

Position Description

Title	Integrated Family Services – Senior Wellbeing Practitioner
Business unit	Western Community Services
Location	Home Agency – Horsham The position will be outposted in community settings i.e. schools, M&CHN, Early Childhood settings.
Employment type	Full time/Part time maximum term until 30 June 2025
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

Context

The *Roadmap for Reform* articulates a vision to redevelop the current system of support to make it more effective in improving outcomes for children. It seeks to recalibrate the system so that more support is available to families earlier and before problems are entrenched. The *Roadmap for Reform* comprises three “pathways to support” along which services are organised and these pathways reflect the varied journeys and needs of children and families.

The ‘early help’ pathway (Pathway 1) is targeted to families with emerging needs and vulnerabilities. A priority of the *Roadmap for Reform* for 2021-24 is to shift the child and family services system, to intervene earlier to improve family functioning and avoid families needing more intensive support or statutory intervention to assure the safety, wellbeing and healthy development of their children. Early Help services will include place-based approaches to service delivery that bring services to locations where families are already engaged, such as schools, Maternal and Child Health and Early Years settings. The delivery of services will require that community services work together with the universal services providing targeted groups and interventions to children and families, that will normalise support and reduce stigma, be culturally sensitive, trauma and evidence informed. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has made available funding to trial a service model

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that increases the accessibility and acceptability of support to families with emerging needs.

The Service Model

The aim of the trial is to provide evidence-based inclusive, early help to families to support the wellbeing and development of children from birth to 18 years to thrive and reduce the need for intensive family and statutory services.

The service model will:

- be underpinned by partnerships between key stakeholders to provide a place-based response to meet the needs of children and families.
- uphold a commitment to Aboriginal self-determination.
- be responsive to people's intersectional needs and identities.

The interventions that will be delivered include:

- individualised short-term support (including outreach) such as counselling and parent coaching to build parents confidence and capacity to respond positively to parenting challenges
- support to navigate and connect to specialist services such as speech therapy
- universally targeted groups providing evidence-based parent education to build parents knowledge, skills and confidence
- flexible funding to support families in crisis or facilitate their participation and connection to the community
- community activation by connecting parents to informal supports such as peer support groups based on mutual interest, recreational, sporting, or other social activities
- specialist advice and consultation to support universal services staff to build their capability and skills to support families accessing their service.

The target group for the trial is families with emerging needs with children aged from birth to 18 years participating in universal services including early childhood education and care services, primary and secondary schools, maternal and child health (MCH), ante natal and post-natal services. The age cohorts are:

- birth to 3 years
- children, 3 to 5 years
- children, 5 to 12 years

1. Position purpose

The Integrated Family Services – Senior Wellbeing Practitioner will be part of the Family Services team and will work in partnership with universal services such as Early Childhood, Primary Schools, Maternal and Child Health and hospitals to deliver services, understanding and responding to the family's emerging needs. The program is particularly targeted toward families who require *early help* to support the wellbeing and development of their children, to reduce the need for more intensive services or statutory intervention.

The child and family outcomes to be achieved are:

- improvements in the quality of parent child interactions.
- increased parental confidence and competence to respond positively to parenting challenges.
- increased awareness by parents of self-care.
- improved participation of children in MCH, kindergarten, and school.
- increased social connection of parents e.g. participation in peer support groups.
- increased confidence of universal staff to support families with emerging needs.

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2. Scope

Budget: Where required

People: Where required

3. Relationships

Internal

- Family Services Team
- Team leaders / Senior practitioners
- Manager and Senior Manager
- Wider Uniting programs and teams

External

- Department of Families Fairness and Housing
 - Department of Education and Training
 - Maternal and Child health, hospital settings
 - Local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO)
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4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

The Senior Wellbeing Practitioner will:

- Work with significant autonomy under the general direction of senior management
- Draw upon a deep well of knowledge and skills, across multiple areas of expertise to support and establish new methods or practices to achieve outcomes when and where required
- Provide expert guidance, support and advice to lower-level employees and volunteers where required
- Work within the Uniting Principles and the service delivery expectations as outlined in the Parenting and Family Services Service Delivery manual.
- Provide individual support to parents to build their skills and confidence and support and assist them to navigate to more specialised services or community supports that can assist them
- Provide group-based services that support families attending the universal service develop their skills and confidence and connect with other families. Groups may include supported playgroups or peer support groups
- Deliver universally targeted groups that are evidence-based parenting education groups for families at the universal service and also offered to the broader community in which the universal service is located. Groups will focus on topics that are relevant to families and that assist parents to build their skills and confidence to respond positively to parenting challenges.
- Maintain data regarding service delivery and impact information on the groups delivered and the number of families participating in each group.
- Establish Peer Support groups identifying opportunities for parents for the purpose of mutual support and to build social connection.
- Administer Flexible Funding to families experiencing financial crisis, to access specialist services or connect with community supports.
- Capability building – Offer support and advice to universal service staff to build their capability to support families. This may include consultation and advice to assist a universal service staff member to respond to a family or information sessions delivered to all staff at the universal service.

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- Provide a flexible service response to families that facilitates their participation in the above intervention. Some capacity to provide a flexible response will be required.
- Support Early Help (EH) team to work with in parameters of program and follow the processes as outlined
- Complete tasks as directed by leadership in alignment with award classification and responsibilities

Administration and reporting

- Ensure client records, care plans and safety assessments are up to date and meet quality standards, statutory, organisational, and funding body requirements
- Complete requests for statistical and other information in a timely and accurate manner
- Keep accurate and complete records of work activities in accordance with legislative requirements and the Victorian Government's records, information security and privacy policies and requirements
- Support team to collate and complete monthly data for reporting. Finalise report and provide to leadership for submission.
- Provide support to Senior Leadership where required to collate acquittal information for the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

Quality and risk

- Carry out all responsibilities in relation to the organisational Quality and Risk Management, Compliance and Workplace, Health and Safety frameworks, policies and procedures
- Assist with and support internal and external audit processes as required
- Attend core and other safety-related training including Induction

Stakeholder relationships

- Build and maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders to facilitate a partnership and integrated practice approach to service delivery.

Legal requirements & risk management

- Ensure all legal, funder and statutory requirements pertaining to the position are met including serious incidents, reportable conduct, and mandatory reporting (child safety)
- Escalate and provide advice on risks, priorities, accountability and practice matters to the reporting line manager.
- Report areas of serious risk to next level supervisor and work together to mitigate those risks.

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

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- 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
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5. Performance Indicators

- Work to meet DFFH funded Targets
 - Compliance with DFFH audit requirements
 - Comply with Uniting Policies and Procedures
 - Comply with Uniting's Code of Conduct
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6. Person specification

Qualifications

- A Diploma and/or Bachelor of Social Work or Psychology or relevant discipline or a willingness to study further and transferable experience.

Experience

- Demonstrated ability and experience in the child and family welfare field, particularly with regard to support of vulnerable and complex families and at risk children.
- A sound understanding of family and parenting issues, especially in the context of child protective concerns
- Commitment to, and understanding of working with marginalised groups including indigenous and CALD clients
- 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 CALD background, or the LGBTI community
- Sound understanding of the "Best Interests" framework and the Child, Youth and Family Act (2005)
- Sound understanding of MARAM and the Child Information Sharing Scheme
- Experience in the delivery of groupwork
- An understanding of child and family services, the universal service system and/or broader social services sector and their fundamental practices and theories is required.
- Demonstrated experience working collaboratively in a multi-agency approach to the provision of services to vulnerable children, families and diverse communities is required
- The ability to work independently and know when to consult in relation to risk issues
- Highly developed assessment and analytical skills with demonstrated capacity to identify emerging risk issues and concerns.
- Highly developed problem-solving skills
- Highly developed written and interpersonal communication skills
- Effective communication and negotiation skills
- Good understanding of Occupational Health & Safety Issues
- Excellent organisational skills with a capacity to prioritise tasks effectively in a dynamic environment.
- Ability to use and operate a personal computer and a range of software package

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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.
- **Statutory knowledge:** An understanding of the relevant legislation and current policy relating to the care of children and families.
- **Client focused:** An understanding of the complex issues that may lead to families needing support of family services. Barriers to families accessing services and/or completing tasks. Ability to respond in a manner that is engaging, flexible and sensitive to individual needs
- **Culturally aware:** Values diversity in the delivery of services to young people and families including but not limited to those from CALD and indigenous backgrounds
- **Inclusivity:** Understanding of issues related to individuals who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised and a commitment to working with these groups
- **Teamwork:** Provide proactive support to others, contribution to the continuous improvement of a positive, collaborative and effective work environment
- **Professionalism:** An ability and commitment to working cooperatively internally and with existing agencies in the delivery of services to children, young people and their families
- **Flexible:** When you're flexible, you're versatile, resilient and responsive to change. Changes in the community services sector are ongoing, and the ability to be flexible helps transition between stages.
- **Reflective thinking:** Is a core principle and practice of employees. Reflective thinking supports us to criticize our own thoughts and see situations for the bigger picture.
- **Personal Attributes:**
 - Verbal ability: Open, honest, articulate, and flexible approach to communication – written and verbal. The ability to actively listen
 - 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 admit mistakes, as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development
 - Professionalism: Professional, confident, focused, and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries

Other Requirements

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

7. 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.

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8. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and accepted the above Position Description

Employee

Name:

Signature:

Date: