



Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth

Job Description: Applied Research & Communications Specialist

Organizational Overview:

Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth (TxSDY), located in Austin, TX, is the statewide nonprofit committed to putting an end to youth alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. We use collective impact and civic engagement strategies to build capacity for communities to advance public policy through advocacy and effective prevention strategies. We are a leader in advancing evidence-based strategies that result in large scale community change that prevent youth from beginning deadly habits. We do this work in partnership with local coalitions, colleges, state agencies, stakeholders, and other organizations with similar goals. TxSDY is a leader in the prevention field, known for our hard work, advocacy, and reliable, quality resources. Our team is passionate about the cause, expected to work hard and operate in a highly collaborative manner that includes effective and ongoing communication.

Position Overview:

The ideal candidate for this position is a passionate leader that will tie problems and solutions together with data. The position requires exceptional communication (both written and oral), critical thinking, teaching, and math skills. In this position, the Applied Research and Communications Specialist will support TxSDY's staff and community partners by providing research and data analysis for the organization's programs - primarily from secondary sources. Working closely with staff and our partners this role requires a mix of attention to detail, organization, forward thinking, effective communication, and decision making to ensure community and grant needs are being met. The position requires motivation to do work that is consistently of the highest quality and ability to deal calmly and effectively with a wide range of personalities and circumstances.

This position is critical to our prevention work. This role contributes by assessing data, moving it "off the shelf" into compelling information that connects the audience to the heart of our work and drives our strategies forward. The job translates complicated information into usable, simple terms. Essentially, this position engages the public by using storytelling to connect a problem to a solution.

The Applied Research & Communications Specialist works in a team environment, both internally and externally with the public, and manages multiple tasks simultaneously, sometimes under tight deadlines. The position also works with funders and adheres to their requirements. The successful candidate will enjoy working in a fast-paced environment, providing support to others, communicating effectively and often across multiple platforms. The successful candidate will also demonstrate strong attention to detail and accuracy.

We are looking for someone who:

- Thinks about short term in relation to long term goals and the big picture
- Demonstrates strong attention to detail and accuracy
- Has experience using data to educate the public and influence community change
- Has successfully used a variety of platforms and formats to share data
- Has strong written communication skills and proven writing experience

- Is relational while holding others accountable and meeting deadlines
- Has worked in public policy, public health, community organizing, or political campaigns
- Doesn't mind tackling a task first
- Is agile and able to use adaptive thinking
- Strives for excellence and achieves high quality products and outcomes

Essential Job Duties:

- Serve as a strategic thinker and work independently
- Utilize data to advance our organizational goals and strategies
- Create reports, fact sheets, issue briefs, maps, & online tools (e.g., dashboards, databases)
- Uses GIS, including ArcGIS and StoryMaps, to bring data to life
- Align data from multiple sources and aspects to provide a comprehensive community picture
- Identify disparities and negative consequences related to drug misuse, and prevention strategies
- Develop and monitor strategies for measuring progress towards goals
- Review research literature for effective strategies
- Educate and train staff, community partners, and general public
- Communicate data to the public
- Work with external evaluator
- Works within grant rules and deadlines
- Develops and/or serves as lead for material development; ensures materials are prepared for trainings, meetings, and events
- Conduct work with a great attitude and a servant leader mindset
- Strives to be a highly effective prevention advocate; encourages and supports others to do the same
- Have fun while achieving outcomes
- Other duties as assigned to carry out the goals and mission of the organization

Required experience and skills:

- Bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, in public health or similar field with formal epidemiological training or demonstrated equivalent epidemiological on-job training experience
- Minimum 3-years of experience working with data in a similar role
- Track record of working successfully with the public/communities
- Track record of surveillance, investigations, data collection using primary and secondary sources
- Proficient in SAS, ArcGIS, online technology systems, Word, Excel
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with strong attention to detail
- Ability to simultaneously manage multiple, complex projects in varying stages of development under time constraints
- Track record in grant writing and completing grant reports
- Track record of writing and creating reports, documents, and/or materials for the public
- Ability to travel overnight for multiple days in a row
- Small non-profit experience highly preferred
- Must have a cell phone, driver's license, and personal vehicle with applicable insurance
- Must be able to lift 30 pounds
- Commitment to organizational mission and ideology in order to effectively promote and advance the goals of our organization

Things to Consider:

- This position reports to the Director of Programs

- Salary: \$56,000-\$61,000 annually, dependent on experience. Plus, health and retirement benefits.
- Hours: full-time, exempt employee; some nights and weekends. Travel required.
- Location: It is not necessary for the selected candidate to live in the Austin area. However, the selected candidate will be expected to travel to our Austin office for in-person meetings and work time.

To Apply:

- Please send a cover letter and resume to info@TxSDY.org. Your cover letter should share how you will inspire others, your direct experience related to the position, and what you will add to our existing team.

We believe in a community where its members and corporate citizens share accountability for preventing youth substance use. We believe diversity and inclusion are key drivers of creativity and innovation. We welcome candidates who share our beliefs to apply for any role within our organization.