

Position Description



Title	Senior Practitioner, Kinship Care
Business Unit	Child, Youth and Family
Location	648 High Street, Reservoir
Employment type	Full Time, Ongoing
Reports to	Team Leader, Kinship Care

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 Albany-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

The Senior Practitioner, Kinship Care is responsible for the provision of practice support, guidance, mentoring of direct care staff to ensure work with clients is high quality, clinically sound, and outcome focused.

This role contributes to the best interests of the child, family focused, culturally sensitive practice to improve client outcomes for Kinship Care families.

Oversight in service provision includes ensuring risk is appropriately and quickly identified and responded to, staff are well supported and high standards of practice care are followed.

3. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

4. Relationships

Internal:

- Programs Managers and Team Leaders
- Uniting Staff

External

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Child Protection

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- Kinship Care Partner agencies
- Kinship Care families

5. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- To ensure direct reports participate in regular supervision and are supported and mentored to undertake their roles and responsibilities.
- To deliver casework as required.
- To support the development of integrated program models of practice and delivery in conjunction with Senior Practitioner North East, Team Leader and Program Manager.
- Timely identification and communication of key practice and organisational risks to the Team Leader and where appropriate to Program Manager.
- To actively implement outcome measures and support staff to comply with outcome requirements and reporting these outcomes in conjunction with the Team Leader and Program Manager.
- To proactively contribute to Uniting's leadership group including the development and implementation of practice groups.
- To proactively and positively contribute to key stakeholder relationships in particular Department of Health & Human Services Child Protection staff, including participating in partnership initiatives and Care Team models.
- To assist the Team Leader in the promotion and development of services including new growth opportunities.

Staff Supervision Responsibilities

- Provide key information for data reports and regular program capacity reports to Team Leader
- On advice from the Team Leader timely allocation of cases to individual caseworkers
- Attend initial outreach visits to families with allocated caseworkers
- Facilitate, support and oversee the completion of best interest assessments, child and family action plans, case plans, quarterly reports, case closures and Looking After Children processes as required
- Facilitate and chair care team meetings, case plan reviews, case conferences, care team meetings and the coordination of collaborative inclusive practice as required
- Support Kinship Care caseworkers who are attending court under subpoena or participating in court processes such as court conferences or hearings.
- Facilitate and support adherence to Uniting's Code of Conduct in relation to the provision of services, which respect client privacy, confidentiality and dignity.
- Encourage creativity and innovation to meet the needs of clients.
- Advocate for appropriate service responses for kinship carers, children, young people and their families
- Participate in activities that provide information and advice to families and professionals
- Support staff to fulfil program requirements for maintenance of case records, statistics and other data gathering requirements, including the use and maintenance of records on CRIS and CRISSP
- Undertake intake services as required
- Participate in Placement Prevention client after hours on-call service as required.

Individual Casework responsibilities

- Carry a caseload of clients as negotiated with Team Leader
- Undertake ongoing holistic family and child centered assessments identifying strengths and risks in line with the Best Interests Framework, Looking After

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Children, Permanent Care assessments, carer assessments and prepare child and family action plans, conduct regular case reviews and finalise case closures

- Develop and implement identified goals, care plans and case plans with Kinship Care children, young people, carers and extended family
- Facilitate care teams, school support groups and the coordination of collaborative inclusive practice
- Fulfil program requirements for maintenance of case records, statistics and other data gathering requirements, including the use and timely maintenance of records of CRIS
- Prepare written assessments, case plan reports, quarterly reports, Looking after Children documentation, case plan and court reports within expected timelines
- Sight children and young people on a regular basis and seek their views about their care and safety in line with program requirements
- Supervise child and family contact as required
- Ensure all service provision is inclusive of birth parents and extended family, especially siblings, based on child/young person's best interests, case plan and court order.

Leadership, Innovation and Organisational Development)

- Support excellence in practice and development
- Provide consultation in relation to family assessments, review, closures and critical incident management
- Foster positive, proactive, strengths based and solution focused culture across Kinship Care Team.
- Actively contribute to the implementation of outcome focused work and evaluation measures as required
- Actively contribute to gaining client feedback and incorporating client voice into program planning and delivery
- Provide proactive and collaborative input into relevant partnerships, networks and cross organisational activities to represent Uniting in a positive manner, in conjunction with the Program Manager Placement Prevention and Team Leader Kinship Care when requested
- Encourage and support staff participation in internal and external activities and their proactive and positive representation of Uniting
- Participate in organisation-wide working group(s), and special projects as requested.
- Participate in after-hours-on-call

Practice Development and Review

- Contribute to the review of guidelines relevant to program and practice needs that are incorporated into the Uniting Kinship Care Program Operations Manual in conjunction with the Team Leader
- Participate in the development and facilitation of program and cross program practice reviews in conjunction with Team Leader
- Support increased integration and connection across program areas.
- Contribute to practice implementation and regular reviews of service delivery and practice outcomes.
- Actively participate in external evaluations involving client care.
- Ensure services are delivered within professional frameworks - including Best Interests Case Practice Model and Specialist Resources, Looking After Children, Care and transition planning for leaving care, DHHS Child Protection Practice Manual and relevant partnership agreements - achieving best practice outcomes.
- Contribute to the development of client feedback mechanisms.
- Support the maintenance and review of quality goal-orientated case practice file and records system.

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Quality and risk

- Show respect to the family and communicate honestly, especially about child wellbeing and safety concerns and consequences
- Undertake ongoing holistic family and child centred assessments identifying strengths and risks in line with the Best Interests Framework, including Looking After Children, , Permanent Care assessments and contributing to carer assessments
- Keep the Kinship Care Team Leader and Program Manager advised of potentially critical situations involving families
- Ensure client feedback is sought and responded to according to Kildonan policies and procedures
- Sight children on a regular basis and seek their views about their care and safety

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

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in social sciences or related field

Experience

- Extensive demonstrated experience in community service sector preferably in out of home care and case management
- Demonstrated practice supervision and leadership experience within the community sector
- Experience of a range of intervention strategies and frameworks in working with vulnerable children, young people and families impacted upon by disadvantage including: family violence, homelessness, poverty, trauma, substance abuse, mental health issues and disability.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting’s values
- **Network:** Ability to network and establish sound working relationships with related services, especially other community agencies and the Department of Health & Human Services.
- **Communication:** Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- **Computer Literacy:** Intermediate to advanced Computer literacy using MS Word, Outlook, Excel and efficient and effective data entry skills.
- **Interpersonal:** Highly developed adaptive interpersonal communication skills including the ability to engage and empower others.

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- Time Management: Ability to be self-reliant, motivated and accountable in managing multiple tasks and meeting timelines and targets.
- Team Work: Commitment and ability to work independently and as a member of a team.

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:		