

Position Description



Title:	Case Worker – Families First
Business unit:	Family Preservation & Reunification, Eastern and Southern Melbourne
Location:	185 Mt Dandenong Road, Croydon
Employment type:	Full time Maximum term to 22 November 2021 (parental leave position)
Reports to:	Team Leader – Families First (FF) and Parenting Assessment & Skills Development Service (PASDS)

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

Position purpose

The FP&R Programs provide intensive outreach and assessment services to children, young people and their families involved with Child Protection in the context of Family Preservation and Reunification (FP&R), within the Eastern Division.

The Family Preservation and Reunification program includes both Families First (FF) and Parenting Assessment and Skill Development Service (PASDS). This position may be required to work across both Programs as appropriate.

The Families first program provides intensive six to eight week flexible, informed and creative interventions which are tailored to the individual needs of each family to address protective concerns and parents to meet the needs of the children. The approach also draws on the advice and support of other specialists within the service system; strengthening multidisciplinary intervention and sharing the responsibility to assist families make positive change, and is based on the Home Builders Model. Families First Case Workers also conduct four week pre-reunification assessments prior to the Families First intervention as appropriate.

Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

Relationships

- Internal:**
- Team Leader – Families First & PASDS
 - Manager – Family Preservation and Reunification
 - Senior Manager – Home Based Care and Family Services
 - Other staff members

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External

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Child Protection

Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Engage with and provide an intensive outreach service to families who are referred from Child Protection
- Participate in Families First program operations and contribution to the ongoing development of the team approach
- Undertake comprehensive in home assessments using appropriate assessment tools and creative, individualised client engagement strategies
- Develop interventions that are tailored to the family's current level of skill, concerns outlined by Child Protection and that take into account their individual learning styles and capacity to make changes
- Provide 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
- Provision of a range of high quality written reports to the Department of Human Services (Child Protection) and to the Courts as required within specified timeframes
- Work respectfully with families with reference to social, political, familial, and cultural restraints that impact on their parenting and family life
- Liaise with other service providers and consultants and working collaboratively with the broader child and family care sector
- Undertake administrative and data collection responsibilities
- Participate in meetings relating to the management and development of the Families First and PASDS programs
- Provide support to other team members
- Be accountable through supervision with their Direct Line Manager
- Ensure that staff practice adheres to DHHS policies and standards
- Maintain an individual case load and high standard of case file management including case notes and assessment documents within required timeframes
- 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 & requirements

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology, Child Development/ Community Welfare, or other equivalent
- Driver's license valid in Victoria
- Ability to work flexible hours – Work hours are 9-5:06, but this role will require some flexibility to provide outreach appointments between 8am and 7pm at times to meet the needs of clients.

Experience

- Extensive experience working with family units, children, adolescents and parents with an understanding of the impacts of Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, Family Violence, Out of Home Care, Child Protection and child development on parenting (minimum 3 years)
- Demonstrated extensive experience in risk assessment of families, infants, children and adolescents
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking assessments of parenting capacity and sound understanding of child and adolescent developmental needs
- Capacity and experience in planning and implementing appropriate interventions in relation to the development of parenting capacity and family functioning
- Proven capacity to liaise appropriately with consultants and other professionals
- Experience in building networking opportunities and representing organisational values in the community and professional settings
- Experience in providing support and mentoring other workers, including supervising students

Technical competencies

- Excellent knowledge of a range of theoretical approaches relevant to working with infants, children, young people and families, including but not limited to attachment theory, trauma informed practice and infant mental health and child development
- Excellent understanding of the legislative requirements of the CYFA as they effect family services particularly the "Best Interests" framework, the information sharing provisions and the child protection system
- High level of ability to actively engage with families during the process of assessment and short term intervention
- Demonstrated analytical skills with the ability to make assessments and recommendations objectively and accurately using a strength based approach
- Proven creative and innovative approach to problem solving
- Highly developed negotiation skills and ability to liaise with DHHS Child Protection in relation to addressing protective concerns for children
- Extensive understanding of self-reflective practice with ability to mentor and support team members through this process
- Proficient with computer applications, typing and databases
- 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.
- Highly developed report writing and time management skills and with a demonstrated ability to complete case notes and reports in a professional and timely manner

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.

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- 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.

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