

Education Specialist

If you are passionate about helping youth and are interested in a career with a non-profit organization, Aunt Leah's has two full time regular Education Specialist positions in our Supporting Education for Foster Youth (SEFFY) program for you! Although both positions are full time at 37.5 hour per week, we may consider applications for part-time regular as well.

The Supporting Education for Foster Youth (SEFFY) program supports long-term education planning for foster youth and former foster youth in care. The emphasis of the program is on highlighting strengths, identifying needs and advocating for resources that lead to success for youth. Each youth is connected with an educational specialist and receives help applying for bursaries and training opportunities, from a variety of schools and programs.

In BC, 45% of teens leaving foster care end up on the streets within 3 years. Aunt Leah's helps vulnerable youth and teen Moms in foster care achieve a better future.

For over 25 years, Aunt Leah's Place has helped prevent children in foster care from becoming homeless, and mothers in need from losing custody of their children throughout Metro Vancouver. To support them on their journey to self-sufficiency, we provide supported housing, job training and coaching on essential life skills.

We work proactively at the 'entry' and 'exit' points of the foster care system, helping low-income families maintain custody of their children and for foster youth readying to 'age out' with supports similar to what modern parents do for their own adult children in transition.

Job Summary: Creating new culture and norms within the foster care community and beyond – that foster children can have success in their educational careers. Aunt Leah's Education Specialist works one-on-one with youth in and from government care on their plan for high school graduation and beyond. In addition, an Education Specialist will take on an advocacy role with schools, social workers and youth to resolve difficult issues and remove barriers to foster kids' school success.

Qualifications:

- Post-secondary education in Social Sciences, Social Worker Diploma, Child & Youth Care Diploma, and/or a related combination of education and experience
- 1 year experience working with youth in or from government care
- Advocacy background and training

Skills and Knowledge:

- Communication (Verbal & Written)
- Ability to follow and implement program policies and procedures
- Interpersonal Abilities & Team Work Skills
- Analytical/Research
- Flexibility/Adaptability in managing multiple priorities
- Computer/Technical Literacy

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- Multicultural/Sensitivity/Awareness
- Problem-Solving/Reasoning/Creativity
- Crisis Management/Conflict resolution skills
- Ability to work independently
- BC High School Education System
- Motivational Interviewing
- Report Writing & Documentation
- Ability to teach and mentor life skills
- Trauma Informed Care

Requirements:

- Undergo & maintain Criminal Record Check
- A valid driver's license and access to a vehicle
- Produce a clear Driver's Abstract
- Proof of vehicle business insurance and \$5 million liability
- Other certification as required by individual programs
- Standard First Aid
- Advocacy training/experience
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
- Agrees to the Society's Code of Ethics
- Advocacy skills & experience
- Follows Aunt Leah's Practice Guidelines

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Direct Service

- Work with youth to create their own plan for high school graduation and beyond
- Monitor attendance, behavior and course performance
- Build youth's problem-solving and self-advocacy skills
- Connect to resources, like tutoring, credit retrieval, and college and career preparation including career cruising software or equivalent
- Build and support the team for each youth, including caregiver, social worker and school teachers, counselors and any other significant individuals in their lives
- Resolve education barriers specific to foster youth: school transitions, special education needs, disciplinary actions, and obtaining transcripts as needed
- Maintain documentation standards (direct service notes, individual educational plan and service agreement)
- Complete tracking information of SEFFY participants concurrently involved in multiple Aunt Leah's programs (e.g. Branches AYA Lifeskill program, Bootstraps Employment program for young adults, Link program etc.); liaise with appropriate staff from other programs to provide wrap around support for participants
- Liaise with Frontier College and facilitate in house tutoring or education related sessions provided by Frontier College tutors/volunteers
- Maintain education information in accessible formats for youth participants
- Supports SEFFY Coordinator to keep up to date on latest news/resources on bursaries/grants/tuition fee waivers available for current and/or former youth in care; assist in sustaining Aunt Leah's in house funding applications for education
- Education-related workshop facilitation as needed
- Provide outreach support and other needed support services to participants as directed
- Rotating attendance at Essential Skills program workshop on Wednesday evenings

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2. Advocacy:

- Help students access education-related support services, including special education
- Prevent school changes when students placements change and pave the way for seamless transitions when school changes are unavoidable
- Minimize the effects of disciplinary actions that keep students out of school
- Assist high school youth in making up credits when necessary and identifying alternative high school programs to stay engaged and on track to graduate.
- Identify and refer SEFFY participants who can benefit from additional internal programming supports (e.g. Branches AYA Lifeskill program, Bootstraps Employment program, Link program, wellness support with Dan's Legacy etc.) or external sources in the community. Maintain connection with referring agencies to ensure continuum of supports in place for participants
- Train caregivers, social workers and students themselves to advocate for students' educational rights.
- Knowledgeable and updated on educational opportunities within the various Ministries (MCFD, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Advanced Education, Ministry of Social Development etc)
- Researches Post-Secondary programs and develops connections and networks on behalf of Aunt Leah's that will benefit the youth people served (includes bursaries, grants, Canada learning bonds).

3. Financial Responsibilities:

- Responsible for providing receipts for petty cash used for participants
- Ensures that expenses follow budget guidelines

4. Health and Safety:

- Is familiar with Aunt Leah's Health and Safety Policies and Procedures

5. Communication:

- Attends meetings as required
- Liaises and seeks direction from Supervisor in crisis situations
- Attends Society Events as directed by supervisor
- Follows Aunt Leah's Policies and Procedures

6. Confidentiality:

- Communication between Education Specialist and youth is confidential

7. On Call:

- Required to be on call as scheduled

8. Physical Demands:

- This position requires some lifting of heavier objects

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We offer: A comprehensive benefit package after 6 months of continuous employment that includes: dental, extended health care including vision care and prescription, RRSP after 1 year, personal time package, and employee discount at our Thrift Store.

Salary: Commensurate with qualifications.

How to apply:

If you meet the qualifications listed, and wish to work in a collaborative and supportive environment that offers ongoing professional development opportunities, please email your resume with a cover letter to: hr@auntleahs.org. You may also apply on our website at www.auntleahs.org. Short listed candidates will be contacted for interview. We thank all interested applicants in advance.