

# Sample HealthySteps Specialist Job Description



Customize this job description to meet your practice's hiring goals. The HealthySteps National Office at ZERO TO THREE highly recommends hiring a licensed behavioral health provider if your budget and local work force allows. For more hiring resources, please visit [healthysteps.org/site](https://healthysteps.org/site) onboarding.

## Summary

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The innovative HealthySteps approach is based on the most recent scientific understandings of how early childhood development works, and how it can best be supported to ensure individual, family, community, and societal well-being.

HealthySteps, a program of [ZERO TO THREE](https://www.zerotothree.org/), promotes nurturing caregiving, which supports families and improves healthy development and well-being of babies and toddlers, preparing them for school and life.

We aim to achieve this goal by weaving together the expertise of a child development expert, the HealthySteps Specialist, and the pediatric primary care provider. Together, just at the time when the brain is developing most rapidly, these experts bring focus to the important skills needed for families to foster healthy child development and life-long well-being: social emotional development; language and literacy skills; cognition skills; and perceptual, motor and physical development.

The entire practice works together to implement the HealthySteps model, with leadership from a Physician Champion and the HealthySteps Specialist.

The HealthySteps Specialist is an early child development expert who will join the pediatric primary care team at [PRACTICE NAME] to provide interventions, referrals, and follow-up for families with patients ages 0-3. The HealthySteps Specialist builds strong relationships with families and providers to increase the efficiency of the medical system and support team-based comprehensive care.

Learn more about HealthySteps at [healthysteps.org](https://healthysteps.org).

## Responsibilities

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### Preventive and Responsive Care

- Promotes HealthySteps within the practice to families and providers
- Conducts team-based well-child visits before, during, or following the primary care provider  
Visits focus on monitoring development, social-emotional functioning, and relational health, and providing anticipatory guidance

- Conducts consultations on a short-term basis for needs regarding development and/or behavioral concerns such as sleep, positive parenting, picky eating, etc.
- Maintains a child development support line and responds to and tracks call requests within the designated response time
- Participates in reflective supervision meetings
- May conduct home visits and may accompany families to key medical, specialty, and community agency appointments as needed
- May facilitate parent/caregiver groups

### **Referrals and Community Collaborations**

- Creates and maintains community resource directory/database. Provides referrals and tracks follow-up, as appropriate, to help families make successful connections to key resources within the community.
- Reaches out to community providers within first 6 months in position to share about HealthySteps, their role, and receive information to support referrals, warm handoffs, and ensure appropriate referral criteria is met.
- Participates (when appropriate) in community-wide early childhood and/or mental health meetings.

### **Team-Based Care**

- Is an active member of the HS Implementation Team and attends regular team meetings
- Works with the front office administrative staff to ensure scheduling of the HS Specialist's time in coordination with provider visits (i.e., well-child visits)
- Engages in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives to ensure the HealthySteps model is delivered with fidelity
- Collaborates with HealthySteps implementation team to implement all eight Core Components including universal screenings, making positive parenting and early learning guidance information available, and adjusting workflows for optimal efficiency
- Maintains open communication with all members of the primary care team
- Works closely with pediatric primary providers around care coordination, goal setting, coaching, and education about key aspects of a child's development
- Provides consultation and/or facilitates training to medical professionals and all practice staff re: early childhood development, early relational health/infant early childhood mental health, and trauma-informed practice

### **Caseload Tracking, Record Keeping, and Reporting**

- Maintains extensive databases required to meet HealthySteps fidelity metrics including both internal and external referrals.
- Collaborates with HealthySteps Implementation Team to complete required annual site reporting to the HealthySteps National Office at ZERO TO THREE, which may include analysis of both external database files and EHR data reports.
- Documents all patient clinical activity and care coordination in EHR.
- Tracks caseload to ensure capacity to deliver the HS services within the risk stratified service delivery model. This includes ensuring exit criteria is met and that families and children are elevated to higher levels of care or referred to community providers if needed.

### **Professional Development Activities**

- Participates in HealthySteps training (Virtual HealthySteps Institute)
- Participates in administrative and clinical/reflective supervision meetings

### **Qualifications**

- Master's degree in psychology, social work, counseling, early childhood education, or related field highly preferred
- Clinically licensed mental health professional preferred
- Experience and knowledge about early childhood growth and development, parent-child relational health, infant and early childhood mental health, and family systems

### **Essential Skills/Attributes**

- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Commitment to working with underserved populations in a community setting
- Empathic, supportive, and patient
- Strong motivational interviewing skills
- Ability to work with people of many backgrounds and cultures
- Ability to take initiative and a willingness to learn
- Ability to work well in teams and independently
- Ability to collect and enter data for program management, evaluation, and reporting purposes.
- Interest in the use of technology to improve care quality a plus. Excel, Word, Outlook, etc.
- "Grace under pressure" with the ability to multitask and triage/juggle multiple appointments and conflicting priorities
- Comfort with an open-door policy, potentially frequent interruptions, and warm hand offs
- Flexibility in communication: able to switch between being on the floor playing with young patients and communicating with medical professionals regarding mental health interventions in a professional, coherent, and efficient manner
- Ability to tolerate isolation as the HS Specialist may be the only behavioral health professional on site.
- "Professional backbone," confidence, and assertiveness with providers and colleagues (shaping appropriate referrals, etc.)
- Reflectiveness, insight, and curiosity about oneself