



Australian Childhood Foundation

Position:	Therapeutic Specialist (VN481)
Organisation:	Australian Childhood Foundation
Location:	Mildura, or as directed by Regional Director
Hours of Work:	15.2 hours (2 days) (After hours in accordance with service requirements)
Term of Contract:	12 month contract
Accountability:	Regional Director, Therapeutic Services or delegate

Introduction

The Australian Childhood Foundation has a strong reputation for delivering clinical services, professional training, and secondary consultation, as well as a range of therapeutic care programs in foster care, kinship care and residential care. All therapeutic programs delivered by the Foundation have been built on contemporary, evidence-based frameworks including the neurobiology of trauma, attachment and relational theories, child development and system theories. A synthesis of this literature informs the basis of the assessment and intervention model for the services of the Australian Childhood Foundation. This theoretical framework provides the foundation upon which all elements of care and intervention are provided by the Foundation's Therapeutic Services program.

The Foundation provides a range of therapeutic services including specialist assessments, support and trauma counselling services for children, young people and their families who have experienced abuse and family violence, harmful sexual behaviour treatment programs for children and young people and therapeutic models of foster, residential and kinship care in Victoria, Tasmania, ACT, South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales and the Northern Territory. The Foundation is responsible for delivering the specialist therapeutic services within therapeutic out of home care programs which are delivered in partnership with a range of foster and residential care providers.

The successful applicant will join this dynamic and growing national Therapeutic Services Program.

The Foundation's Therapeutic Services include a range of programs that seek to address the impact of developmental trauma on the child's emotional, psychological, behavioural and social functioning, and support and resource key relationships and systems around the child to support the healing process for children and young people. This position will actively work alongside

local organisations in the delivery of programs and services.

The primary objectives of our therapeutic service are to:

- promote the ability of children and young people to recover from the effects of abuse, trauma and loss;
- resource carers and others to provide nurturing, therapeutic, reparative care for children and young people who present with complex needs and challenging behaviours using a trauma framework;
- ensure that children and young people are provided with opportunities and assistance to participate in decisions that affect their lives;
- ensure a multi-systemic, integrated, coordinated, consistent and holistic response to the needs of children, young people and parents/carers;
- promote placement stability for children and young people living in care and improve opportunities for them to successfully transition from more intensive to less intensive placement options, to reunify with family, or have a robust leaving care plan;
- work with families in a supportive, inclusive and respectful way; and,
- ensure that meaningful planning occurs in regard to the cultural needs of Aboriginal and other culturally diverse children and young people.

1. KEY FUNCTION OF THE POSITION

The Therapeutic Specialist will utilise a trauma informed, culturally safe, inclusive framework to respond to challenges experienced by children and young people referred to the Foundation for a variety of supports including, but not limited to, therapeutic assessment and planning, educational needs analysis, individual, dyadic and family counselling and support, clinical guidance/consultation and support to care systems and parent/carer support. The Therapeutic Specialist will work with children and young people within the out of home care system and support their healing and recovery from their experiences of trauma, enhance care systems to understand their individual needs and advocate for engagement in education, vocation or community programs to support their long-term wellbeing. The position will also provide consultation and support to systems around children and young people engaging in harmful sexual behaviour.

2. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Therapeutic Responses

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Undertake specialised trauma and educational assessments and planning for children and young people referred to the Organisation.
- Provide, where appropriate, direct individual, dyadic and/or family trauma counselling to children and young people to promote their recovery from the effects of their abuse
- Provide direct support and guidance to children and young people around education and vocational learning needs.
- Coordinate any specific therapeutic services for children and young people in the program or referred to ACF, including liaison with existing therapeutic service providers.
- Provide therapeutic support and intervention for children and young people within the care system as required.

2.2 Specialist Therapeutic Support/Advice

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Work in partnership with referrers and other systemic supports, such as the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and educational settings, to ensure a coordinated, effective and timely response to children, young people, carers and families of origin to understand the individual needs of the child/young person and support the implementation of therapeutic recommendations.
- Provide secondary consultation concerning the needs of young people referred to the program to all members of each young person's network and others involved in the young person's life as appropriate.
- Provide regular planned and unplanned specialist therapeutic support and advice to the care team in accordance with the therapeutic care plan.
- Provide secondary consultation concerning the mental health needs of children referred to the program to all members of each child's care team, network and others involved in the child's life as appropriate.
- Provide educational support and consultation to care teams and direct support to the children and young people within the residential care program.
- Participate in meetings with other relevant professionals including formal Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) case planning meetings where required, eg. annual/unscheduled review and liaise, where appropriate, with other agencies/organisations in the child's context who are critical to the care and placement plan, eg. DFFH Child Protection, school, child care and other therapy providers
- Provide advocacy on behalf of the child or young person where required, eg. school, police, courts.
- Provide written reports upon request and where appropriate, including court reports.
- To develop and maintain effective liaison between the care team and all other relevant parties involved with the child / young person.

2.3 Advocacy, research and training

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Promote the rights of children and young people to safety and security at an individual case practice level.
- Contribute to the ongoing review of public policies and practices that affect children and young people, particularly in relation to their educational needs.
- Participate, engage and support the research activities of the organisation.
- Ensure that protocols with relevant agencies are followed.
- Develop and maintain effective liaison between all relevant parties involved with children, young people and their families.
- Participate in the development and delivery of training as agreed with Senior Management.

2.4 Supervision and Team Building

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Work collaboratively as a member of a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency program, actively participating in the team and program meetings.

- Participate in program meetings and training, organisation workshops and meetings, and other meetings as required..
- Attend and contribute to regular supervision with designated line managers.
- Participate in group supervision and other forms of in-service training where appropriate.

2.5 Administration Requirements

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Meet all administrative requirements of the Australian Childhood Foundation.
- Meet all program documentation standards and requirements and contribute to the development of the organisation's policies and practice guidelines.
- Maintain regular data recording and analysis for the purpose of reporting against funding targets and deliverables.
- Develop relevant program documentation in consultation with Senior Management.

2.6 Other duties

The Therapeutic will:

- Participate in and follow the requirements of the Australian Childhood Foundation Quality Management Systems.
- Abide by the policies of the Australian Childhood Foundation.
- Observe the Code of Practice of the Australian Association of Social Workers, the Australian Psychological Society or relevant professional body.
- Adhere to and promote the Foundation's Code of Conduct
- Perform other duties as required by the CEO or senior management.

3. MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND QUALITIES

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work, Occupational Therapy or a related discipline.
- Eligibility for membership of the relevant professional association.
- Demonstrated knowledge of trauma, attachment and neurobiology frameworks and theories.
- Knowledge of the drivers of harmful sexual behaviour, safety planning and therapeutic responses to address the behaviour by children and young people.
- Knowledge of and expertise in delivering a range of appropriate therapeutic interventions to children, young people and their families.
- Highly developed ability to provide secondary consultation and advice to clinicians and other professionals.
- Demonstrated capacity to communicate effectively and positively within a team environment.
- Demonstrated commitment to a learning culture and continuous improvement.
- Demonstrated ability to work flexibly and responsively in a dynamic environment.
- Demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively, maintaining effective relationships and partnerships, and the capacity to negotiate and liaise with individuals who make up the network of support around children and young people, including their families, carers, Department of Education, child protection, other agencies and the community.

- Personal values consistent with the values of the organisation.
- A current driver's license and working with children check.

4. PREFERRED SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Post Graduate qualification or additional training in relevant child, adolescent and family clinical practice.
- Capacity to articulate and relate theory to practice in a training environment.
- Extensive knowledge of child welfare and child protection and relevant legislation.
- Understanding of child advocacy and related areas.
- Experience in program development, monitoring and evaluation.

5. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The Australian Childhood Foundation meets the requirements of a Safeguarding Children Organisation. The successful applicant is required to comply with the Foundation's child protection policies and Code of Conduct at all times. The Foundation's staff will not directly or indirectly cause children and young people to be abused, harmed or suffer any form of exploitation at all times. It is also a requirement that staff will not access or cause others to access, view or download any form of child sexual abuse and exploitation material at all times. Actions and behaviour by any staff member in breach of this policy and related procedures will be treated as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

6. SALARY PACKAGE

The salary package is based on the terms and conditions of a Social and Community Services Employee Level 6 under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010. The salary is determined on the basis of the employee's experience and qualifications.

The successful employee will be able to salary package a proportion of their salary according to the limit set by the Australian Taxation Office with regard to FBT liability for not-for profit organisations.

7. ORGANISATION DESCRIPTION

Australian Childhood Foundation was formed as the Victorian Society for the Prevention of child abuse and neglect (VICSPCAN) in 1986 with its primary aim to advocate on behalf of children who have suffered abuse and neglect. It is a non-profit, non-government organisation that has made substantial achievements in the prevention of child abuse through education, advocacy, research and specialised therapeutic services to abused children and their non-offending family members. All positions are subject to a criminal records check. The Australian Childhood Foundation is committed to E.E.O principles and a smoke-free workplace. All employees are required to comply with its child protection policies, WHS, including all public health directives and orders in relation to COVID-19.