

Position Description



Title	Key Worker, Cradle to Kinder
Business Unit	Child, Youth and Family
Location	648 Hight Street, Reservoir. Position located at Melbourne City Mission, Maribyrnong
Employment type	Full Time, Maximum Term (until June 2023)
Reports to	Team Leader, Parents and Kids Together (PAKT)

1. 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

2. Position purpose

Cradle to Kinder is a whole-of-family service response in the form of pre-birth support, intensive and longer term interventions and casework support until the child reaches five years of age/attends school. The service is aimed to support vulnerable young pregnant mothers (under 25 years), where there are a number of vulnerabilities and significant concerns about the wellbeing of the unborn child. There is priority access to young mothers who are or have been, in out-of-home care, Aboriginal women, women from newly arrived communities and women with a learning difficulty.

The purpose of this position is to be a Key Worker in the Cradle to Kinder program, as part of a multi-disciplinary direct service team and to maintain liaison with service delivery consortium partners and external service delivery partners in order to deliver the quality, volume and outcomes targets specified in the program's service agreement with DHHS.

Melbourne City Mission is the lead agency in partnership with Uniting Kildonan, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and Tweddle. The position is based at the team's location in Maribyrnong with Melbourne City Mission providing supervision and day to day support to Uniting staff in the program

3. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

4. Relationships

Internal:

- Uniting staff
- Team Leader PAKT

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- Senior Managers, Program Managers

External

- Melbourne City Mission, staff and managers
- DHHS Child Protection
- Maternal & Child Health in North East
- Relevant service managers within the Consortium’s integrated service delivery network
- Relevant community specialist services staff and partner staff members
- Child FIRST and Integrated Family Services alliance in North West Metro Melbourne

5. Key responsibility areas

Service Delivery

Using a strengths-focused approach, the Cradle to Kinder Key Worker will:

- Provide child-centered, family-focused case management and support to vulnerable young mothers and their children who are referred to the Cradle to Kinder program from pre-birth until the child reaches 5 years of age/school age
- Work with families within a multi-disciplinary team to build the capacity of parents to meet the child’s health, safety and developmental needs, and to build self-resilience through linkages to education, training and employment
- Work with the most complex challenging families who are referred to the program
- Carry a caseload based of 8 families at any one time for a full time key worker or equivalent for part-time workers.

Case Work

- Undertake an initial intensive in-home child and family assessment and monitor and review that assessment on an ongoing basis
- Provide in-home or community based support to children and families to support their engagement and access to services – to reinforce changes made through work with other services
- Utilise the Family Star Plus as a goal setting tool with clients
- Develop and co-ordinate an individually tailored Child and Family Care Plan and lead its implementation for allocated cases
- Provide case management and casework to children and their families offering: appropriate therapies, family mediation, counselling and personal and parenting support. This may include assisting therapeutic intervention to young parents to support their healing from possible traumatic experiences that may be impacting on their parenting
- Provide support for the young parent and child to access ante-natal and post-natal care including access to easy-to-understand information supporting healthy and positive decisions in relation to the care of themselves and their baby
- Support the attachment of young parents and their child, supporting them in being responsive to their child’s daily care and developmental needs, including their understanding of child development, play and early learning
- Empower children and families by assisting them to develop skills and strategies to address their own issues, including provision of information and assistance in building confidence of the young parents to access a range of universal maternal and child health services and other early years services
- Facilitate access to the service through the provision of an active and assertive outreach model of practice
- Provide tailored and appropriate responses to young parents who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and/or have learning difficulties
- Assist the provision of culturally sensitive services to Aboriginal families by ensuring referral to VACCA where relevant

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- Develop strong working relationships with Child Protection and relevant specialist services including reporting any escalation of behaviour that may place the child/ young person at unacceptable risk
- Referral Function**
- To provide information, referral and advocacy for children and their families
 - To maintain awareness of resources and services available to children and their families
 - Provide information to Child Protection, other services and the broader community about the program as required
- Program Development**
- Comply with time keeping requirements of the service.
 - Contribute to the addition of new techniques, client engagement and feedback and approaches as the program develops
 - Assist with activities that support the development of a coordinated service system focused on preventing children being placed in the out-of-home Care sector
 - Participate in and contribute to team building activities as required by the Cradle to Kinder Team Leader and Uniting Team Leader
 - Obtain input from children and their families together with other key stakeholders as part of Cradle to Kinder’s evaluation framework
 - Participate in networks, forums and partnerships related to Cradle to Kinder as a long term support program
 - Record relevant client expenditure of flexible support funds and with the planning, development and delivery of the program
 - Promote the program in the broader child and family services community as appropriate
- Other**
- Ability to travel and work throughout North East catchment with flexibility to respond as required.
 - Be available to work flexible hours depending upon participants’ needs
- 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.

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Minimum Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Development, Youth Work, Psychology or Social Work and/or an equivalent relevant tertiary qualification(s)

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Experience

- Demonstrated understanding of the Best Interests Case Practice Model, Common Risk Assessment Framework (Family Violence) and Children, Youth and Family Act (2005).
- Demonstrated case work experience in family services, youth work, early childhood services social work or a related field
- Demonstrated skills and experience in casework with vulnerable families, including capacity to engage families, to establish effective helping relationships and experience with families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal families.
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking assessments that identify needs, strengths and risks in families and individuals.
- Significant experience in working with and providing active and assertive engagement in casework with children, young parents and their families, particularly for those with complex needs and those who are reluctant to accept services, especially young people

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values
- Knowledge of child development, trauma and attachment theories
- Sound understanding of the issues facing vulnerable young parents and affecting their ability to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children and an understanding of child development and the factors that can impede a child's healthy development
- Sound understanding of the service system for vulnerable young parents and their children and experience in working in partnership with key agencies
- Capacity to deliver group work initiatives, work independently and as a member of a team
- Well-developed interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills, report writing skills and conflict resolution skills
- Proven ability to work collaboratively and innovatively with families, staff and services to develop and achieve goals that facilitate safe and nurturing environments for children and young people, including strengthening parenting skills.
- Ability to network and establish effective relationships with other services, especially other community agencies and the Department of Health & Human Services Child Protection.
- Competence in computer literacy (Word/Excel/Outlook) and ability to utilise client information systems

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 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.

8. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood and accepted the above Position Description

	Employee	Manager
Name:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Date:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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