

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Research and Evaluation Program Specialist

First Things First (Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board) is one of the critical state partners in creating a child and family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all Arizona's children. Created by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First is governed by a state Board with 28 regional partnership councils. First Things First is a decentralized organization that engages diverse constituencies to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a focus on accountability, transparency, coordination, collaboration and on the outcomes that will ensure young children start kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed in school and in life.

Job Summary

The Research and Evaluation Program Specialist works under the direction of and in collaboration with the FTF Evaluation Project Director. Primary areas of responsibility include: 1) conducting grant partner trainings to support submission of quarterly data requirements; 2) coordinating with Information Technology (IT) team (e.g. create report requirements), Evaluation Project Directors and other teammates to create timely and accurate quarterly data reports, 3) providing data interpretation support for internal (e.g. regional staff) and external audiences, and 4) providing research and data support to Senior Director and Evaluation Project Directors for evaluation studies and other divisional projects.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The ideal candidate will enthusiastically support the vision and mission of First Things First and possess the personal qualities of integrity and credibility. She/he will have the proven ability to work within teams to accomplish multiple tasks and keep multiple projects organized and progressing towards successful completion. This is a key position within the FTF Research and Evaluation team, and her/his work is critical to the successful delivery of services by the unit as a whole.

Typical Duties and Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the Evaluation Project Director of research and evaluation:

- Conduct grant partner training on data requirements.
- Work with evaluation, IT and other cross-divisional teammates to produce quarterly data reports for regional councils, FTF board reports, annual reports and other ad-hoc reports as required.
- Work with evaluation team members to report data findings and offer data interpretation support for internal and external audiences.

First Things First is a Top 25 program in the 2017 Innovations in American Government Awards from Harvard University, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation.



- Summarize results in a written format suitable for consumption by various audiences including the FTF Board, Regional Partnership Councils, staff, and stakeholder groups (e.g., technical reports, summary reports, data presentations, graphical outputs and policy briefs).
- Assist with ensuring strategy implementation data and research and evaluation study findings are effectively disseminated and used for ongoing program improvement, as well as board and regional council decision making/strategic planning.
- Effectively communicate progress and impediments to the Evaluation Project Director on all assigned projects.
- Provide support with research and data collection, analysis and interpretation for evaluation team projects.
- Provide program support and technical assistance to assigned Regional Area Team (RAT) and/or Strategy Implementation Team (SIT).
- Respond to requests from FTF staff and grant partners for information and/or assistance.
- Undertake other duties as assigned. The duties listed above are typical examples of the work performed; not all duties assigned are included, nor is it expected that all similar positions will be assigned every duty.

Qualifications:

Master's degree in early childhood development/education, developmental psychology, research methodology, public health, social welfare, public policy, public administration, educational psychology or related field.

- A minimum of 2 years of experience in research and analysis in a public agency, university, health, education, or non-profit organizational environment is required.
- Demonstrated proficiency and experience with statistical databases/software packages (e.g. SPSS, MySQL).
- Strong statistical and analytical skills (quantitative and qualitative) are required, including ability to analyze data and create summary reports.
- Proficiency in data management, data quality assurance, including maintaining detailed and accurate data files, codebooks and syntaxes.
- Proficiency in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook).
- Extensive knowledge and experience with effective practices of research and analysis design/ methods and evaluation research, theory and practice.
- Knowledge of early childhood development research.
- Ability to create data reports, develop procedure manuals and business requirements for IT.
- Ability to effectively communicate data findings to a wide variety of constituents (e.g. staff, stakeholders, general public, professional conferences).
- Experience conducting training and/or webinars with online tools (e.g. Webex, Ilinc).
- Proficiency with using large nationally representative data sets (e.g. Census).
- Proficiency in maintaining data integrity /confidentiality following organizational data policies.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, especially the ability to interact successfully with staff members from various levels of the organization, including leadership.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to write and speak clearly, succinctly and in a manner that appeals to a wide audience.
- Demonstrates flexibility and ability to adapt to changing demands.
- Demonstrates strong critical thinking and problem solving and analytical skills.
- Reliable, regular and punctual attendance at work during core business hours.

- Impeccable integrity, mission-driven and self-directed.
- Ability to act with sensitivity and discretion.
- Ability to manage multiple and often simultaneous tasks, and create a work environment that is recognized for a high level of ethical integrity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and results.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, meet deadlines, and coordinate with colleagues at varying organizational levels.
- Ability to work effectively in a fast-moving environment, while also striving toward clarity and solutions; and demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities.

Review of resumes will begin on August 18, 2017 and continue until the position is filled. For consideration please submit your cover letter, comprehensive resume and three professional references to:

[**www.azstatejobs.gov**](http://www.azstatejobs.gov)
Job ID 32066

In the AZ State Personnel System, the position is classified as a Grade 23 with a salary range of \$58,000 - \$64,000. The position is not covered under the State of Arizona Merit system rules. The State of Arizona offers an outstanding comprehensive benefits package.

“Arizona State Government is an EOE/ADA Reasonable Accommodation Employer”