



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Senior Aboriginal Child Specialist Advisor
Reports to	Team Leader
Direct Reports	NA
Status	Full time (38 hrs pw) (part time will be considered)
Location	Wangaratta/ Wodonga

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organization of its kind in Australia. VACCA is an Aboriginal community-controlled organization that supports and advocates for the Aboriginal community. Our strength lies with our people. Our team is committed to the organisation's vision and values; advocates for our children and other vulnerable community members; and shows respect for, observance and compliance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice and ceremony. Our Aboriginality is what distinguishes us from mainstream services and what enables us to deliver the positive outcomes we achieve for our people.

VACCA employs over 600 staff and delivers more than 70 programs across the state. VACCA's experience and expertise in the delivery of therapeutic interventions are underpinned by culture, connection, and healing. VACCA designs, develops and delivers programs with self-determination and an understanding that the intergenerational trauma experienced by our community requires intergenerational and community healing.

Central to VACCA's work is the importance of connection to family, community and culture as essential to Aboriginal children's safety, stability and ensuring that they have an ongoing sense of belonging. As Victoria's largest Aboriginal child welfare agency, VACCA will play a key role in the process of transitioning the care and case management of Aboriginal children from government and non- Aboriginal organisations to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations following the recent decision of the Victorian Government.

VACCA is implementing cultural therapeutic ways which is an agency wide framework that underpins our work with the community, our clients and staff

OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be.

OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities



PROGRAM AREA

The Lakidjeka Aboriginal Child Specialist Advise Support Service (ACSASS) provides specialist advice and case consultation to Child Protection about culturally appropriate intervention in respect of all reports relating to alleged harm of children and significant decisions in all phases of child protection.

The Lakidjeka program does not have direct responsibility for case work. The role of the program is to provide advice and support to inform the respectful engagement of families, risk and other assessments, planning, monitoring and reviews undertaken by child protection.

The program works closely with the child protection offices within the local region to:

- Provide an Aboriginal and cultural perspective on all risk and safety assessments
- Support child protection to engage Aboriginal children and families in a fair and respectful manner
- Improve case management and decision-making processes concerning Aboriginal children
- Advocate for the rights and interests of Aboriginal children in all assessments, planning and decision making and at court
- Support Aboriginal families to meet with child protection and understand the legal processes.

POSITION SUMMARY

This Senior Case Advisor role will:

- Work in strong partnership with child protection to ensure the rights and best interests of Aboriginal children who have come to the attention of child protection are upheld and maintained
- Respond to and work closely with child protection staff in the local area to meet with families where allegations of abuse and neglect of children have been made
- Participate and provide advice to child protection in case planning to ensure an Aboriginal perspective is considered in assessments, placement planning and decision making of the child
- Support child protection to identify and locate Aboriginal family members who can provide support and care to the child and family
- Develop and maintain external relationships with services in the interests of the child and family
- Undertake all of the reporting requirements required of the role, such as completing case notes and file maintenance
- Participant on the Lakidjeka After hours roster

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Lakidjeka Intake & AHS team, VACCA Ovens Murray & VACCA Permanent Care

External: Department of Health Human Services – Child Protection, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, (particularly Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making, Cultural Support, Out of Home Care & Early Intervention), Community Service Organisations & Children’s Court Victoria

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA



- Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, the values that underpin VACCA' vision and purpose and the capacity to take a leadership role in championing these internally and externally
- Demonstrated awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal societies and cultures, and commitment to continually build knowledge of such, along with a high level of awareness of the key issues which impact upon Aboriginal communities
- Demonstrated experience in working and engaging with Aboriginal families and children
- Demonstrated understanding of the issues impacting on Aboriginal families that lead to Child Protection involvement
- Demonstrated ability to work closely with Child Protection and other services to advocate for the child and support the best interests of children
- Demonstrated ability to identify risk of harm to children and young people and undertake risk assessments within a cultural framework
- Demonstrated ability and experience working independently and within a small team.
- Demonstrated sound administrative skills, including computer skills, record keeping including maintaining case notes, file maintenance and data recording
- Ability to work in a pressured environment and prioritising work and meeting deadlines

QUALIFICATION/ EXPERIENCE

- A relevant welfare qualification
- Experience working in the community services sector

REQUIREMENTS

- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card.

POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To respond to reports to Child Protection regarding Aboriginal children and young people.
- To undertake and provide cultural input into risk assessments regarding Aboriginal children, young people and their families through consultation and advice to Child Protection.
- To work in strong partnership with Child Protection in line with the VACCA/ DHS Protocol 2002 and the Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005 (Vic.)
- Ensure Aboriginal culture is embedded throughout all aspects of the program to ensure cultural safety in line with VACCA's Cultural Therapeutic Ways
- To participate in case planning, Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making and other processes involving Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- To undertake joint visits with Child Protective workers.
- To provide specialist advice on behalf of Aboriginal children, families and communities
- To provide recommendations to assist Child Protection in making referrals.
- To support children, young people and their families understand the process of dealing with Child Protection and court system.
- To attend the Children's Court where appropriate
- To liaise directly with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies and with government departments, such as the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Child Protection (DHS).
- To maintain clear, concise and accurate records of statistics, meetings and case notes.
- To be aware of and familiar with current policies, legislation, programs and practices in relation to child welfare.



VACCA
Connected by culture

- To participate in training sessions, team meetings and staff meetings.
- To undertake intra-state travel as required.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Ensure compliance with the OH&S Act and VACCA policies.
- Contribute positively and proactively to team and organisation wide OH&S activities.

QUALITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure compliance with legislation, contract and policy requirements in your day to day work in order to meet the organisation's audit, contract and registration obligations.
- Proactively apply your specialist knowledge in the review and maintenance of policies, systems and processes.
- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

OTHER

- Participate proactively in team project initiatives
- Support other team members in periods of high demand and during periods of absence.
- Participate in project groups and attend events
- Undertake other duties as directed

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and supporting strong, safe, thriving Aboriginal communities and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity, honouring all cultural backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and spiritual beliefs.

VACCA is a child-safe organisation and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with zero tolerance for child abuse. All successful applicants will be required to undertake a National Police Record Check and Working with Children Check prior to commencement of employment and periodically following commencement.

VACCA is an equal opportunity employer and has a smoke-free workplace policy.