



Position Title: Children’s Health Policy Senior Director

About Children First

Children First is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives and chances of children through thoughtful and informed advocacy. Children First is a fast-paced child advocacy organization that uses research, people power, and coalition building to create the momentum for reform of public policies that enable more children to grow up healthy, well-educated, and ready to take the reins of their communities.

Position Summary

Children First is looking for a Senior Health Policy Director to play a critical leadership role in setting and advancing local and state policy priorities to improve children’s physical and mental health. The Senior Policy Director is primarily responsible for setting and achieving strategic priorities and goals for our physical and mental health advocacy campaigns and expanding our coalitions and partnerships. A key component of the position will be spearheading the Strong Minds Bright Futures coalition, a multi-sector partnership transforming how we support children’s mental health in schools, communities and care systems. Additionally, you will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our advocacy efforts, evaluate outcomes, manage teams, and solve problems.

The ideal candidate will have both the skills necessary to lead an advocacy campaign including coalition management, strategic planning, and persuasive communications, along with a strong working knowledge of health policy topics including CHIP, Medicaid, vaccines, environmental health hazards and mental health.

Key Duties:

Lead the development and implementation of advocacy strategies to advance state and local policy priorities that improve children’s health, children’s mental health, and access to insurance.

Responsibilities include:

- Oversee the development and implement advocacy, communications, mobilization, and government relations strategies to advance Children First’s children’s health policy priorities and secure adoption of priority policy reforms.
- Spearhead a major initiative focused on improving children’s mental health, including managing campaign strategy, coalition engagement, policymaker relationships, communications, public engagement, and campaign implementation.

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- Oversee creation, expansion, and manage broad-based coalitions of community leaders, parents, caregivers, youth, advocates, providers, and other stakeholders to build support for children’s health and mental health policy priorities.
- Serve as a public-facing leader for Children First’s children’s health and mental health advocacy efforts, including regularly communicating with policymakers, coalition members, community leaders, parents, youth, and other key stakeholders.
- Oversee the development of compelling advocacy materials, including messaging documents, official correspondence, testimony, public remarks, policy briefs, reports, and other materials that advance Children First’s children’s health policy goals.
- Manage the development, publication, dissemination, and promotion of reports and other policy materials, including strategies to draw public, media, policymaker, and stakeholder attention to key findings and recommendations.
- Monitor trends in children’s health, children’s mental health, Medicaid, and related state and local policy areas; collect and analyze data to identify unmet needs, persistent challenges, emerging issues, and priority policy opportunities.
- Monitor news, social media, and other public communications channels to identify opportunities to elevate Children First’s children’s health policy priorities.
- Develop and execute multimedia strategies to amplify Children First’s children’s health and mental health advocacy efforts.
- Supervise the physical and mental health policy teams, including the Mental Health Policy Director, Children’s Health Policy Associate, Lead Free Promise Project Consultant, Health Policy Consultant, campaign staff, and other government relationships and technical consultants. Supervise staff responsible for mobilizing people with lived experience to advocate for Children First’s health policy priorities.
- Draft grant applications, contribute to funder relationship management, ensure grant objectives are met according to schedule, and monitor project expenditures to ensure they do not exceed available funds.

Competencies:

- Policy Knowledge: Knowledge of children’s health policy issues and experience developing and executing strategy & tactics to advance policy improvement and adoption.
- Advocacy Knowledge: Professional experience understanding and advancing legislative goals and leading coalitions, including the ability to develop strategies and tactics that persuade legislators and elected officials, and the ability to organize, mobilize, and facilitate widespread community participation.
- Stakeholder Relationship Management Skills: Ability to cultivate, manage, and grow relationships with diverse policymaker, parent/caregiver, and other networks and coalitions.
- Advanced Communication Skills: Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate policy issues and priorities, relevant data, etc., clearly and persuasively.
- Strategic and Critical Thinking: Ability to see the big picture and develop strategy and aligned tactics to achieve policy outcomes. Ability to critically assess a situation, information, etc., and (re)calibrate strategy accordingly.

- Data and Trend Analysis Skills: Strategic and detail-oriented ability to collect, interpret, and simplify large datasets in support of policy priorities and advocacy goals.
- Media Savvy: Professional experience using social, news, and other media to amplify efforts towards a cause and policy improvement.
- Management/Supervision Experience: Minimum 3 years of experience managing and supervising a team with a spirit of collaboration and empowerment to help achieve team goals.
- Adaptability/Flexibility: Ability to work independently and with others in a hybrid, dynamic environment.
- Planning Skills: Strong project management and strategy development skills aligned with policy priorities and legislative calendar, etc.
- Organized: Ability to prioritize and manage multiple priorities.
- Proficiency with Technology: Facility with Excel and Word, web-based research, social media platforms.

Qualifications, Education, and Experience:

- Advance degree in public health, mental health or public administration preferred
- At least 12 years of combined policy and advocacy experience
- At least 7 years management experience with supervisory responsibilities
- Ability to travel to communities across the region - must have driver's license and access to a reliable vehicle

Location:

This is a full-time hybrid position. Our health advocacy efforts are statewide, but concentrated in the Southeast, and the position requires 10-15 days of annual travel to Harrisburg, periodic travel throughout Pennsylvania, and frequent travel in the five-county area. Travel costs are reimbursable.

Reports To: Executive Director

Salary: Between \$150,000-\$165,000 depending on experience, and a generous benefits package, including health care insurance coverage for the employee and their children and paid family leave.

Apply: Send resume and cover letter to info@childrenfirstpa.org