



Position: Youth Advocate

Purpose: To promote safety, stability, and well-being for Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY). Youth Advocates engage youth using the Positive Youth Development model to build a path to long-term success through positive relationships and skills for self-sufficiency.

Qualifications: Some combination of relevant college courses and work experience in human services and/or with vulnerable youth populations. Youth Advocates must understand the issues of youth homelessness, sexual identity/preference (LGBTQ), substance abuse, mental health and trauma, abuse, and adolescent development. They must desire to participate in the coordination of services and program development in an interdisciplinary team setting; have the ability to integrate and reconnect youth with natural supports and community resources; and know how to maintain a safe environment – physically and emotionally – for all youth.

To join Jackson Street’s staff, applicants must pass a criminal background history check; have a driver’s license and a driving record sufficient to qualify as approved driver; be available to work flexible shifts at Jackson Street’s shelters in Albany and Corvallis, including nights and weekends; be willing/able to work across a three county region (Linn-Benton-Lincoln) as needed; and have or obtain First Aid/CPR and Oregon Food Handlers certifications.

Applicants must make a good-faith commitment to stay in the position for at least a one year, and must be willing to embrace Jackson Street’s mission and values. ***Bi-lingual/Bi-cultural applicants are preferred.***

Responsibilities:

GENERAL

- Ensure that youth, volunteers, interns, and visitors adhere to Jackson Street’s rules and procedures.
- Practice an understanding and respect for youth culture, families, and family systems. Use respectful language and listen in a non-judgmental ways.
- Implement the core competencies of Positive Youth Development (belonging, competence, usefulness, and inclusion) in interactions with youth.
- Use harm-reduction and youth-empowerment models to provide on-going support, skill building, and crisis management.
- Motivate and engage youth in creative and encouraging ways, individually and in groups.
- Remain available and supportive to cover shelter shifts, including substituting for other staff on occasion.

DIRECT CARE

- Be part of a team providing effective 24/7 supervision for youth in care.
- Implement the normal structures and routines at Jackson Street’s Emergency and Transitional houses.

Jackson Street helps youth 24/7/365

- Together with youth and other staff, implement and participate in house meals and activities.
- Assist with advocacy, case coordination, and the process of setting and achieving goals for each youth in Jackson Street's care.
- Teach (including teaching by positive example) and provide opportunities for youth to build skills and succeed in school.
- Provide crisis intervention and youth and family mediation, as needed.
- At night, conduct regular bed checks.

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Abide by state licensing and federal funding requirements.
- Once initial training is completed, demonstrate a thorough understanding of agency policies and procedures.
- Conduct intake and exit procedures in an accurate and professional manner.
- Maintain youth files and shelter logs in a complete and timely manner.
- Conduct call logs, Answer crisis-line calls appropriately, conduct crisis intervention as needed, and document calls.
- Answer other phone calls, be able to answer general questions and direct calls to other staff; take and respond to messages appropriately.
- Maintain a safe, welcoming shelter appearance and complete daily chores.
- Attend required meetings and trainings.

Professional Development Opportunities: Youth Advocates may be offered additional professional development opportunities after completing their six-month performance evaluation. At that time the supervisor will discuss these options, assess each Youth Advocate's interests and determine best fit. If a commitment is made to pursue one or more of these options, training will begin. Opportunities include:

- *One Circle* peer group facilitation
- Anger Reduction intervention, individual and group work
- Resident House Meeting facilitation
- Outreach Support
- FoodShare coordination
- TOPSoccer Buddy

Assignment to additional duties will begin on or about the first anniversary of employment with Jackson Street, and will be accompanied by a pay increase.

Pay and Benefits: Wage Scale \$10.50-\$13.50/hr. (Those who regularly work overnight shifts earn a slightly higher wage.) Health insurance is available to those working 20 or more hours per week, with 2/3 or more of the monthly premium paid by Jackson Street. Voluntary group Dental and Vision plans and participation in the OregonSaves Program are available.

Youth Advocates report directly to the Shelter Manager.