RAISING READERS IN STORY COUNTY

Small Talk Volunteer Job Description

Position Overview

Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) is seeking volunteers to support the Small Talk program, a free program from LENA Start that helps parents and caregivers of young children increase interactive talk. Through 10 weekly sessions, caregivers receive feedback about their language interactions with their children and learn strategies for talking, reading, and engaging more with their children in a supportive environment. Small Talk volunteers assist with program activities, technology, childcare, and participant support.

Responsibilities

- Greet participants and assist with attendance.
- Provide technology support, including PowerPoint presentations and LENA Hub software.
- Assist with program facilitation by overseeing stations, activities, and other program components.
- Organize, prepare, and clean up program materials.
- Assist with childcare as needed during program sessions.
- Support participants and staff in creating a welcoming and encouraging environment.
- Communicate questions, concerns, or program needs to RRSC staff.
- Complete other duties as assigned.

Maintenance and Safety Requirements

- Follow RRSC safety procedures and staff instructions.
- Maintain a clean, organized, and safe program environment.
- Properly use and care for program materials and technology.
- Follow all childcare and participant safety procedures.
- Maintain participant confidentiality and respect the privacy of families.
- Report safety concerns or incidents to RRSC staff promptly.
- Volunteers working with children must follow all applicable RRSC screening and safety requirements.

Qualifications

- Must be at least 14 years of age.
- Must pass a background check.
- English language comprehension.

- Effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
- Ability to problem solve and respond flexibly to program needs.
- Comfortable working with young children and families.
- Basic competency with technology, including PCs and Microsoft PowerPoint.
- Ability to learn and use LENA Hub software.
- Dependable, patient, and willing to work as part of a team.
- No previous Small Talk or LENA training is required.

Time Commitment

- Volunteers participate in Small Talk sessions as scheduled with RRSC staff.
- Volunteers are expected to attend the scheduled Small Talk sessions they register for.
- Volunteers should arrive on time and remain for their scheduled volunteer shift.
- Specific scheduling and time commitments will be communicated by RRSC staff based on program needs and volunteer availability.

Volunteer Expectations

- Treat all participants, children, families, volunteers, and staff with respect and professionalism.
- Create a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment for families.
- Follow RRSC policies, procedures, and staff direction.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding participant and family information.
- Communicate clearly and promptly about attendance, scheduling, or concerns.
- Be dependable and prepared for scheduled volunteer shifts.
- Ask questions when unsure about a task or procedure.
- Work cooperatively with RRSC staff and other volunteers.
- Complete all required screening and onboarding requirements before volunteering.

Impact

Small Talk volunteers help create a supportive environment where parents and caregivers can build skills and confidence in communicating with their young children. By assisting with program activities, technology, childcare, and participant support, volunteers help RRSC provide families with meaningful opportunities to strengthen early language and literacy development.