**JOB DESCRIPTION**

Senior Psychologist Permanency Support Program (PSP)

# **ABOUT UNITING**

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

**Our values:** As an organisation we are **Imaginative, Respectful, Compassionate** and **Bold**.

At Uniting, we believe in taking real steps to make the world a better place. We work to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice. Our focus is always on the people we serve, no matter where they are at in their life.

Our services are in the areas of aged care, disability, child and family, community services, and chaplaincy and we get involved in social justice and advocacy issues that impact the people we serve. As an organisation we celebrate diversity and welcome all people regardless of disability, lifestyle choices, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or gender identity. We commit to respecting children and take action to keep them safe.

Uniting is the services and advocacy arm of the Uniting Church NSW & ACT and as such Uniting leaders understand, support and can express the mission and purpose of the Uniting Church.

# **ABOUT THE ROLE**

**Role Purpose**

The Permanency Support Program (PSP) aims to give every child/young person a loving home, whether that be with parents, family, extended family, through guardianship or quality long term care. We provide culturally supported placement options for children and young people 0-18 years of age. PSP also provides a ‘light touch’ Aftercare service for young people 18-25 years who have left foster care.

This role is responsible for leading a small team of psychologists providing psychological assessments, behaviour support plans, advice to caseworkers, carers, parents and family about the implementation of plans, and specialist psychological support to the multidisciplinary support team in their work with children and young people.

The role is a flexible full or part time role, and works to maximise outcomes for children and young people (under eighteen years of age) by assessing and recommending evidence based, individualised strategies for them, along with plans to build the capacity of families and carers to develop the strengths of each individual.

# ROLE KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

* In partnership with the Operations Manager, ensure the clinical team are managed so they meet performance requirements, ethical and professional standards, as well as community and stakeholder expectations.
* In partnership with the Operations Manager be responsible for ensuring that PSP psychologists have the necessary resources and capability to deliver psychological assessments, behaviour support plans, advice to caseworkers, carers, parents and family about the implementation of plans, and specialist psychological support to the Transdisciplinary Support Team in their work with children and young people.
* Support the team with practical ways of considering a child or young person’s needs through cross functional lenses focusing on developmental needs, education needs, therapeutic needs and cultural needs. Promote and embed case planning which doesn’t occur in isolation but at all times, views the child or young person and their needs holistically.
* Collaborate with all members of the PSP leadership team to build and lead a PSP culture that supports data integrity. Ensure effective clinical data management training for staff, and regular monitoring of this data.

**As the Senior Psychologist in PSP, your role specifically will:**

* Lead a small team of psychologists providing psychological assessments, behaviour support plans, advice to caseworkers and carers about the implementation of plans, and specialist psychological support to the Transdisciplinary Support Team in their work with children and young people.
* Collaborate with PSP staff, carers and children, external psychologists, therapists and families, to provide therapeutic practice support to best meet the needs of complex children including planning, implementing and evaluating this support.
* Mentor other staff in therapeutic case management using your in-depth knowledge of attachment, childhood development and trauma informed practice and dealing with challenging behaviours.
* Advise the PSP leadership team, other caseworkers, carers and parents about how best to support the needs of individual children and young people using your experience, skills and sound judgement.

Ensure the clinical team are supported and coached where necessary, to adhere to all policies and procedures (organisational and PSP specific) and occasional projects to develop and improve service delivery approaches.

**Assessments and Planning**

* Provide assessments and other appropriate input for the development of behaviour support plans, and assist caseworkers with the development of the plans as well as sign-off/approve plans.
* Oversee the quarterly review of behaviour support plans, especially where clients are on psychotropic medication or other restricted practices. Conduct quality checks on reviews and coach Caseworker/Support Consultant in improvements.
* Review Behaviour Support Plans, create recommendations while building caseworker/support consultants capacity in this area.

**Coaching Staff, Families and Carers**

* Work on strategies for behaviour support plans in consultation with key people in the young person’s life, such as educators, carers, parents and families, and ensure behaviour support plan information is shared back with key people to ensure consistent delivery.
* Coach staff in effective implementation of behaviour support plans.
* Build capacity of staff (Caseworkers/Support Consultants) to identify and implement strategies and work them through with carers, parents and educators etc.

**Direct Support**

* Provide direct support as needed, including case management and/or counselling, for particularly challenging situations or where the early intervention of a professional psychologist is required (under Specialist Support Coordination if an NDIS participant).

**Multidisciplinary Support**

* Support the multidisciplinary support team with complex cases where psychologist support would be beneficial, such as where there are complex behavioural and/or family relationship issues. Support may be consulting or assistance with writing plans, developmental and/or psychometric assessments, or actual face-to-face support including forums like brief case consultations.

**Community Networks and Inclusion**

* Build community networks to facilitate community inclusion strategies to support children and young people.

**Practice and Improvements**

* Coach Uniting PSP staff in practice improvement as needed.
* Complete reporting requirements for Uniting.

# Key relationships

| Who | Why |
| --- | --- |
| **Internal\*** |  |
| Head of | * Through the PSP Operations and Program Managers, escalate issues, keep informed, advise and receive instructions |
| Operations Manager, PSP | * Collaborate to ensure the voices of children and young people are central to decision making and actions * Partner to ensure psychological services are integrated across regions in line with contractual obligations and needs of children and young people |
| PSP Program Manager | * Collaborate to ensure the voices of children and young people are central to decision making and actions * Partner to ensure PSP psychological services are well coordinated and applied to the area of the greatest need |
| Practice Lead, CYF | * Collaborate with to ensure a contemporary, permanency and restoration focused PSP Practice Framework * Partner to support holistic, practice responses for complex children and young people |
| Quality Improvement Specialist | * Actively partner to drive a culture of continuous improvement within teams |
| Psychologists, PSP | * Lead and collaborate with on decisions regarding how each person’s role contributes towards the PSP outcomes * Lead and collaborate to ensure the delivery of timely and high quality Behaviour Support Plans * Lead and collaborate to support clinical planning for complex children and young people |
| PSP Caseworker team | * Lead and collaborate with on decisions regarding how each person’s role contributes towards the PSP outcomes |
| Carer Engagement Support Coordinator | * Collaborate and work with to achieve teams business outcomes for children, young people, their carers and birth families |
| Carer Engagement Support Team | * Work collaboratively with CES leadership and the wider team. Ensure regular, proactive and positive information exchanges between teams that benefit the wellbeing and life outcomes for children and young people. |
| **External** |  |
| Community Partners/Care and Service Providers | * Maintain and monitor relationships with local NSW Department of Community and Justice Offices to ensure the PSP programs are able to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people. |

**Role Dimensions**

**Reporting line**

* This role reports to the Operations Manager PSP

**Direct reports**

PSP psychologists

**Essential requirements**

**Qualifications:**

* Registration as a Psychologist through the Psychology Board of Australia.
* Accredited to conduct relevant psychometric testing.
* Current NSW Working With Children Check clearance for paid employment.

**Your experience ticks the following boxes:**

* Experience dealing with challenging behaviours, using positive behavioural support to build social skills and using attachment/family systems theory to improve relationships.
* Experience applying models of therapeutic and evidence-based practice.
* Experience working with children with a background of trauma, and understanding of child protection issues.
* Experience dealing with clients who have a plan that incorporates the use of psychotropic medication and other restricted practices.
* Ability to coach others to implement, maintain and review strategies.
* Demonstrated ability to empathise and maintain a person centred approach.

**Even better**

* The confidence to challenge thinking and leadership, for example, in questioning PSP placements.
* Experience working with a psychosocial childhood development perspective or model
* Accreditation to provide supervision for clinical psychologists.
* Outstanding organisational and communication skills.
* Current driver’s licence and use of own vehicle (with kilometres reimbursed) for business use.
* Willingness to travel within NSW as required.

**Capabilities for the role**

| Your Key Capabilities | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Capability** | **Proficient performance looks like** | **Highly proficient performance looks like** |
| **People**  **Leadership**  Develop and foster productive relationships | * Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change * Set an example for others to follow and identify and explain ethical issues * Raise and work through challenging issues * Continuously identifies opportunities to enhance employee engagement levels through training and development opportunities | * Delegates and assigns responsibility, evaluating performance along the way. * Knows when team members can operate independently and when to intervene * Role models PSP culture of achievement and acknowledge the input of others * Provides current, direct and actionable positive and corrective feedback to others |
| **Communication**  Communicate Effectively | * Actively listens to others * Writes fluently in a range of styles and formats * Acknowledges and respects culturally affirmative communication | * Create opportunities for others to be heard * Tailors communication to the audience * Ability to clearly articulate and convey complex information |
| **Relationships**  Work Collaboratively | * Work towards positive and mutually satisfactory outcomes * Utilise facts, knowledge and experience to support recommendations * Fosters progressive team relationships by adopting collaborative practices | * Takes responsibility for developing and maintaining effective contacts, relationships and networks * Assists employees to understand the personal behaviour implications of culture and change |
| **Results**  Delivers on intended outcomes | * Use own expertise and seek others' expertise to achieve work outcomes * Provides and facilitates a work environment that motivates and retains key talent * Be willing to seek out input from others and share own ideas to achieve best outcomes * Make sure the team understand expected goals and acknowledge success | * Take responsibility for delivering on intended outcomes * Research and analyse information and make recommendations based on relevant evidence * Identify, assessing, mitigating and re-evaluating dangers and risks as a standard practice * Identify issues that may hinder completion of tasks and find appropriate solutions |
| **Safety**  Commitment to providing a safe and healthy working environment | * Considers the care and wellbeing of others, including their emotional, mental, physical and cultural safety * Ensures effective safety and risk processes to build increasing accountability in practice and ensures duty of care. | * Demonstrate active and visible leadership in WHS risk management and in building and supporting a culture of incident reporting * Models exemplary WHS practices by working through issues and identifying solutions to ensure the wellbeing of customers and employees |
| Practice Specific Capabilities  Practice specific capabilities focus on reflective practice to ensure quality decisions in complex service delivery situations and promote continuous improvement | | |
| **Capability** | **Proficient performance looks like** | **Highly proficient performance looks like** |
| **Person centred**  Elicit the child or young person’s voice | * Demonstrate a high level of integrity and ethical conduct * Communicate and act in ways that reflect a Strengths-based practice * Lead others to use a range of age appropriate practices to ensure children and young people’s views are known and taken into account in all decision making * Lead others to work inclusively with families and children’s networks for life | * Ensures that others understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate * Apply and encourage reflective and culturally affirmative practice within the team to make quality decisions in complex situations |