

Job Profile, Responsibilities and Person Specification			
Post:	Adviser and Advocate	Responsible to:	Advice and Advocacy operational manager/Advice and Advocacy service manager
Hours:	28 hours (4 days) per week	Contract:	Permanent
		Location:	Dalston, London
Grading:	NJC scale PO2 £30,785 - £33,437 (plus London weighting allowance of £3,650) pro rata, and 5% pension contribution	Purpose of Post:	To provide advice and advocacy services to families who are involved with children's social care services, and assist with the general running and development of the organisation's advice and advocacy work.
Leave:	21 days per year (increasing to 24 days) + pro rata bank holiday entitlement		
The Organisation:			
<p>Family Rights Group (FRG) advises and supports over 5000 families a year who require, or are involved with, children's social care services because of child welfare needs or concerns. The charity promotes effective family support, the increased involvement of families in decision making, advocacy for families when child protection processes are initiated and adequate support for relatives and friends who look after children when they cannot live with their parents. These goals drive the development of projects and services, as well as our campaign activity. All of Family Rights Group's campaigning, policy and research work is informed by the experiences of advice service users.</p> <p>Family Rights Group is based in Dalston, a thriving multi-cultural community in Hackney, East London. We have a lively and friendly office in a building shared with other voluntary organisations and community groups.</p> <p>Family Rights Group's advice service comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A free, confidential phone line open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 3.00pm; • Free, up to date information via the FRG website including Frequently Asked Questions, interactive advice features ('decision trees') and electronic advice sheets; • A moderated electronic discussion board for parents and a separate discussion board for family and friends carers (i.e. relatives, such as grandparents, older siblings or friends who are raising a child who is unable to live with their parents). 			
Job Description:			
<p>The principal purpose of the job is to provide advice and advocacy services to families who are involved with children's social care services.</p> <p>You will work with families who are seeking help from social care services; families who are subject to child protection procedures; and families whose children are in local authority care or placed for adoption. For many families, becoming involved with social care services is a difficult and distressing experience.</p>			

As an adviser you will give telephone and written advice to families who are involved with children's social care services on all aspects of child care law and local authority practice.

You will assist with the development and running of the service, including promoting the service to the most disadvantaged families.

As an adviser and advocate for the family you will need to:

- Listen attentively and deal sensitively with callers in a highly charged emotional state;
- Examine the issues raised, and advise on the family members' rights and the options available to them; and
- Attend Child Protection Conferences and other meetings as appropriate (if we are funded to do so as part of any specified direct advocacy project that Family Rights Group may be involved in delivering).

Responsibilities:

- To provide advice to families involved with children's social care services.
- To write letters and advocate for parents/family members by telephone/email or another channel as appropriate.
- To act as an advocate for parents involved with children's social care child protection services according to specified referral criteria as part of any direct advocacy project work that Family Rights Group may be involved in delivering.
- To contribute to Family Rights Group's Advice and Advocacy service including drafting advice materials, supporting the engagement of families in policy and service developments and participating in relevant projects.
- To assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the Advice and Advocacy service.
- To provide telephone and digital advice and follow up support to families.
- To contribute to the overall work of the organisation and to attend staff and policy meetings, training and development meetings and other relevant events as required.
- To contribute to the organisation's training and conference programme.
- To ensure that all work undertaken is delivered in accordance with FRG's equalities policy.
- To undertake other tasks as requested by the operational managers that are broadly compatible with the remit of the post.

Person Specification:

1. Professional qualifications and experience

You will be qualified as a lawyer or social worker with experience of children and families work. Alternatively, you will have extensive experience that has led to an equivalent level of expertise in advising families.

You will have experience of advice and advocacy work.

2. Anti-Discriminatory Practice

You will be able to demonstrate and apply a knowledge and understanding of the way in which discrimination impacts on families, including minority ethnic families, asylum seeking families and disabled parents.

3. Knowledge and Learning

You will be able to demonstrate and apply a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Children Act 1989, other relevant legislation and current policy and practice in the areas of child welfare and child protection.

You will have demonstrated the ability to review your work and to seek opportunities to learn new skills.

4. Communication Skills

You will be experienced in working with people who are under a great deal of emotional stress.

You will be able to manage conflict and offer positive ways forward in difficult situations.

You will have experience of working with people from a variety of communities and backgrounds.

You will be able to develop strong working relationships with people from other organisations.

You will have experience of preparing clear written and verbal reports.

You will have experience of delivering training (desirable).

5. Self-Management

You will be skilled in handling a busy workload, meeting deadlines and managing conflicting priorities.

6. IT

You will be experienced in using Microsoft Office applications including Word (essential), Excel and Access (desirable) and will be willing to build on these skills in line with the requirements of the job.

7. Other Requirements

You will have an understanding of and commitment to the aims of the organisation.

You will be able to stay away from home overnight occasionally and attend some early morning/late evening meetings.

Please note that because this post involves unsupervised work with vulnerable adults and children, you will be required to undergo an enhanced disclosure and barring check.