

Position Description

Title	Social Worker, Enhanced Therapeutic Contact Service (ETCS)
Business unit	Children, Youth and Families
Location	10 Ti Tree Drive, Doveton
Employment type	Part time (60.8 hours per fortnight) Maximum term until 14 July 2022 (parental leave cover)
Reports to	Team Leader, Enhanced Therapeutic Contact Service

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

1. Program information

The Enhanced Therapeutic Contact Service supports and supervises court ordered contact visits for children living in Out of Home Care. The aim is to create a stable, predictable, and safe environment to enhance the quality of contact visits. Keeping the child's best interests at the forefront, team members support parents to develop parenting skills, help to rebuild relationships, promote child development, and support families to engage with services in their community. ETCS staff advocate for children, provide role modelling, coaching, parenting education, and plan contact experiences to achieve agreed therapeutic goals. Goals for contact are developed in partnership with Child Protection and parents to work towards reunification, unsupervised visits, or alternate means of supervision.

The Program aims to support contact as a therapeutic experience for children and each family referred to the program is allocated a keyworker who supervises and plans visits, conducts transports, and is responsible for casework including referring families to other services and attending case plan and care team meetings.

The program works with children and young people aged 0-18 years and is delivered across the Bayside Peninsula and Southern Melbourne areas. Visits may be centre based at Doveton or occur in the community or the home. Referrals are received by Child Protection, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

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2. Position purpose

The primary function of this role is to:

- Facilitate therapeutic contact between children and their families that considers the age, stage, culture, and gender of children and promotes their connection to family, and their safety, stability, and development.
 - Plan and deliver a range of therapeutic interventions to enhance the quality of contact visits. Utilise a strength-based approach during contact visits to support parents through coaching, psycho education, play, and role modelling.
 - Ensure the highest quality of service provision through a commitment to organisational values, policy adherence, and maintenance of positive relationships with key stakeholders
 - Ensure services are client focused and service delivery is compliant with all regulatory standards and funding requirements
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3. Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

4. Relationships

Internal

- Senior Managers, Southern
- Program Manager
- Team leader
- Co-located staff and team colleagues
- Other Uniting staff

External

- Child and adult clients and carers
 - DFFH Child Protection personnel
 - Other professionals
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5. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Complete initial and ongoing assessments of children and families using the Best Interests case practice model
- Utilise evidence-based approaches to service delivery with the child's experience at the centre of all decision-making and action
- Collaborate with colleagues, parents, and professionals in the care team to develop therapeutic goals and implement therapeutic activities and approaches in contact visits
- Work as part of a multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of the service to ensure service delivery best matches the needs of the child and their family
- Work to ensure the child's experience in the program promotes safety, stability and development within a culturally competent framework
- Manage intake and goal setting meetings and conduct regular goal reviews
- Facilitate referrals to other services where appropriate

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- Provide transport for children and their families to participate in the program
- Logistical planning and liaison with placement agencies or caregivers
- Set priorities and manage time appropriately
- A willingness to work flexible hours to meet program requirements (this includes before or after regular office hours)
- Other projects and duties, as required

Administration

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date contact observation records and case notes
- Maintain accurate files, electronic records, and scheduling data compliant with agency standards
- Comply with agency and program protocols and systems (incident reporting, fleet, after hours procedures, etc)

Quality and risk

- Participate in initiatives to enhance quality of service delivery, including audits, reflective practice and team development and team planning
- Identify, assess, and report risk, particularly in a contact setting
- Participate in regular supervision, reflective practice sessions, secondary consults as required, and performance reviews with supervisor
- Be open to experience and learning; possess self-awareness and the ability to recognise mistakes as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development
- Comply with relevant Occupational Health and Safety standards

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

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- A tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology, or related field
- Current First Aid and CPR qualifications or willingness to obtain such if successful in application

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Experience

- Demonstrated ability as a practitioner in the child, youth and family welfare field
- A strong understanding of children’s physical and emotional developmental stages and milestones, and the potential impact of trauma on development
- A commitment to trauma informed, family-centered, and strength-based models of practice.
- An understanding of the Best Interests case practice model and CYFA 2005, and some familiarity with Child protection intervention phases and orders.
- Experience of working in a multi-disciplinary team, and collaboratively within care teams
- Solid understanding of Microsoft Office programs
- Familiarity or training in the MARAM Framework is desirable

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting’s values.
- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- Ability to work collaboratively with families to identify and achieve shared goals.
- Demonstrated experience and competence in applying relevant theoretical approaches and goal-oriented interventions with children and their families where there is a history of abuse and trauma.
- Demonstrated knowledge of practices to engage and ensure the cultural safety of clients from a diverse range of backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with a CALD background, or individuals identifying as LGBTIQ+.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills: the ability to engage and communicate effectively with a variety of age groups, cultures, and language groups; able to utilise interpreters. High level written skills and an ability to prepare high quality written reports and case notes in a timely manner with attention to accuracy and detail.

Other requirements

- Legal eligibility to work in Australia
- Current Victorian Driver’s Licence
- Current First Aid and CPR qualifications or willingness to obtain such if successful in application
- 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.
