

Position Description

Title	Access to Early Learning Facilitator (AEL)
Business Unit	Children, Youth & Families
Location	Horsham
Employment type	Full-time, Ongoing
Reports to	Team Leader- Child, Youth and Families

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. Position purpose

Access to Early Learning is an early intervention and prevention program designed to support the sustained participation of vulnerable three-year-old children in high quality early childhood education.

The AEL Facilitator will provide outreach support to families to address specific practical and family-related barriers to participation in Early Childhood Education and Care Services.

The facilitator will support parents and / or carers build their capacity to provide a stimulating in-home learning environment and link the family with appropriate additional local services and supports to encourage effective in-home learning, enrolment and sustained engagement in kindergarten. The AEL facilitator also fosters important connections and collaboration between the family, the early childhood education and care (ECEC) service and its educators, and other services.

2. Scope

Budget:

Nil

People:

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Nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Uniting management
- Horsham Kindergarten Best Start Facilitator
- Early Childhood Development Coordinator
- Statewide Children's Resource Worker
- Early Learning Years Education Support Workers
- Uniting Support Services as required

External

- Department of Education and Training
- Preschools/Kindergartens/Childcare Providers
- Maternal and Child Health
- Local Councils
- Community partnerships
- Aboriginal Controlled Organisations
- Other community service organisation as required

4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Address cost factors by ensuring kindergarten is free for families, using brokerage and flexible resources where needed
- Increase awareness of the barriers to participation in ECEC in the local service system, and coordinating relevant professional development across organisations
- Proactively collaborate with secondary services to systematically identify children from families with complex needs, who may miss out on ECEC without additional supports
- Work with other services involved with families to coordinate and strengthen support available for vulnerable children
- Address specific family factors that are impeding children's participation in ECEC by using flexible resources
- Link and reconnect families to local community supports and services (such as counselling, health, housing, and legal services)
- Build parents' confidence in engaging with educators to support their children's learning
- Provide individualized in-home support to strengthen the skills and confidence of parents as their child's first educator, and building on children's learning and development at the ECEC service
- Promote of continuity between in-home learning and center-based learning, sharing goals in regular support group meetings and the facilitation of stronger relationships between educators and families
- Increase families' awareness of the value of early learning and education in their children's development
- Utilise evidence-based practices to engage and support the participation of families experiencing vulnerability, focusing on reflection and strength-based, child-focused relational practices
- Increase educators' awareness of families' context, and the impact of their values, attitudes and skills on effective engagement.
- Where required, support families to enroll older siblings in year-before-school kindergarten, or to apply for the Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS), or refer families to Smalltalk groups or community playgroups
- Proactively match and link eligible children and their families with services offering quality kindergarten programs, delivered by a degree-qualified teacher
- Support the family visit ECECs and orientation days, and support the family and the ECEC service to complete enrolment and funding administration

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- Assist with the transition to the ECEC, supporting the family and educators with strategies to address anxiety and separation where necessary
- Assess and strengthen cultural inclusiveness and cultural safety in the ECEC setting, and links the family and the ECEC to appropriate services and community supports, where appropriate
- Establish a kindergarten support group, comprising the family, the facilitator and educator/s, as well as representatives from relevant services and facilitate meetings are held each term.
- Work closely with families and ECEC services to monitor the engagement, participation and attendance of children in the kindergarten program

Strengthen the Early Childhood Education and Care Environment

- Increase educators' awareness and understanding of the needs and context of vulnerable children and families, enabling them to consider behaviours and issues through a 'trauma-informed lens'.
- Promote partnerships and strength-based relational practices.
- Utilise reflective practice.
- Support practice and program adaptation.
- Increase collaboration and coordination between services.
- Support continuity of learning between home and centre

Administration, Quality and Risk

- Undertake/support administration relating to enrolment and engagement. For example, through applying for grants and subsidies, and organizing Brigance assessments
- Complete data collection and reporting as required.
- Other projects and duties, as required
- Comply with Uniting policies and procedures and ensure Child Safety at all times
- Raise and report any concerns about Child Safety immediately

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 the position

5. Person specification

Qualifications

- Suitable tertiary qualifications in early childhood education and development and/or social work

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Experience

- Significant experience working with and empowering families experiencing vulnerability and be well-informed about early childhood development. Suitable tertiary qualifications in early childhood education and development and/or social work are also necessary
- Experience in working within the practice frameworks of the VEYLDF and Best Interest Principles.
- A commitment to the family-centered approach and the family strengthening and empowerment models of practice and ability to use evidence-based best-practice for working with children and families experiencing vulnerability.
- Have a genuine understanding and expertise in relational practice, strength-based practice and family-centred practice (partnerships with families)
- be familiar with local service systems and supports and have an understanding of Attachment Theory, Trauma-informed Practice and the Core Values for Trauma-informed Services, *small talk* coordinator training and resources, structural, familial and relational barriers to access universal services, reflective practice and social determinants of health
- Demonstrated capacity to plan, develop and implement projects/initiatives

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values respect the uniqueness and value of every individual; establish and maintain right relationships that enable people to be influential in their own support arrangement and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect; build on strengths and abilities of all; demonstrate transparency and accountability
- **Consumer Centeredness** – foster, promote and implement a culture that keeps consumers at the center of everything we do; demonstrates an awareness of and prioritises the needs of consumers; focuses on optimal outcomes for consumers
- **Stakeholder Relationships** – Strong negotiation and influencing skills; ability to engage, build and maintain strong, mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders; track record of being able to sustain positive, collaborative and effective relationships; capacity to position Uniting as a trusted advisor to peak bodies and key stakeholders in the sector including government and funding bodies; promotes harmony and consensus through diplomatic handling of disagreements; builds trust through consistent actions, values and communication
- **Communication** – Strong and clear communication skills with the ability to build positive professional relationships with key internal and external stakeholders; excellent interpersonal skills; high level written and verbal communication skills; ability to conduct presentations; ability to prepare high quality business cases and reports
- **Administrative skills:** Excellent organisational skills; High level of attention to detail and accuracy; experience in handling sensitive information and maintaining privacy; knowledge of Client Management Systems / Databases or the ability to quickly develop competency in use of such systems; high level computer literacy skills including demonstrated experience in Microsoft Office; well-developed literacy and numeracy skills

Other Requirements

- Legal eligibility to work in Australia
- Current Australian Driver's License
- 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)

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

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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.

7. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and accepted the above Position Description

Employee

Name:

Signature:

Date: