# Role Title: Volunteer Counsellor

Working with: Counselling Coordinator, Digital Support Services

Location: Homebased

Time Commitment: Minimum 2hrs per week with an additional 1 hour per month for organisational supervision

About the service

Family Action are excited to be recruiting volunteer counsellors for our Digital Support Services: FamilyLine and the Special Guardianship Support Service. These services provide telephone, text, webchat and e-mail support to adults across the UK.

FamilyLine supports adult family members who contact our helpline. Our volunteers offer a listening ear, emotional support and guidance to people experiencing a range of complex challenges, including: parenting, financial hardship, mental health problems, social isolation, learning disabilities, domestic abuse, or substance misuse and alcohol problems.

The Special Guardianship Support Service provides listening, emotional support and guidance to Special Guardians who are encountering difficulties. Commonly, issues may include: contact and family relationships, the increased demand on finances, behavioral and emotional needs as well as many other challenges. The Special Guardianship Support service supports Special Guardians to manage these challenges and improve their wellbeing.

Family Action is committed to being people focused, reflecting a ‘can do’ approach, and striving for excellence in everything we do. We have mutual respect for everyone we work with, work for and support through our services. These are Family Action’s core values, and inform all the work that we do.

About the role

You will be sharing your skills and experience to support people from a diverse range of backgrounds and circumstances across the UK, offering short-term counselling of 6-8 sessions. You will be making a real difference to peoples’ lives, supporting clients to:

* Talk openly about the challenges they face
* Approach challenges in a calm and non-judgmental manner
* Recognise their own emotional and physical health needs
* Feel more confident to constructively address challenging behavior in others
* Manage relationships with members of their family
* Manage challenges that cause family breakdown or lead to crisis
* Build a trusting therapeutic relationship, based on honest and open communication

Responsibilities

* To attend induction training
* To arrange sessions with clients at a mutually agreeable time on a weekly basis. Sessions will take place remotely, Monday – Friday between 9am and 9pm
* To provide support using a positive, non-judgmental and empowering approach
* To maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries at all times
* To make relevant and appropriate notes
* To engage with Volunteer Coordinators who will provide ongoing support
* To understand and abide by all relevant Family Action policies and procedures

To positively promote Family Actions values, and if called upon, act as an ambassador of the charity

Benefits to volunteering with us

* Becoming a part of Family Action, a people-focused charity established in 1869. Currently, we are the largest National Family Charity, running 200+ services across the UK
* A rewarding volunteering experience, making a real difference to people’s lives
* The opportunity to be part of a service supporting families in challenging circumstances
* The opportunity to obtain telephone counselling experience, and the flexibility of volunteering remotely
* Regular training and development opportunities
* Being part of a virtual team
* The opportunity to build a portfolio of your training, skills, experience and qualities
* The opportunity to improve future employment prospects

Training and Support

Volunteering for Family Action is a great opportunity to develop new and existing skills and to gain experience working with people. In addition to the training programme, volunteers are supported throughout their journey by a team of Coordinators.

Volunteers are provided with the all the training required to carry out the role, which includes (but is not limited to) using the online system, effective communication, data protection, safeguarding procedures and legislation. Volunteers will also have access to the Family Action staff training relevant to their role. Volunteers will be invited to attend team meetings, collaborating with other counsellors and team members, helping us to maintain a responsive service committed to ongoing improvement. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to attend volunteer celebration events. We value our volunteers and will look to do what we can to support you in your role.

Essential Requirements

* Must be qualified at **level 4 (or proven equivalent) or above**
* To be able to evidence that you receive **monthly clinical supervision** from an external supervisor, which will need to be in place during all your volunteering with the counselling service. £5 per month of your clinical supervision costs can be reimbursed with an active counselling case

Skills and attributes needed

* Ability to quickly develop and sustain trusting relationships
* Non-judgmental and accepting of differences
* People-focused
* Friendly and reliable
* Empathy, understanding and emotional awareness
* Commitment and consistency
* Resilience and the ability to remain calm in times of stress
* Listening and communication skills
* A desire to help individuals to gain coping skills to better manage stressful situations relating to family life
* To be open to challenge and to challenge others while maintaining trusting relationships
* Good computer skills and access to a computer, telephone and the internet

We welcome applications from all members of the community.

How to apply: Complete attached application form, and submit via e-mail to: familyline.volunteer@family-action.org.uk

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact:

Carrie: 07816 806 846

Sonia: 07966 926 755

E-mail: familyline.volunteer@family-action.org.uk