



EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION PACKAGE

Thank you for your interest in applying for a position with Gold Coast Youth Service Inc. (GCYS). GCYS is an Equal Opportunity Employer and as such, the following information is provided to ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity for preparing their applications. It is important that your application meets the requirements of this document.

POSITION DESCRIPTION + SELECTION CRITERIA

The Position Description and Selection Criteria should be read carefully as it details:

- The requirements and duties of the position
- The criteria for selection of the most suitable applicant for the position

Please note that, in terms of the selection criteria “demonstrated competency” or “demonstrated skill” means that you have actually used the particular competency or skill and can give and discuss examples of this use.

YOUR APPLICATION

A separate application must be submitted for each position vacancy advertised.

The application is to include the following:

- a) A covering letter stating the position title of the vacancy and your name, address and telephone number.
- b) A resume/curriculum vitae
- c) Your response to **each** of the selection criteria
- d) The names, positions and telephone numbers of at least two referees who can comment on your competency in regard to the selection criteria. Referees will only be contacted after an interview.

You *must* address the selection criteria. Applications that do not address the selection criteria will not be considered. Please give specific examples that provide evidence that you have the relevant knowledge, skill, or ability. If you simply state that you meet the selection criteria, but do not demonstrate how, it is probable that you will not be short-listed.

Please keep your application brief and to the point.

SHORT-LISTING PROCESS

Initial short-listing is based solely on how well your written application demonstrates that you meet each of the selection criteria.

Each of the selection criteria has been given a weighting based on importance to the position and applications are short-listed according to how well applications score against each selection criteria.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

If you are short-listed you will be invited to attend an interview with a panel consisting of the CEO, Team Leader and one independent person.

The interview panel will ask you questions that address the selection criteria and allow you to expand on your written submission. Each applicant will be asked the same questions and you will be provided with a copy of these questions fifteen minutes prior to your interview.

Questions are aimed at testing your knowledge and skill and may include scenarios for you to respond to. You should answer each question fully and succinctly, as the panel will see it as your responsibility to give all the factual evidence to support your application.

Your responses to the set of questions will be scored according to the same weighting scale used for short-listing and a comparative assessment made based on both the information in your application and how well you address questions in the interview.

If you have not been short-listed you will be advised of this in writing as soon as possible, usually within four weeks.

REFERREE CHECKS

It is the responsibility of your referee to provide honest feedback about your knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to the selection criteria for the position.

At least one referee should ideally have been a recent supervisor. If you are not currently in the workforce your referee should at least be in a position to comment on your abilities as they relate to the selection criteria.

If your referee provides information detrimental to your selection, you will be made aware of this information and be given an opportunity to respond.

If you have any concerns about the reference checking process please raise them during your interview.

Reference checks are used to supplement the final selection decision.

SELECTION

If you are selected for the position you will be first contacted by telephone. You will be offered the position and should you accept a formal written offer of employment will be forwarded to you including information detailing the terms and conditions of employment.

If you are not selected following interview, you will be advised of this in writing within two working weeks of the interview.

Post selection feedback for unsuccessful applicants is available on request.

Thank you for applying for a position with Gold Coast Youth Service Inc.



Position description

Position Description	
Position Title:	Youth Support and Advocacy Worker
Program/Team:	Next Step Plus
Type of employment and hours:	18-month fixed term contract Permanent Full-time 38 hours a week
Remuneration:	SCHADS Award Level 5 plus above Award Conditions
Place of Work:	Gold Coast Youth Service, 15 Oak Avenue, Miami
Reporting relationships:	Reporting to the CEO via the position of YWT Team Leader
Qualifying Period:	Three months (if applicable)
Primary purpose of position:	<p>The Youth Support and Advocacy Worker will join a team of dedicated staff to back young people in out of home care to transition successfully to independent adult life. The Youth Support and Advocacy Worker will partner with Child Safety Officers to support young people in care to plan and gain the skills and support they need. The Youth Support and Advocacy Worker will also provide additional support if it's needed for these young people until they are 25.</p> <p>Each Youth Support and Advocacy Worker will work with a caseload of young people across the Gold Coast Region as needed. They will deliver planning, coaching and case management services that achieve strong outcomes for young people,</p>

Duties – Key Result Areas	
Service Delivery:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Child Safety staff to support young people in care aged 15+ to develop a transition plan and gain the skills and support they need, including resourcing a natural mentor where one is identified. • Complete thorough assessments and provide responsive, flexible case management and crisis response services for young people after they have left out of home care to help them resolve issues and achieve their goals. • Undertake check-ins with clients to ensure they are on track. • Liaise with other stakeholders' services to link clients to the supports and resources they need for participation and independence. • Undertake offsite work, including mobile support to various locations including after hours. • Participate in shared organisational service delivery including Open Access and events (if required)
External relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and foster collaborative partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders to provide and maintain effective, accountable services for clients, and report on developments. • Build a network of contacts in other relevant organisations and ensure GCYS's image and reputation is maintained.

Teamwork and collaboration:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to developing a cohesive team by participating in meetings, scheduled activities and team processes. Share information, communicate and present ideas in team meetings. • Participate in service review and organisational planning. • Develop and maintain meaningful networks and collaborative relationships with external providers to enhance young people’s access to services. • Assist with keeping shared service delivery space clean and operational. • Work across the team to ensure coverage of all clients in all areas, and share expertise with other team members to provide the best possible services for young people. • Undertake monitoring and evaluation activities to maintain and improve service provision and client outcomes.
People and Culture:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the GCYS Code of conduct to ensure ethical and professional practice by being honest, approachable and responsive. • Undertake work in accordance with team standards and GCYS policies, protocols, and procedures, including workplace health and safety, risk management, and relevant legislative requirements. • Attend supervision and performance appraisals with the Team Leader and CEO to monitor performance. • Attend training and professional development opportunities to address learning needs. • Provide support to colleagues and contribute to a positive work culture.
Cultural respect:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the history and ongoing impacts that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience. • Deliver services that are person and community centred for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
Administration and other tasks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain accurate and timely record keeping relating to the service including client files, data collection, correspondence and statistics. • Contribute to high quality and timely reporting and data collection in collaboration with the service manager and external partners. • Adhere to GCYS policies and procedures and implement relevant service standards to ensure a high-quality service provision. • Undertake any other tasks as required.

Mandatory
1. Possession of, or the ability to gain, and retain a current positive Working with Children Suitability Card.
2. Possession of a current Open Queensland Driver License.
3. First Aid certificate



Selection criteria

Overview	
Position Title:	Youth Support and Advocacy Worker
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Selection Criteria	
Knowledge and experience specific to the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven extensive experience in person centred case management or coaching service delivery with young people with complex needs. Experience in housing, mental health, drug and alcohol and/or safety fields will be highly regarded. • Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the factors contributing to young people succeeding and failing to succeed in the transition from out of home care to independent adult life. • In-depth understanding of the impacts of trauma, and strategies to work effectively with young people in this context. • Well-developed interpersonal communication skills to engage with a range of people (e.g. young people and families, Child Safety staff, education providers, community practitioners and specialist clinicians)

	<p>including people from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to let young people take the lead in articulating their goals, strengths and aspirations, and then supporting young people to achieve these. • Teamwork skills with the ability to contribute to a productive and harmonious team environment and to share expertise. • Effective written communication skills to write correspondence and prepare short reports. • Demonstrated organisational skills to plan and prioritise work efficiently and effectively, and to manage competing demands and priorities. • Refer to the level 5 competencies in the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award.
Other role requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work out of hours when required to respond to client needs. • Work remotely across a large region as required. • Current National Police Check
Additional information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An employee may be directed to carry out such duties as are within the limits of the employee's skill, competence and training. All employees are required to observe GCYS's policies and procedures. Employment in the position will be subject to an annual performance plan and review, with initial appointment subject to a probationary period of three months.

Mandatory
1. Relevant tertiary qualifications (Degree in relevant discipline) and/or relevant experience are essential.
2. Possession of, or the ability to gain, and retain a current positive Working with Children Suitability Card.
3. Possession of a current Open Queensland Driver License
4. First Aid certificate

GOLD COAST YOUTH SERVICE

AGENCY PROFILE

Gold Coast Youth Service (GCYS) was established in February 1980 and became incorporated in 1986. GCYS is a not-for-profit community-based organisation that receives a range of funding from both government, business and community partners.

GCYS responds to the needs and requests of young people aged 12 to 25 years who are marginalised, at risk of homelessness or currently experiencing homelessness. This group may include families of these young people as well as care-providers.

The service covers the whole of the Gold Coast LGA including Beenleigh to the north, the Albert Corridor and the New South Wales border to the south. The service also encompasses cross-border client support and service delivery.

The service strongly believes that young people are an important and significant part of the future of society and their inclusion through active participation in their community is important to their personal growth, self-confidence, overall development and well-being.

One of the aims of the agency is to establish effective working relationships with young people in order to assist them in managing their lives. Young people present with a variety of issues that have significantly impacted on their lives. Some of these include, but are not limited to the following areas:

- Lack of safe and affordable housing
- Lack of adequate financial income
- Lack of basic human rights, i.e. food, clothing, shelter, emotional support
- Lack of transport
- Lack of medical care and adequate health services
- Drug and alcohol issues
- Domestic Violence
- Family and relationship conflict
- Trauma
- Lack of employment and educational opportunities
- Disengagement from family and/or support networks

GCYS has operated from its current premises since 1989 and during this period has grown substantially to provide a higher level of support service to young people and the community through the establishment of five separate programs and their associated staff members.

Inside our premises young people find a safe and supported environment where they can either “drop-in and relax”, meet with a worker, have a meal, a shower, or a chat. Many of these young people relay stories of negative life experiences, and the lack of support and opportunities afforded to them to be able to plan and work towards their life goals.

Staff provide young people with professional support, assistance and resources when discussing their varying life options, and in ‘weighing up’ the possible outcomes. This ‘hands-on’ approach assists young people to work towards attaining their life plans and developing stronger links within their community.

GCYS has a demonstrated history of commitment to working in the youth sector and has established strong and collaborative partnerships across the wider community and government sectors. For the future the service will continue its commitment to working with disadvantaged young people in the Gold Coast community.

FUNDED PROGRAMS

You are invited to access our web site at www.gcys.com.au to obtain further details and information about the services we provide.

GOLD COAST YOUTH SERVICE

VALUES STATEMENT

This Statement reflects our thinking at a *point in time*. As we learn and grow, we expect that this statement will be subject to change and refinement.

EVERYONE IN SOCIETY HAS FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

It is important to recognise the context in which the problems facing young people occur. Western Society is constructed in a way that results in *winners* and others that lose out. This contributes to the devaluing of young people, and other social groups. In particular, the hierarchical structure of society leads to many young people feeling powerless within society, and patriarchy has an impact on how young women see their place in the world. Many of the fundamental human rights of many young people are not currently being met, and our social structures frequently undermine the individual opportunities of young people.

Everyone is entitled to live peacefully and free of disadvantage, regardless of their race, gender, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status or personal values. Society's economic resources should be distributed fairly, and exploitation eliminated. Every human being deserves to have their values and person treated with respect. Many young people do not currently enjoy these rights.

Everyone in society deserves the opportunity to participate in all aspects of life. We believe that young people should have a say in decisions affecting their lives. They are entitled to feel *safe*, which includes not being in situations where they feel vulnerable, threatened, fearful or in danger. Young people are also entitled to enjoy stable, secure housing, an education, employment opportunities and freedom from violence. Again, many young people do not currently enjoy these rights.

Violence and abuse are never acceptable. *Violence* is not only the act of physical, mental, verbal, emotional, spiritual or sexual harm. It also includes the threat or fear of being hurt. *Abuse* exists wherever power is taken over an individual, group or society by others. This may occur at an individual, social, political or economic level. We believe young people are entitled to safety, even when they choose to behave in a way some consider *risk taking*. We envisage a society where young people can live and grow in a safe, secure, mutually-supportive environment. Many of the young people we work with are, or have been, subject to violence and abuse.

CO-OPERATION COULD LEAD TO POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

We look toward a society where differences are appreciated and celebrated. Recognition of our common ground as human beings is essential to eliminating the oppression of groups that suffer within our current society.

We believe it is the particular responsibility of community and government to recognise and provide for all members of society, including those outside the *mainstream*. Society could, and should, exist in order to meet a fair share of the needs of each of its members and it is therefore collectively obliged to focus on the unmet needs of those who *don't fit* for whatever reason. One response to this obligation is the provision of services. Wherever possible, we will provide services in the manner, places and at the times that best suit young people.

In order to be able to make informed decisions about the services required, we believe governments need to listen to young people and those in direct contact with them. Many of the problems faced by young people are an outcome of social structures and systems, rather than individual weaknesses or deficits, hence their need for services to assist them. Funding, programs and policies should address the genuine needs of young people, rather than reacting to *youth problems*. For example, employment policies should be developed in a way that reflects the realities of employment opportunities for young people, and protects against the unemployed being blamed for

their situation. Improvement in the social standing of young people will occur when society no longer subscribes to the myths that devalue young people and their social contributions.

It is only through collaboration between the community and government that the social change necessary to meet young people's needs can occur. Valuing of young people by society will be enhanced, when governments are truly representative of the gender, cultural, socio-economic and age mix of the Australian community. Members of the community have an obligation to challenge government to provide adequate resources on a long-term basis. The media has a role to play in the improvement of young people's social standing by reporting in a balanced and realistic manner. Community organisations, too, have a significant role in enabling a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of young people, and others who *miss out* in our current social structure.

Everyone, given the opportunity, can contribute to creating a better society.

Improvement and maintenance of the urban and natural environment is integral to people's ultimate survival and sense of well-being. Given a shared vision, people have the power to bring about social and political changes that will result in a society that better meets the needs of its members. Young people have the ability and potential to make a major contribution to positive community change. A key role of youth services and young people themselves is to challenge those social structures which misrepresent or exclude young people and therefore hinder their opportunity to interact in ways they find meaningful. We believe that structures within the social system must become more flexible, and able to assist individuals and groups to ultimately create positive changes in society.

GCYS is committed to challenging those structures that restrict young people's opportunity to believe in themselves. We will work towards ensuring that our service is proactive in addressing global issues, as part of our commitment to acting in young people's interests. Young people's interests are best served by a balance of direct work with young people, and an investment in wider social, economic and political change.

OUR AGENCY CULTURE WILL MODEL POSITIVE SOCIAL INTERACTION

We aim to treat everyone associated with Gold Coast Youth Service with *dignity* and *respect* in a caring environment where young people feel safe and welcome. This means that we aim to interact with people in a way that assumes that they and their ideas are valuable and worthwhile. We seek to model a culture of mutual respect, that maintains morale and generates a harmonious working environment, at all levels within GCYS and beyond. In particular, we affirm young people's right to disagree with us and with others. We aim to treat each young person as an individual, not a stereotype. We aim to eliminate abuse such as sexism and racism within the agency. We will accept young people, regardless of their background or the choices they make.

We will foster healthy working relationships, based in honesty and integrity. We believe that *actions speak louder than words*, and agency culture will influence young people's behaviour, attitudes and decisions. The way we work together should be consistent with the way we work with young people. We will seek to demonstrate behaviour and attitudes which are consistent with this *GCYS Values Statement* and our *Vision*; where we interact with everyone as we would like to be treated ourselves; where our boundaries are clear and consistent; where our values are reflected in individual programs, decision making and our interactions with young people.

We will encourage a culture where everyone has the right to be listened to, and have their contributions taken seriously. We want everyone - staff, management and young people - to feel comfortable to disagree or question. We will focus on ensuring that the opinions, feelings and views of all are heard. We will encourage a culture where everyone is committed to being open to new ideas. We recognise that everyone's ideas are based in what they've learned through experience, and therefore value young people's opinions as much as our own. Everyone has the right to hold and express differing views, provided that they don't impose these on others. We will focus on actively listening to the contributions of all, and offering full opportunities for everyone to participate in making decisions that affect their lives.

We will enable and advocate constructive, non-abusive ways of dealing with conflict. We will discourage the use of physical, verbal or psychological violence in conflict situations. This approach

will be integrated into the everyday culture of the agency, through a focus on talking, discussion and exploring possible solutions wherever differences arise. We will always try to be honest and open, when expressing our concerns, and ensure that open lines of communication exist at all levels within GCYS. We are committed to ensuring that clear, defined processes are available to help all stakeholders challenge the services we offer in a useful way.

We aim to work in a way that lessens the power imbalances in our relationships with young people.

We are concerned with encouraging the autonomy of individual young people, and a collective commitment amongst young people to themselves and the community. By assisting individuals to make informed life choices, we aim to equip young people with the means to improve their quality of life and contribute to wider change. Young people should have a political voice in their future. They have the ability to, individually and collectively, challenge systems that they feel discriminate against them.

We are committed to maintaining our own ability to provide the most valuable service possible to young people. Workers, in particular, should look after their own mental and physical health. Both staff and management are committed to use the training available to them to continually upgrade their skills in areas relevant to their respective roles. Both need to be constantly aware of their values and beliefs, and their possible affect on young people.

OUR BEHAVIOUR WITH INDIVIDUAL YOUNG PEOPLE WILL REFLECT THESE VALUES

We aim to help young people to achieve their full potential. We see *helping* as a process where we offer a range of options, resources and accurate information that is reflective of, and responsive to, their identified needs. This process is designed to provide opportunities for young people to develop and maximise their personal strengths and attributes. A positive and encouraging approach is fundamental to this approach. Ultimately, we aim to help each individual young person to reach the best of their ability in the area they choose as important in their lives. Their choices should reflect and be consistent with their own values. We are committed to respecting the values held by young people, provided that these do not result in harm to self or others. Accordingly, we are concerned with *facilitating* young people's development. This includes:

- respecting their frame of reference
- extending their frame of reference
- exploring possible consequences of decisions
- developing strategies to deal with possible consequences
- being there for them, regardless of their decisions
- informing them of information we hold which is outside their frame of reference (in case they wish to access this later)
- the only circumstances under which we will intervene from any frame of reference other than the young person's, is in *life and death* situations or when the service believes the person is unable to make a safe decision.

Young people should be able to be themselves, so long as their behaviour doesn't harm others. We recognise young people do not have control over many of their life circumstances. Often their behaviour is a response to their treatment by society and imposition of 'norms' that do not meet their needs. We will seek to maximise young peoples' power and therefore their ability to 'own' their decisions, actions and behaviours. When challenging behaviours we find destructive, we will work from the assumption that there is a reason for this behaviour, and challenge the behaviour rather than the person themselves.

We believe that it is as important to work on young people's strengths, as well as the difficulties they face. We will focus considerable energy on assisting young people to recognise and build on their talents and abilities. We will facilitate the development of young people's skills and attributes and promote confidence and self-esteem. We believe this style of work will afford young people the opportunity to develop their full potential.

We know that people only initiate change when personally motivated to do so. Every individual is capable of making their own decisions. They always have some choices - although these may be limited by factors outside their control or potentially destructive to themselves or others. We will encourage self worth amongst young people so their chances of making positive changes are as high as possible. We will encourage young people to assess their own worth according to their own criteria, rather than someone else's. If young people feel safe and free to challenge what they believe without being *put down*, they are likely to make better quality decisions.

We will value the existing supports and resources of the young people with whom we work. This includes recognising the benefits of their family and wider community interactions and relationships. Everyone needs significant relationships in their lives, through which they can learn and grow. We will encourage home situations that enable equality for young people and others who share their living environment, whether these be family or friends. We will encourage young people to form and maintain healthy, meaningful relationships in which they are treated with respect and dignity.

We believe young people should have the opportunity to be young, to have a relatively carefree life and some fun with family support and without undue worries. However, we are concerned about the pressure placed on some young people to take a level of responsibility in life, beyond their years. We recognise that some families, government and society place rules and structures on young people that can compel them to make early decisions that will affect their choices later in life. Whilst recognising these pressures, we will offer young people opportunities to explore the consequences of their decisions. We believe that everyone is responsible for their own decisions, and should be encouraged and supported in this process.

OUR FUNCTIONING AS AN AGENCY WILL REFLECT THESE VALUES

The ultimate criteria for any organisational decision within GCYS, will be its affect on young people. We will continue to primarily focus on young people's needs. Both workers and management should continuously review their personal value system and its influence on the organisation. All should be committed to ensuring that service delivery is functioning to the highest standard and in the best interests of young people. We will encourage workers, volunteers and young people to participate to the best of their ability. We will encourage workers to take responsibility for learning from experience, and continuing to question their work practices. We will also respond to the needs of young people through using consultative approaches to increase community awareness, and through constantly evaluating our effectiveness.

We will institute agency policy and practices designed to ensure the best possible quality of service to young people. As an agency, we will undertake regular strategic planning to focus on the needs of young people and evaluate and improve the quality of the services we provide. We also believe that using a team approach will contribute to the best possible outcomes for young people. We will maintain consistency of approach through establishing and working within clear standards of behaviour that focus on our *duty of care* to young people, and are consistent with our *Values* and *Vision*. Development and maintenance of a *Best Practice* policy, is also a part of this commitment.

GCYS will put time and energy into maintaining healthy working relationships with other agencies, government and the wider community. It is critical that we build and maintain our cross-agency relationships to enable young people to become aware of services available to them. Referral from other agencies can increase young peoples' options and access to appropriate services. To enable this, we will continue to raise public awareness through informing the wider community of issues relevant for young people and services provided by GCYS, and the philosophy behind our service provision.

We particularly value a developmental/proactive approach to work with young people. This applies whether we are doing short or long term work with young people themselves, or seeking to change those systems which adversely affect young people. We seek, where possible, to work with young people before major crises occur. However, we recognise that some situations require an immediate crisis response, and see this as a necessary aspect of our service provision.

We recognise that some young people have limited or no family, and believe those young people are particularly entitled to community assistance. We believe that all young people should be able to access services from the agency of their choice. Every young person is entitled to access a quality service where they are treated with respect. Accordingly, GCYS remains available to all young people. However we see our primary target group as young people who perceive themselves to be in particular need, and who feel they have limited access to stable, quality support. We believe that meaningful relationships between these young people and service providers are important, since they might be the young person's first experience of a positive relationship with an adult. A priority on those young people with limited support options helps us to meet the overall social responsibility of enabling all young people to end up with equal opportunities.

We recognise that young people share both common needs and differing (individual) needs. Where the pattern of young people's common needs change, we aim to be organisationally flexible and change our practices accordingly. In our day to day work with young people, we will focus on addressing their individual needs as they perceive them.