

# VHCB AmeriCorps

## **Children's Services Associate**

**Upper Valley Haven, White River Junction, VT**



*The Upper Valley Haven is looking for a Children's Services Associate to help support and foster growth and resiliency in children. In the Haven's afterschool and summer programs, you'll gain valuable skills and experience mentoring children with complex needs. If you like to play games, laugh out loud and just have plain old fun, this position will deliver!*

This position is part of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board AmeriCorps (VHCB AmeriCorps). The VHCB AmeriCorps program supports the innovative dual-goal approach to creating stable affordable housing opportunities for Vermont residents while preserving the natural and working landscape. VHCB AmeriCorps is a national service program that places members with non-profit housing or land and energy conservation organizations around the state

The Upper Valley Haven services people struggling with poverty by providing shelter and education to those that are homeless and food, clothing and support to anyone in need. All Haven services are provided free of charge. Since 1980, the Haven has fostered independence by providing resources through our shelter advocacy, aftercare, and educational programs.

The Haven staff work in partnership with each family or individual staying in the shelters. The work involves supporting families and individuals establish short- and long-term goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Staff members also work in partnerships with area agencies to coordinate efforts to reach these important goals.

The Haven's food shelf provides a week's worth of healthy food to anyone in need. During 2020 the COVID pandemic struck everyone hard, but the Haven kept supporting the community. COVID caused the Haven to make changes and adapt to maintain a safe environment, but the supportive services and work continued all of 2020. After implementing safety protocols in 2020, 84 households received placement services and 31 individuals/families transitioned into safe, affordable housing. In addition, there were 13,774 individuals who received services to improve food access from the Haven Food Shelf. The Haven's Children's Program provides academic support, enrichment programs, and mentoring to homeless and at-risk children and youth. In 2020, the programs had smaller numbers of children in order to maintain a safe environment but the summer camp and after school programming continued with strict guidelines. We were able to provide support and creative programming to 16 children ages 5 to 13 in 2020. This programming included therapeutic horseback riding, kayaking, fishing, swimming, art classes with AVA Art Gallery, cooking with King Arthur Baking Company, workshops with Montshire Museum, and presentations by VINS Nature Center. We would be unable to operate these programs without extensive volunteer support. In 2020, the Upper Valley Haven had 695 volunteers giving 22,895 hours of service. The program with the most volunteers is the Food Shelf with volunteers giving 14,755 hours of service to 13,774 people in the community. Volunteers touch 16 programs across the organization and are crucial to our success.

Guided by the faith of our founders, we:



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- Welcome all who enter our doors as equals, respecting their dignity and accepting them without judgement;
- Encourage those we serve to develop the capacity for independence;
- Are thrifty with our resources, generous in hospitality, and responsible to the communities that support us;
- Welcome all who are willing to join us in service to our neighbors.

The objective of the Children's Services Associate position is to aid the Children's Program Coordinator in expanding the Children's Service's Program to provide more development and enrichment opportunities for youth and their families. Our Afterschool Program and Summer Youth Program have been very well utilized. We are very interested in the continued facilitation of our programs for toddlers, pre-school aged children and their families. Development of programming in the family shelter to provide new opportunities for families and their children. In order to sustain and expand the children's programming, the Children's Program Coordinator would benefit from assistance in program implementation. It would also be the role of the Children's Services Associate to engage volunteers to facilitate the additional enrichment programs to ensure program sustainability. We would also like the Children's Services Associate to assist staff with the facilitation of sustainable programming for the children in the family shelter.

## Essential Functions:

- Establishes positive, supportive relationships with the children in the program and their families.
- Assists in the facilitation of the Afterschool Program.
- Facilitates educational/wellness programming for children and their families in the shelter.
- Assists in planning and preparation of healthy snacks.
- Supports connecting children to local summer camps that match individual needs/interests.
- Maintains a fun, engaging playroom space for the children in the shelter.
- Assists in the organization and collection of outcome data and writing weekly notes.
- Supports the day-to-day operations of the Summer Program by organizing enrichment activities, providing a high-level of supervision and engagement with all children, and supporting transportation needs.
- Communicates, collaborates and effectively serves shelter guests, volunteers and other staff, and community partners.
- Participate in an Independent Service Project under the guidance of VHCB AmeriCorps.
- Participate in VHCB AmeriCorps Trainings, Service Days, Events, and Program Initiatives.
- Engage in professional and personal development activities and networking opportunities.

## Secondary Functions:

- Assist in the Food shelf
- Assist in providing childcare during educational classes offered to current shelter guests.

## Desired Qualifications:



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- Has life experience including demonstrated respect for and acceptance of people who are struggling with life's demands or experiencing poverty.
- Serves well independently yet knows how to seek and use help or support.
- Interacts effectively with a diverse population.



## Minimum Qualifications:

- Be US citizen or have permanent resident status;
- Be at least 18 years of age upon entering the Pre-Service Orientation or 17 years of age with verified parental permission;
- Be a high school graduate, have a GED certificate, or be willing to work towards a GED as part of the service-term. A member cannot have dropped out of high school to join AmeriCorps.
- Has not been convicted of murder or sexual assault and is willing to undergo a National Service Criminal History Check;
- Be committed to the VHCB AmeriCorps program's ethic of service, appreciation of diversity, and personal and professional development of its participants;
- Have the ability and enthusiasm to drive to, attend, and participate in all required trainings and events, and be prepared to drive up to 2-3 hours each way.
- Available to regularly serve 40 hours per week

## Additional Information:

Service will be performed primarily indoors during the winter months, primarily outdoors in the summer months. The hours are flexible, but it must include afternoons during the school year and some evenings. The Upper Valley Haven is a campus of three buildings, and the service will primarily be performed in the Bev's House building. There are kitchen facilities on campus as well as showers.

Position begins September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and ends August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

This position is **Full Time**: Requires 1,720 hours for an average of 40 hours per week for 48 weeks. Member will receive a living allowance of \$20,400 (pre-tax), and an education award of \$6,345 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service.

Other benefits include health insurance, federal school loan forbearance, and various training and networking opportunities.

**To Apply:** <https://vhcb.org/our-programs/vhcb-ameri-corps/positions>

For questions about this position or to send additional materials:

Nancy McNally, Children's Program Coordinator.  
Upper Valley Haven  
713 Hartford Ave, White River Junction, VT 05001.  
Phone: (802) 478-1860  
Email: [nmcnally@uppervalleyhaven.org](mailto:nmcnally@uppervalleyhaven.org)



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Application deadline: August 24<sup>th</sup>, or until filled.

Additional information on AmeriCorps is available at [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org).

**The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) is sponsoring this AmeriCorps position through their AmeriCorps Program. VHCB is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion or creed.**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



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