

Position Description

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| Title | Family Services Practitioner |
| Business unit | Inner East Child and Family Services, Eastern Melbourne |
| Location | 160 Whitehorse Road, Blackburn, Victoria 3130 |
| Employment type | Full time Ongoing |
| Reports to | Team Leader – Integrated Family Services |

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

Uniting is part of the Inner East Family Services Alliance providing generalist family services as well as Child Wellbeing expertise in the Inner East Orange Door. The objective of family services is to promote the safety, stability and development of vulnerable children, young people and their families and to build child, family and community capacity and resilience.

The Family Services Practitioner is responsible for developing Child and Family Action Plans utilising the “Best Interests’ Framework”, providing direct client support and case management; referral to additional specialists supports and advocacy where required. Through child centred, family focused service delivery they will assist families to provide effective parenting and a stable environment to promote the safety, wellbeing and healthy development of the children. This position will be required to work in the Family Services program located in Blackburn. Occasional travel maybe required to other Uniting sites and partner agencies.

2. Scope

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Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Team Leader
- Team colleagues
- Family Services staff
- Other Uniting staff

External

- Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
 - Staff of agencies providing services relevant to the service delivery to families and the wider service network
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4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Provide an outreach service to children, young people and families with complex needs, that is flexible and creative
- Undertake Child and Family Assessments and Planning processes based on Best Interest Principles
- Coordinate and implement tailored interventions designed to enhance family functioning and client outcomes
- Undertake ongoing analysis of the child's safety and wellbeing in the care of their family including an analysis of family functioning, capacity to parent and to make and maintain changes
- Regularly review work undertaken with families to identify progress and to celebrate change
- Work respectfully with families with reference to social, political, familial and cultural restraints that impact on their parenting and family life
- Work flexibly and collaboratively with Child Protection, VACCA and other agencies while providing a needs and risk assessment, and developing and implementing an integrated service response
- Support families through the provision of responsive group work
- Undertake administrative and data collection responsibilities
- Participate in meetings relating to the management and development of the program
- Contribute to a positive and supportive team culture
- Be accountable through supervision with Team Leader
- Work flexible hours
- Other projects and duties, as required

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

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- 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

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology or equivalent area
- Current driver's licence valid in Victoria

Experience

- Demonstrated ability as a practitioner in the child, youth and family welfare field
- A commitment to the family-centred approach, and the family strengthening and empowerment models of practice
- An understanding of the 'Best Interests' framework and CYFA 2005 is desirable
- Ability to engage families and to provide outreach services, sometimes in a difficult or stressful context
- Demonstrated ability to work flexibly to meet the current needs of families, young people and children
- 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

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; the ability to suspend judgement
- **Teamwork:** demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships
- **Flexible:** ability to work flexible hours
- **Organisational skills:** demonstrated effective organisational and time management skills
- **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused, clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries
- **Computer skills:** sound computer skills, literacy and familiarity with community services software packages
- **Communication:** well developed open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication both written and verbal including the ability to prepare for and conduct case plan meetings and implement agreed actions, along with the ability to actively listen
- **Open to experience:** high level self-awareness with the ability to admit mistakes as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development
- **Conscientious:** responsible, dependable, organised and persistent

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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
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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.
