

Position Description



Title:	Child FIRST Practitioner
Business unit:	Child FIRST, Southern Melbourne
Location:	55 Webb Street, Narre Warren
Employment type:	Full time Ongoing
Reports to:	Team Leader – Child FIRST

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 community services organisation 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, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity or sexual orientation. 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. We welcome lesbian, gay, trans, gender diverse and intersex (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

Program information

The South East Family Services (SEFS) Alliance includes family service agencies in the municipalities of Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia. Connections is part of the SEFS Alliance providing Child FIRST (Family Information Referral and Support Team); generalist family services; and group programs. Approximately 50 staff are located in Cranbourne, Narre Warren, Pakenham and Dandenong.

With the introduction of the Children, Youth & Families Act 2005, Child FIRST has been established to provide a clearer entry point into child and family services. Child FIRST provides a common intake point for referrals from DHHS Child Protection, schools, other community service organisations and the general community.

Referrals from Child FIRST that require a family practitioner are allocated to one of the family services teams within the catchment area. Family practitioners provide home based family support service to families experiencing high levels of stress that impact on parenting and children's well-being. 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. Developing systems and implementing approaches to service provision that apply Best Interests and Family Services principles will achieve this aim. Success will result in improved parenting, relationships, development for children and young people, and improved social connectedness and life skills.

Position purpose

The Child FIRST practitioner will be required to complete initial and ongoing assessments on children and families using the "Best Interests" framework. The practitioner may develop Family Action Plans, Safety Plans and make referrals to other services, as well advocate and provide support to client families. There may also be opportunities for group work.

They will also develop relationships with key agencies (including DHHS Child Protection). Through child centered, family focused service delivery; s/he will assist families to provide effective parenting and a stable environment to promote the safety, well-being and healthy development of the children.

Approved by: Group Manager	Page 1 of 3	Division: South & East Victoria
Date Approved: May 2021	Printed copies of this document are not controlled.	Next Review Date: Annual PDP

Position Description

Child FIRST Practitioner



This position will be required to work in the Child FIRST program, located at Narre Warren. Occasional travel may be required to one of the Family Services Teams located at Cranbourne, Pakenham or Dandenong.

Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

Relationships

- Internal:**
- Team Leader
 - Team Colleagues
 - Family Services Staff
 - Other Uniting staff
- External:**
- DHHS personnel
 - Staff of agencies providing services relevant to the services delivery to families and the wider service network

Key responsibility areas

- Service delivery**
- Receive referrals into the Child FIRST service
 - Provide information and advice to referrers
 - Offer crisis intervention
 - Undertake risk and needs assessments of children and families
 - Demonstrate assertive outreach to hard-to-reach families
 - Prepare reports, service documents and maintain accurate and up-to-date case notes
 - Develop collaborative relationships with other agencies providing client services
 - Liaise with schools and network service providers
 - Broker services appropriate to the families' needs
 - Advocate for families to needed services
 - Participate in regular supervision with supervisor
 - Set priorities and manage time appropriately
 - 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.
 - 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.

Person specification

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bachelor degree in social work, psychology or a related tertiary qualification relevant to child and family welfare• Driver's licence valid in Victoria
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• 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• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values alignment: ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values• Personal Attributes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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.

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 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.

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