



Position Description: Early Head Start Child Care Partnership – Family Educator and Family Support Specialist (8 positions available)

Organization

Created by the SC General Assembly in 1999, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness is the state’s comprehensive early childhood education agency and a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. SC First Steps (SCFS) takes a holistic approach to accomplishing our mission of preparing all kids for success in school, work and life, offering services that improve children’s health, strengthen families, expand access to quality child care, increase participation in four-year-old kindergarten (4K) programs and help transition rising kindergartners into school. Through a network of 46 affiliates, called “local partners,” SCFS reaches children 0-5 and their families in every county of the state. SCFS runs one of the largest Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs in the country with a presence in 14 counties. With funding from the state, annually, SCFS provides over 2200 four-year-olds with access to Pre-K 4 across 64 school districts. The diverse workforce that makes up the 70+ member team at SCFS includes salaried, hourly, and grant-funded positions and is governed by a State Board of Trustees. Our office is in downtown Columbia, SC. As SCFS is a state-wide organization, some positions are remote, and some require travel.

Team: Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP), Family Services

SC First Steps operates one of the nation’s largest and most complex Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs. This federal initiative was created to expand Early Head Start services in partnership with community-based child care settings. First Steps contracts with child care providers across a fourteen county service area to provide both classroom-based early childhood education and comprehensive services to the families of 416 low-income infants and toddlers. The program operates year-round and full-day in more than 50 private preschool classrooms. The SC First Steps Early Head Start–CCP team includes over 30 team members based both in Columbia and across the state. *The EHS-CCP Family Services team is the largest team within the EHS-CCP program and will work regionally across 14 counties to include: Allendale, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Fairfield, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Saluda and York.*

Position Description:

The EHS-CCP Family Educator and Family Support Specialist are responsible for working with families and children regionally for the agency’s Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grant. The purpose of these two positions are to provide quality, comprehensive child and family support services to children 0-3 and their families enrolled in community-based child care classrooms. These positions will support and assist parents in meeting the needs of their children while enhancing parents’ role as the primary influence on their child’s education and development while supporting parents in increasing their economic stability. The Family Educator and Family Support Specialist will determine eligibility for grant enrollment, enroll families into the classroom, and enlist parental involvement in child educational programs. The two positions will work with parents to identify and achieve goals, access support services, create training programs, and facilitate positive relationships. Both positions will carry a caseload of families and be responsible for case management services and implementing the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum. Parents as Teachers is a national, evidence-based home visitation model designed to ensure young children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Services are delivered by model-certified parent educators who emphasize parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting and family well-being. First Steps has served as the lead agency for Parents as Teachers in South Carolina since 2011.

When submitting your cover letter and resume, please indicate which county or counties you would be interested in working in as a Family Educator and/or Family Support Specialist.

- Ensures all funded slots are filled with eligible child participants who meet program requirements.
- Identifies and recruits eligible families and children – including children with disabilities, underserved populations, and children with ABC vouchers.
- Selects participants based on plans and procedures in compliance with EHS policy and procedures.
- Provides appropriate follow-up when absences are frequent.
- Develops a professional, trusting and collaborative partnership within each family that respects diverse values and risk.
- Promotes family readiness and parent participation/involvement through supportive measures and proper orientation to the program.
- Makes home visits according to agency procedures and assesses the needs of each family
- Utilizes community resources through collaborations, that include resource planning, to deliver services to children.
- Documents and recordkeeping in the ChildPlus software system in a timely manner.
- Works with staff in a positive, flexible, respectful, and trustworthy manner to meet the needs of children and families while promoting the agency.
- Communicates clearly with staff, families, and other parties in a professional manner that may include oral and written forms.
- Maintains confidentiality in accordance with EHS and agency policy.
- Acts in a responsible way to meet deadlines, work with others, and use technology and provided materials in a way that fosters success.
- Assesses the needs of each enrolled child (e.g. filling out forms/surveys, family partnership agreements, health, nutrition living skills, budgeting, job skills, goal setting, etc.) for the purpose of developing an action plan and supporting the family in appropriate ways.
- Assists with health screening, immunization verifications, and outside agency referrals (e.g. hearing, vision, immunization compliance, height/weight relationships, etc.) for the purpose of developing individualized goals, success plans, promoting needed treatment, and complying with program requirements.
- Performs home visits for the purpose of enrolling students in program, interviewing parents, informing parents of school and/or community resources and providing child development/parenting information, and setting family goals.
- Plans and facilitates family meetings and parent engagement events (e.g. PACT, health, nutrition, counseling, etc.) for the purpose of providing for family support needs and complying with program regulations.
- Provides outreach to low-income communities and organizations for the purpose of recruiting families to EHS and building collaborative partnerships.
- Ensures parents from all centers are represented on the EHS-CCP Policy Council and notified when meetings are conducted.
- Works with families to ensure that families complete Family Partnership Agreements within 90 days of enrollment into the program, as well as complete appropriate follow-up meetings to the Family Partnership Agreement every six months.
- Assists families with a Transition Plan to Head Start/or ECE programs, including providing transition information, coordinating visitations to ECE sites.
- Participates in workshops, meetings, community events, and training sessions to present or learn information.
- Serves as a liaison between teaching staff and family services.
- Provides monthly reports to the ERSEA Director.
- Additional required duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Skills:

Required:

- Must have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited university in early childhood education or related field.
- Must have at least 5 years of experience in child development and/or early childhood education
- Must have knowledge of SC Child Care Licensing requirements
- Must possess leadership ability and organizational skills
- Must have good interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to work as part of a team, communicate effectively both orally and in writing, receive and provide feedback, and manage dynamic interchanges in meetings
- Must possess Initiative and problem-solving capabilities
- Must be able to work well with people
- Must be able to demonstrate and promote inclusivity and cross-cultural competence.
- Must be willing to work a flexible schedule to include nights and weekends
- Must be willing to travel extensively

Other Requirements:

- Valid South Carolina Class "D" Driver's License and ability to travel in-state and out of state
- Ability to travel extensively to child care setting in 14 counties
- Maintain and show proof of personal auto insurance
- Must be able to accept some exposure to communicable diseases (i.e. childcare setting)
- Must be able to work in an environment that may be moderate to loud (i.e. childcare setting)
- Ability to lift up to 45 pounds

Benefits:

This position is eligible for a variety of benefits from a comprehensive health and dental insurance program and a secure retirement and 401(k) system. The State of South Carolina offers a competitive benefits program for state employees.

To apply, submit your cover letter and resume to Samantha Ingram at hr@scfirststeps.org.

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Eight positions are available in the following counties: Allendale, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Fairfield, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Saluda and York.