



Parent/Professional
Advocacy League

Job Description: Family Support Specialist – Crisis/DEI

Job Type: Part Time (30 hrs/week)

Location: MA Statewide

Have you traveled or are you traveling the mental health journey with your child, youth, or young adult? Do you have experience with mental health crises, the Emergency Department, and racial/cultural diversity (even if only within your own family)? Do you feel passionate about helping other families who are experiencing the same things and making a positive impact on mental health systems and services? If so, then this job may be for you!

Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc. (PPAL) is a vibrant, impactful nonprofit working to make life better for families of children, youth, and young adults with mental health needs. PPAL works with families throughout Massachusetts who need help navigating services in mental health, juvenile justice, school, and other systems, at no cost to them. We work in close partnership with other community and state agencies with the goals of supporting families, nurturing parent leaders, and improving systems. More information about PPAL can be found at <https://ppal.net>.

As a Family Support Specialist-Crisis/DEI (FSS), you would be responsible for (i) providing information, support, and education to parents/caregivers in handling crisis situations, navigating the emergency department, and obtaining services for their children and family with mental health needs; (ii) doing community outreach to reduce mental health stigma and make PPAL's services known, particularly in diverse and underserved communities; and (iii) participating in policy/systems meetings and events to influence improvement in mental health access and services in MA, particularly for diverse and underserved residents. PPAL will provide training.

You *must* have experience raising a child, youth, or young adult with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs including dealing with mental health crisis situations, a steadfast commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a strong desire to support PPAL's mission of improving mental health and wellbeing of all children and families.

This position is currently hybrid – community-based, office, and home, as determined by PPAL. PPAL's office is in Westborough, MA. You must have reliable transportation. Bilingual candidates preferred.

Interested? Here are some of the things you would be doing:

- Working with families one-on-one to help them navigate their child's mental health crisis including emergency room visits, provide them with emotional support, connect them with referral resources, and educate them around the mental health system, appropriate services for their family, their child's rights, school-related issues, and effective communication and advocacy.
- Educating and empowering families by providing skill building, coaching, and advocacy training.
- Recognizing, acknowledging, and advocating for awareness around systemic racism and trauma as it affects mental health and supporting families affected by it in their journey with their child.
- Preparing parents to represent the voice of families who have children with mental health needs at the local and state levels with a particular emphasis on advocacy around racial, ethnic, and cultural barriers.
- Embracing diversity in culture, religion, race, education, socio-economics, and gender expression, among others, and regularly demonstrating cultural humility, a desire to learn, and a desire to effectively address issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, disproportionality, and cultural responsiveness.
- Facilitating support groups and workshops for families as needed.

- Conducting community and professional outreach and events to inform interested parties of PPAL's services and reduce mental health stigma, particularly in diverse and underserved communities.
- Partnering with PPAL team members to advance the mission of PPAL and the families it represents.
- Representing PPAL and its families in a positive and professional manner at all times; consistently communicating PPAL's mission and vision.

You're a good fit if...

- You are compassionate, passionate, and motivated.
- You have raised or are raising a child, youth, or young adult with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs and have crisis and/or emergency department experience related thereto.
- You have navigated resources and systems for yourself or others.
- You can share your experience and perspective as a parent/caregiver of a child with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs to build rapport with families.
- You are a good listener and can remain calm in a crisis situation.
- You value open, effective, and timely community with others.
- You respect and value collaborators with varying perspectives and interests.
- You embrace working with people diverse in all ways including culture, religion, race, education, socio-economics, and gender expression and seek to effectively address issues of diversity, inclusion, disproportionality, and cultural responsiveness.
- You have good judgment, are kind, and tactful.
- You can manage your time and meet deadlines.
- You have excellent follow-through and ability to consistently document activities.
- You are comfortable with technology, have good computer skills, and can plan and conduct online meetings.
- You can accommodate evening and weekend work.
- You have a valid MA drivers' license, and access to a car (driving is required.)

If this describes you, then let's talk! Submit your resume and a cover letter (including your personal experience with children's mental health) to apply@ppal.net.

This is a 30 hr/week position with a salary range of \$20 to \$22 per hour. Benefits include generous PTO and holidays.