

Position Description

Position title	Therapeutic Specialist
Document ID	
Program/Unit	Therapeutic Residential Care Barwon Region
Classification	
Position reports to	Principal Practitioner

Organisational context

On 1 July 1997, MacKillop Family Services was formed as a new organisation by re-founding seven agencies operated by the Sisters of Mercy, the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart in Victoria. However, our legacy and inspiration is much older. From the 1850s, these three congregations, respectively founded by Catherine McAuley, Edmund Rice and Mary MacKillop, worked in Victoria to establish homes for children who were orphaned, destitute or neglected, and for families who were in need of care and support. Throughout the years, the original model of institutional care evolved into different forms of residential care, foster care, education, family support and disability services.

The purpose and character of MacKillop Family Services as a Catholic organisation, continues to draw from the lives, works and inspiration of the three founders who provide a living model for the way our staff and volunteers approach their work. Woven through this ethos is the acknowledgement and recognition of the inherent Aboriginal spirituality of this country and respect for the cultures that have lived here for thousands of generations.

Today, we continue this work within the framework of Catholic social teaching and in the spirit of the Gospel - one of radical inclusion, restoration and accompaniment. MacKillop Family Services is now a national organisation and a leading provider of services for children, young people and families across Victoria, New South Wales, ACT, Western Australia and to other organisations in every state and beyond. We offer services and programs in family support, foster care, residential care, disability services, youth support, education and training, parenting, family therapy, mental health, family violence, early childhood, and support to women and men who, as children, were in the care of our founding agencies.

At MacKillop we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their Elders - past, present and emerging - and acknowledge the importance of their stories, history and wisdom. They hold the memories, traditions, cultures, hopes and aspirations of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are strongly committed to the ongoing work of Aboriginal self-determination, reconciliation, and cultural safety for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, staff and stakeholders.

MacKillop has almost 1,500 staff, operating out of more than 50 sites, and has forecast annual revenue for the 2020/21 financial year of over \$150 million.

Our purpose

MacKillop Family Services continues our founders' passionate commitment to social justice - to work for the rights of children, young people and families to be safe, to learn, feel nurtured and connected to culture. We provide high quality services to promote healing from trauma and loss, and to enable hopeful futures.

MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

Our vision

All children, young people and families are safe, thriving and connected to culture and community. MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

Our values

We commit to the following five foundational values which we continue to embed in the culture of our organisation and practice:

JUSTICE. We believe in the right of all people to experience respect and to have access to quality services irrespective of sex, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, marital status, disability, sexuality or age. We advocate for inclusiveness and social justice in the wider community and commit to these principles across our organisation and all services we provide. *We believe in the right of all people to be treated justly and fairly.*

HOPE. We commit to creating positive and hopeful relationships where people find meaning in their experiences and relationships and are able to learn, explore their strengths and create possibilities for growth and change. *We seek to foster hope that assists people to find meaning.*

COLLABORATION. In our work with individuals, families and other organisations and groups, we commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment. *We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment.*

COMPASSION. Compassion is an attitude of the heart, an expression of our shared humanity and a deep desire to alleviate another's suffering. We commit to creating an attitude of openness to others and to their circumstances. *We seek to foster compassion, an attitude of the heart and a response to exclusion and suffering.*

RESPECT. We value ourselves and other people, the earth and all creation. We seek to listen and learn from each other and build relationships with respect, being proud of what we hold in common and with understanding and tolerance of our differences. *We seek to act with respect with regard to each other, the earth and all creation.*

Our Sanctuary Commitment

Our values are brought to life through our commitment to the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is an evidence-supported, whole-of-organisation framework that guides how we practice as an agency. Sanctuary enables a shared language, knowledge, and response to the impact of trauma and loss on all of us.

Our seven Sanctuary Commitments are as follows:

- Non-Violence - Mean what you say and don't be mean when you say it
- Emotional Intelligence - Look out for yours and other people's feelings
- Social Learning - We all learn from, and teach each other
- Democracy - Everyone is heard
- Open Communication - Be honest and share information
- Social Responsibility - We all help each other ... It takes a village to raise a child
- Growth and Change - Open to new ideas and ways of thinking

Position purpose

This position is situated within the **Therapeutic Residential Care (TRC) Program** which is responsible for intensive and time-limited care for a child or young person in statutory care that responds to the complex impacts of abuse, neglect and separation from family. Therapeutic care is achieved through the creation of positive, safe, healing relationships and experiences informed by a sound understanding of trauma, attachment and developmental needs.

The Therapeutic Specialist provides therapeutic leadership and trauma informed interventions based on sound practice expertise and contemporary research that delivers positive outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

The Therapeutic Specialist is a member of the Clinical Program and reports to the Principal Practitioner.

Primary objectives

The primary objective of this role is to add value over and above the residential and case management aspects of the TRC program, by developing therapeutic strategies and plans for each individual child or young person, supporting and guiding staff in the implementation of these strategies and plans to facilitate the development of new skills and perspectives to help them expand their strengths to facilitate healing and recovery. The Therapeutic Practitioner will also collaborate with the care team to plan and implement processes that strengthen the child/young person's relationship with their family and community.

Key result areas and responsibilities

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Provide support to staff, carers and members of each child's therapeutic network. This will include facilitating group reflective practice and training for staff especially in the areas of trauma and its impact on the young person.
- Ensure that appropriate assessment procedures including SDQ and HoNOSCA assessments, risk assessment, therapeutic planning processes and outcome measurements are undertaken for each child or young person upon entry to TRC at all relevant times during referral, placement and transition to further options.
- Facilitate the development and timely review of Individual Therapeutic Care Plans (ITCP) for each child and young person in TRC.
- Work in collaboration with the area manager, program staff and regional services and provide secondary consultation concerning the mental health needs of clients of MacKillop Family Services.
- Plan and implement interventions, in collaboration with the care team, to engage families, communities and young person in a process that assists relational repair and increased family/community connection
- Report regularly through clinical supervision to the Principal Practitioner. Undertake duties as required.
- Attend and contribute to team meetings.
- Participate and assist in organisation wide service provision and development of training, quality assurance mechanisms and improvement frameworks for trauma informed service delivery.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with key internal and external stakeholders, particularly other mental health providers, to improve health and well-being outcomes including education performance, for each client in the program.

Key selection criteria

The incumbent will have:

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work or a related discipline is essential. Post Graduate training in relevant child, adolescent and family clinical practice, family work and systemic thinking is strongly preferred.
- Demonstrated practice knowledge areas relevant to work with traumatised and vulnerable children, young people and families which may include child development and the impact of trauma clinical work with children, young people and families, mental health, drug and alcohol, disability or other trauma related behaviours.
- Evidence of a well-developed understanding of Attachment and Trauma theories, the relationship to child abuse and neglect, together with an understanding of intellectual disability and an ability to assist others to understand the implications.
- Experience in completing assessments for children and young people and using the findings to complete a comprehensive therapeutic written report/care plan designed to inform staff and child interactions and the Care Team's planning
- Established high level ability to provide secondary consultation, training and advice to clinicians, other professionals, staff and carers
- Proven highly developed interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence and excellent engagement skills, especially in engaging children and young people who have experienced significant trauma, disrupted attachment and demonstrate extreme emotional and behavioural dysregulation.
- A track record of working collaboratively and the demonstrated capacity to negotiate and liaise with internal and external stakeholders including other mental health providers, Department of Human Services, other agencies and the community.
- Evidence of a sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the child protection and out-of-home care service system and the issues involved in providing services to statutory clients
- Understanding of and commitment to MacKillop objectives, values and Sanctuary Commitments
- A knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values and an awareness of the current issues faced by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Other information

The incumbent is required to:

- Sign and actively abide by MacKillop's Code of Conduct.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's P.8 People and Workplace Policy.
- Observe and fulfil health and safety responsibilities as contained within 'WHS-P-001 Responsibility Statements' document.
- Attend mandatory and other training as required.
- Actively participate in MacKillop's Bid Management process as required.
- Participate in and promote continuous quality improvement processes.
- Promote an environment that is culturally safe and strengths focussed.

- Abide by principles and commitments of the Sanctuary Framework.
- Incorporate cultural safety into your practice with Aboriginal families.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Victorian Driver's Licence.
- Valid and current Victorian Working with Children Card.
- Satisfactory criminal history check conducted by MacKillop Family Services.

Approval

Approver's full name:	Kerry O'Sullivan	Date:	19/10/2020
Approver's position title:	Director Clinical Services		
Incumbent's full name:			
Incumbent's signature:		Date:	



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services.