Advice and Advocacy Worker

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

Are you passionate about advising, advocating and empowering women to achieve the best possible outcomes?

Would you like to work for an organisation that is leading the way for a trauma-based approach for working with families?

Would you like to be part of a unique organisation that puts mental health and wellbeing at the forefront of the support it provides to women?

Then MumsAid may have an exciting job opportunity for you…

YoungMumsAid is a unique service providing specialist counselling and support for pregnant and new mothers aged up to 21 years living in Greenwich. Supported by Children in Need and Young Londoner’s Fund the free weekly therapy sessions help young mums manage their mental health issues and their ability to cope as a new parent by reducing feelings of loneliness and strengthening their relationship with their baby. In response to service user feedback, coupled with the awareness that there is an alarming gap in local service provision offering advice and advocacy support, MumsAid has developed this exciting new role.

We actively encourage applications from women from a variety of backgrounds, and with a range of skills and experiences. We are particularly interested to hear from Black, Asian and minoritised women and women with lived experience of trauma and of being a young parent. The role is only open to women, in accordance with the sex-based exemptions of the Equality Act 2010 pursuant to Schedule 9, Part 1.

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| **Job Title** | Advice and Advocacy Worker |
| **Starting Salary** | £31,500-£34,000 pro rata (dependent on experience) |
| **Hours of Work** | 15 per week |
| **Duration of Contract** | 2 years |
| **Location** | Blackheath, Greenwich |
| **Start Date** | Immediate subject to satisfactory references and checks |
| **Annual Leave** | 25 days per annum, bank holidays additional |
| **Accountable to** | Young Mums Aid Manager |
| **Closing Date** | 9 am 25th Jan 2021 |

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| **About us**  MumsAid is a maternal mental health charity that was founded in 2012 to address the lack  of support for mothers during pregnancy and after birth. We believe passionately that  pregnancy and new motherhood can be an exciting, but also challenging, time, and that the  right support can make a difference, not just to mothers but to the healthy emotional  development of their babies, and the broader well-being of their families and communities.  Since its inception, MumsAid has delivered a growing programme of support during the  perinatal period (pregnancy, birth and the early infant years), which has included  counselling and psychotherapy, therapeutic groups, befriending support by trained peer  volunteers, training for frontline staff in postnatal depression awareness, clinical  supervision, and an active social media presence aimed at providing support to mothers and  raising awareness.  Our therapy is open to women of all backgrounds, but we have a particular focus on  marginalised groups within our local community, including mothers from BME communities,  those on low incomes and single mothers. Our YoungMumsAid Service is a bespoke therapy and support programme for teenage and young mothers with complex needs. We work primarily in  Greenwich, but have plans to expand our services and reach. |
| **Purpose of Job**  The post-holder will be responsible for providing frontline services to MumsAid clients. The post-holder will offer information, advice, advocacy, casework and outreach to our young mums. The role also includes networking and will liaise with all appropriate services to ensure we are able to signpost and support mums effectively. We intend that by providing support for our YMA service users everyday needs to survive and thrive, we will be able to facilitate access to, and gain maximum benefit from, the therapeutic programme being offered. |
| **Duties and Responsibilities**   1. To process initial requests for advice and advocacy, assess users’ issues and needs and ensure appropriate responses to their needs. To understand how to prioritise multiple issues and target support appropriately 2. To carry out assessments of clients’ needs in relation to benefits, housing, education, social integration and in some cases immigration support and to support these through direct advice and advocacy and referral to specialist agencies 3. Where necessary to conduct risk assessments in conjunction with the Service Manager and YMA therapists and make necessary referrals to social services, refuges and referrals to specialist agencies e.g. law centres and solicitors 4. To liaise and develop links with other agencies and professionals to include understanding referral pathways and eligibility criteria so as to undertake appropriate referrals for our young mums 5. To develop and deliver an advice and advocacy on an outreach basis designed to meet the clients’ needs 6. To maintain accurate and up to date records, files and case notes and enter data onto our cloud database system 7. To gather statistics in order to monitor and evaluate the service, providing reports and case studies as required 8. To keep abreast of developments and legislation around issues affecting clients, in particular regarding welfare benefits and housing rights and services 9. To assist with initiatives for the improvement of services 10. To undertake training and self-development in order to ensure clients get the best advice and service |
| **Other Responsibilities:**   1. To support service users’ in voicing their concerns to statutory agencies, landlords etc and in raising awareness of policy and decision-makers. 2. To uphold the aims and principles of Mums Aid and to adhere to, and to comply with MumsAid Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality policies and abide by health and safety guidelines and policies designed to safeguard vulnerable adults and children. 3. To take up training on matters relevant to your work in agreement with your Line Manager. 4. To undertake any other appropriate tasks in pursuance of the aims and objectives of MumsAid as directed by YMA manager |

**Person Specification**

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|  |  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Attributes** | |  |  |
| 1 | Direct and demonstrable experience of working with women and girls | **🗸** |  |
| 2 | Be able and willing to travel | **🗸** |  |
| 3 | Ability to travel independently with own car/motorbike/bike |  | **🗸** |
| 4 | The ability to work in an agile way with laptop and mobile technology | **🗸** |  |
| 5 | Be able to work flexible hours occasionally if required | **🗸** |  |
| **Experience** | |  |  |
| 1 | Minimum 2 years' experience of managing a caseload providing advice and advocacy | **🗸** |  |
| 2 | Experience of communicating clearly, concisely and discretely with a wide range of people both verbally (telephone, face-to-face, in networks or forums, etc.) and in writing (e.g. briefings, reports, letter writing, email etc.) | **🗸** |  |
| 3 | Experience of working in partnership with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies | **🗸** |  |
| 4 | Experience of carrying out needs assessments to understand entitlements to welfare, housing and social services support and to plan casework strategy | **🗸** |  |
| **Knowledge** | |  |  |
| 1 | An in-depth understanding of welfare benefits and housing rights and legislation including some understanding of public funds rules | **🗸** |  |
| 2 | Working knowledge of policy, legislation and services relevant to young women who have experienced gendered violence and trauma |  | **🗸** |
| 3 | Working knowledge of safeguarding legislation and practice |  | **🗸** |
| 4 | Knowledge of safeguarding concerns in relation to babies and young children. | **🗸** |  |
| 5 | Knowledge of child development |  | **🗸** |
| **Skills and Abilities** | |  |  |
| 1 | Excellent communication skills both spoken and written | **🗸** |  |
| 2 | Able to manage a caseload and prioritise time effectively | **🗸** |  |
| 3 | Ability to think and act creatively, and to identify and carry through practical solutions to clients’ problems. | **🗸** |  |
| 4 | Ability to liaise, advocate on behalf of clients, and negotiate at variety of levels | **🗸** |  |
| 5 | Ability to use PC programmes including databases, to maintain accurate client records and to produce letters, emails, reports and accurate statistical information | **🗸** |  |
| 6 | Ability to ensure data collection is completed in a timely way to evidence our impact and outcomes | **🗸** |  |
| 7 | Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team | **🗸** |  |
| 8 | Ability to keep/maintain confidentiality of clients and records according to mums aid GDPR policies | **🗸** |  |
| 9 | Ability to implement Mums Aid Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Health & Safety and other policies | **🗸** |  |
| 10 | Clear understanding of Professional Boundaries | **🗸** |  |

MumsAid is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and post holders to share this commitment.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

This post is subject to a criminal record disclosure check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes, as the post holder will be working for a charitable organisation which serves and works alongside vulnerable members of the community.