Position Description

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| **Position Title** | Project REAL Youth Engagement and Learning Mentor |
| **Type of Employment/EFT** | Part-time – 24 hours per week |
| **Program Area/Service Unit** | Project REAL (Re-engagement in Education and Learning)  Department of Community Development and Action Research |
| **Award/Agreement/ Classification** | Neighbourhood Houses and Adult Community Education Centres (NHACE) Collective Agreement 2016  Class I Level 3 |
| **Reports To** | Project REAL Lead Teacher |
| **Location** | Broadmeadows |

Banksia Gardens Community Services

Banksia Gardens Community Services is a vibrant community services organisation and registered charity operating in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. With a strong commitment to community development and action research principles, our programs focus mainly on education and training, young people, early childhood, environmental sustainability, gender equity and community participation and advocacy.

Our Mission

Banksia Gardens Community Services will be a leader in education, training and community engagement programs in Hume City and the northern suburbs. Our services will provide opportunities, particularly for those experiencing disadvantage and poverty, that lead to further education and employment pathways, enhance well-being and transform lives. Banksia Gardens Community Services will also focus on social justice advocacy and give voice to those in our community who suffer injustice.

Our Values

**Respect**

We genuinely acknowledge and respect each other’s individual values, beliefs, efforts, ideas and cultural and religious backgrounds.

**Integrity**

We maintain high standards of integrity, are ethical, honest and conscientious in our approach to work. We acknowledge and assume responsibility for our own actions and personal behaviour and we are entitled to expect the same of others.

**Inclusion**

We collaborate with the aim of empowering each other to be the best that we can, to connect communities, celebrate diversity and give voice to those who suffer injustice.

**Responsiveness**

We are proactive and act flexibly to empower our community when responding to community needs.

**Gender Equity**

We believe gender equity is fundamental in creating a just society. We will cultivate an equal work environment and will be a leader in gender equity as a means of achieving a thriving, safe community that is free from violence.

**Environmental Sustainability**

We actively support the principles of environmental sustainability, both locally and globally.

The Program Unit/Team

Project REAL, an alternative education program established by a community partnership led by Banksia Gardens Community Services, started operating in February 2017.

The aim of the project was to develop and test a re-engagement program for local primary school students who manifest behavioural issues and significant disengagement as a result of experiences of adversity and stress that have disrupted their emotional and cognitive development.

The rationale of the program is based on a solid body of research into the importance of repairing self-regulatory abilities in ensuring educational engagement of young people who have experienced complex trauma and/or high levels of adversity and stress.

The purpose of this position is to provide support to the Project REAL team with the daily operational requirements of the program. This support will involve assisting the teaching team to prepare the Project REAL space for the day and supporting staff and students during learning activities and breaks by attuning to students’ needs and maintaining a safe, calm and nurturing learning environment.

Visit [https://banksiagardens.org.au/project-real/](https://banksiagardens.org.au/project-real/%20) to gain an understanding of the project, and its parent project: the Northern Centre for Excellence in School Engagement (NCESE) at [https://banksiagardens.org.au/northern-centre-for-excellence-in-school-engagement/](https://banksiagardens.org.au/northern-centre-for-excellence-in-school-engagement/%20)

The Position

The Project REAL Youth Engagement and Learning Mentor will work collaboratively to support the teaching team in delivering programming requirements for Project REAL, with a specific focus on supporting students’ learning, and their social and emotional development, while maintaining an environment conducive to achievement and personal development.

**Key Duties & Responsibilities**

**Supporting the operations of Project REAL**

* Develop and nurture positive relationships with students and their families through daily interactions at Project REAL.
* Monitor the wellbeing and behaviour of individual students and use trauma-informed practice tools in accordance to the Project REAL processes and practices to support their ability to regulate and their engagement in the curriculum.
* Work alongside teachers, other support staff, volunteers and external partners, to engage students in 1:1 learning activities or in small group activities prepared by the teaching team to support their wellbeing, engagement and learning.
* Foster the development of students’ social and emotional skills by supporting their engagement in the Project REAL curriculum and its relevant processes and practices (e.g. preparing a student to conduct a repair as part of the program’s restorative practices).
* Participate in rostered supervision of students during class time, recess and lunch breaks, as well as on excursions as needed.
* Support students’ transitions in and out of Project REAL as required and as directed by Lead Teacher.
* Regularly update Project REAL databases for attendance, assessment, evaluation and compliance purposes as required.
* Keep up to date records regarding students’ progress and wellbeing.
* Contribute to all documentation and communication necessary for student learning and information sharing (e.g. input into weekly reports for referring schools).
* Contribute to daily tasks related to the operations of Project REAL, such as cleaning, tidying, assisting students with food preparation, purchasing food, setting up activities and preparing the physical space for various activities.
* Actively participate in the refinement of Behaviour Support Plans and Individual Education Plans for each student as required.
* Regularly share concerns with the team, as well as ideas about how to best support students’ wellbeing, learning and engagement.
* Participate in morning briefings, afternoon debriefs and regular team meetings as required.

**Operational and professional learning requirements**

* Participate in professional learning and reflective practice sessions, and contribute to a culture of collective care for our staff and PR community.
* Attend staff meetings and professional development sessions and contribute to Banksia Gardens initiatives as directed by the Project REAL Lead Teacher and the BGCS Executive Management Team.
* Contribute to the analysis and evaluation of Project REAL as a creative, critical and reflective practitioner.
* Contributing to a body of knowledge documenting best practice in flexible and alternative educational practices, through participation in the NCESE activities and Project REAL external evaluation and other related initiatives as required
* Comply with all the relevant policies and regulations of Banksia Gardens Community Services in accordance with the operation of a Department of Education and Training endorsed re-engagement program.

**Positions of responsibility**

* Facilitate one on one learning blocks with students (with training and time allowance).

The Person

The Project REAL Youth Engagement and Learning Mentor is required to work in a manner which reflects the following competencies:

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| **Client Service Orientation**   * Display unconditional positive regard for the Project REAL students and their families at all times. * Embrace diversity and actively promote respect for all clients, staff and stakeholders. * Professional presentation, courtesy, punctuality and reliability. * Maintain effective communication, including: active listening, demonstrated empathy and clear and effective expression (verbal and written). |
| **Leadership**   * Maintain a positive attitude at all times and respond to escalating behaviours in a calm and measured manner in order to support co-regulation. * Monitor own emotional state and effectively express needs to team members and / or supervisor (e.g. requesting to swap with another staff member after working with a highly escalated student for a certain period of time) |
| **Self and People Management**   * Demonstrated confidence and personal resilience and ability to manage challenging situations. * Demonstrated ability to engage others and develop collegial, positive and productive relationships. * Ability to work with a high degree of autonomy and as part of a team. * Actively seek and use feedback to identify areas for learning and improvement. |
| **Team Work**   * Collaborate effectively with supervisor, peers, staff and volunteers from across BGCS to achieve individual, team and organisational objectives. |
| **System and Process Development**   * Critical thinking, problem solving and analysis skills. * Actively promote better practice by contributing to the development of organisational systems and process. |
| **Planning and Initiative**   * Demonstrated capacity to set and achieve goals through planning, organising and execution of agreed initiatives. |

Key Selection Criteria

**Essential**

1. Tertiary qualifications in youth work, community development, psychology, teaching or a related discipline.
2. Demonstrated ability to build relationships with highly vulnerable children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds.
3. Sound understanding of the effects of chronic stress and childhood adversity on children’s learning and development.
4. Well-developed organisational and time-management skills with the ability to plan workload, prioritise and meet deadlines.
5. Knowledge of the Victorian Curriculum and other relevant developmental and academic milestones for primary and early secondary levels.
6. Proven ability to work with students experiencing complex personal and family situations in a non-judgmental and confidential manner.
7. Understanding of trauma-informed practice and how it can be applied to a flexible education setting.

**Desirable**

1. Current drivers licence and use of vehicle.

**Qualifications, Registration and/or Experience**

1. Tertiary qualifications in youth work, community development, psychology, teaching or a related discipline.

Other Requirements

* Assist in the development and implementation of the organisation’s quality improvement strategies.
* Assist in achieving the organisation’s strategic objectives.

**Workplace Health & Safety and Risk Management**

All staff have a responsibility to workplace health and safety at BGCS. Staff are required to carry out their duties in a manner that does not adversely affect their own health and safety and that of others by reporting all incidents and injuries as well as co-operating with any measures introduced in the workplace to improve WH&S.

**General**

* It is the responsibility of all staff to work within BGCS’s Code of Conduct and represent BGCS as a professional and client-focused organisation and to promote its range of programs and services.
* Comply with and contribute to BGCS’s Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions.
* Carry out all other duties as directed consistent with BGCS’s Strategic Direction.
* Attend staff meetings, relevant network meetings, program planning and professional development sessions.
* Engage in ongoing professional development and quality improvement activities.
* Participate and actively engage in regular Supervision.
* Other duties as required to achieve position specific or organisational objectives.
* Be conversant with computer systems and other technology relevant to the position.

Additional information

* Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
* BGCS is an organisation that values diversity. All employees are required to have an awareness of inclusive practice principles as they relate to the following vulnerable community groups: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse and people experiencing poverty.
* The successful incumbent will be required to undertake and maintain a National Criminal History Check (NCHC) and hold a current valid Working With Children Check (WWCC). Appointment is subject to the outcomes of these checks and the provision of a recruitment screening Statutory Declaration (for new staff).
* BGCS is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. BGCS has **zero** tolerance of child abuse. All staff working at BGCS are responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.
* BGCS is committed to the promotion of gender equity and the prevention of family violence.
* BGCS reserves the right to vary the location of the position according to its needs and the needs of its clients and any future changes to BGCS's area of operation.
* Salary sacrifice arrangements are available to all staff subject BGCS’s ongoing Fringe Benefits Tax exempt status as a registered charity.
* The position requires a current Victorian Driver’s licence.

Acknowledgement

I hereby accept and agree to the duties in the Position Description. I understand that this Position Description is to be read in conjunction with my Letter of Appointment and agree to abide by the terms and conditions stipulated therein.

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| **Name:** *(Please Print)* |
| **Signature:** *(Incumbent)* |
| **Date:** |