

Position Description

Position Title:	Foster Care Practitioner
Program or Function name:	Foster Care
Reports to:	Team Leader Foster Care/ Team Leader Foster Care & Lead Tenant

OzChild

OzChild was founded in 1851, we support vulnerable children and young people by providing healing, preventing abuse and neglect, and strengthening families.

It is our goal to see that all children and young people are safe, respected, and nurtured, and reach their full potential.

Child Safety

We are committed to protecting children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying, exploitation and neglect, and to creating environments in all our programs and services where children are safe and feel safe.

We are committed to listening to children and addressing any concerns they raise with us. OzChild will treat all allegations of child abuse very seriously. We will report all allegations in compliance with incident reporting, mandatory reporting and reportable conduct requirements.

All OzChild People are required to support this commitment to child safety, and to behave appropriately towards children at all times.

Role Purpose Summary

The purpose of the position is to improve outcomes for children and young people by delivering services and program outcomes through the support, supervision, and development of clients and carers in the Foster Care program.

The role develops and implements plans to deliver positive planned outcomes for vulnerable children or young people in foster care. The role works to deliver on the permanency objective to provide safe stable care for clients. The role represents both the clients' and carers voice and ensure the needs of the child/young person are consistently met.

The OzChild Way

In doing so, the position will support the OzChild Way behaviours and accountabilities as follows:

We deliver evidence-based services: Utilise your professional knowledge and skills to monitor, review, develop and maintain policy, procedure, practices and guidelines that supports the accurate and timely completion of processes and reporting to support our Service Delivery and Program Teams.

Our customers determine our success: Support and continually develop and enhance networks within OzChild and the capability of our Service Delivery and Program Teams to support the effective delivery of high quality services to children and young people, their families and to carers/volunteers.

We deliver innovative solutions: Engage others in the development of functional plans, tactics and activities to support innovation in services and achieve the desired outcomes articulated in the OzChild Strategic Plan.

We set each other up for success: Support collaboration with internal and external stakeholders and directly support your team and the Service Delivery and Program Teams by providing the necessary guidance, development, and tools for people to achieve success in their roles.

I learn, adapt, grow, and embrace my cultural competence: Demonstrate a willingness and energy for personal learning, adapt to and embrace change, and develop your cultural competence.

Position Specific Responsibilities

Deliver Service Outcomes

- Deliver quality, effective and efficient program services consistent with customer requirements, the OzChild Strategy, National Practice Framework, and OzChild Way.
- Maintain focus on achievement of outcomes for Children, Young People, Families and carers through:
 - Supervision and provision of positive support for children, young people and carers, and
 - Partnering with other foster care program teams to deliver consistent and quality support.

Client, carer and family care and development

- Inform development priorities and curriculum through assessment of trends in client/carer/family needs and performance through oversight of focussed needs assessments and care plan outcomes; monthly and annual reviews; and analysis and maintenance of up-to-date records and case management notes.
- Work in partnership with carers to complete Carer supervision, compliance checks and Annual Foster Carer Reviews to identify areas of development or support needs for carers and consult with Intake & Carer Experience team and Leadership as necessary.
- Actively contribute to carer engagement and retention activities alongside other program staff to ensure a positive carer experience in the foster care program.

Case Management

- Develop and implement plans to deliver outcomes for the client through addressing seven dimensions of child development to set the client up for success.
- Complete at a minimum monthly face to face assessment visits with children and young people to inform Care and Placement Plans and utilise these assessments to inform client outcomes. Complete minimum monthly carer supervision for carers with children in placement with them.
- Optimise the potential of the child returning home with birth family through the development of improved relationships managed through safe, supported contact.

Intake

- Manage streamlined and efficient transitions from Intake & Carer Experience team to ensure a positive child / carer experience. Support the identification of new placements in consultation with Intake as required.
- Manage relationship with government and other related agencies involved in the Intake process.

Collaborate with others

- Build operational partnerships with the other teams to enable strong working relationships and facilitate issues resolution.
- Maintain strong communication with other Foster Care program staff, Team Leaders and other OzChild teams to ensure positive and professional processes are in place.
- Develop and maintain relationships with Internal and External stakeholders to ensure the delivery of planned outcomes for the child.

Manage risk and quality of care

- Ensure Risk Management and Quality of Care processes are in place and managed across all service delivery, including management of incidents consistent with external and internal policy and procedural requirements and a focus on customer and client outcomes.
- Mitigate risk and streamline delivery of quality response through implementation of incident management processes, and identification and addressing trends and advocating for change.

Deliver and ensure quality and compliance

- Demonstrate accountability for adherence to the principles, policies and processes inherent in internal and external quality, safety and governance framework.
- Implement relevant quality systems and processes to facilitate continuous improvement, compliance and alignment to OzChild processes.
- Drive the provision of a safe and respectful workplace.

Drive improvement and operational efficiency

- Initiate and implement continuous improvement in program practice through analysis of outcomes, evaluation and learning from interactions and incidents; and analysis of client/customer feedback to identify process, productivity and efficiency opportunities.
- Escalate recommendations for improvement to leadership team for further analysis.

Key Job Relationships

Internal

- Foster Care Program Leadership Group
- Intake & Carer Experience Team
- Other Foster Care Teams
- Head Office support teams

External

- Clients and their families
- Foster Carers
- DFFH- Child Protection & Placement Coordinator
- Other community or welfare agencies
- Schools, Child Care, Health Professionals, etc

Qualifications

Essential

A tertiary qualification in social work or equivalent that is recognised in Australia.

Preferable

Foster Care Training and Assessment Skills (example – Shared Lives & Step by Step Training)

Screening and Licences

- OzChild will conduct interviewing, reference checking, and ensure the completion of satisfactory safety screening (National / International Police Check and Working with Children Checks) relevant to the State or Territory that the position is undertaken.
- Must be able to drive, provide and maintain a valid Drivers' Licence and have access to reliable transportation.

Skills and Experience

- Problem solving and developing solutions to meet customer needs.
- Applying policy and procedure to decision making.
- Experience of complex case management and working with children, young people and their families.
- Demonstrated success in delivering outcomes in a client focussed program.
- Teamwork.
- Building positive and productive professional relationships.
- Strong written and verbal communication.
- Attention to detail.
- Solid professional judgement.
- Application of theoretical frameworks relevant to children in alternative care.
- Knowledge and application of child protection legislation and practices for children at risk.
- Demonstrated achievement of outcomes through advocacy on behalf of those in need.
- Application of assessment skills.
- Demonstrated capability in conflict resolution, influence and negotiation skills.

Mandatory Training

All employees of OzChild are required to complete Mandatory Training and Program Specific training upon commencement of employment and complete refresher training as required.

Your Organisational Responsibilities

- Demonstrated ability to work as part of, and contribute to, a person-centred team.
- Facilitate good working relationships with all services of OzChild, the clients, their families and other people significant to the client.
- Undertake all interactions with clients, families and co-workers in a culturally sensitive manner and take appropriate account of cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Attend client, employees related meetings, workshops, conferences and training as required.
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality are always upheld.
- Be familiar and comply with OzChild policies, procedures and other work instructions as updated from time to time.
- Represent OzChild and our services in a positive manner at forums, meetings and training with external agencies.
- Assist in the development of continuous improvement and service accountability initiatives as needed.
- Travel between office locations maybe required.

Your OzChild People Responsibilities

- Ensure compliance with OzChild's Code of Conduct, policies and procedures, and commitment to cultural awareness and child safety.
- Demonstrate commitment to diversity, respect differences and foster an environment and relationships that are safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- Participate in and complete all mandatory training and participate in other training and development opportunities to ensure they have the necessary qualifications, skills, certificates and clearances to meet the requirements of their position.
- Embrace and utilise technology and new ways of working to enhance collaboration, effectiveness and outcomes.
- Ensure the safety and well-being of self and other.
- Work together as a team and encourage and support others within their team.
- Speak up and making it clear when behaviour is unacceptable.
- Support those who are affected by breaches of Policy or Procedure and encouraging them to act.
- Raise concerns and or complaints in a constructive manner, including identifying possible solutions.

Your Safety & Wellbeing Responsibilities

- Assume accountability for safety and wellbeing for self and others.
- Undertake all duties safely and in accordance with applicable policy, procedures and processes.
- Participate in safety and wellbeing consultative forums and contribute ideas to improving safety and wellbeing.
- Where appropriate, participate in workplace safety and wellbeing training, programs and initiatives.

- Report all work health and safety breaches, hazards and incidents, and assist with actions to reduce and eliminate risks.
- Report any work related or non-work-related injury or illness.
- Support return to work programs to facilitate safe and durable return to work for OzChild People, where possible, for both work-related and non-work related Health Condition/s.

Employee Acknowledgement

I confirm by my signature my understanding of this Position Description and that it reflects the primary function of this position and should not be construed as an exhaustive list of all duties. The duties and Positions and Primary Responsibilities may be altered, including additional duties delegated from time to time without changing the roles level of responsibility.

I have read and understood the position description.

Name	Signature	Date
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