



Title: RHYMES Shelter & Youth Advocate
Reports To: RHYMES Shelter Director
Pay Grade: \$16/hour

## **YWCA La Crosse Runaway and Homeless Youth Mediation and Emergency Services (RHYMES) Shelter & Youth Advocate**

The RHYMES Shelter & Youth Advocate is responsible for accomplishing organizational and program-specific goals. Under the guidance of the RHYMES Shelter Director, implement the free and confidential RHYMES 24 hour Crisis Line and Walk In Services, 24 hour Emergency Shelter, Youth and Parent/Guardian (Family) Mediation, and RHY specific outreach and ongoing support in collaboration with RHYMES collaborative partners.

### Essential Duties and Responsibilities of RHYMES Shelter & Youth Advocate:

1. Initiate and complete youth intake interview processes, which includes initial meetings, service explanations, assessments, and the development of shelter contracts.
2. Assist with client intervention plans, advocacy, and referrals.
3. Provide support, care, supervision, and guidance for youth, which includes meeting physical, emotional, and crisis needs. Reinforce positive behavior and administer consequences and appropriate discipline as needed. Demonstrate positive role modeling for youth.
4. Oversee the day-to-day activities of resident youth in the shelter. Ensure that meals are properly prepared and in compliance with established nutritional standards. Assist with the purchase of groceries and program supplies as authorized.
5. Accurately complete and maintain client files and program documentation and communicate effectively about client needs with colleagues.
6. Maintain shelter facilities and compliance with licensing regulations.
7. Facilitate group programming for residents. Provide resident youth with basic independent living skills on an individual or group basis.
8. Provide telephone crisis counseling, information, and referral to meet the needs of youth, adults, and other community agencies.
9. Coordinate program-related projects as assigned by the RHYMES Shelter Director.
10. Other duties may be assigned.

Qualification Requirements: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**Required Education and/or Experience:** Requires education generally equivalent to a Bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university with emphasis in social work or related field or a high school education and at least three years of related child care experience or relevant life experience. One or more years of experience as foster parents, institutional houseparents, or other relevant childcare experience (as required by DCF 59.04(1) Personnel Requirements for Shelter Care licensing).

**Preferred Education and/or Experience:** Experience in working with youth in a residential setting preferred with experience in youth and/or family advocacy. Experience working with youth and their parent(s)/guardian(s)/chosen trusted adults in individual and/or group settings, with a focus on addressing housing instability, homelessness, running away, and family dynamics that can increase need for RHYMES programming. Demonstrated skills or capacity to learn skills in crisis intervention with the ability to connect with individuals from varied backgrounds when working with program participants identifying needs related to housing instability/homelessness, seeking of mental health support, suicide prevention, gender based violence, family violence, human trafficking, child abuse, and other urgent needs related to safety and wellbeing.

**Cultural Competency Commitment:**

1. Awareness of one's own world view and that different world views exist.
2. Self-awareness of one's own attitudes, beliefs, biases, and assumptions about others.
3. Acknowledgment that people from other cultural groups do not necessarily share the same beliefs and practices or perceive, interpret, or encounter similar experiences in the same way.
4. Recognition that everyone has at least some ethnocentric views that are provided by their culture and is shaped by their individual interpretation of it.
6. Respect and openness toward others whose social and cultural background is different from one's own.
7. Ability to recognize and manage one's own behaviors, moods, and impulses — to help create an inclusive, equitable, and welcoming environment at RHYMES Shelter.

**Certificates, Licenses, Registrations:** First aid and CPR certification is required and can be obtained after hire. State social work certification preferred.

**Missional Commitment:** Dedication to eliminating racism and empowering womxn. Strong background in concepts surrounding Racial and Social Justice. Strong familiarity with issues surrounding racism and the impacts on people of color. Strong familiarity with how oppression impacts individuals and communities particularly LGBTQ+-identified youth and adults. Focus on supporting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

**Schedule:** To be determined but requires supervision and scheduling of a variety of the following: Day shift (7am-4pm), Mid Shift (3pm-12am) and Overnight (11pm-8am). Availability to work days, evenings and weekends necessary.

**Communication and Language Skills:** Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operation and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals. Ability to write routine reports and business correspondence. Demonstrated computer skills, include word processing, database and spreadsheet competence. Ability to speak effectively before groups of residents, employees of the organization, and community partners or other professional representatives and community members outside of the organization. Ability to clearly communicate expectations. Demonstrated conflict resolution skills and the ability to work collaboratively under pressure. Superior organizational skills and the ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously and balance competing priorities. Ability to operate standard computer word-processing software.

**DCF 59.04(1) Personnel Requirements for Shelter Care licensing:** Be of responsible, mature individuals of reputable character who exercise sound judgement and demonstrate the capacity to provide good care for children. Be in good physical and mental health so that the health of the children or the quality and manner of their care will not be adversely affected. Before beginning employment or service in a shelter care facility, a person shall receive a health examination covering the areas included in department form DCF-F-CFS0384 and receive a tuberculin skin test without positive findings within 90 days before beginning employment or service. Complete not less than 24 hours of relevant training in accordance with plan formulated by YWCA La Crosse and approved by DCF.

**Other Skills and Abilities:** Ability to work independently within the parameters of the program and to be able to work in an environment where there is frequent exposure to stressful/crisis situations. Ability to respect and maintain confidentiality. Ability to work with non-judgmental attitude in a population composed of diversity in gender, socioeconomic and ethnic group, sexual orientation, and physical or mental abilities. Ability to frequently use standard office equipment, such as a copier, telephone, calculator, and paper shredder, as well as occasionally use common household appliances, such as a microwave, oven, dishwasher, vacuum cleaner, VCR, and common household tools such as a plunger, hammer, screwdriver, smoke detector, door monitor, and fire extinguisher.

The candidate must live in the La Crosse area or be willing to move within 90 days of hire.

**Physical Demands:** The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand; to use hands to finger, handle, or touch objects; and to talk or hear. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, and the ability to adjust focus. The employee is occasionally required to sit, to reach above shoulders, to climb or balance, to stoop, kneel, or crouch, and to taste or smell. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds.

**Work Environment:** The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee occasionally works near moving mechanical parts; in high, precarious places, and in outside weather conditions; and is occasionally exposed to household cleaning products, fumes, and chemicals and risk of electrical shock. The employee may be exposed to some physical risks from clients. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

**Ability to Travel:** Ability to travel locally with reliable transportation to worksites.

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Employee Signature

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Date

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Employee Print Name

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Date

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Supervisor Signature/Title

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Date