Family Mediation and Support Specialist (Multi-County)

Sojourners, a nonprofit organization rooted in Appalachian Ohio, partners with young people to help them rise above challenges and work for the futures they want.

Type of Position: **Full-time, salaried.** 40 hours per week ***(Please note Work Hours section below).*** Salary $34,000 annually. Starting salary is $34,000 but can increase if candidate has college degree or relevant credentials (total). Sojourners' Staff Classification Scale will provide guidance for compensation. Eligible for full benefits, including 5 weeks paid time off, paid holidays, life insurance, employee health reimbursement account, and optional medical, vision, and dental insurance. This position is contingent upon continued grant funding.

Locations: There is flexibility in where office can be located. Must be in Athens, McArthur, Gallipolis, Wellston, or Chillicothe. There will be a need to travel at times to the counties of Gallia, Jackson, and Meigs, Ross, Hocking, Vinton and Athens (OH). Mileage reimbursement will be provided and Sojourners vehicles may also be available for use.

General Purpose:

The Family Mediation and Support Specialist provides intensive, home- and community-based family mediation and stabilization services through Sojourners' Basic Center Program. The position works with young people under age 18 and their parents or caregivers when significant family conflict or other circumstances place a young person at risk of running away or experiencing homelessness.

The primary focus of this position is early intervention—helping families address escalating conflict, rebuild trust, strengthen relationships, and develop workable agreements that allow young people to remain safely at home rather than entering emergency shelter. The Specialist works with families whose relationships may have reached a breaking point, helping young people and caregivers re-engage in communication, understand differing perspectives, and identify realistic steps toward restoring stability.

Unlike traditional case management, this position emphasizes direct family mediation, conflict resolution, relationship-building, and facilitated problem-solving. The Specialist collaborates with other Sojourners staff and community providers to address practical, behavioral health, and other needs while maintaining a primary focus on strengthening family relationships and preventing separation.

When appropriate, the Specialist may also work with young people and caregivers following an emergency shelter placement to help resolve conflicts, support safe reunification, and reduce the likelihood of future housing crises.

Key Responsibilities:

- Engage young people and parents or caregivers experiencing significant family conflict, establishing trusting, respectful relationships and creating opportunities for all parties to feel heard and understood.
- Provide intensive home- and community-based family mediation and conflict-resolution services, particularly when communication has broken down or family members are struggling to identify a path forward.
- Meet individually and jointly with young people and caregivers to understand differing perspectives, identify sources of conflict, and help prepare family members for constructive conversations.
- Facilitate difficult family conversations, helping participants communicate more effectively, recognize one another's concerns, negotiate expectations and boundaries, and develop mutually understood agreements.
- Help young people and caregivers rebuild trust, strengthen connections, and develop practical strategies for managing disagreements and preventing future crises.
- Work with families to develop individualized stabilization and conflict-resolution plans that identify agreed-upon goals, specific actions, responsibilities, and strategies for responding when conflict escalates.
- Provide ongoing coaching and follow-up to help family members practice communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills and sustain progress over time.
- Use strengths-based, trauma-informed, youth-centered, and family-support approaches, including Motivational Interviewing and principles of collaborative and wraparound planning.
- Work closely with the Diversion and Intake Coordinator to receive appropriate referrals, assess immediate safety and service needs, and identify families who may benefit from intensive mediation and prevention services.
- Recognize when family conflict is compounded by behavioral health concerns, economic stress, school difficulties, or other challenges, and collaborate with existing service providers to address those needs without duplicating their services.
- Identify and engage supportive relatives, trusted adults, and other natural supports when appropriate, with attention to youth safety, family preferences, and confidentiality.
- Develop and update safety plans; recognize signs of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and escalating risk; and respond according to agency policy and mandated reporting requirements. Ensure that mediation and reunification efforts are pursued only when safe and appropriate.
- Coordinate with Basic Center Program shelter and case management staff when emergency shelter becomes necessary or when specialized family mediation may support a young person's safe return home.
- Maintain ongoing communication with schools, behavioral health providers, child welfare agencies, and other community partners to support coordinated intervention while maintaining the distinct focus of the mediation role.
- Provide planned follow-up as families make progress toward stabilization, helping them establish strategies and supportive connections that can continue beyond the period of intensive intervention.
- Maintain accurate, timely case records and required program data; participate in supervision, case consultation, training, and continuous quality-improvement activities.

Qualifications:

- High school diploma or equivalent required; associate or bachelor's degree in social work, human services, family studies, conflict resolution, or a related field preferred.
- Experience working with adolescents, parents or caregivers, or families experiencing significant conflict, relationship challenges, or crisis situations preferred.
- Demonstrated ability to navigate interpersonal conflict, listen to differing perspectives without judgment, de-escalate emotionally charged situations, and facilitate constructive problem-solving.

- Strong relationship-building, communication, negotiation, and interpersonal skills, including the ability to engage individuals who may be frustrated, distrustful, or reluctant to participate.
- Experience or training in family mediation, conflict resolution, restorative practices, family peer support, or related approaches preferred. Willingness to complete specialized mediation and family-support training is required.
- Ability to maintain a balanced, respectful approach when working with young people and caregivers who may have strongly opposing perspectives.
- Relevant lived experience navigating significant family challenges, parenting or caring for adolescents, or working through complex family systems is valued as a complement to professional experience and training.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed practice, Motivational Interviewing, youth development, family-centered approaches, and community resources preferred.
- Ability to recognize when family circumstances require clinical intervention, protective services, or other specialized supports, and to collaborate appropriately with those providers.
- Strong documentation, organizational, independent time-management, and professional judgment skills.
- Ability and willingness to travel frequently throughout a seven-county service area, conduct home visits, and maintain flexibility to meet family needs.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality, professional boundaries, and compliance with mandated reporting and agency requirements.
- Valid driver's license and ability to meet agency driving requirements.

Benefits:

- Health insurance
- Health savings account
- Life insurance
- Mileage reimbursement
- Five Weeks Paid time off annually (pro-rated upon hire)
- Professional development assistance
- Vision and dental insurance

Work Hours: Generally Monday–Friday during regular business hours, with flexibility for some late-afternoon or evening home visits and occasional planned weekend activities to meet family needs. Exact schedule will be established with the supervisor.

Apply: To apply, send your resume to careers@sojournerscare.net