

## 1.1 House Parent

**REPORTS TO:** Director of Therapy

**EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION:** Full-time. Exempt.

**PURPOSE OF THE POSITION:**

House Parents use biblical values in modeling a healthy family, as they care for the teens residing in their home. They manage the home so as to create a therapeutic environment which facilitates the attainment of goals established when each child is accepted at The Joy House (JH). Within a structured environment, they ensure a holistic approach to nurturing each child. Additionally, they assist in the care and maintenance of JH property.

**PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Spiritual Development of the Child

- a. Sets a good example of Christian attitudes and conduct.
- b. Trains teens in the experience of worship by actively participating in a local church and encouraging the participation of the teens in the activities of the church. Attendance is required for Sunday worship, but House Parents should consider the value of the child participating in other services, Sunday School, youth meetings (i.e. Young Life, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, etc.), and retreat, when residents reach appropriate phase.
- c. Conducts daily family devotions with the teens.
- d. Fosters a spirit of religious tolerance, while encouraging the child to an individual faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Emotional Development

- a. Becomes familiar with each child's social history in an effort to understand the child as an individual.
- b. Is available to the child for counseling at all times, coordinating their input with the Counselors, especially during crises.
- c. Looks for ways to help the child achieve the goals that were set for him/her when he/she first came to The Joy House.
- d. Looks for things the child does well, be fair in giving consistent consequences, and ensures that the children understand what they must do to progress through the Phases of the program.
- e. When the children are sick, cares for them. When they're involved in school or church activities, encourages them. When they have responsibilities, holds them accountable.
- g. Nurturing is guided by the emotional need of each teen and stretches from tucking them into bed and giving a needed hug to them to assuring them that they are accepted unconditionally.
- h. Develops and maintains an accepting and empathetic relationship with the child's relatives.
- i. Works closely with the Counselors on any emotional problems of the child. Communicates with the staff any significant experiences or attitudes of the child.

- j. Holds information about the child and his family confidential, to be shared only on a professional basis.
- k. Reports immediately all incidents, indications or rumors of child abuse--whether physical, verbal, emotional or sexual--to the Executive Director, Director of Counseling and/or Counselor who will, in turn, notify the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS). This information can never be "held in confidence."

### 3. Social Development

- a. Provides formal and informal play periods.
- b. Helps the teen develop habits of proper behavior, dress and safety at social and recreational activities.
- c. Teaches teen appropriate methods of building and enhancing interpersonal relationships.
- d. Plans and carries out off-site activities for the whole home.
- e. Makes a concerted effort to give each child sufficient individual attention to compensate, to a certain degree, for the necessary regimentation of Joy House life and to make up for his being away from his own family and for his having to share affection with so many other children.
- f. Ensures that each child in the home is properly fitted for shoes and clothing. Clothing items shall be appropriate to the seasonal weather and should be comparable to that worn by other children in the community. If the child's parents have not provided the needed clothing items, House Parents should bring it to the attention of the Director of Operations.
- g. Encourages communication between the child and his/her family or guardian.
- h. Avoids derogatory comments of a child's parents, relatives or guardians.
- i. Plans meals, as much as possible, so as to enable staff and children to eat together, serving both the same food.

### 4. Intellectual Development

- a. Education
  - (1) Encourages a wholesome and constructive attitude toward school.
  - (2) Provides structured time each day for school work and ensures that the teens have necessary study materials.
  - (3) Works in close cooperation with our teachers to insure that each teen in their home is meeting their educational goals.
- b. Discipline
  - (1) Uses discipline to help the child learn self-control, rather than forcing him/her to conform to adult standards. Discipline is training that makes punishment unnecessary.
  - (2) In administering discipline the Rules and Disciplines in the Joy House Resident Handbook should be used as the guide.

- (3) Discipline must be fair and consistent, and every effort should be made to help the child see it as such. Standards of discipline for the House Parents' own children should be similar to those expected of the resident children, although the means of carrying out that discipline may be different.
- (5) Serious offenses, such as drug use, sexual acting out, criminal offenses or running away, should be reported to the Executive Director immediately and followed up with a written Incident Report.
- (6) No disciplinary action should be taken which will demean the child or damage his self-esteem
- (7) As a general rule, discipline should be administered only to your assigned children. Refer other infractions to the appropriate House Parent.

## 5. Physical Development of the Child

### a. Housekeeping and Sector Maintenance

- (1) Supervises the teens in completing household chores and helps them develop good housekeeping habits.
- (2) Assigns teens to household tasks that are appropriate to age and abilities.
- (3) Teaches the teens how to use the proper tools to take care of that part of the grounds assigned to the home.
- (4) When possible, there should be an element of choice in the assignment of jobs, and changes should be made frequently. Ideally, each job should have a written description, including physical and intellectual requirements. Such a description would serve as a guide in rotating work assignments in line with the teen's age and ability.

### b. Food

- (1) Plans menus, prepares and serves nutritionally balanced meals using seasonal fruits and vegetables, food storage items, donated items, and home-purchased menu supplements.
- (2) Helps the children develop the capability for meal planning, budgeting, and preparation (within their ability to understand).
- (3) Models and practices good table manners and encourages an atmosphere of "serving one another" during meals. Eat as a family.
- (4) Provides opportunities for the children to develop skills as good hosts to guests in the home.
- (5) Prior to turning the home over to the Relief Staff, insure they have everything in place to provide any meal their responsible for.

### c. Clothing

- (1) Supervises all laundering of clothes, insuring that each teens takes responsibility for keep their laundry done.
- (2) Insures clothing is kept in good repair.

### d. Health

- (1) Encourages the development of good personal hygiene habits such as bathing, brushing teeth, changing clothes, shampooing hair, cleaning nails, etc.
- (2) Encourages good grooming.
- (3) Knows any special health needs of assigned children (allergic reaction to bee stings, medicines, etc., special medicines needed, etc.). Ensures required medication is taken at the proper time and in the prescribed amount. Keeps a written log of dose and time prescribed medicine is taken also documenting when they initially begin and end taking the medication.
- (4) Coordinates with the parents/guardians to insure appropriate medical and dental appointments are scheduled and kept.
- (5) Meets with your Counselor to establish strategies for the physical and emotional health of each child.

#### 6. Home Maintenance

- a. Maintains the home and furnishings in good order.
- b. Keeps the home van in good running condition, practices preventive maintenance, and informs the Director of Operations of needed repairs.
- c. Advises the Director of Operations promptly when repairs to the home or furnishings are needed.

#### 7. Grounds Chore and Sector Maintenance

- a. On an as needed basis may be asked by Director of Grounds and Maintenance to work with and supervise their residents in performing some grounds maintenance.

#### 8. Staff Relations

- a. Participates and cooperates with all those who make up the child care team Director of Counseling, Counselors, Teachers, other House Parents, Relief Staff, and the Executive Director.
- b. Provides for the spiritual, social, educational and emotional well-being of assigned teens by referrals to appropriate staff persons.
- c. Provides documentation as required--reports of fire drills, accident/incident reports, budget book and associated financial information, menus, etc.
- e. Informs Relief Staff of the home routine and any special needs of a particular teen.
- f. Acts as hosts for scheduled public relations tours of the homes.
- g. Attends interviews for teens who are being considered for their home.

9. Delegated Responsibilities - Any other responsibilities that may be assigned by the Executive Director.

**QUALITIES:**

1. Good character, health and emotional stability.
2. Regularly attends church.
3. Agrees with Joy House Statement of Faith and Staff Policy Manual
4. Shares with spouse a burden to provide a Christian home for troubled children and to accept the associated call for sacrifice.
5. Teachable.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Education and Experience
  - a. High School Diploma plus work experience.
  - b. At least twenty-five (25) years of age.
  - c. Previous work in a child care agency desirable.
  - d. Good moral character and integrity. Strong Christian character and nurturing lifestyle as documented by references.
2. Technological
  - a. Willing and able to do manual work.
  - b. Able to lift up to fifty (50) pounds - men.  
Able to lift up to twenty-five (25) pounds - women.
  - c. Able to keep good records.
  - d. Able to follow oral and written instructions.
  - e. Able to become First Aid and CPR qualified.
  - f. Able to be on call twenty-four (24) hours at a time.
  - g. Able to prepare three (3) meals a day for up to eleven (12) people.
3. Other
  - a. Good physical and psychological health as assessed by employment exams and job performance.
  - b. Valid Georgia driver's license within thirty (30) days of employment.
  - c. Able to adjust to sudden changes in schedule.
  - d. Able to maintain home budget.
  - e. Plan and supervise quarterly community service project for the home.

- f. Able to balance tension between Joy House responsibilities and those of own family.