

Position Description

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| Title | Senior Family Services Practitioner (Vivs Place) |
| Business unit | Child and Family Services, Eastern and Southern Melbourne Cluster |
| Location | 23 High Street Cranbourne and other sites as required |
| Employment type | Full time Ongoing |
| Reports to | Team Leader - Family Services |

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We work alongside people of all ages in local communities in Victoria and Tasmania. Our services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania.

We empower children, young people and families to learn and thrive. We're there for people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction or mental illness. We support people with disability to live the life they choose. We assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment. We're proud to welcome and support asylum seekers to our community. We work to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

As an organisation, we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

We celebrate diversity and value the lived experience of people of every ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) people at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.

Our purpose: To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

1. Position purpose

The Senior Practitioner will carry a case load, providing support to vulnerable children and their families with a higher level of complexity, through outreach case management informed by the Uniting Therapeutic Model of Care. The position will also undertake a coaching, mentoring and leadership role within the Family Services Program and assist with supporting staff practice and networking on behalf of the agency.

The Senior Practitioner (Vivs place) will be primarily located at Vivs place, Dandenong. This position requires an increase level of autonomy in working from a multi-disciplinary residential setting with women and children who have experienced significant trauma and disadvantage. The Senior Practitioner will work collaboratively with key stakeholders to manage referrals, direct service delivery, consultation and crisis management.

2. Scope

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Budget: Nil

People: Nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Team Leaders – Family Services
- Manager – Child & Family Services
- Other Uniting programs and groups operating at Vivs Place.
- Orange Door staff

External

- DFFH
- Launch housing
- Members of the Southern Family Services Alliance
- Government and Community Stakeholders

4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Support the Team Leaders in managing workflow and mentoring high level practice and professional maturity
- Work flexibly and collaboratively with Launch Housing, Child Protection, VACCA and other agencies while providing a needs and risk assessment, and developing and implementing an integrated service response
- Manage a case load of families residing at Vivs Place, experiencing complex parenting and family issues.
- Manage consultation and referral pathways with Launch Housing and residents seeking Family Services support.
- Participate in local networking opportunities and attend relevant meetings, as directed.
- Actively participate in internal and/or external professional development opportunities as agreed
- Pro-actively lead and coordinate new initiatives or processes, as requested.
- Other projects and duties, as delegated

Quality and risk

- Maintain an individual case load and high standard of case file management including case notes and assessment documents within required timeframes
- Comply with relevant Occupational Health and Safety standards.
- Comply with Uniting policies and procedures and ensure Child Safety at all times.
- Raise and report any concerns about Child Safety/wellbeing immediately, in line with Child Safety Standards

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People and teams

- Assist Team Leaders in the development and modelling of a positive team culture.
- Undertaking Higher Duties, as required
- Drive the team in leading practices and effective process governance.
- Support program objectives and staff when Team Leaders are unavailable or absent.
- Provide support, guidance, coaching, leadership, and empowerment to the team including feedback.
- Undertake regular supervision and performance review with line manager, providing feedback to promote collaborative working relationships.
- Ensure that staff practice adheres to Uniting and Department of Health and Human Services policies and quality standards
- Promote and maintain a positive, respectful and enthusiastic work environment.
- Provide authentic team leadership and the highest level of professional conduct in alignment with Uniting's values.

Personal accountability

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
- Work with a high degree of autonomy.
- Cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children who come into association with us.
- Ensure appropriate use of resources.
- Work collaboratively with Uniting (Victoria Tasmania) employees and external stakeholders in accordance with Uniting's values and professional standards of behaviour.
- Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace.
- Identify opportunities to integrate and work collaboratively across teams.
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and health and safety of others (to the extent required).
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to health and safety consultation and communication.
- Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to line management
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health, and safety) and mandatory training specific to position.
- Declare anything that you become aware of through the course of your engagement which may impede your suitability to work with children and/or young people.
- Declare any potential or actual conflict of interest that you become aware of through the course of your engagement:
 - Based on a relationship with a current member of Uniting's workforce
 - Based on my ongoing work with another organisation

5. Person specification

Qualifications

- Tertiary qualifications in social work, psychology or equivalent area
- Current driver's licence valid in Victoria

Experience

- Excellent understanding of the legislative requirements of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA) as it effects family services particularly the "Best Interests" framework,

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information sharing provisions and child protection system.

- Knowledge of and extensive experience in child and family services and child protection systems.
- Excellent knowledge of a range of theoretical approaches relevant to working with infants, children, young people and families, including but not limited to attachment theory, trauma informed practice and infant mental health.
- Extensive knowledge and understanding of current issues facing families, children and young people.
- Extensive knowledge and understanding of reflective practice and its use within daily practice.
- Experience in providing support and mentoring other workers, including supervising students.
- Experience in building networking opportunities and representing organisational values at local meetings and forums.
- Extensive experience in support women and children whom have experienced Family Violence.
- Understanding of high density housing is desirable.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values.
- **Child safety:** demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- **Interpersonal focus:** strong interest in people and respect for others, ability to suspend judgement, high level self-awareness, with the ability to admit mistakes, as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development.
- **Teamwork:** demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships
- **Conscientious:** responsible, dependable, organised, persistent and willing to work flexible hours
- **Open to experience:** high level self-awareness with the ability to admit mistakes as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development.
- **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused, clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries Ability to liaise and advocate respectfully with DFFH Child Protection in relation to addressing protective concerns for children.
- **Initiative:** ability to work flexibly and creatively to meet the needs of families, children and young people
- **Relationship building:** High level of ability to actively engage with families during the process of assessment and short-term intervention, which may be crisis management.
- **Leadership:** highly developed emotional intelligence and ability to mentor and support team members through positive role modelling and reflective practice; capacity to work independently in the development of assessments of need and risk and to provide support and guidance to peers in these areas as required.
- **Computer skills:** sound computer skills, literacy, and familiarity with community services software packages
- **Communication:** open, honest, articulate, and flexible approach to communication both written and verbal; and the ability to listen actively.
- **Problem solving:** well developed negotiation and problem solving skills

Other requirements

- Legal eligibility to work in Australia
- A satisfactory national police records check is a condition of this position and is repeated every three years and international police check if required
- Compliance and understanding/familiarity with organisational policies, procedures relevant legislation (Quality management system, Equal Opportunity, Health and Safety)

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6. We are a child safe organisation

Uniting is a child safe organisation and is committed in everyday practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, at all times. As a child safe organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national (and international where relevant) police check and relevant Working With Children Check in Victoria prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking.

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.
