

Position Description Childhood Educator - LP POSTC5021 ISO9001 Approved by Shannon Bell Next Revision: 01/07/2027	Location:	Lower Plenty
	Traditional Land Owners:	Wurundjeri People
	Classification:	SCHADS Level 4
	Reports To:	Family Services Team Leader
	Direct Reports:	N/A

Odyssey Victoria (OV) is a place of hope and positive change for individuals working towards breaking their pattern of addiction. At OV we believe that every person should have the opportunity to change and grow. Our diverse teams work with individuals, families, and communities to reduce drug use, improve mental health, and reconnect people to their family and the community. The Odyssey name and logo reflects the courageous journey of self-discovery and change that our clients undertake.

Position objective

The Childhood Educator coordinates and delivers care and education to meet the needs of individual children in residence at the TC. The key purpose of the position is to lead, implement and continuously improve the delivery of the children's programs and to contribute to the development of organisational policies and initiatives. The role provides guidance to educators, ensuring a secure and nurturing environment for children, and promoting opportunities for children to reach their full potential. A secondary purpose is to collaborate with the Family Services Team Leader in embedding a trauma-informed approach, guided by Best Interests principles, and to model high-quality practice across the Family Services Program.

Part of the Therapeutic Community (TC), a long-term residential program, the onsite Children's Centre forms part of the specialized Family Services Program, offering a unique play and learning environment for the development of children aged 0-5 years and providing additional programs for children aged 6-12 after school and on school holidays, working closely in supporting resident families. The Centre provides childcare experiences tailored to meet the needs of individual children. The Centre is open Monday to Friday, and assists in providing an environment that is secure, and nurturing, and will support the safety, social and emotional wellbeing and developmental needs, and protection of all children.

Role responsibilities

Working under general direction, the role performs duties of a specialised nature in the application of knowledge and skills gained through relevant qualifications and previous experience in the discipline, and is expected to contribute knowledge in establishing procedures, and exercise judgement where procedures are not clearly defined.

The role undertakes responsibility for the following varied activities:

Program and Education Services

- Design and lead day to day educational activities in consultation with the Lead Childhood Facilitator
- Mentor and supervise resident workers
- Work within the philosophy and principles of integrated service delivery.
- Provide a program of education and care based on strengths, dispositions, skills, and interests of the children which will evolve from observations, feedback from parents, the inclusion of the broader Therapeutic community.
- Support families in developing an understanding about the importance of play and leisure-based learning, and the significance of the early years in the educational continuum for children.
- Support a culture of professional inquiry and ongoing learning, implementing change where agreed and promoting a culture of best practice.
- Use reflective practices in a way that embeds continuous collaboration and improvement

Children's Centre

- Coordinate and oversee daily routines and structured educational activities Ensure programs reflect evidence of consultation with children, families and the Family services team and demonstrates a strong focus on effective partnerships with families.
- Establish and maintain environments that are welcoming and inclusive of all families and focus on engaging the family as a whole.
- Communicate with families offering support, guidance and encouraging participation in the program.
- Actively participate as a member of the integrated team to implement and enhance the delivery of the children's programs and to inform the development of policies and initiatives as required.
- Ensuring compliance with NQS, child safety, and organisational policies.
- Deliver therapeutic structured programs that are responsive to the changing needs of the children and enhance the individual developmental outcomes of each child.
- Record individual children's progress and their progress towards developmental milestones.

- Ensure child safety standards are met, which include being able to identify and respond possible attachment issues and trauma signs within children.
- Set realistic limits of behavior for children and provide consistent positive reinforcement.
- Liaise with team members in coordinating the daily activities of the Children's Centre Resident Volunteers.
- Assist with the organization of and lead external excursions with children and Children's Centre team and Resident Volunteers.
- Assist in providing an environment that is secure, nurturing, and will support the safety, social and emotional wellbeing and developmental needs, and protection of all children.
- Design and lead the delivery of an after-school program and holiday programming in consultation with the Lead Childhood Facilitator
- coordinate the general running of the Children's Centre.

Family Support

- Provide specialist guidance to resident parents utilizing Strengths based approaches by role modelling positive techniques for supporting and working through children's behaviours.
- Contribute to case planning discussions, treatment plans, and advocates for children's needs within the broader therapeutic community
- Assist resident parents with play-based activities that help to repair relational fractures.
- Communicate with resident parents, specialist Children's Centre team members, and wider Family Services team observations regarding the children.
- Assist families to build community connections and access appropriate support.
- Provide hands-on, practical parenting support to residents, including modelling positive routines, co-regulation strategies, and developmentally appropriate responses to children's behaviours.
- Support parents to create predictable home routines (mealtimes, sleep, transitions, hygiene) that can be replicated in their family unit
- Facilitate informal parent education around attachment, emotional regulation, responsive caregiving, and behavior support strategies.
- Work alongside parents during challenging moments (e.g., tantrums, bedtime struggles, sibling conflict) to model calm, safe, trauma-informed responses.
- Assist parents to understand their child's developmental stage, strengths, and needs, and translate this into day-to-day practice in the home environment.

- Support parents to prepare for significant transitions (e.g., contact visits, reunification processes, court dates, kindergarten/school entry).

Referral Pathways

- Identify when children may benefit from additional developmental, allied health, therapeutic, or specialist supports and discuss pathways with the Lead Educator, family services team, and parents.
- Prepare documentation, referral letters, case summaries, and progress notes to support access to external services (e.g., maternal and child health, NDIS, OT, speech pathology, pediatrics, mental health services).
- Liaise with external professionals and agencies to support coordinated care, ensuring parents are informed, included, and empowered.
- Assist parents in gathering required information for referrals, completing forms, booking appointments, and preparing for meetings with external providers.
- Contribute to individualized support plans for children, including behaviour support strategies, developmental goals, and trauma-informed approaches.

Child Safety and Trauma-informed care

- Use critical thinking and sound professional judgement in a complex therapeutic environment, balancing child safety, developmental needs, family dynamics, and community considerations where situations are nuanced and require adaptive, trauma-informed responses.
- Recognise trauma presentations in children and parents, and adapt practice to maintain safety, connection, and predictability.
- Participate in risk identification and contribute to safety planning for families within the Therapeutic Community environment.
- Work collaboratively with the broader TC team to ensure child-focused considerations are embedded across all aspects of the service (e.g., during community meetings, routines, family work).
- Support staff and community members to uphold child safety principles
- Contribute to creating a culturally safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for children and families.

Quality

- monitor NQS to support and lead the development and implementation of educational programs and the assessment planning cycle (Quality Area 1).

- Ensure a safe physical environment is available for children to promote their health, safety, and wellbeing (Quality Areas 2 & 3).
- Ensure minimum child ratio requirement of qualified and experienced educators are available to develop a respectful relationship with children (Quality area 4).
- Guide and develop families to achieve quality outcomes for children based on active communication, consultation, and collaboration (Quality Area 6).
- Work in accordance with policy and procedures and participate in planning and programming (Quality Area 7).
- Work in accordance with all relevant legislative and statutory requirements, organizational policies, and procedures.
- Model appropriate workplace health and safety practices contributing to a safe working environment.
- Commit to ongoing professional development through clinical supervision, participation in in-house training programs and external activities as appropriate.
- Fulfilling duties of a First Aid Officer performing first aid in the workplace, as compensated through a FAO allowance.

General

- Actively promote and adhere to the OV Child Safety policy and procedures to assist OV to maintain a child safe organization and supporting colleagues to engage in child safe practices.
- Demonstrate ability to understand and apply inclusive practice when working with people from diverse communities, such as cultures, genders, sexualities, bodies, abilities, spiritualities, ages and backgrounds.
- Demonstrate understanding of the importance and application of intersectionality when working with people from all cultures, genders, sexualities, bodies, abilities, spiritualities, ages and backgrounds.

Residential Services Expectations

All Residential Services staff are expected to:

- Model behaviours and attitudes in keeping with the objectives of the Program and at all times act in accordance with the staff *Code of Ethics & General Conduct* and resident *Bill of Rights*.
- Adhere to professional and agency ethics and boundaries.
- Foster the Therapeutic Community process of mutual self-help recovery for our residents, at all times using the social environment to maximise peer influences by encouraging transmission of residential community teachings rather than directly instructing and delivering such communications in the manner or style that reflects the rational purpose of helping.

- Work in an open, honest, and reflective style, participating as members of the staff group.
- Participate in and commit to ongoing professional development through in-house training programs and external activities as appropriate.
- Share information about the work of the Program with visitors, interest groups, statutory bodies, and professional associations as part of OV's commitment to informing others of our work.
- Promote the benefits of improved lifestyle and mental health free of substance abuse and other self-defeating anti-social behaviours amongst the staff and residents.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Relevant Bachelor Degree qualification plus a minimum of the AOD Skill Set for Health Professionals* (or commitment to obtain within 12 months of employment).
2. Significant experience (minimum 3 years) in early childhood education and family support, preferably in complex environments such as AOD, mental health, or child protection.
3. Knowledge of and experience in implementing Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and National Quality Standards (NQS)
4. Understanding of the developmental stages of children aged 0-5 years (6-11 years highly desirable).
5. Proficient knowledge and understanding of approved learning frameworks in order to stimulate, engage and enhance children's learning and development.
6. Demonstrated understanding and acceptance of different social and cultural values and attitudes to raising children.
7. Ability to maintain confidentiality, professionalism, and discretion at all times.
8. Strong communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills with the ability to build collaborative partnerships.
9. Ability to effectively liaise and communicate with a wide variety of people in a non-judgemental manner.
10. Ability to meet deadlines, balance competing demands, prioritise work and respond effectively to change.
11. Ability to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team, and a willingness to give and receive feedback and recognise and resolve interpersonal conflict.

Essential Requirements

- Relevant Bachelor Degree qualification plus a minimum of the AOD Skill Set for Health Professionals* (or commitment to obtain within 12 months of employment).
- Knowledge of and experience in implementing Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and National Quality Standards (NQS).
- Knowledge and understanding of the developmental stages of children aged 0-5 years (6-11 years highly desirable).
- Experience working with children who have additional needs and challenging behaviours.
- Current Level II First Aid certificate & CPR Certification.
- Current Anaphylaxis Training certificate.

- Current Mandatory Reporting Training.
- Effective communicator with highly developed written and verbal communication skills
- Satisfactory outcome of a confidential Police Check and Working with Children Check. OV is committed to child safety and is a child safe organisation.
- Empathy for those whose lives have been affected by problematic alcohol and other drug use and/or mental health disorders.
- Eligibility to work in Australia.
- Possession of a current Victorian Driver's Licence.
- Preparedness to travel within the catchment to meet the requirements of the job and to work out of various partnership locations.

Desirable Requirements

- Understanding of Attachment Theory
- Understanding of child and family developmental process
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the developmental stages of children aged 6-12 years
- Understanding of risk and protective factors for child social, emotional development and family Functioning
- Familiarity in working within a health and/or community organisation.
- Current knowledge of OH&S practices
- Current Certificate in Food Safety.
- Mental Health First Aid Certificate

Our Reconciliation Action Commitment

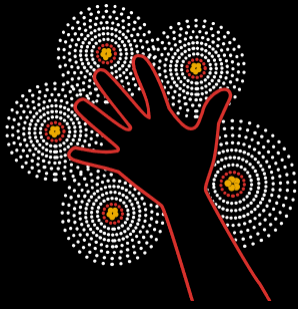
Odyssey Victoria's commitment to reconciliation with Australia's first nation peoples, means that we prioritise a workplace that welcomes, supports, and employs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and we value their unique contribution to our organisation.

We will act in ways that promote reconciliation between our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and our staff, and to contribute to the healing that is needed. We will assist with, and prioritise, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job applications and treatment referrals. We commit to celebrating local and national dates of significance, and we will Acknowledge Country when we meet together. We will respect the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and acknowledge their unique status as the traditional custodians of this land and its waters.

Our Diversity Commitment

At Odyssey Victoria, we value diversity and believe that employing people with a range of backgrounds and abilities brings a variety of ideas, perspectives and experiences that will enhance the relevance, safety, and effectiveness our services.

We will promote a workplace that actively seeks to encourage people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people, young people, older Australians, and people from diverse cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds to apply for employment with us. We are committed to ensuring that a diverse range of people are welcomed, valued, and supported in their roles.



Our values

We promote hope for change and expectation to reach one's full potential. We encourage perseverance and innovation to make a real difference in people's lives. We uphold the pillars of Respect, Concern, Honesty, Trust, and Love. Our values are promoted among the residents, staff, and clients of Odyssey Victoria.

This artwork, inspired by Chris Thorne, represents counting the pillars on one hand.

Our values

There are five values that are upheld by the residents and staff at Odyssey Victoria. This artwork, inspired by Chris Thorne, represents counting these values on one hand. They are Respect, Concern, Honesty, Trust, and Love.