



480 Cady's Falls Road · Morrisville, VT 05661 · (802) 888-5229 · www.lamoillefamilycenter.org

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH DOCUMENT**

### **THE SEARCH**

The Lamoille Family Center (LFC) seeks an Executive Director to continue the leadership of this well-established non-profit that has served the families of the Lamoille Valley for more than four decades. Since its beginning in 1976, the Family Center has been committed to *encouraging, educating and celebrating families.*

The LFC is fortunate to have a history of stable and committed leadership; over its forty-one-year history, the Family Center has hired just five executive directors. Staff turnover across the organization is unusually low as well, resulting in a strong and reliable organization where staff feel valued and supported, and where the work is rewarding. The board of directors is cognizant that matching the organization's needs and culture with the right leader is critical to continuing this successful track record.

The LFC is seeking a candidate who can work in partnership with the board, staff, community partners, and funders (current and prospective) to design and execute a plan for strategic program development that conforms to community needs, is mindful of the financial climate, and keeps a watchful eye on changing government and social issues in order to respond and adjust course accordingly.

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CENTER AND THE PARENT CHILD CENTER NETWORK**

In 1975, a group of practical dreamers conceived the idea of a parent resource center to educate parents and help children. The first two staff offered parent education through a home visiting program, and created peer support groups to foster social connections among the isolated parents of this rural region. While the original focus was on parents with little formal education, and limited access to economic supports, health services, and nutritional programs, the LFC from the outset developed a reputation as a valuable resource for all parents across the Lamoille Valley – regardless of age or socio-economic status.

In 1988, the Vermont Legislature established into law a statewide network of Parent Child Centers *“for the purpose of providing prevention and early intervention services such as parenting education, support, training, referral and related services to prospective parents and families with young children including those whose children are medically, socially, or educationally at risk.”*

As a founding member of the Parent Child Center Network, the LFC is one of the Network's 15 centers committed to delivering eight core services: home visiting, early childhood services, parent education, playgroups, parent support groups, concrete supports, community development, and information and referral. The Network meets regularly and works together to advocate for resources, share best practices, support and encourage innovation, conduct peer reviews, and promote supports and services for Vermont's children, youth, and families. For more than 30 years the PCCs have been an essential state-wide conduit for upstream innovation.

## **WHERE THE LAMOILLE FAMILY CENTER IS TODAY**

*Programs:* The LFC currently occupies a former ski dormitory on Cady's Falls Road in Morrisville. From this base of operations, 32 professionals reach more than 4,000 children, youth, parents, and caregivers annually. The LFC's reputation both locally and at a state level is of an organization known for the high quality of its services and programs. Among the services offered by the LFC are: on-site high quality child care for infants and toddlers; childcare referral and financial assistance; parent education and support services; playgroups; home visits; emergency assistance; educational support services for pregnant and parenting young women and their families; and youth and young adult case management and crisis intervention. For performance related metrics on the cluster of services under the Children's Integrated Services program, go to this link: <http://www.lamoillefamilycenter.org/results/>.



The programs are supported financially through 16 separate grants, the majority from the Department for Children and Families. An assortment of other funding, including grants from the Department of Health and private philanthropy, also support these programs. Most are renewed annually and are vulnerable to state and federal fiscal realities/pressures.

*Projects:* In addition to these core programs, the LFC develops both short and long term projects to meet emerging needs. Examples of these innovative responses to those needs include: the summer camp project for children and youth who otherwise would not be able to have a camp experience; and a weekly support and educational group for young fathers. These projects meet local needs that existing programs and their more restrictive funding sources do not.

*Community Events:* The most far-reaching annual community event coordinated by the LFC is the Holiday Project – a well-established project with its inception in the organization's earliest days. Community organizations, businesses, and individual donors enable 350 local children to receive age-appropriate Christmas gifts each year.

The LFC hosts an annual Royal Tea Party each August, attended by 70 princes and princesses. The annual Pumpkin Art Night in October brings about 125 children and their families together to celebrate fall. At the Morrisville 4th of July parade, LFC staff and board members distribute more than 1,200 books to children along the parade route.

*Population Health:* In addition to its in-house stable of services, LFC is a key partner in regional efforts addressing service systems related to children and families, and social determinants of health. These include groups that address housing, food security, transportation, substance abuse, health care reform, and child abuse and neglect. The dynamic health care reform environment is a place where the LFC plays an important role related to assuring children, youth, and their families are represented in both state and community-level discussions about increasing investments toward prevention and early intervention.

*Fundraising:* An annual campaign mailing goes out to about 900 donors each fall, with a return rate of approximately 30% that generates much needed unrestricted revenue. Occasional special appeals also draw in additional donations during the year.

In the last five years the LFC has chosen to focus its fundraising strategies on improving existing and growing relationships with individual donors, philanthropic organizations, and other sources of revenue. These efforts have realized some success with individual donors having increased both the amount and frequency of giving. Growing connections with local businesses has increased financial support from that sector and laid the foundation for additional opportunity.

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The successful candidate will possess a combination of skills, knowledge, and attributes that will assure the LFC fully leverages emergent opportunities and skillfully and nimbly navigates anticipated and unforeseen challenges. The Executive Director will assure the long term viability of the organization, as well as the success of children, youth, and families across the Lamoille Valley.

The work to support the organization fits under four broad categories.

**Finance and sustainability:** The LFC operates on a tight budget with pressures on many fronts. About 71% of the budget comes from one state department, and those grants and contracts have been level-funded for many years. About three-quarters of the staff earn less than \$20 per hour, and the differential between LFC staff and state employees doing comparable work is about 30% in wage and benefits. Strategic investments, fundraising, and private philanthropy have allowed the LFC to consistently provide salary increases. With many moving parts, the Executive Director manages the inevitable tensions between prudent fiscal management and the needs of a professional workforce.

**Programs and services:** With 16 programs and projects under its auspices, the LFC is a reliable go-to agency for Lamoille Valley's community partners, citizens, schools, and businesses when it comes to the needs of children, youth, and families. LFC serves as a regional hub for families with children, and supports youth across a range of needs. Increasingly, a growing demand for data, evidence, and effectiveness is driving innovation and integration with the health care system to address the social determinants of health. The LFC executive director will need to be an advocate for the organization's role in this dynamic environment.



**Facilities and technology:** LFC owns the Cady's Falls facility that houses staff offices and a small child care center, in addition to 24 acres of mostly forested property. While this informal and friendly building serves as a welcoming place to visit, it has many challenges as a base of operations for a large professional staff. While several large projects have been completed over the past few years, as with any old building there are on-going maintenance and capital improvements needs. The LFC has maintained an upgraded computer system, both hardware and software. Staying relatively current with those systems and ensuring digital and data security will continue to be important priorities for the Executive Director and the organization's leaders.

**Organizational culture:** The Executive Director serves as an organizational, regional, and state leader, significantly influencing the tone and tenor of how staff work with families, and how the agency interfaces with other regional organizations and influences policy at the state level. The LFC has created a culture that expects transparent decision making, encourages diverse points of view, engages in continuous improvement, and is focused on family strengths and resilience. The next Executive Director should be prepared to continue and grow these traditions.

**THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WILL HAVE DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCE IN THESE AREAS**

- Managing people and money
- Communicating orally and in writing
- Understanding and applying strengths-based approaches to child, youth, and family development
- Navigating Vermont's human service system, especially in the early childhood and youth services arenas
- Using data to measure program performance and whole population well-being
- Negotiating contracts
- Leading organizational, regional, and state efforts to improve outcomes
- Fundraising and grant writing
- Planning strategically
- Leading teams
- Supporting a work and organizational culture that is rooted in respect, inclusion, accountability, and empowerment

We hope this opportunity excites you. If it does, please send your resume and letter of interest to Dean Burnell at: [dburnell@lamoillefamilycenter.org](mailto:dburnell@lamoillefamilycenter.org) between January 2nd and January 26th, 2018.

**For more information about the Lamoille Family Center, go to the web site at:**  
<http://www.lamoillefamilycenter.org/>

