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| **Volunteer Brief** | **Family Support Volunteer** | |
| **Hours of Work** | Flexible: to suit both volunteer and organisation.  The time commit will differ depending on the specific role the volunteer undertakes (see ‘key volunteering roles’ below) which can be worked out as part of the interview and induction process. | |
| **Location** | Various across Edinburgh and the Lothians.  Dependent on the specific role (see ‘key volunteering roles’ below)  We have Family Connection venues in Edinburgh (George Street), West Lothian (Livingston), and East Lothian (Musselburgh). Our office is currently in Edinburgh (George Street). | |
| **Accountable to** | A designated supervisor: team leader or service manager | |
| **Expenses** | Travel expenses required to undertake support tasks with families  Any courses/CPD externally provided that are needed to fulfil the role | |
| **Holidays/sick leave** | We expect volunteers to take holidays to suit them, advising us of your absence in advance. Holidays are important to volunteer wellbeing and we will encourage you to take holidays at least in line with employee entitlement.  Please also advise us if you are ill and please do not come into work – we are conscious of the need to reduce transmission of any infection to other staff and service users. | |
| **Introduction** | Family Journeys supports families after separation, providing a range of services to parents and children. At present these services operate throughout the Lothians in outreach locations, with an established team of Family Support Workers and Family Connections Workers.  Our work requires a high degree of trust and professionalism. We engage with families in complex situations where a high degree of professional judgement is required. Our work requires commitment to safety and child protection and working to a high standard expected by families, social workers, solicitors and courts.  **Volunteering**  As a small charity we benefit from volunteers who give their time to help our organisation and the families we work with. However, to ensure our services are of the standard required by stakeholders such as courts and solicitors, we ask all volunteers to work to the organisation’s policies and to commit to undertaking training, regular supervision, and reading our email communications that keep you informed of our organisation. | |
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| **Key volunteering roles** | **Support our Family Connections work.**  **Based in one of our venues in Edinburgh, Livingston or Musselburgh as part of a staff team.**  A Family Connections shift is six hours. Joining the staff team for the duration of the shift would be an advantage to the organisation where possible.   * Support families using Family Journeys services, contributing to our provision of positive, playful and attachment-promoting child contact centres and activities; * Work as part of a team supporting parents to help them prepare themselves and their child for contact sessions with a non-resident parent, providing information, tips and learning opportunities, to make this a positive experience for child and parent. * Work as part of a team with children, through play and activities, to listen to their views and interpret their needs, to prepare for contact with their non-resident parent. * Collaborate with our family connections teams to welcome children and parents, create a positive play environment, implement the plans made in advance with children and parents, and ensure their safety. * Support experienced staff to record work with children and parents in our database to ensure strong communication for the benefit of families. * Answer phone calls made to the venue during shift and relay messages to relevant staff. * Develop a positive, nurturing and trusting relationship with families using our services. Provide additional ad hoc support to individuals when required by being a listening ear. * Maintain confidentiality and ensure information between parents, and between parents and their children, is handled sensitively and with explicit permission of parents and children. * Where developed, support families to access outdoor supported play options either within their own family context or as part of a group. * Support organisation to develop a pool of sessional staff available to fill gaps in service delivery created by sickness/annual leave, etc.   **Support our administration staff and reception duties.**  **Office based in Edinburgh, with experienced staff available.**  Time commitment is more flexible here to suit the volunteer. Weekly or fortnightly support is ideal offering between 1-4hrs in the office.   * Responding to referrals from parents and/or professionals. * Answering calls from parents enquiring about our services, providing them with information over the phone, by email or sending literature; * Taking client details and entering them on a database. Some if this information is sensitive concerning clients’ personal circumstances and needs, which we require to help us prioritise our follow up to them. * Developing social media and communication platforms * Complying with data protection. * Maintaining a warm, friendly and welcoming tone, prepared to go at the pace of the caller, especially if they are distressed or angry. * Recording the clients’ views and information to help staff to avoid duplicating questions in their next stage of follow up. * Following guidance that may change from time to time when we have to make operational decisions about services or procedures. * Referring to other staff members if calls become complex.   **Involvement in development projects**  Location and time commitment is flexible. Scope for home working. Time commitment is more of an ad hoc nature.  From time to time, we involve volunteers in undertaking projects which help us to develop our services or gather evidence of our impact. These projects may involve:   * Group work: online or face-to-face * One off or programme of events * Helping us to communicate more effectively with families, producing learning materials, information leaflets, web downloads or social media posts for audiences of parents or children of diverse age groups. * Helping us to develop our policies and procedures by researching legislation, the policies and practices of other organisations, or new theories and emerging practice around the UK and other countries. Creating short jargon-free briefing papers for staff to learn from and consider the implications for our own work. * Interviewing past clients, to gain their views for evaluation of their experience or research on experiences of family separation and conflict. Recording and writing up interviews. * Supporting our analysis of data from our recordings and database, to help us communicate our impact to a wider range of stakeholders.   We are open to volunteers undertaking specific studies or research to collaborate with us on their projects or dissertations.  Development projects are usually areas of work where our staff are unable to commit time due to the demands of our service delivery. Volunteers undertaking this work will usually be required to be “self-starters” working to an agreed brief with less hands-on supervision than we will provide in service delivery roles. | |
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| **Additional requirements** | * Attend the required training and induction for the roles you wish to undertake. * Work to and implement the organisation’s policy and procedures including child protection procedures. * Adhere to and promote respect for health and safety throughout the organisation. * Maintain strict confidentiality. * Support Family Journeys’ communications and PR activities. * Use new technology and engage with our IT systems appropriately to your role. * Engage with external stakeholders positively. * Ask for help when you need it and be aware that some of our work is challenging and emotionally demanding, even for experienced staff. * Accept support and supervision requests. | |
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| **Key relationships** | **Direct supervision**:   * This will be agreed following your induction and depending on the role you are given. * During sessions, lead staff may change depending on the activity and location, but you will have one overall link worker * Levels of supervision will be proportionate to the hours spent volunteering. * You may receive some supervision in groups with other volunteers and paid staff. | |
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| **Essential requirements** | * A PVG check will be required for all client-facing roles * Ensuring that, at all times and for all service users, our services are inclusive and actively seek solutions to ensure those with different disadvantages benefit from our support * To model and promote Family Journeys values. * Strict adherence to data protection and confidentiality policies * Visible commitment to and adherence to good practice in all our policies and in particular to safety and child protection * Compliance with our PVG requirements * Ensuring our services and organisation as a whole respects and promotes equality and diversity * Ensuring our organisation complies with government guidance and the law | |
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| **Person specification** | | |
| Experience of/interest in direct work with disadvantaged and diverse families  Experience of/interest in supporting parents and children.  Good verbal and written skills.  Understanding of social exclusion and other issues impacting on the lives of children and families  Excellent communication skills  Trauma informed and non-judgemental approach to working with families | | |
| **Organisational requirements** | | **Team meetings:** at least once per quarter. Timings will be rotated to ensure volunteers can attend at reasonable times according to their availability.  **Continuing professional development:** all volunteers will be offered the opportunity to participate in training for their development and their interests. For some roles, training is a necessary pre-requisite before volunteering. Child protection training, confidentiality and data protection, and trauma informed practice are required. |
| **Our commitment to you** | | **We will:**   * Support you learning through inhouse training and where available external training providers. * Keep a record of your training and CPD * Provide you with references for future employers, which we will keep on file for up to five years after you leave us * Let you know when we are recruiting for paid positions both internally and externally. Volunteering with us does not guarantee any favourable assessment of your application or interview. * Provide support, fun, and respect for your time and commitment. |