

THE CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
JOB DESCRIPTION
CHILDREN'S SERVICES ASSOCIATE – CHILD SUPPORT CENTRE

Job Title: Children's Services Associate, Child Support Centre
Department: Child Support Centre
Section: Care, Legal and Regulatory Services
Reports to: Team Lead, Child Support Centre
Direct Reports: NA
Indirect Reports: NA

JOB SUMMARY

The **Children's Services Associate** is responsible for providing social services support to improve the social and psychological well-being of children who have been deemed to be in imminent danger and have been received into care and placed temporarily at the Child Support Centre. The role of the Associate involves undertaking assessments and interventions of the children to determine their needs. Additionally, the Associate will develop intervention plans to address those needs to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. All these services will be delivered in keeping with best practice, while respecting and promoting the rights of the child.

When carrying out this responsibility the Associate may be required to appear before the Courts, as there may be instances where the Courts will bring clients to the attention of the Authority.

All activities must be geared towards maintaining the highest levels of service to all internal and external stakeholders and clients, must be sensitive to children's issues, and must conform to the guidelines and standards set by The Authority and to all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

- i. Contributes to the overall effectiveness of the Authority by implementing the reception framework, structures, systems, policies, programmes and protocols to support the Authority's mandate.
- ii. Conducts admission, orientation and discharge of children at the Child Support Centre.
- iii. Assesses the circumstances of each child assigned to them at the Child Support Centre, determines their needs and formulates psychosocial plans for meeting those needs.

- iv. Provides basic crisis interventions aimed at attending to critical psychosocial needs of the child.
- v. Counsels children and other psychosocial interventions with the aim on reducing trauma, improving emotional well-being and behaviour, and assisting them in determining strategies and actions to resolve and improve their situation.
- vi. Plans and facilitates developmentally appropriate daily activities to support the children's need for play/recreation, continuous learning, physical development and social and emotional stability.
- vii. Makes recommendations for clients' holistic well-being, and liaises with caseworkers from other Units in the Authority, as well as external stakeholders to access resources or services which will aid in coordinated case management and the clients' well-being.
- viii. Attends Court, as required, as part of a team that makes a petition to the court or provides testimony on behalf of a child.
- ix. Assists with providing supervision of children at the Centre during activities and interactions with others.
- x. Accompanies residents on external visits and appointments, as required.
- xi. Coordinates services for clients with multi-disciplinary professionals in order for ongoing investigations to be completed with as little trauma to the child as possible.
- xii. Establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with community agencies and resources which provide support services to children and families so that appropriate referrals can be made or support services accessed.
- xiii. Interacts meaningfully with persons and organisations that refer children to the Authority with a view to understanding the issues related to the child so that decisions can be taken in the best interest of the child.
- xiv. Serves as advocates/liaisons between children, and service providers such as homes, schools, family services, child guidance clinics, courts, protective services, doctors, and other contacts, to help them integrate and maximize the benefits received.

- xv. Works collaboratively with ad hoc and specialised teams established to address issues related to investigations, assessments, family reintegration and alternative placement for clients.
- xvi. Maintains documented records of the personal history, interventions, action plans and recommendations related to each child and submits appropriate reports to the Team Leader.
- xvii. Maintains professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops, reviewing professional publications and participating in professional societies and advising on trends in social services management.
- xviii. Supports the development and maintenance of a team environment by performing other related duties.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Social Sciences, Psychology, Counselling or related field.
- Two years' experience in the social services field would be an asset.
- Voluntary/internship experience working with children and/or families.
- Working knowledge of social services agencies in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Working knowledge of social problems and cultural norms in Trinidad and Tobago, especially as they relate to children.
- Working knowledge of laws relating to the protection of children
- Working knowledge of social intervention strategies.
- Or equivalent combination of training and experience.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Confidentiality with respect to information records concerning families and children.
- Communication (both written and oral) and interpersonal skills.
- Planning and organizational skills.

- Team work skills.
- Analytical and problem solving skills.
- Customer service orientation.
- Demonstrable interest in children, their needs and rights.