



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Family Preservation Worker	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-15658	Fort Smith	Child, Family and Community Services / Fort Smith

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Family Preservation Worker assists families in effectively addressing the emotional, physical, cultural, intellectual and spiritual needs of their children. Families access services through referral from Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority Child and Family Services. The over-arching purpose of this position is to work with families collaboratively to enhance the safety and wellbeing of children and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect.

SCOPE

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) is the single provider of all health and social services (HSS) in the Northwest Territories (NWT), with the exception of Hay River and Tłı̄ch̄o regions, covering 1.2 million square kilometers and serving approximately 43,000 people, including First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and non-aboriginals. HSS includes the full range of primary, secondary and tertiary health services and social services including family services, protection services, care placements, mental health, addictions, and developmental activities, delivered by more than 1,400 HSS staff.

While the Tłı̄ch̄o Community Services Agency will operate under a separate board and Hay River Health and Social Services Agency will in the interim, the NTHSSA will set clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and monitoring for the entire NWT. Service Agreements will be established with these boards to identify performance requirements and adherence to clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and policies as established by the NTHSSA.

Under the direction of the Minister of Health and Social Services, the NTHSSA is established to move toward one integrated delivery system as part of the government's transformation strategy.



Located in Fort Smith and reporting directly to the Regional Manager, Child and Family Services, the Family Preservation Worker is responsible to provide direct one-to-one support to parents in their home and/or in the community.

The Family Preservation Worker is responsible for establishing trusting relationships with families involved in Child and Family Services (CFS), while providing appropriate supports and services. The incumbent will spend approximately forty percent of the day providing services to families in emotionally distressing situations which can distort communication, requiring the incumbent to be highly sensitive and accurate in their communication, balancing the need for intense listening and observation. Services include providing an assortment of direct supports in order to address a variety of client and family problems; educating parents about child development, positive parenting strategies and overall family functioning; providing a variety of psycho-educational workshops to families working with CFS; supporting parents in using culturally appropriate approaches to parenting; advocacy for parents/families; and assisting parents and families in accessing relevant community resources. The incumbent is often required to provide support to families who may be in conflict with a Social Worker. This can create conflictual relationships with co-workers which may require mediation and interpersonal skills to manage.

For Indigenous residents of the NWT, who represent over 50% of the population, these shifts are particularly significant because despite some improvements over time, there remain significant disparities in their overall health status in comparison to non-indigenous residents. Health disparities are largely attributed to inequalities in the social determinants of health, which for Indigenous residents include the legacies of colonization and systemic racism. With specific reference to CFS, Indigenous families and their children are disproportionately overrepresented in the system. Most of the children who are involved with CFS are Indigenous, a fact that can be attributed both to the historical legacies and systemic racism as mentioned above, but also to the lack within the CFS System of culturally safe and accessible family supports. These factors have also impacted the way health and social services are delivered and accessed by Indigenous peoples in the NWT, contributing to additional complexities in Indigenous health disparities. When Indigenous peoples feel culturally safe interacting with staff and the HSS system they are more likely to access care when needed, leading to improved health outcomes.

Colonization has a continuing and profound impact on NWT Indigenous families today, therefore the Healthy Family Program renewal project is intended to support a system-wide shift towards prioritizing early childhood development, culturally based prevention, and, family and community-driven programing.

The incumbent is expected to demonstrate compassionate care that is free of racism and discrimination to clients, families, community members, and other members of the health care team. Practicing from a trauma-informed care perspective is expected and the position requires



that interaction with clients and families, community members, partners and colleagues is tactful, respectful and humble.

The incumbent is required to use critical thinking and sound judgment in balancing the use of existing legislation and standards of practice with the need to make quick decisions that will greatly impact the lives of clients.

The client base for this position is the population of Fort Smith Region.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide a continuum of services and supports that facilitate positive parent-child relationships, stimulate child development, promote healthy lifestyles, and improve the capacity and functioning of involved individuals and families.

- Establish a trusting relationship with at risk families.
- Work collaboratively with parents to develop and implement a family support plan that supports parents in achieving goals which are either self-identified, or identified by the clients, Child and Family Services staff, and Family Preservation Worker.
- Assist parents in strengthening parent skills and knowledge; developing an understanding of age-appropriate expectations; using effective coping strategies; appropriate discipline; using positive reinforcement in parenting; and identifying and utilizing their strengths and their support network.
- Teach parents problem solving and coping skills with modalities including, but not limited to, positive discipline, solution focused, motivational interviewing, harm reduction, anger management and coping skills.
- Assist parents in developing culturally appropriate strategies in addressing problems that impact their family; provide workshops allowing parents to learn various skills that parents need; and ensure parents have access to parenting support that is culturally safe and culturally relevant.
- Link families with cultural supports that are available in the community.
- Gather and maintain information on progress, providing progress reports as required and adding case notes to Matrix in a timely manner.
- Carry a client caseload, and participate in case management and regular team meetings.
- Conduct ongoing assessments of client strengths, areas for development and progress towards case goals and maintain documentation on case progress.
- Assist parents in maintaining a safe and functional home environment.
- Complete critical incident reports in a timely manner.
- Establish and maintain effective communication between youth, families, extended family, case managers and community stakeholders.
- Respond immediately to families in crisis by providing assistance and support to help them resolve personal issues.



- Promote an atmosphere that encourages parents to maintain responsibility and accountability for meeting the needs of children.
 - Work with case managers to provide assistance to youth in the development of life skills and assist youth in gaining access to community resources.
 - Assist youth in making a transition to independence that reinforces their sense of self-responsibility for the choices they make and their consequences.
- 2. Engage in culturally sensitive and culturally relevant community capacity building, at which point the community can be mobilized to develop and implement programs that prevent child maltreatment, enhance family and community functioning and evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts.**
- Knowledge of issues affecting Indigenous people in Canada and willingness to engage in Indigenous culture and teachings.
 - Respond to requests from the community and from other professionals for information and presentations about the program and various issues that families face.
 - Incorporate families' knowledge of culturally relevant supports and programming.
 - Connect with cultural supports in the community as well as other programs, services and resources in the community.
 - Collaborate in the development and implementation of a variety of parenting programs as part of a community prevention initiative.
- 3. Contribute to the effective functioning of the Child and Family Services team to enhance program development and delivery by supporting workers and the families they work with to engage in collaborative decision making.**
- Consult with, advocate for, and coordinate client services.
 - Engage in case conference planning and meetings.
 - Regular and ongoing communication with CFS staff about the progress and development of families as well as needs related to ongoing support.
 - Support ongoing collaborative decision making between families and workers in CFS case management.
- 4. Promote family preservation and reunification throughout all Child and Family Services involvement.**
- Ensure families are adequately informed of and understand the applicable child and family services they are receiving.
 - Participate in case management meetings with clients and CFS staff as required.
 - Facilitate and support family visitation as required.
 - Collaborate with workers to champion the goal of family preservation and reunification within the delivery of Child and Family Services.



WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

When necessary, the incumbent may be required to assist in carrying luggage and awkward items, or carrying and transporting young children, some of whom will be physically resistant to being carried.

Environmental Conditions

Approximately, fifty percent (50%) of each day will involve exposure to communicable diseases while in home situations and while seeing clients in the office.

Approximately, twenty five percent (25%) of each day will involve exposure to unsanitary conditions, including but not limited to fecal matter, soiled diapers and bedding, and blood, while in home situations.

Sensory Demands

On average, forty percent (40%) of the incumbent's day will be spent providing direct therapeutic services requiring the use of the combined senses of touch, sight, smell, and hearing during the ongoing observation / assessment / and provision of services to clients to enhance the safety of children and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect.

Mental Demands

Professionals providing child and youth care counselling services will repeatedly hear children and youths' traumatic stories (i.e., abuse, neglect, multiple losses, family violence, parental addictions, etc.).

The incumbent will work with clients who often have a history of violence, a criminal record of violent acts, hostile and unpredictable behaviour, and who may pose a real and significant threat to personal safety for approximately forty percent (40%) of the day.

Approximately, ten percent (10%) of incumbent's week may involve travel outside of the community in poor road conditions and/or in unsafe weather conditions, including travel by small aircraft.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of a variety of issues and approaches, including but not limited to: child development, high risk youth, parenting stresses, effective positive parenting strategies, positive behavioural reinforcement, non-violent parenting strategies, family dynamics, addictions and domestic violence issues, and CFS systems and procedures.
- Knowledge of Child and Family Services Act, Adoptions Act and their regulations, standards, and guidelines.
- Ability to establish and maintain relationships with individuals, families and communities.



- Knowledge and sensitivity regarding the geographical and cultural needs of the community, and ability to understand how community and culture impact the delivery of health and social care.
- Knowledge and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of traditional parenting practices.
- Ability to assess the cultural needs of families working with Child and Family Services, and to develop and implement an individualized case plan, as well as a variety of programs to address these needs.
- Ability to acquire knowledge of northern culture and the environment in which NTHSSA operates.
- Knowledge of a variety of basic counselling skills and supportive approaches to be utilized with the client and family.
- Ability to understand systemic influences and ability to use these to inform an approach to appropriate family interventions.
- Ability to work in a cross cultural environment.
- Ability to conduct group work, community groups, and facilitation of psycho-educational groups.
- Ability to deliver structured and easy to understand presentations and workshops.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision, as well as collaboratively with service partners and the Child Protection Worker.
- Ability to influence, problem solve in stressful situations, and provide conflict resolution.
- Communication skills in written and verbal form, and effective listening skills in order to fulfill the demands of the position.
- Ability to communicate and liaise between families, workers, and community service providers.
- Ability to advocate for clients within CFS as well as any other pertinent service systems.
- Knowledge of the different referral agencies/services available within the community.
- Skilled in interviewing, assessment, negotiation and conflict resolution.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Diploma in Social Work, Child Development, Youth Care or Early Childhood Education; and one (1) year of related experience.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Must have a valid Class 5 Drivers License (or equivalent).



NTHSSA – Regional Requirements

Within the region, the incumbent must be able to acquire within a reasonable time frame and remain current with the following training and certifications:

- Immunizations
- Fire training
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Certification in First Aid & level C CPR/AED
- Non-violent Crisis Intervention
- Cultural Training
- Mental Health First Aid
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- Workplace Safety
- Hand Washing Certificate
- Training under the Accreditation Canada Standards

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☒ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)
 - Level required for this Designated Position is:
 - ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
 - READING COMPREHENSION:
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
 - WRITING SKILLS:
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred