



Position Available: Safe Haven Counselor

POSITION SUMMARY

February 2019

Organizational Background: My Friend's Place is a privately funded nonprofit organization with a mission "to assist and inspire homeless youth to build self-sufficient lives." Our crisis resource drop-in center provides emergency, health, mental health, creative arts, case management, and education & employment services to nearly 1,500 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness youth annually. Our comprehensive, multi-disciplinary program model is innovative and replicated in drop-in centers locally and nationally. We are a data lead agency committed to continuous learning and development. We are currently seeking an enthusiastic, committed, and integrous social worker to join our Clinical Case Management Team.

Job Summary: As a part of the Safe Haven Team and under the direct supervision of the Safe Haven Program Manager, the counselor is essentially responsible for ensuring a safe, clean, welcoming, and therapeutic Safe Haven drop-in environment and providing for the basic physical (food, showers, and clothing) and tending to the emotional needs of young adults. All services are to be provided in a highly compassionate, efficient, and consistent manner. The Safe Haven is the gateway program and focuses on meeting the daily safety and survival skills of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. The Safe Haven promotes community and prosocial behavior. The ethos of the Safe Haven is to be respectful to self and others. Using a trauma informed lens and working with a multidisciplinary team, primary duties include:

Direct Youth Care Responsibilities:

- Create and actively promote a comfortable, welcoming and healing environment where every young person is treated with dignity and respect and community is promoted
- Employ a customer service orientation in order to anticipate and respond to needs and requests primarily related to food, showers, clothing, transportation, and other safety and survival necessities
- Engage and provide support promoting positive attachment and prosocial behavior
- Establish caring and trusting rapport with youth experiencing homelessness
- Uphold program and community guidelines and address problem behaviors with trauma informed approaches
- Identify youth who seem to be experiencing distress in the milieu and intervene proactively so that all youth can remain safely in Safe Haven community
- Provide supportive counseling on issues ranging from identity development to substance use to life skills

- Provide supervision and on-the-job coaching to youth interns enrolled in our work preparedness program, The SHIFT, using the framework of positive youth development
- Facilitate “Reflect & Strategize” meetings with youth to improve insight, interpersonal, and problem solving skills so that youth can safely and respectfully re-join the community
- Complete timely and accurate documentation of youth activity and interactions in performance management tool

Additional Responsibilities:

- Stock supplies and maintain inventory for efficient youth services
- Clean and organize the Safe Haven and clothing closet
- Laundry shower towels
- Participate in team, all-staff and other necessary meetings as well as community and fundraising events
- Interface with volunteers, neighbors, contributors, and community business owners to maintain good relations
- Upholding multi-disciplinary team approach, assist with aspects of case management, intake orientation, crisis intervention and creative arts programming as needed
- Drive agency vehicle to transport youth and/or pick up and drop off donations and other agency business

Experience, Education & Qualifications

The list below is representative of the knowledge, skill, philosophical orientation, and composure desired in a candidate.

- Commitment to agency mission and core values
- Sincere interest in working with high risk, homeless youth
- Endorse trauma informed care principles
- Excels in a chaotic, demanding environment
- Comfortable in the face of crisis and conflict
- Demonstrates a strong sense of calm and solution focused thinking
- Ability to work and share critically and self-critically
- Demonstrable commitment to self-awareness and one’s own healing and wellbeing as key to working responsibly and effectively with others and contributing to a healthy and equitable work environment
- Must have the ability and interest to work professionally with youth with severe trauma histories and appreciate that the behavioral expression of pain can include challenging, even hostile, behaviors
- Solid understanding of adolescent/young adult development and the impact of trauma on high-risk behavior including substance use
- Ability to thrive in a multidisciplinary team approach appreciating that service decisions and interventions are made in collaboration with the team
- Strong organizational skills with an attention to details, timelines, and follow through
- Ability to balance autonomy, responsibility, and collaboration
- Open-mindedness and ability to work with diverse groups

- Articulate a positive vision for the mission of My Friend's Place
- Able to concentrate and be productive in a shared office setting
- California driver's license, automobile insurance and reliable transportation

Requirements, Terms & Benefits

- Full-time non-exempt status position, occasional weekend and evening hours will be necessary. Benefits include medical and dental insurance, vacation and sick leave, and 403b retirement plan
- The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit, stand, walk, bend, lift, navigate stairs multiple times in a day and carry objects weighing 25+lbs, and drive
- Department Of Justice clearance and acceptable DMV record per agency's insurance guidelines are mandatory. Must have valid California driver's license and proof of insurance.
- Person in this role is standing and walking most of the day, including up and down stairs, and lifting up to 20 lbs regularly (clothing, food, etc).
- **Education and Experience:** B.A. or A.A. degree in a related field (Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, etc) preferred. Two years experience working with at risk youth also preferred.
- **Computer/Office Equipment Skills:** Proficient in PC computer environment (MS Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint).
- **Language Skills:** Fluency in spoken and written English; fluency in English/Spanish strongly preferred.
- **Other skills/requirements:** Ability to successfully pass 90 day probationary period.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Commitment to Core Values

The following core values are fundamental to our work together and with the youth: compassion, flexibility, honesty, human worth, integrity, openness, respect, sense of humor, trust, valuing diversity, and the willingness and courage to engage, address, discuss and work across differences

Dependability / Reliability

- Centers youth care
- Reports to work on time and informs appropriate staff when involved in other duties away from the agency
- Provides advance notice in a timely manner for all scheduled leave
- Maintains proper attendance requirements in compliance with agency policies, understanding the critical nature of the crisis center work

Attitude and Flexibility

- Exercises good judgment under various work situations
- Adapts to changes in agency routines and issues
- Maintains flexibility in completing tasks as required by the position
- Exhibits positive daily work attitudes on a consistent basis

Interpersonal Relations

- Creates a positive environment for all people in the agency by addressing issues of harassment, discrimination, or lack of respect immediately
- Continues to pursue the development of cultural sensitivity and proficiency agency-wide
- Documents challenging personnel and stakeholder situations in writing
- Exhibits cooperation and courtesy while creating a positive public image for My Friend's Place and a productive work environment

Quality / Quantity of Work

- Understands and satisfactorily performs activities as assigned by the Safe Haven Manager, Director of Programs and Executive Director
- Ensures that all work is completed to highest quality and professional standards

Professional Leadership

- Maintains a level of professional knowledge so as to function as a resource for all staff, volunteers, and community members for the agency's overall operation

To apply, please email your resume and salary requirements to Frank Babich, Safe Haven Program Manager at fbabich@myfriendsplace.org.