



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Program Specialist – Family Support and Literacy

First Things First (Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board) is a public agency and one of the critical state partners in creating a child and family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all Arizona's children. Created by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First operates through a surcharge on tobacco products. Governed by a state Board with 28 regional partnership councils, First Things First is a decentralized organization that engages diverse constituencies to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a focus on accountability, transparency, coordination, collaboration and on the outcomes that will ensure young children start kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed in school and in life.

Job Summary:

The Program Specialist for Family Support and Literacy functions as a content expert and program manager in the area of family support and literacy for children birth to five and their families. Family Support and Literacy encompasses the fields of supporting families in early literacy and language development, addressing the goals of supporting children through their parents as their child's first teacher and bridging services designed to facilitate strong family relationships, family connectedness within neighborhoods, and access to community-based health and educational services. This position is responsible for state level systems planning, committee/meeting facilitation and participation, program oversight and management, and determination of effective policy and programs in early childhood education related to working with children 0-5 years of age. This position requires directly assisting regional partnership councils and other First Things First staff in early learning programmatic design, training and technical assistance, and content related information for grant proposals. This position conducts research on national trends and programs for Family Support and Literacy and has direct management responsibilities for designated statewide and multi-regional FTF strategies.

The Program Specialist- Family Support and Literacy also functions as a central agency consultant to regional partnership councils on early childhood development and health issues and assists regional staff with strategy development, training and technical assistance to regional councils, program oversight, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that regional program objectives and outcomes are being achieved.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

The Program Specialist- Family Support and Literacy must have a strong knowledge of and experience with family support programs such as Home Visitation, Family Resource Centers and trends in Early Literacy, as well as the ability to manage grants and partnership efforts. The

specialist must have research skills and the ability to analyze and apply that research to the development and implementation of best practice Family Support and Literacy programs. The specialist will be required to partner and consult with multiple internal staff and external stakeholders in the field.

Typical Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist regional directors and councils in the development of family support and literacy strategy directions.
- Promote best practice and evidence-based programming by conducting research and analysis using local, state and national resources and data, and communicate effectively both verbally and in writing related to those practices.
- Facilitate implementation of and manage designated FTF statewide and/or multi-regional strategies.
- Provide program support and technical assistance to assigned regional partnership councils, serve on assigned Regional Area Team (RAT), review annual regional funding plans and grant renewals, and provide historical information on partnership challenges and opportunities.
- Respond to requests from FTF staff and grantees for information and/or assistance promptly, professionally, courteously and helpfully.
- Participate in Technical Review Teams to review grant applications, contracts, governmental-to-governmental agreements, amendments, and renewals to ensure that the overall scope and intention of the services, including the standard of practice, is properly addressed and documented.
- Review and respond to quarterly narrative and data reports for assigned family support and literacy programs, and provides assistance to other FTF staff in interpretation of those reports.
- Actively participates and contributes in meetings of the Family Support and Literacy Strategy Team, the Family Support and Literacy Advisory Committee and sub-groups, the Regional Area Team, FTF staff and Program Division, and all other meetings as requested.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's or Master's Degree in early childhood education, child development, education, social work, family studies, or a closely related field.
- Extensive experience in Family Support programs / early learning settings.
- Ability to work collegially and effectively within a team environment.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Effective communicator, orally and in writing. Commitment to uphold high ethical standards.

Review of resumes will begin on August 17, 2015 and continue until the position is filled. For first consideration, please submit your cover letter, comprehensive resume and three professional references by the close of business on August 14, 2015 to:

www.azstatejobs.gov

In the AZ State Personnel System, the position is classified as a Grade 24 with a salary range of \$50,890.53 - \$69,012.11. The position is not covered under the State of Arizona Merit system rules. The State of Arizona offers an outstanding comprehensive benefits package.