



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Director of Communications

August 2010

Mission and Organizational Background

First Children's Finance, a national nonprofit headquartered in Minneapolis, helps children thrive and learn by forging relationships that bring economic power and viability to the business of child care. Founded in 1991, First Children's provides business and financial assistance to business owners and leaders in the field of early care and education. First Children's also promotes private sector engagement and investment in the business of child care. Under the leadership of its founding president/ CEO and a board of directors made up of business and child care leaders, First Children's Finance is in a positive position for growth and expansion of its services across the country.

Purpose

The director of communications is responsible for planning and implementing strategies to strengthen and expand First Children's Finance's national reputation among an ever growing number of key stakeholders, including early education and care leaders, business and community leaders, funders, state and Federal elected and appointed officials, and others - in collaboration with First Children's Finance staff.

Key Accountability Areas

Specific responsibilities include:

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a strategic marketing and communications plan to build First Children's reputation among large numbers of opinion leaders and decision makers nationally.
- Support the CEO's strategy to develop regional partnerships and delivery systems to strengthen the quality of early care and education.
- Identify ways to use technology and social media to communicate more effectively including:
 - Provide leadership and management for the FCF website;
 - Provide leadership and management for the Virtual Business Resource Center;
 - Other
- Ensure a consistent brand identity and presence, including:
 - Create, distribute, and maintain a brand style guide;
 - Produce all collateral materials (e.g., brochures, flyers, advertisements, stationery)
 - Update the Web site's design and content on a regular basis;
 - Develop and update key messages; and
 - Ensure all copy reflects First Children's key messages and AP Style.
- Work with the Children's Chamber of Commerce coordinator and the state directors to grow the children's chambers and to develop best practices across the children's chambers.
- Work with CEO and/or leadership staff to design and promote the First Children's Finance Fellowship program.
- Deliver communications strategies to ensure ongoing, positive visibility, including:
 - Publish First Children's e-newsletter at least six times per year;
 - Write and place stories about First Children's in other early education and care periodicals and on related websites;
 - Pitch and place stories in the media;
 - Manage any public relations crises;

- Ensure effective communication with elected and appointed elected officials in collaboration with the president/CEO and the federal relations consultant;
 - Develop and provide support for First Children’s presentations and training;
 - Seize opportunities to convey First Children’s messages about quality child care and effective business practices;
 - Work with State Directors in support of communication strategies in each state; and
 - Advise the president/CEO as necessary about communication issues and opportunities.
- Market First Children’s programs, including:
 - Help to increase the number of loan fund applicants;
 - Deliver targeted campaigns to support the Growth Fund;
 - Promote the First Children’s Finance Innovation Awards;
 - Drive traffic to the Business Resource Center on the First Children’s Web site;
 - Promote training opportunities; and
 - Provide support for resource development as appropriate.
 - Produce videos, DVDs, and CD-ROMs to support and promote First Children’s programs and people.
 - Ensure First Children’s marketing and communications infrastructure is able to effectively support initiatives and campaigns.
 - Manage all First Children’s databases and lists;
 - Work with the information and technology manager to maintain up-to-date Web capabilities and other technologies;
 - Produce online interactive and video segments to advance First Children’s programs;
 - Develop and maintain all collateral materials;
 - Produce and maintain displays, banners, and signs; and
 - Suggest and maintain an appropriate supply of give-aways.
 - Provide training and technical assistance to clients as appropriate.
 - Lead the communications team, including staff and consultants.

Education

- A bachelor’s degree (or equivalent experience) in communications, organization development, planning, or a related field is required. A master’s degree preferred.

Experience

Required experience:

- Proven ability to plan, implement, and evaluate marketing and communications programs
- Demonstrated success using communications technology
- Progressive positions in the communication field, preferably across multiple industries
- A track record of building public visibility through the media and other public relations initiatives
- Commitment to leading-edge strategies as well as traditional marketing/communications approaches

Preferred experience:

- Involvement with fund raising and resource development
- Team leadership and supervisory skills
- Effective building and coordination of public/private partnerships
- Services as a member of leadership or management teams
- Budget management

Skills

- Use of diverse forms of media/marketing/communications programs and tools
- Ability to work with a high-powered board and staff, volunteers, and consulting team
- Excellent written and oral communications skills
- Ability to work with minimum supervision, yet be a part of a team

Personal Attributes

This position requires an individual who is:

- Creative, innovative, entrepreneurial;
- A team player, partner, collaborator, and networker;
- Energetic, enthusiastic, with a can-do attitude;
- A systems thinker who is able to maintain a big-picture focus while attending to detail;
- Organized, self-starter, multi-tasker; and
- A strategic thinker and planner as well as an effective implementer.

Reports To: Chief Executive Officer

Status: Full-time

Salary and Benefits: Salary is competitive based on education and experience.

Application Procedure

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter and resume detailing how their experience meets the requirements of the position to:

Carol Zapfel
First Children's Finance
212 Third Avenue North, Suite 310
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Fax: 612/338-4596
E-mail: carol@FirstChildrensFinance.org

Position will remain open until filled. For information about the work of First Children's Finance, please visit our website at www.FirstChildrensFinance.org. First Children's Finance is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages people of color to apply.