

Position Description

Title	Family Preservation & Reunification Practitioner
Business unit	Child, Youth and Family Services
Location	61 Riggall Street Broadmeadows
Employment type	Full time Ongoing
Reports to	Family Preservation and Reunification Team Leader

1. About Uniting

Uniting Vic Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We have 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 are 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 are 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, bisexual, Trans, gender diverse, 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

The Family Preservation and Reunification Response (The Response) is an innovative approach to delivering relational, therapeutic, evidence-informed and coordinated support to vulnerable children and families considered at significant risk of entry into care or where rapid and safe reunification is appropriate, through a

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strengthened partnership with Child Protection. The Child Protection Navigator role will provide practice leadership and specialist case practice advice to Child Protection and the Response teams. The Response targets three groups of children (and families) including children subject to an unborn report; birth to 5 years; and 10 to 15 years, each with identified child and parental characteristics linked to entry into care.

- The primary focus of the practitioner is to prevent children from having further statutory intervention and entry into care services. The role works in a collaborative, care team approach to provide responsive, intensive and sustainable support to these families and their children who are actively involved with Child Protection. This program allows for an innovative and creative response for up to 240 hours service intervention, to meet the needs of all family members and to identify and mitigate risk. Practitioners will have access to flexible funds and specialist services to meet child and family needs.

The target group for this role in Uniting is primarily for children who are subject to unborn reports or very young children (0-5 years).

The Practitioner will be working under a new Uniting model focused on objectives of:

- Family preservation and reunification
- Building safety for children and young people
- Improving parent child attachment
- Addressing and healing trauma
- Strengthening the cultural identity and connection of Aboriginal children
- Building families' motivation and capacity
- Improving health and well-being
- Connecting children to early childhood education and school
- Connecting young people and parents to education and employment
- Connecting and coordinating with other services
- Connecting families with their community
- Building self-sufficiency
- Creating opportunities

3. Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

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4. Relationships

Internal:

- Team Leader
- Senior Manager
- Group Manager
- Other Uniting professionals

External:

- DFFH Child Protection
- Community services
- Child & Family Alliance
- Other key stakeholders

5. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Assess needs, strengths and safety considerations of families
- Provide intensive case work to families, with capacity to work flexibly outside standard working hours, as needed
- Work collaboratively with Child Protection on case planning objectives
- Demonstrate assertive outreach and creative engagement solutions with to hard-to-reach families
- Coordinate and chair regular care team and professionals' meetings and monitor the progress of actions identified
- Prepare reports, service documents and maintain accurate and up-to-date client records and case notes
- Actively seek out the voice of the child and young people advocating for their voice to be heard
- Identify opportunities for financial assistance and brokerage for families
- Identify and refer family members to other services as required
- Work within a capabilities model to set goals with families and monitor the implementation and progress
- Liaise with other stakeholders as required
- Respond to risk and report to other statutory bodies as required
- Other projects and duties as required

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- Implement a range of evidence informed interventions, assessment tools and outcome framework specific to the Response as agreed with the funder

Quality and risk

- Participate in regular supervision with Team Leader
- Undertake designated training in the Response model and contribute to implementation of service delivery modes in conjunction with the Team Leader.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date case notes and data
- Participate in relevant meetings, panels and consultations
- Participate in team reflective practice
- Participate in the development of individual Performance Development Plans
- Ensure the highest quality of service provision through a commitment to organisational values, policy and procedure adherence, and maintenance of positive relationships with key stakeholders.

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.

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6. Person specification

Qualifications

- A degree in Social Work, Psychology or a related tertiary qualification relevant to child and family welfare
- Current driver's licence valid in Victoria

Experience

- Demonstrated ability as a practitioner in the child, youth and family welfare field
- Experience in working with vulnerable children and families in a community services setting is preferred
- Demonstrated experience in engaging with families successfully and completing assertive outreach
- Demonstrated experience with working with men (? fathers)
- Demonstrated ability to assess and appropriately respond to risk for children aged 0-5 years
- A commitment to the family-centered approach and the family strengthening and empowerment models of practice
- An understanding of the 'Best Interests' Case Practice Model and Children Youth and Families Act (CYFA) 2005 and 2015 amendments
- Knowledge of child development, trauma and attachment theories
- Well-developed written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare for and conduct 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.

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- Professionalism: Professional, confident, focused and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries

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:

Signature:

Date:
