

Position Description

Title	Family Services Practitioner
Business unit	Children, Youth & Families
Location	3 Church Street, Leongatha, Victoria 3953
Employment type	Ongoing Full time
Reports to	Team Leader Housing for Families Integrated Family Services Bush Link

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

The Family Services Practitioner works within the Integrated Family Services Case Management Team. The Integrated Family Services (IFS) program is aimed at supporting families who are experiencing difficulties that impact on parenting and family life. Working in close partnership with a range of other agencies including Child Protection, the IFS program provides a range of supports to increase the life opportunities for children, young people and families who are in most need.

This position allows for significant professional growth through challenging and adaptive, fast paced practice. Responsibilities range from providing support to a family via a case management service delivery model and/or providing innovative and targeted shorter-term support interventions.

The key objectives of the role are the provision of a high-quality service designed to meet the needs of families while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of their children. This is achieved by:

- Proactively intervening and working from an integrated approach with other services to ensure positive outcomes for children, young people and families
- Developing and implementing tailored interventions in collaboration with children, young people, families and other service providers
- Undertaking ongoing risk assessments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

Position Description

Family Services Practitioner

- Providing outreach services to families that are flexible and creative to meet the needs of children, young people and their families
-

2. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Case Management team members
- Intake and Assessment team members
- Client Services Practice Leaders and Manager
- Other Uniting employees and volunteers

External

- Clients
 - Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
 - Other Community Service providers as required
-

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 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
- Other projects and duties as required

Quality and risk

- Ensure all administrative and reporting requirements of the program are completed and submitted to the relevant organisations within the appropriate timeframe
- Use principles of best practice to provide an innovative and responsive program response
- Maintain current and accurate case notes, records, and statistical information

Position Description

Family Services Practitioner

People and teams

- Undertake regular supervision and performance review with line manager, providing feedback to promote collaborative working relationships
- Promote and maintain a positive, respectful, and enthusiastic work environment

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.
- 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, Social Welfare, Psychology, or other related discipline

Experience

- Knowledge and experience of the issues facing children, youth and their families, and the provision of intervention and support to assist
- Experience in working with vulnerable children, young people and families, and the ability to work flexibly to meet their needs
- Experience in working with those impacted by family violence, substance abuse, physical and mental health issues is highly desirable
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in undertaking risk assessments of children, young people and families, and planning interventions that address risk and promote self determination
- Understanding of the legislative requirements of the Children, Youth and Family Act 2005 as they effect family services particularly the "Best Interests" framework, the information sharing provisions, and an understanding of the child protection system
- Knowledge of a range of theoretical approaches relevant to working with infants, children, young people and families, including but not limited to attachment theory, strength-based approach, infant mental health, and trauma informed practice
- 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

Position Description Family Services Practitioner

- Capacity to liaise and develop effective networks and working relationships with other professionals and support services
- Ability to self-reflect and actively engage in reflective practice

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.
- **Legislative and policy knowledge:** ability to demonstrate understanding of key legislation, policy, and reforms relevant to the Children, Youth and Families sector and the Housing sector
- **Interpersonal skills:** well-developed interpersonal skills, including a high level of self-awareness
- **Communication skills:** effective communication skills, including relevant written and verbal skills, demonstrated ability to relate positively to a large range of people from diverse backgrounds
- **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused and able to set appropriate professional boundaries, demonstrated ability to respond to and resolve conflict within the workplace, willingness to self-reflect and engage in reflective practice
- **Administration skills:** demonstrated ability to use computers proficiency including Microsoft Word and Outlook
- Current driver's licence valid in Victoria

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

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. It is a condition of employment that all eligible workforce receive the COVID-19 vaccination and supporting evidence may be requested in order to perform duties at any of Uniting's workplaces.

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.
