

Position Description



Title:	Family Services Practitioner
Business unit:	Integrated Family Services, Eastern Melbourne
Location:	48 Blackburn Road Blackburn Victoria 3130
Employment type:	Full time (76 hours per fortnight) Maximum term (6 months)
Reports to:	Team Leader – Integrated Family Services

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

Uniting provide Integrated Family Services from two locations in the Eastern Region, Croydon and Blackburn. The Integrated Family Services program is aimed at supporting families who are experiencing difficulties that impact on parenting and family life. Working in partnership with alliance partners across the municipalities of Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Boroondara, Maroondah, Knox and Yarra Ranges, and in close partnership with a range of other agencies including VACCA and Child Protection, the IFS program provides a range of supports to increase the life opportunities for children, young people and families who are in most need.

Position purpose

This position is requiring a motivated practitioner to work creatively within the Inner East Family Services program. The successful candidate's responsibilities will range from providing support to a family via a case management service delivery model and/or assist in responding to workflow demands by providing innovative and targeted shorter term support interventions. This position will allow for significant professional growth through challenging and adaptive, fast paced practice.

The key objectives of this position are the provision of a high quality service designed to meet the needs of families while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of their children. This is achieved by:

- Providing outreach services to families that are flexible and creative to meet the needs of children, young people and their families
- Proactively intervening and working from an integrated approach with other services to ensure positive outcomes for children, young people and families

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- Developing and implementing tailored interventions in collaboration with children, young people, families and other service providers
- Undertaking ongoing risk assessments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

This position is predominantly based at Blackburn, however travel to other agency sites may be required from time to time.

Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

Relationships

- Internal:**
- Integrated Family Services team members
 - Child FIRST staff
 - Team Leader – Integrated Family Services
 - Program Leader – Child, Youth and Families Inner East

- External:**
- Clients
 - Child Protection Staff
 - Members of the Inner East Family Services Alliance
 - Department of Health and Human Services
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Key responsibility areas

- Service delivery**
- Provide an outreach service to children, young people and families with complex needs, that is flexible and creative
 - Undertake Child and Family Assessments and Planning processes based on Best Interest Principles
 - Coordinate and implement tailored interventions designed to enhance family functioning and client outcomes
 - Undertake ongoing 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
 - Regularly review work undertaken with families to identify progress and to celebrate change
 - Work respectfully with families with reference to social, political, familial and cultural restraints that impact on their parenting and family life
 - Work flexibly and collaboratively with Child Protection, VACCA and other agencies while providing a needs and risk assessment and developing and implementing an integrated service response
 - Support families through the provision of responsive group work
 - Undertake administrative and data collection responsibilities
 - Participate in meetings relating to the management and development of the program
 - Contribute to a positive and supportive team culture
 - Be accountable through supervision with Team Leader
 - Work flexible hours
 - 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.

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- 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

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology or equivalent area
- Driver License valid for Victoria

Experience & knowledge

- Knowledge and experience of both the child and family services and child protection systems
- Experience in working with vulnerable children, young people and families
- Experience in working with those impacted by family violence, substance abuse, physical and mental health issues is highly desirable
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge in undertaking risk assessments of children, young people and families and planning interventions that address risk and promote self determination
- Understanding of the legislative requirements of the Children, Youth and Family Act 2005 as they effect family services particularly the "Best Interests" framework, the information sharing provisions and an understanding of the child protection system.
- Knowledge of a range of theoretical approaches relevant to working with infants, children, young people and families, including but not limited to attachment theory, strengths based approach, infant mental health and trauma informed practice
- Knowledge and understanding of current issues facing families, children and young people

Technical competencies

- Ability to actively engage with families during the process of assessment and short term intervention, which may be crisis management
- Ability to work flexibly and creatively to meet the needs of families, children and young people
- Ability to plan and coordinate case work in line with case plan objectives and timeframes
- Ability to liaise and negotiate with DHHS Child Protection in relation to addressing protective concerns for children
- Capacity to liaise and develop effective networks and working relationships with other professionals and support services
- Capacity to work independently in the development of assessments of need and risk and to provide support and guidance to the team in these areas as required
- Ability to self-reflect and actively engage in reflective practice
- Ability to complete case notes, reports and other data collection requirements in a timely and professional manner
- Effective communication skills, including relevant written and verbal skills
- Computer proficiency
- 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.

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Core selection criteria

- Values alignment: ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values
- Ability to work flexible hours
- 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.
 - 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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