Advocates for Children and Youth

Job Description

Title: Child Welfare Policy Director

WHO WE ARE
Advocates for Children and Youth (ACY) is a powerful nonpartisan voice for Maryland’s children and youth. ACY is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency founded in 1987 by a group of prominent child advocates in Maryland who saw the need for an independent organization to advocate for the needs of the state’s children and families in the community, the media and the public policy arena.

OUR MISSION
ACY’s mission is to identify problems, promote policies and programs that improve results for Maryland children in measurable and meaningful ways, and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and policies for the state’s children and youth.

WHAT WE DO
We believe that all children in the State have the right to the basics – education, health, safety and economic security. We advocate for children and youth in Maryland by:

- Researching issues affecting children in Maryland in our core areas of health, juvenile justice, education and child welfare, applying the lens of economic sufficiency and racial disparities to each issue;
- Responding to trends and new information and decisions by policy makers;
- Publishing Issue Briefs and other publications that bring to light policies and policy decisions that affect children;
- Communicating with agency department heads, legislators, and elected officials to address policies and decisions affecting children in Maryland;
- Speaking out to mainstream and other media to identify issues and solutions, build consensus, and promote decision making that beneficially affects children;
- Maintaining our website (www.acy.org) as a vehicle and medium to raise awareness of issues affecting children and identify and advance solutions;
- Building effective solution-centered coalitions to advance policies in the best interests of children and youth.

Responsibilities:

1. Develop strategies to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in Maryland’s child welfare system.
2. Collaborate with child welfare stakeholders across Maryland including state agencies, direct service providers, and other advocates to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families involved with Maryland’s child welfare system.
3. Persuade key decision makers to effectively implement policies that will improve outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in Maryland’s child welfare system.

4. Maintain, support, and build collaborative relationships with city, state, and federal advocacy and policy organizations, which monitor federal and state laws, policies, and budgets, and stay informed about research and best practices.

5. Represent ACY on child welfare related task forces, committees, and public relations events.

6. Produce written materials as needed—issue briefs, letters to the editor, op-eds, testimony and one-pagers for legislative hearings, media advisories, etc. to support our advocacy.

7. Help prepare foundation grant proposals and reports relating to ACY’s child welfare portfolio.

8. The position is full time; some evenings may be necessary for meetings and during the Legislative Session.

**Requirements:**

**Education:** Master’s Degree or J.D. required.

**Experience:**

1. Five or more years of experience in the field of child welfare, ideally including some advocacy and public policy development
2. Experience in advocating for policy change in a complex environment
3. Knowledge of government relations in Maryland

**Skills:**

1. Strong public speaking and writing skills
2. Ability to build and maintain effective coalitions
3. Ability to interpret and synthesize research on effective practices
4. Ability to interpret and understand child welfare data
5. A self-motivated and highly disciplined work ethic

Send cover letter, resume, and writing sample to [jobsearch@acy.org](mailto:jobsearch@acy.org).

No phone calls please.

Advocates for Children and Youth is committed to diversity and inclusion in every aspect of its work. We encourage people of all backgrounds and abilities to apply for this position. ACY is an equal opportunity employer and considers all applications without regard to race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status.