Primary (Gr. 1-4) Program Lead

Permanent, Onsite

At Promise Vancouver, our Out-of-School Care Program brings together children, preteens, and youth in a shared space of growth, leadership, and belonging. Our approach is grounded in the belief that when we invest deeply in teens, they in turn rise to invest in younger children, creating a cycle of growth and empowerment for everyone involved.

Children (grades 1-4) and preteens (grades 5-7) participate in engaging, relationship-centered programs where they are reminded daily that they are valuable and loved. Through literacy support, social-emotional learning, and consistent mentorship, we help them build confidence and overcome systemic and personal barriers. Youth in grades 8-12 take part in our Young Leaders Program, a paid employment and mentorship opportunity where teens are trained to lead and support younger children. With consistent coaching from adult staff, youth take on real responsibility, grow in confidence, and develop into trusted role models within the community.

The Role

As Primary Program Lead, you will join a close-knit team of youth-focused staff to lead this well-established and structured program. Your main role is to mentor and coach the teens as they grow in leadership and responsibility, while bringing your own expertise in working with children. You understand the emotional, developmental, and behavioural needs of children, and you model and teach effective strategies when challenges arise. You support youth in real time as they navigate their leadership roles, helping them build the tools and confidence needed to succeed. This position is ideal for someone with a background in child development and who finds purpose in mentoring youth and shaping the next generation of leaders through coaching rather than direct one-on-one care.

About Promise

Promise Vancouver is a charitable organization operating in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, focused on helping children and youth find security in knowing they are valuable and loved. The Promise approach is "Reach a Child, Raise a Leader, Restore Community", which we put into practice through long-term relationships and intentional programs that are trauma-informed, non-religious, and responsive to the needs of our neighbourhood.

The Christian commitment to love all people through meaningful relationships drives our mission: to journey with children and youth, helping them discover their inherent value. We foster safe, inclusive spaces where every young person feels seen, supported, and empowered to grow, regardless of their background.

To further this work, we seek team members whose personal faith reflects this same commitment to Christ-like love, demonstrating deep empathy and discernment for our community's diverse needs. This role offers the chance to contribute from a faith-informed perspective, applying professional expertise and spiritual depth to support our work's heart and rhythm, extending love and care to everyone we serve.

What You'll Be Responsible For

Youth Empowerment and Leadership Development

- Coordinate and mentor Young Leader staff, guiding them through our Empowerment Plan
- Collaborate with other staff to intentionally delegate responsibilities to Young Leaders, equipping them to take ownership of programs, with you transitioning into a support and coaching role as they grow
- Lead feedback meetings and check-ins with Young Leaders to discuss strengths and growth areas
- Oversee leadership development components (activities, facilitation, assessments, peer mentorship)
- Encourage, support, correct, and celebrate teens as they grow in character and skill, knowing when to step in and when to step back
- Co-lead training for the Young Leaders
- Lead afternoon Young Leaders debrief meetings
- Attend all youth outings, including Young Leaders Nights and retreats, to model leadership and strengthen community

Program Leadership and Coordination

- Oversee the daily after-school program by running the structured program with consistency, care, and excellence. There may be opportunity for creative additions and leadership input.
- Serve as the gatekeeper of the program: maintain deep knowledge of our mission, values, and of the community we serve. Ensure the program is safe and sustainable for all children, youth, and staff. This may require difficult decisions (e.g. waitlisting applicants, suspending participants if unable to meet the safety requirements). Holding to these boundaries is vital for the health and safety of all involved.
- Ensure safety and quality across all program activities and outings
- Cultivate relationships with families and caregivers by connecting about their children with empathy, clarity, and consistency.

Team Building and Administration

- Complete administrative tasks such as program registration, attendance tracking, health and safety documentation, incident reports, and any necessary licensing compliance and assessments.
- Communicate with partners, vendors, venues, and service providers with clarity and professionalism.
- Take weekly photos of the program and contribute to our social media presence by posting at least once per week on Instagram to showcase youth leadership and community impact.
- Represent Promise with professionalism, acting as a relational leader and trusted point person for families and community members

Who You Are

You are a confident, calm, and relational leader who comes alive mentoring teens and supporting children. You balance challenge and encouragement while holding high expectations with grace and compassion. Deeply called to youth and community work, you bring both heart and strong organizational skills to ensure programs run smoothly and effectively.

You thrive in complex environments, like Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, and approach challenges with sensitivity and calm. You have experience working with children and youth, especially those facing complex needs, and are skilled in coaching youth to succeed. You naturally build trust and connection by meeting people where they are.

As a generous team player, you value collaboration, clear communication, and mutual support. You have a passion for excellence and know the importance of delivering high-quality, safe, and meaningful programs.

Preferred Background

Your background might include:

- Degree in Education, Child & Youth Care, or related field (or equivalent education and experience)
- Experience working in child *and* youth care, education, social services, or recreation
- Experience working with vulnerable and/or underserved populations
- Experience working in the Downtown Eastside or similar communities
- Experience managing or leading teenage staff or volunteers
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) certification is an asset
- Living in or near East Vancouver/Downtown Eastside is an asset

What We Offer

- 32 hours/wk, permanent position, generally Monday to Thursday, 10am to 6pm, and about two Fridays/month 3-6pm (for youth-focused programming)
- Compensation: $27.50–$29/hour. Salary is based on education, experience, and qualifications
- Group extended health care benefits included
- An opportunity to engage in meaningful work with youth, families, and the broader community
- Supportive, values-driven team culture

Application Instructions

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, with a deadline of Nov. 27, 2026. Please submit your cover letter and resume to caitlin@promisevancouver.ca and our team will follow up with you. All applicants will receive a response and qualified candidates will be asked to interview for this position.