

Position Description

Title	Case Worker – Starting Out
Business Unit	Child, Youth & Families
Location	185 Mount Dandenong Road, Croydon, Victoria 3136
Employment type	Full time Maximum term to June 2025
Reports to	Team Leader Starting Out

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

Starting Out is a unique Family Services program, which provides an innovative support service to young people 25 years of age or younger who are pregnant or parenting and residing in Melbourne’s Eastern Metropolitan Region. The work focuses on enhancing the capacities of young parents and their children to develop positive relationships with each other and the community. In addition to individual work with families through a Family Services outreach case management model, Starting Out also provides a group based program which focuses on parenting education, attachment based play activities and building social relationships and connections.

The Case Worker will manage a caseload and provide support to vulnerable babies, children and families with a high level of complexity through provision of case management informed by the Best Interests Case Practice Model. This includes:

- Providing outreach services to families
- Undertaking ongoing risk assessments
- Developing parenting skills and knowledge
- Proactively intervening to ensure positive outcomes for children and families
- Developing and implementing intervention programs in collaboration with the family

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- Participating in the group work program
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2. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Team Leader – Starting Out
- Manager – Child and Family Services Outer East
- Eastern Family Services staff

External

- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection staff
 - Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)
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4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Provide outreach Family Services support to vulnerable and at risk babies, children and families, experiencing a diverse range of complex issues
- 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
- Work respectfully with families with reference to social, political, familial and cultural restraints that impact on their parenting and family life
- Undertake assessments of families skills, knowledge and risk and implement plans accordingly
- Maintain a high standard of case file management including case notes and assessment documents within required timeframes
- 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
- Participate in local networking opportunities and attend relevant meetings as directed
- Actively participate in internal and/or external professional development opportunities as agreed
- Participate in the provision of the group work program

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.

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- 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

- A relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology or equivalent
- A driver's licence valid in Victoria

Experience

- Excellent knowledge of Family Services and/or Child Protection including the Child Youth and Families Act 2005 and Best Interest framework
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of a range of theoretical approaches relevant to working with young families, babies and children
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking risk assessments of babies, children and adolescents, including a good understanding of age, stage and development (birth – 5yrs)
- Sound understanding and experience supporting issues impacting vulnerable young parents and their children
- Experience with successfully and creatively engaging young families in planning and implementing appropriate interventions in relation to the development of parenting capacity and family functioning
- Capacity to liaise and develop effective networks and working relationships with other professionals and support services
- Experience with planning and facilitation of group programs and activities
- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from 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 CALD background, or the LGBTIQ+ community
- Ability to liaise and negotiate with the DHHS Child Protection in relation to addressing protective concerns for children
- Capacity to plan and implement appropriate interventions in relation to the development of parenting capacity and family functioning

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.
- **Communication:** open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication both written and verbal, and the ability to actively listen
- **Interpersonal focus:** strong interest in people and respect for others, and the ability to suspend judgement

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- **Cooperative:** demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships
 - **Conscientious:** responsible, dependable, organised and persistent
 - **Open to experience:** high level of self-awareness and self-reflective capacity , with the ability to admit mistakes and accept feedback as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development
 - **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries
 - **Organisational skills:** excellent time management and organisational skills and the ability to work flexibly and creatively to meet the needs of families, children and young people
 - **Negotiation skills:** ability to influence and negotiate effectively by facilitating agreement between parties based on trust, honesty, and interest-based bargaining.
 - **Problem solving:** ability to address issues in a calm and thoughtful manner in order to understand obstacles and develop strategies to overcome them which are practical and sustainable
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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.
