

Community Connector Practitioner

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Service:	Child and Family Services
Program:	Restoring Families Program
Position Title:	Community Connector Practitioner
Location:	Cross sites
Award:	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010
Classification:	Social and Community Services Employee
Level:	Level 5
Travel:	Ovens and Murray regional work requiring local/regional travel on a regular basis using a fleet vehicle.

UMFC is a Child Safe organisation and is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy, and empowered. We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children.

The Sanctuary Model promotes cultural, physical, emotional, psychological and social safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community. Through the implementation of this model, UMFC aims to enhance the quality of care we provide and cultivate a workplace where everyone feels valued supported and able to thrive.

1. POSITION CONTEXT AND SUMMARY OF POSITION

Consistent with UMFC's vision for our communities that every child and young person is cared for, Child and Family Services (CAFS) is made up of Strengthening Families, Restoring Families and Early Years, LGBTQIA+ counselling and it supports vulnerable children, young people and their families. The service provides an entry point for vulnerable children and families to access the range of services and supports they need to build the capacity of the family to support their children's healthy development. Intensive casework and case coordination, sometimes in collaboration with other services, has the aim of strengthening the capacity of families to promote the safety, stability and development of their children and young people.

The Community Connector Practitioner position takes a lead role in the provision of capacity building, consultation, and joint work with all Restoring Families service providers within the Ovens and Murray catchment areas. This position is funded by the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) until 30 June 2027.

This role complements the work of our Restoring Families team by addressing the growing and highly concerning issues associated with pre and adolescent children's mental health, in particular where they are using violence in the home (physical and psychological) toward parents and other children. The role will contribute to supporting children and youth's pro-social skills, confidence, ability to participate in mainstream education and contribute to the health of the family unit. It will also concentrate on supporting community and social connections for children and youth.

2. COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS

Position supervised by:	Senior Team Leader Restoring Families
Supervises directly:	Nil Staff
Communicates internally primarily with:	Restoring Families Senior Practitioners and Practitioners, Senior Team Leader Restoring Families, CaFS Service Manager, all members of the CaFS Team and other UMFC services
Communicates externally primarily with:	Other Restoring Families Service providers, including VACCA, Mackillop and Mungabereena Aboriginal Corporation, DFFH, children and families, referral sources, and other professionals and community groups.

3. KEY RESPONSIBILITY AREAS (KRAS)

Consistent with the UMFC values of Unwavering integrity, Considered empathy, Determined advocacy, Passionately optimistic and Bravely collaborative, and the Sanctuary commitments, this position provides high quality, efficient services through the following Key Responsibility Areas:

KRA 3.1 Lead the Community Education and Development Program

In conjunction with CaFS Leadership, take responsibility in leading and driving the Community Education and Development Program, including:

- Strengthening community connections and pathways across Ovens and Murray by facilitating warm introductions and access to community groups and organisations, with a particular focus on supporting adolescents who are at risk of disengagement.
- Building community capacity by engaging specialised services, knowledge and skills through partnerships with organisations such as The Man Cave and Flourish Girl, ensuring the unique needs of adolescents are effectively supported.
- Coordinating and facilitating partnerships with The Man Cave and Flourish Girl to deliver community development and education initiatives that increase local capability and capacity to support adolescents in regional, rural and remote communities.

KRA 3.2 Capacity Building and Community Training Provide capacity-building and training opportunities for community champions (e.g., sporting coaches, theatre groups), UMFC staff working with families, and partner organisations to strengthen their ability to proactively and effectively support adolescents in building positive social behaviour norms by: • Identifying key services across the region that support adolescents and linking young people to these community resources. • Designing and delivering training initiatives and projects that build the skills and service capacity of community groups and professionals. • Establishing and maintaining strong working relationships with networks and services to improve linkages that enhance child and family safety outcomes. • Developing an understanding of, and facilitating access to, appropriate service funding for clients as required.
KRA 3.3 Collaboration and Family Support Work collaboratively with Restoring Families leaders and practitioners to provide support services for families where pre-adolescent and adolescent children are using violence (physical or psychological) within the home towards parents or siblings by: • Supporting practitioners in developing, implementing, and reviewing Child and Family Action Plans (CFAP), with a clear definition of the Community Connector Lead Practitioner's role. • Providing consultation and guidance on strategies to address adolescent mental health and violence in the home. • Delivering education and support to parents and caregivers to build capacity in supporting emotional regulation and adolescent wellbeing. • Maintaining accurate and timely records, including IRIS database entries (services and case notes), in line with CaFS guidelines.
KRA 3.4 Direct Support for Adolescents Provide direct support and guidance to pre-adolescent and adolescent children through: • One-on-one mentoring to strengthen personal, social, and community connections. • Equipping young people with strategies to manage trauma-related symptoms, enhance self-regulation, and support recovery. • Educating adolescents on how behaviours influence outcomes, including techniques to challenge negative thinking, foster positive behaviour change, and develop relaxation skills.
KRA 3.5 Risk Management and Compliance Work collaboratively with Senior Leadership and Operations team by actively identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks within the role by meeting all compliance-related tasks and expectations, including but not limited to monitoring activity, adherence to organisational policies and procedures and completion of compliance training and promoting a culture of risk awareness and compliance.
KRA 3.6 Child Safety and Cultural Inclusion Proactively promote and support a culture of child safety using the Sanctuary commitment of Cultural Humility to engage and grow cultural connections for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children who may be gender diverse or children who may be culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).
KRA 3.7 Organisational Culture and Values Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a culture that reflects the organisational values of unwavering integrity, considered empathy, determined advocacy, passionately optimistic and bravely collaborative. Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a culture that reflects the Sanctuary Model Domains.

KRA 3.8 Team Collaboration and Professional Development

Actively participate as a team member in relevant meetings and professional development processes such as supervision, training, and quality improvement processes in line with program and UMFC guidelines and requirements.

KRA 3.9 OHS Compliance, Physical and Psychosocial Safety Responsibilities

- Actively fulfil all Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) responsibilities relevant to this position, including both physical and psychosocial safety obligations.
- Actively identify and report physical and psychosocial hazards in the workplace
- Participate in risk assessments and implement agreed controls to reduce physical and psychological harm
- Support a positive workplace culture that promotes emotional, psychological, social and physical wellbeing, with colleagues and clients.
- Contribute to maintaining a safe, trauma-informed environment consistent with UMFC's policies, values and procedures.

KRA 3.10 Additional Duties

Other duties as directed.

4. PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE POSITION

(Key of estimated daily requirements: Not Required=0%, Marginal=1-5%, Occasional=6-20%; Regular=21-50%, Frequent=51-70%, Continuous=> 70%)

- Sitting – Regular
- Computer based tasks – Frequent
- Driving – Frequent
- Lifting – Marginal

5. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- 5.1 Tertiary qualifications in social work or related field e.g. Bachelor of Social Work, Psychology, or Diploma of Community Services, plus relevant experience.
- 5.2 Experience in child-centred, family-focused family violence practice.
- 5.3 A strong knowledge of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, the Best Interests Case Practice Model 2008, the MARAM Framework and other relevant legislation including OH&S and privacy laws.
- 5.4 A strong working knowledge of the relevant practice application of theories, such as attachment, childhood trauma and family violence in a context of needs and risk assessment and management.
- 5.5 Excellent consultation skills with a variety of professionals in the community, with the ability to successfully communicate complex concepts and ideas to stakeholders.
- 5.6 Excellent emotional intelligence and the demonstrated ability to understand and manage oneself and the impact of actions on others, to appreciate differences and to build effective professional relationships.
- 5.7 Excellent communication skills both verbally and in writing to a range of people, including other professionals, children, families and carers and within team environments.

6. ADDITIONAL ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE POSITION FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

- 6.1 A satisfactory Victorian
- 6.2 A satisfactory Police Check
- 6.3 A satisfactory International Police Check (If relevant)
- 6.4 Current driver's licence

7. WORK CHALLENGES/PRESSURES

- Working with children and families' complex situations and needs
- Working with external services with different priorities
- Time constraints/adhering to timeframes as per IFS guidelines
- Competing priorities
- Working with client expectations that may not be realistic
- Working with people with a variety of abilities and needs
- Working with distressed clients
- Managing competing priorities and deadlines while maintaining safe work practices.
- Maintaining personal resilience and wellbeing while supporting clients and colleagues.

8. REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

At UMFC, Reflective Supervision is considered to be an integral part of service delivery and ensures oversight over workforce design and psychosocial hazards. The development of skilled and supported staff is dependent on the support and structured reflection opportunities provided by the Reflective Supervision framework. The supervision framework is supported by our Sanctuary commitments such as social responsibility, open communication and democracy.

Reflective Supervision has a number of benefits for staff, clients, and the organisation, including:

- protection and a commitment to quality service provision for clients through case review.
- a forum of accountability for those to whom the staff is accountable (clients, organisation, profession).
- a reflective space for staff to identify their strengths, areas for development and any personal issues that may impact their professional practice.
- an opportunity for staff to build their skills and identify areas for future development in a supportive environment.
- trauma informed, consistent conversations that are a protective factor to decrease the likelihood of developing vicarious trauma when undertaking challenging work.
- reflection on psychosocial hazard exposure, understanding how work impacts wellbeing, and implementing strategies to enhance psychological safety.

Supervision is a requirement for all staff at UMFC and must, at a minimum, be provided:

- on an individual basis
- for 2 hours per month (pro rata) which may be in a single block or in smaller units.