

Position Description

Title	Therapeutic Specialist – Family Violence (Psychologist, Social Worker, Counsellor)
Business unit	Therapeutic Services, Child, Youth & Families
Location	51 Princes Highway, Dandenong, Victoria 3175 and other locations as required including Doveton
Employment type	Maximum term contract (to 30 June 2024) Full time or part time
Reports to	Clinical Services Leader

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We have 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 are 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 are 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

This position sits within Therapeutic Services, is funded through Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)/Family Safety Victoria (FSV), and will be responsible for delivering short to medium term family violence therapeutic interventions to children and young people residing in a family violence refuge with their family as well as children and young people affected by family violence in the community.

The purpose of the Therapeutic Specialist position is to:

- Promote and facilitate safe, stable and nurturing environments for vulnerable children and families in our communities.
- Make a positive contribution to children's adjustment and development by designing and implementing tailored therapeutic interventions for vulnerable children and their families; and
- Provide professionals and community stakeholders with professional development opportunities that promote the most effective approaches and contemporary knowledge in working with vulnerable children and families.

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Primarily based at Dandenong and Doveton, the Therapeutic Specialist will also be required to travel to complete clinical tasks such as attending case conferences, and conducting home and school-based services.

2. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Clinical Services Leader
- Other Uniting staff, including Family Violence staff

External

- DFFH and FSV, professionals and other workers from schools, community and health organisations involved with clients
- Child Protection staff and other government departments
- WAYSS refuge staff and clients

4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Support and educate carers/parents to increase their understanding of the child/young persons' experience of trauma, with the aim being to increase the child/young person's social, emotional, behavioural and developmental functioning.
- Provide preliminary therapeutic supports/interventions to children/young people and their carer/parent during their episode of care within the refuge.
- Provide carers individualised education regarding the child and their presentation/behaviour.
- Observe the child/young person and their interactions with their carer/parent within the refuge.
- Provide a therapeutic space for parent and child to be able to safely connect and positively bond.
- Contribute to case plan and professional meetings as negotiated.
- Liaise with relevant professionals, and provide education and support to the child's network, to create a plan for the families continued healing journey, help support relevant professionals to make appropriate referrals and plan for future relevant trauma informed therapeutic services.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide specialist consultation to case managers, parents/carers, client families and other professionals
- Facilitate and participate in a reflective learning environment within the organisation
- Develop and maintain skills and ethical practice to a high level according to best contemporary practice
- Manage the development and delivery of specific portfolio projects
- Manage the development and co-ordination of groups for families, children & young people
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality as per organisational policy
- Maintain data systems including timely collection, uploading and reporting
- Actively mentor students / interns and other staff

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- Maintain professional conduct and ethical practice in accordance with the Code of Ethics of relevant professional society and Uniting policies
- Other projects and duties, as required

Administration

- Contribute to developing related literature and documentation
- Collect and analyse data to support strategic direction
- Write high quality, accurate, timely and thorough documentation of client work
- Additional reporting as required for stakeholders such as for Department of Health and Human Services

Quality and risk

- At the direction of the Clinical Services Leader, participate in the development and implementation of continuous improvement and risk mitigation strategies.

Personal accountability

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
- 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

- The minimum qualification for this role is a Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent qualification
- OR a minimum of 5 years relevant professional experience or a related qualification relevant to child and family welfare as per the mandatory minimum qualifications for family violence practitioners
- OR significant cultural knowledge and experience or lived experience, and have faced barriers to educational pathways as per the mandatory minimum qualifications for family violence practitioners
- Current Victorian Driver's Licence

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Experience

- Substantial experience providing assessments, therapy / counselling services to children, adults, couples and families with complex needs. This would mean that you have completed counselling with complex clients.
- Substantial experience providing therapeutic support to families that have experienced trauma/ family violence.
- Demonstrated understanding of the gendered nature of family violence, and feminist theory in responding to violence against women and children in the home.
- Demonstrated knowledge of relevant theoretical approaches for working with children, adults, couples and families.
- A clear understanding of the issues facing families, children and young people who have experienced trauma and/or attachment difficulties
- Some experience providing parenting assessment, strategies, and education to carers and parents of vulnerable children with challenging behaviours
- Shows awareness and understanding of child abuse and neglect
- Demonstrated knowledge of practices to engage and assure the cultural safety of clients from a diverse range of backgrounds, including those from an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background, or the LGBTIQ+ community
- Working knowledge of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) framework
- Experience providing crisis therapeutic support and/or short-term therapeutic interventions.
- Demonstrated competence in providing psychological therapies and services to children, young people, parents and carers with diverse and/or complex needs.
- Demonstrated competence in applying relevant theoretical approaches in planning and implementing therapeutic interventions, formulations and assessments.
- Demonstrated competence in assessment of children, adults and families, including emotional, developmental, cognitive, and systemic considerations.
- Experience providing play therapy/art therapy/dyadic therapy/trauma therapy/sensory-motor therapy to children and young people- Desirable.
- Experience in providing clinical supervision and mentoring to staff and/or students-Desirable
- Experience providing family and/or couple relationship counselling – Desirable.
- Experience facilitating psycho-therapeutic groups – 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.
- **Risk management:** demonstrated competence in assessing risk and responding appropriately
- **Organisational skills:** strong ability to multitask and prioritise work commitments, able to manage multiple priorities
- **Communication:** open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication – written and verbal, and ability to actively listen.
- **Administrative skills:** confident user of Microsoft office and Outlook, demonstrated competence in report writing and case file notes to a high standard.
- **Interpersonal focus:** strong interest in people and respect for others. The ability to suspend judgement.
- **Cooperative:** demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships.
- **Conscientious:** Responsible, dependable, organised and persistent.
- **Open to experience:** High level self-awareness, with the ability to recognise mistakes, as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development.
- **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries.

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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 (and NDIS Worker Screening Check where relevant) to your State 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.
