



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	Family Services Practitioner
Business Unit:	Integrated Family Services, Eastern Community Services, Uniting Connections
Location:	Connections' Croydon office, 185 Mt Dandenong Road
Employment Type:	1 x Full time, Maximum term to end June 2020 1 x Full time, ongoing
Reports to:	Team Leader, Integrated Family Services Eastern

ABOUT UNITING

Uniting works 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.

Uniting is the services and advocacy arm of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We are 7000 skilled, passionate and creative people providing over 770 programs and services.

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 celebrate our diversity and welcome all people regardless of ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work.

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

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

POSITION PURPOSE

Program Information:

Uniting Connections is part of the Outer East Family Services Alliance (OEFS) providing Child FIRST (Family Information Referral and Support Team); generalist family services; and group programs to municipalities of Maroondah, Knox, Yarra-Ranges. Child FIRST provides the common intake point for referrals from DHHS Child Protection, schools, other community service organisations and the general community for families that require a Family Service. 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 Position:

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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 Croydon. Occasional travel may be required to other Connections sites and partner agencies.

SCOPE

Relationships:

Internal:

- Team Leader, team colleagues, Family Services staff, other Connections and Uniting staff

External:

- DHHS personnel, staff of agencies providing services relevant to the service delivery to families and the wider service network

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.
- Ensure appropriate use of resources.
- Work collaboratively with Uniting (Victoria Tasmania) employees, founding agency employees and external stakeholders in accordance with Uniting’s values and professional standards of behavior...
- 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).

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- 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 General Manager People and Culture.
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health and safety) and mandatory training specific to position.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications, experience and requirements

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology or equivalent area
- 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
- Driver Licence valid for Victoria
- Ability to work flexible hours.

Technical competencies

- 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.
- Well-developed written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare for and conduct case plan meetings and implement agreed actions
- Demonstrated organisational and time management skills
- Computer literacy.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values
- **Personal Attributes:**
 - Verbal ability: Open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication – written and verbal. The ability to actively listen.
 - Interpersonal focus: Strong interest in people and respect for others. The ability to suspend judgement.
 - Cooperative: Demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships.
 - Conscientious: Responsible, dependable, organised and persistent.
 - Open to experience: High level self-awareness, with the ability to admit mistakes, as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development.
 - Professionalism: Professional, confident, focused and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries.

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

As a 'child safe' organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national (and international where relevant) police check and Working With Children Check (in Victoria) and/or Working With Vulnerable People Check (in Tasmania) prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking.

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