

**Job Class Profile:            Group Home Counsellor****Pay Level:                            CG-29                            Point Band:                            622-675**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	5	5	4	6	3	3	3	1	4	
Points	233	83	25	29	90	65	62	21	43	651

**JOB SUMMARY**

The Group Home Counsellor is responsible for providing counseling, support, care, and supervision to residents in youth home facilities.

**Key and Periodic Activities:**

- Follows all in house programs and individual program plans of all residents consistently and accurately.
- Supervises and monitors residents and maintains an awareness of their whereabouts at all times.
- Supervises residents in structured and unstructured activities, assists them to use free time constructively, and actively participates in daily routines.
- Demonstrates appropriate reinforcement and consequences. Intervenes appropriately before or when a potentially disruptive situation or behaviour occurs. Sets limits and controls for unacceptable behaviour.
- Accompanies young people on home visits and supervises visits when the safety of the young person is a concern.
- Properly manages the dynamics of the group and uses appropriate skills while dealing with the group.
- Utilizes a variety of intervention techniques including implementing the resident's intervention plan.
- Acts as a keyworker. Residents are assigned a keyworker upon intake. Duties include building a positive, trusting relationship with the youth; making recommendations to individualized programs based on specific strengths and needs; attending individual case conference meetings and completing a monthly progress report; making initial contact with family/guardian; ensuring the youth's file is up to date; making contact with school, counsellors, medical professionals, etc; completing observation reports; drafting a schedule for aftercare if applicable; and developing and implementing the youth's individual intervention plans.
- Completes documentation and records significant events, activities, routines, appointments, contacts, etc. Completes a medication log, family visit reports, incident reports, and pertinent information in communication log.
- Implements in-house programming and initiates programs designed specifically towards individual's needs such as group sessions or life skills.
- Encourages and rewards positive social behaviour and consistently enforces disciplinary procedures for violation of house rules or behaviour misconduct.

**Key and Periodic Activities:**

- Performs regular room checks during the night or during quiet hour.
- Develops and participates in therapeutic recreational programs targeted towards developing life skills, cognitive skills which enable residents to respond appropriately in stressful situations.
- Assists residents to obtain academic or vocational or employment placements.
- Performs various administrative and financial duties including calling for relief staff, petty cash expenditures, calculating and distributing allowance, recreational funds, clothing allowances, and grocery funds.
- Performs household maintenance including meal preparation, developing weekly menus, painting, minor repairs, purchasing food and household supplies, and laundry.
- Determines when medical intervention is required for residents, fills prescriptions and implements prescribed medical treatment plans, records dosages, and ensures appropriate dosage is received. Uses first aid, CPR, and/or suicide intervention skills if necessary.
- Attends program meetings, parent teacher meetings, case conferences, counselling appointments, legal aid appointments, and court appearances.
- Maintains regular contact with teachers, educational therapists to assist in implementing programs and strategies.
- Documents and responds to complaints from the community.
- Refers youth to various community agencies (i.e. choices for you to investigate housing and financial supports).
- Liaises with families and intervenes when families are in crisis to find solutions.
- Performs intake procedures into the Emergency Placement Unit.
- Facilitates and participates in in-house training sessions.
- Mentors new employees.

**SKILL****Knowledge****General and Specific Knowledge:**

- First aid, suicide intervention, therapeutic crisis intervention, Youth Criminal Justice Act, Child and Youth Care Protection Act, internal policies and procedures, and other training as set out by the organization/health authority to maintain standards of care.

**Formal Education and/or Certification(s):**

- Minimum: Undergraduate degree in social sciences or a related field.

**Years of Experience:**

- Minimum: Less than 1 year experience.

**Competencies:**

- Ability to adapt to a broad range of social and interpersonal situations and to develop creative and flexible responses.
- Awareness of community resources and how to use them.
- Leadership, problems solving, assessment, analytical, and communication skills.
- Ability to operate a vehicle.

**Interpersonal Skills**

- Interpersonal skills are used to listen to information and ask questions, provide routine and complex information to others, provide care/comfort to others, instruct/train, coach/mentor, deal with angry or upset people, gain the cooperation of others to complete work, provide expert advice and counselling, and resolve disputes between people.
- The most significant contacts are with residents, fellow group home employees, immediate supervisor and social workers.
- Examples of daily interpersonal skills: (1) Listening to young people talk about their issues, concerns, and needs, as well as family members, parents, caregivers, social workers. Listening and asking questions is critical to gaining insightful information on the young person and to help them become a productive member of society. (2) continually providing nurturing and care to residents, forming supportive relationships with them, providing guidance and mentoring. (3) addressing and mediating issues/disputes/conflicts within the home. (4) Interacting and communicating with young people, families, educational providers, social workers, and other professionals. (5) preparing written and oral reports.

## EFFORT

### Physical Effort

- Work demands occasionally result in fatigue requiring periods of rest.
- Regularly lifts/moves objects up to 10 lbs and occasionally moves/lifts objects up to 50 lbs.
- Occasional fine finger precision work, gross motor skills.
- Regular sitting, standing, and walking.
- Examples of physical effort: monitoring young people doing chores in different areas/levels of the home, completing reports on the computer, cooking, cleaning, walking up and down stairs, participating in recreation activities with the youth, carrying groceries/household items/office supplies, applying physical restraints, doing laundry, and home maintenance.

### Concentration

- **Visual** concentration is required while focusing on the physical surroundings and any potential risk to staff or residents, general supervision of residents, watching residents' behaviour for changes, awareness of sharp objects/knives in the house, drugs, or alcohol.
- **Auditory** concentration while listening to what residents say to the staff person as well as to each other, loud environment with music and young people yelling, listening for unusual sounds in places where residents are not in full sight supervision (i.e. drug use).
- **Other sensory concentration** including using sense of smell to detect drugs, tobacco use, alcohol, or possible fire.
- **Alertness to the health and safety of others** is evident as many residents are involved in high risk behaviours that require a high level of attentiveness on the part of staff such as drug use, suicide. Residents may be in conflict with a partner or family member. Also a concern that an outsider could show up at the home to harm a young person or staff member.
- **Higher than normal levels of attentiveness** is required when supervising residents and during crisis intervention for youth admitted to the facility.
- **Time pressures and deadlines** can occur when getting young people to appointments, job interviews, or other educational programs. Completing reports, log entries, petty cash, and

incident reports.

- **Interruptions and lack of control over the work pace** can occur as a result of phone calls, short notice appointment, responding to the use of drugs, conflicts between residents requiring immediate attention/mediation, agitated or aggressive residents.
- **Eye hand coordination** is required during computer work, cooking, and driving facility vehicle.

### Complexity

- Tasks are generally different but related and involve a wide variety of responsibilities and situations. Challenges and problems range from those that can be resolved using standard work processes, to those that require analysis of the issue and the development of solutions in a team environment.
- Typical challenges include: (1) dealing with young people and requiring them to meet the expectations of the home when they lack the cognitive ability to fully understand what is expected of them. Each person has different levels of understanding and staff have to try to reintegrate the young person back into society while taking into consideration their ability to learn. (2) Working with young people who have challenging behaviours. Staff need to understand, and help the young person to understand, why they act the way they do and how they can look at things differently to lead to changes in their behaviour and actions. (3) Maintaining a continuously stable and safe environment for residents when there are various issues (medical and behavioural) in the house which can lead to conflicts between residents. When the resident population is high, the challenge to maintain a safe environment increases.
- When addressing typical challenges/problems can reference the daily checklist, internal policies and procedures, individual intervention plans, Youth Criminal Justice Act, Child and Youth Care Protection Act, Senior Group Home Counsellor, Coordinator, facility social worker, or the Regional Director.

## RESPONSIBILITY

### Accountability and Decision-Making

- Work tasks are generally prescribed and controlled.
- Supervisory approval is not required for the purchase of small household items required for the day to day operation of the facility, groceries, gas for the van, and rewards (treats) for residents; to enforce a discipline for inappropriate behavior by a resident; or for daily situations which require immediate response such as critical situations when there is no time for approval or guidance (i.e. an outing with a young person who is assaulted by another person, a resident who is threatening to hurt him/herself or others.) Also make recommendations for additional staff if the dynamic of the home requires extra staff to ensure safety/security of residents.
- Independent decision making is given a high priority in emergency or crisis situations.
- Supervisory approval is required for large purchases, road trips or outings for residents, policy changes, and commitments on behalf of the organization. Decisions to refuse a young person admittance to the program, or to move a young person to another unit, is the final decision of the program coordinator.
- Discretion and judgement must be exercised daily in the performance of duties. For example, if a staff person suspects that a young person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, that

person would not be permitted to go out into the community. If Counsellor suspects the home environment is not safe for the young person, a visit or a temporary release to go home may not be an option. Daily case planning and implementation is under the discretion of the Counsellor such that changes are made when required, following the standards set out in the policy and procedures manual at all times.

- A high level of judgement and discretion is exercised in situations where police intervention is necessary, when medical attention is required, or utilizing a physical intervention such as the use of restraints.

### **Impact**

- Has a positive or negative impact on immediate work area, the department, and on clients and families. Additionally there are impacts on finances, facilities, health and safety, and human resources. The completion of tasks directly impacts both employees and residents at the facility, as well as programs offered. It is felt in the day to day operation of the facility, the care and support of residents, and other professions such as social work. Because residents live in the home, decisions made by Counsellors have a direct impact on everyone in the home. Information concerning incidents during a shift must be passed on to the next shift to ensure ongoing safety of staff and residents. Incidents in the community can affect the community and the facilities image and its supporters.
- During office hours the Senior Group Home Counsellor or the Coordinator monitors staff tasks and activities. At night and during weekends, work independently following established guidelines.
- Significant mistakes could result in a security issue for residents and staff, and possibly the community. If a staff person lets a young person go out into the community without recalling that the location has been an area of trouble for that youth (i.e. the mall has banned the youth) could result in significant impact for the youth (i.e. charged with trespassing).
- Consequences and/or errors are normally identified and resolved within hours of identification.
- Errors with medications, staff person leaving a knife out in the open, omissions in reporting incidents, or staff person missing a specialist appointment or court date with the youth could have significant impacts.

### **Development and Leadership of Others**

- There is no supervision of staff.
- Group Home Counsellors are required to be constant role models to residents and provide on the job guidance, advice, feedback, and mentoring to new and junior employees.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Environmental Working Conditions**

- There is a requirement to use universal precautions and safety protocols at all times including wearing gloves in certain situations such as cleaning contaminated surfaces, or working with residents who have infectious diseases, or any exposure to bodily fluids. Medications and files must be locked at all times. Training is provided on how to de-escalate a crisis to minimize risk of harm in potentially violent situations.

- There is a limited likelihood of minor cuts, bruises, abrasions or minor illnesses, fractures or other injuries, and occupational illness such as mental or emotional stress, resulting in disability.
- Occasional exposure to unusual/distracting noise, dirt/dust/garbage, hazardous chemicals, toxic or poisonous substances, infectious diseases, odours, wet or slippery surfaces, lack of privacy, fire, physical dangers or threats, sharp objects, adverse weather, and travel/client transportation.
- Examples of environmental work conditions: use of chemicals to clean and sanitize, exposure to bodily fluids when doing laundry or cleaning the facility, physical threats from residents, residents with knives or other sharp objects, residents with infectious diseases, taking residents to appointments in adverse weather conditions, intervening in a crisis situation, and the application of restraints.