

**Family Support Specialist
First Interview Questions**

Initial Screening Interview I:

Provide applicant a copy of current job description to review prior to actual interview. Initial screening interviews may be done with groups of three to four applicants.

1. Based on the job description do you have any questions for us regarding the job position?
2. Can you tell us why you want to work for this program and what makes you think you are suited for this type of work?
3. What experience have you had taking care of your children or assisting families?
4. In your opinion, what do you think infants from 0-6 months need most?
5. How would you define the word "discipline" with children? What discipline methods would you recommend to parents of 0-3 year olds?
6. Vignette #1
7. Could you please describe both your strengths and weaknesses as they would relate to this job setting?
8. What are your career goals and how would this job fit into them?

HFSP Questions:

9. What role do you play on a team?
10. What are your thoughts on giving / receiving feedback?
11. Inquire about interest and/ or familiarity with Sunset Park community.
12. Inform that due to the nature of our relationship-based work, some families may be interested in your personal life, and vice versa. How might you establish boundaries?
13. Inform that staff is required to participate in trainings which may be one to four days long within the state area. Overnight stays may be required. Inquire whether candidate perceives this to be a challenge.
14. Any questions for us?

**Family Support Specialists
Second Interview**

Interview II

Explain that this interview is designed to get to know them better. Ask them if they have any initial questions.

1. What did/do you like best and least about your current/last job?
2. Under what type of supervision do you function best?
3. Tell us about a past job situation you had with your supervisor or colleague where it did not go well, and how you would handle the same situation today?
4. What do you prefer, a job that you can master quickly or a job that involves on-going learning?
5. Are you familiar with CPS? If so, what is your impression of what that agency does?
6. What do you think causes stress for families which may result in child abuse or neglect? Ask them to elaborate on any area they describe as a problem.
7. How do you deal with your own stress? What suggestions would you have for parents in coping with their stress?
8. Vignette #2
9. Vignette #3
10. Describe some strategies you might use to encourage the fathers to become involved in home visiting services (parent-child interaction, developing goals through the family support plan, attending parent groups, etc.).
11. Any questions for us? Tell them when they should expect to hear from us regarding a decision.

**Family Support Specialist
Interview 1 Questions Rationale**

Interview I

1. N/A
2. Assess applicant's emotional health. They shouldn't be attempting to resolve personal issues through this type of work. They should express the desire to work with both parents and children.
3. Applicant should have had successful parenting experiences, or substantial experience caring for babies and young children. Also, to be the type of person people come to for support.
4. Infants can not be "spoiled". They need lots of love, to be held, etc. If the applicant responds "yes" to spoiling, ask to clarify. They may be referring more to mom's need to get baby on a feeding schedule and to allow baby to learn to console himself in appropriate time frames.
5. Look for guidance, having respect for others, etc. Applicant should not be rigid, should be able to give age-appropriate examples and should not condone spanking.
6. Look for utilization of problem solving skills with the participant rather than a directive approach. Look for appropriate two year old intervention strategies (no biting back, no spanking, sensitivity to child's position, use of language, etc.) Also, use of supervision if applicant doesn't know how to respond.
7. Assess ability to be insightful. Does applicant have realistic expectations? What could she/he offer the program?
8. Look for two year commitment. Since it takes six-twelve months to train and given trust issues with staff turn-over, this job should be what applicant wants to do for at least two years. This position must not be used as a training/experience opportunity for new college graduates.
9. Look for willingness to contribute and collaborate as a team player.
10. Look for transparency with communication and openness to learning about self strengths and areas for improvement.
11. See if applicant displays interest in learning about the uniqueness of the community. If applicant is familiar with community, look for desire to apply knowledge to work.
12. Look for ability to set boundaries and/or willingness to identify appropriate versus inappropriate exchange of information.
13. N/A
14. Seek curiosity and/or clarification questions.

**Family Support Specialist
Second Interview Questions Rationale**

Interview II

1. N/A
2. Does this fit with your program's supervisory methods?
3. Has the applicant been able to learn from her/his mistakes? Have coping/problem solving skills improved?
4. Family Support Workers need to prefer on-going learning and challenges.
5. Applicant should express and support the need for the protection of children.
6. Applicant should be able to identify at least three (preferably more) of these stresses(i.e., lack of emotional support, financial problems, substance abuse, mental illness, teen parenting, lack of knowledge, mental problems, etc.)
7. Applicant should be able to describe a couple of stress management techniques she/he uses and have appropriate suggestions for participants. Suggesting participants use religion to cope with stress may be an unacceptable imposition of personal values.
8. Assess counseling/problem solving skills. Applicant should not be judgmental or impose her/his values on the participant. Applicant should discuss options with the participant and should encourage the participant to make her/his own decision.
9. Inquire regarding location of children. Assess applicant's ability to be empathic in exploring/assessing change in mom's status. Would applicant utilize supervision?
10. Focus of program is on fathers, too. Assess applicant's beliefs about father involvement and openness to include fathers in home visiting process.
11. N/A

VIGNETTES FOR FAMILY SUPPORT STAFF

ASK #1 DURING THE FIRST INTERVIEW

- #1 You have been working with a mother who has a child age two. This child bites and hits the younger child in the family. The mother is asking your advice about how to handle this child. What would you tell her?

ASK #2 AND #3 DURING THE SECOND INTERVIEW

- #2 You have been working with a mom for quite a while. The mom tells you she needs to talk to you and she tells you she is pregnant again and very unhappy and asks you what she should do. What would you tell her?
- #3 This is another family you have been working with for sometime. The house is generally clean and orderly and mom functions well. She has an infant and a toddler that are always around. One day you make a visit and you immediately notice that mom is just not herself. The house is in a mess, which you have never seen before and the children are no where in sight. How would you proceed?