



Director of Evaluation and Innovation

The Organization:

Extensive research has documented that significant early adversity and "toxic stress" in the lives of young children leads to a greater likelihood of developmental delays, as well as physical and mental health problems. Early childhood education is even more critical for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially homeless children. Horizons for Homeless Children (HHC) was founded in 1988 to serve young homeless children and their families.

With a current budget of almost \$10 million and staff numbering over 100, HHC assists more than 2,200 homeless children in Massachusetts each week through two direct service programs:

Community Children's Centers (CCCs), Boston's only comprehensive, full-time early education and care centers specifically for young homeless children. HHC operates three CCCs within Boston; and
Playspace Programs, which offer educational and recreational spaces in 140 family shelters across Massachusetts.

In addition to these programs, HHC also supports young homeless children and their families through policy and advocacy efforts, as well as training and technical assistance offerings for related service providers. In the organization's first twenty years, HHC has staked out a unique position at the intersection of early education and homelessness and has established itself as the principal voice of on-the-ground experience with this population. Now, as a highly effective, well-regarded organization - and one confronted with pressing needs in Massachusetts (where on any given night, 7,300 children under age six are homeless) and nationwide (more than 650,000 children under age six are without a home at any one point) - HHC is ready to take its work to the next level.

HHC's recently crafted strategic plan identifies three key ways in which the organization can expand its work and deepen its influence on the lives of young children:

Initiative 1: HHC seeks to deepen the impact of its programs on the lives of homeless children by maintaining our relationships with the children and families we serve after they leave the CCC's and by assisting them in obtaining high quality services to ensure their continued growth.

Initiative 2: HHC seeks to further its existing advocacy efforts to improve conditions for young homeless children in MA by leveraging the power of alumni and active volunteers who share a commitment to its mission.

Initiative 3: HHC seeks to build on its initial policy achievements by embarking on a broader nationwide advocacy campaign to educate state and national decision-makers about ways to better support young homeless children.

The Position:

HHC is currently seeking an experienced and entrepreneurial professional to serve as its first Director of Evaluation and Innovation. A new position created to support the organization's new strategic plan, the Director of Evaluation and Innovation will lead the design and implementation of a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for measuring the impact of its site-based program (Boston's three CCC's, which serve 175 children and their parents each weekday) and its Family Services Program to ensure that the organization deepens and broadens its influence on the lives of homeless children.

The Director of Evaluation and Innovation, in collaboration with other HHC departments, will identify key areas for evaluation, build capacity for ongoing self-assessment, and lead efforts to conceptualize and implement a longitudinal strategic evaluation plan designed to improve internal program practices and to inform on a national level the field of early childhood education and policy. Working collaboratively with staff, this role provides an exciting opportunity for someone with a deep background in research and evaluation and a demonstrated commitment to family support services and programming to contribute to the continued growth and success of HHC.

This position will report to and work closely with the Chief Education and Training Officer.

Responsibilities:

Build capacity for, implement and manage internal systems for conducting ongoing outcomes measurement and assessment

- Participate in conversations with HHC staff, Board members and other key stakeholders to determine appropriate metrics and benchmarks for organizational success
- Coordinate with IT staff on the development and implementation of a centralized assessment database
- Consolidate all current tools and practices for measuring impact to ensure cohesive, consistent, high quality data collection and analysis

Manage the design and implementation of strategic longitudinal evaluation plan

- Work closely with Chief Education and Training Officer to build on existing evaluation tools to create a strategic evaluation plan that measures progress and success against

key metrics for both internal program improvement purposes as well as for external reporting purposes

- Independently or with external vendors, design and implement evaluation tools to support the strategic evaluation plan including both quantitative and qualitative methods as appropriate
- Oversee the use of evaluation as a tool in accomplishing program/project objectives and ensure that data is being collected accurately, analyzed appropriately and adapted as needed
- Facilitate communication of policies, procedures, schedules and other logistics associated with the external evaluation.
- Manage a portfolio of strategic evaluations, working closely with the program staff to assure that the evaluations provide quality, useful and timely information

Disseminate and translate research findings to a variety of constituencies

- Work with external stakeholders, including funders and early education partners, to assure best practices and transparency
- Work with Chief Education and Training Officer and the senior leadership team to effectively communicate results both internally and externally
- Create systems for using data to provide ongoing feedback and support to providers for the improvement of program practices.
- Produce publications, presentations, research resources and briefing/white papers designed to inform the early education field and policy makers

Manage all administrative aspects of research and evaluation, including budget, staffing, data collection logistics and other related duties as necessary

Qualifications:

Masters Degree in Public Policy, Social Science, Education or related field

Experience in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment with a strong focus on metrics and data-driven decision making, preferably in a not for profit organization

At least 2 years of successful experience with both quantitative and qualitative research methods, tool design and validation

Demonstrated ability to conceptualize and implement new program and research briefs

Demonstrated experience working with large quantitative and qualitative datasets, and working knowledge of quantitative and qualitative analysis methods and software (i.e., SPSS, SAS, Atlas-ti. etc.)

Exceptional project management, prioritization, and planning skills, with demonstrated success producing high-quality deliverables on time and within budget

Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively in a team

Excellent strategic thinking skills, with the ability to operationalize concepts and transform ideas into action as well as apply research findings to ongoing program development

Prior experience working with homeless or underprivileged families and/or education and for low income children is preferred

Knowledge of research and current trends in homelessness, the field of early education and care, the achievement gap and child development strongly preferred

Passion for, and demonstrated commitment to, improving the lives of disadvantaged families; sensitivity to the needs of diverse racial and ethnic populations

Horizons for Homeless Children is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages candidates of all backgrounds to apply for this position.