

Position Description

Title	Lead Practitioner Family Services
Business unit	Child, Youth and Families
Location	Sale and Bairnsdale
Employment type	Permanent Full Time
Reports to	Team Leader Family Services

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We work alongside people of all ages in local communities in Victoria and Tasmania. Our services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania.

We empower children, young people and families to learn and thrive. We're there for people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction or mental illness. We support people with disability to live the life they choose. We assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment. We're proud to welcome and support asylum seekers to our community. We work to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

As an organisation, we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

We celebrate diversity and value the lived experience of people of every ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) people at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.

Our purpose: To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

1. The Family Services Platform and Position Information

Family Services Platform

The Family Services platform is organised around three conceptual interconnected service streams, along a continuum of need, to make services simpler to navigate, offering families a more personalised experience. These streams are:

Connecting Families is for families with emerging needs, providing brief periods of support delivered in groups, individually or combined.

Strengthening Families is for families with cumulative, escalating needs, providing in-home child and family support over a longer period.

Restoring Families is for families with significant and enduring needs, offering comprehensive, intensive and targeted in-home child and family supports.

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1. Position Purpose

The Lead Practitioner Family Services delivers family services to support children, young people, and their families who are experiencing challenges and vulnerabilities. The Lead Practitioner will provide evidence informed interventions aligned with the family's needs and Uniting's Therapeutic Model of Care (TMoC), that promote safety, stability and development.

2. Scope

Budget: Nil

People: Nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Team Leader
- Team colleagues
- Other Uniting staff
- Uniting leadership

External

- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection
 - Partner agencies and community services
 - Child & Family Alliance
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4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Provide an outreach family casework service, working in partnership with families to achieve their goals, aimed at enhancing the child and young person's development and overall family functioning.
- Take steps to reduce risks to children and young people's safety and the wellbeing of other family members.
- Undertake child/young person and family assessments and develop action plans using Best Interests principles and other evidence informed tools and frameworks as identified by Uniting and in line with current legislation.
- Deliver intensive case management (relative to the needs of the family) for children, young people and families experiencing multiple and complex vulnerabilities.
- Implement planning and support that address' vulnerabilities experienced by families (including but not limited to; family violence, mental health, substance use, and trauma).
- Utilise principles of diversity and inclusion when working with families with diverse backgrounds.
- Establish and lead care teams in line with agreed action plans.
- Work collaboratively with Child Protection, Aboriginal Organisations and other agencies.
- Provide practical and emotional support, advocacy, skill-building and connection to community resources.

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- Be available to work flexible hours, including providing out-of-hours responses as required to meet the needs and circumstances of children and families.
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- May provide services from alternative locations.
- Maintain accurate case notes, reports and data compliance.
- The role may periodically be required to assume case management responsibilities within aligned program areas (e.g., The Orange door, family violence or Foster Care) to support continuity of service delivery. Such duties will be allocated in consultation with the manager (or their delegate), in accordance with organisational workload guidelines, and only where the employee is deemed to possess the requisite skills.

Quality & Risk

- Ensure cultural safety that actively supports Aboriginal self-determination and align with the principles of *Wungurilwil Gapgapduir – Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement*.
- Maintain risk assessments and safety planning.
- Escalate risk issues inline with Uniting's risk escalation procedures and policies.
- Participate in supervision, training and model fidelity activities.

Personal accountability

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
- Cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children who come into association with us.
- Ensure appropriate use of resources.
- Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace.
- Identify opportunities to integrate and work collaboratively across teams.
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and health and safety of others (to the extent required).
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to health and safety consultation and communication.
- Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to line management.
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health, and safety) and mandatory training specific to position.
- Declare anything that you become aware of through the course of your engagement which may impede your suitability to work with children and/or young people.
- Declare any potential or actual conflict of interest that you become aware of through the course of your engagement:
 - Based on a relationship with a current member of Uniting's workforce
 - Based on my ongoing work with another organisation

5. Performance indicators

To be identified with the Team Leader in line with program requirements and Uniting strategy and Objectives.

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Minimum tertiary qualifications in Social Work, Psychology, Welfare or a related discipline is essential

Form:

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Experience

- Demonstrated ability in child, youth and family welfare.
- Experience with vulnerable families and adolescents.
- Strong knowledge of Best Interests Case Practice Model and CYFA 2005.
- Advanced understanding of child development, trauma and attachment.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values.
- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- Ability to network and establish sound working relationships with related services, especially other community agencies and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Intermediate to advanced Computer literacy using MS Word, Outlook, Excel and efficient and effective data entry skills.
- Highly developed adaptive interpersonal communication skills including the ability to engage and empower others.
- Ability to be self-reliant, motivated and accountable in managing multiple tasks and meeting timelines and targets.
- Commitment and ability to work independently and as a member of a team
- Cultural competence and ability to work flexibly.
- Current Drivers License valid for Victoria

7. We are a child safe organisation

Uniting is a child safe organisation and is committed in everyday practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, at all times. As a child safe organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national (and international where relevant) police check and relevant Working With Children Check (and NDIS Worker Screening Check where relevant) to your State prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking.

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.

8. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and accepted the above Position Description

Employee

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Form:

Date approved:

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Addendum: Strengthening Families

Adolescent Family Service (AFS)

Adolescent Family Services

Adolescent Family Services provides time limited, change focused tailored support to young people and their families or carers.

Finding Solutions supports young people and their families referred from Child Protection Intake to reduce family breakdown especially where it is likely to result in youth homelessness and / or Child Protection involvement.

Finding Solutions practitioners use their knowledge of adolescent development to support the strengthening of adolescents' family and significant relationships.

They will support parents and young people where there is conflict to identify and resolve behaviours and /or issues that are placing their relationship at risk of breakdown. Finding Solutions will also work with young people toward strong family relationships, stable and safe housing, young people's wellbeing connections with education and the community.

Strengthening Families Stream

The Strengthening Families stream provides early intervention and preventative support to families experiencing vulnerability or emerging challenges that may impact parenting, family functioning, and child wellbeing.

The primary objective of the stream is to work alongside families to:

- strengthen parenting capability,
- enhance family relationships, and
- build protective factors that enable children to remain safe, supported, and connected within their family and community.

Practice within this stream is grounded in strengths-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches, recognising families as the experts in their own lives. Practitioners work collaboratively with families to:

- identify and prioritise family goals,
- address stressors affecting family stability, and
- connect families with practical supports and community resources.

The Strengthening Families stream plays a key role within the broader service system by providing timely support that:

- promotes child wellbeing,
- builds family resilience, and
- reduces the likelihood that family challenges escalate to the point of statutory intervention.