



Australian Childhood Foundation

Position:	Therapeutic Specialist
Organisation:	Australian Childhood Foundation
Location:	Based in Norwest – This is an outreach role and will require travel to various locations across NSW
Hours of Work:	30.4 hours per week. Permanent (After hours in accordance with service requirements)
Accountability:	Senior Manager – Therapeutic Services or delegate

Introduction

The Australian Childhood Foundation has a strong reputation for delivery of clinical services, professional training and secondary consultation programs built upon up to date and evidence and based upon theoretical frameworks including the neurobiology of trauma, attachment and relational theories and child development. This theoretical framework provides the foundation upon which all elements of care and intervention are provided by the therapeutic care programs.

The Foundation currently provides a range of innovative therapeutic services including trauma counselling services for children, young people and their families who have experienced abuse and family violence, sexually abusive 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 program has been funded by the NSW Government. It recognises that through the relationships they form, Foster-carers and Kinship carers provide continual moments of repair for the children who they look after. It includes the implementation of a statewide helpline for carers as well as provide therapeutic intervention to children and carers which aims to increase placement stability and improve developmental outcomes of children in care. It uses the Foundation's integrated model of evidence informed trauma based therapeutic practice.

Our Therapeutic Services

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 Aboriginal and other 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 carers;
- promote placement stability and improve opportunities for children and young people 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 of origin 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.

Context

The OurSPACE program provides specialist outreach therapeutic trauma support to children and young people under 16 in OOHC in NSW. We aim to support and build relationships around children and young people and promote placement stability.

We use a care team approach, working with all the important people supporting the child/young person. This might look like supporting caseworkers, carers, family, school, and other services involved. We begin our work with a care team meeting, and these continue throughout the intervention.

We also provide direct therapeutic trauma intervention to the child and their carers. We develop a Therapeutic Connection Plan which captures the trauma needs of the child and their relational network.

We work anywhere in NSW, moving with the child regardless of their placement locations. We have a team of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Therapeutic Specialists who work with children to help support their culturally strong and trauma-informed needs.

1. KEY FUNCTION OF THE POSITION

The key role of the Therapeutic Specialist is to act as a specialist therapeutic consultant and practitioner, working in partnership with children, carers and networks of professionals to deliver the program. The Therapeutic Specialist is primarily responsible for the provision of specialist therapeutic intervention with children/young people and therapeutic support to foster carers, kinship carers and other members of a child's care team.

2. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Program Development, Implementation and Review

- Participate in program development, implementation and review of the program, working collaboratively to contribute to the successful development and implementation of the program.
- Be involved in the implementation and monitoring of quality assurance measures within the program, including the development of quality assurance and quality improvement frameworks for therapeutic service delivery.

- Establish and maintain positive relationships with the key stakeholders relevant to the therapeutic care program.
- In collaboration with key stakeholders, contribute to the development and implementation of an evaluation, monitoring and review strategy for the therapeutic care programs.
- Assist in identifying gaps or weaknesses in the program and assist in devising strategies to address these.

2.2 Specialist Therapeutic Support/Advice

- Participate in the provision of therapeutic advice to carers and professionals over the phone and via videoconferencing as required.
- Provide a coordinated, effective and timely response to children, carers and families of origin providing therapeutic leadership in the implementation of the program including assessment procedures, needs identification, risk assessment, practice guidelines, case documentation and transition planning.
- Provide referral and assessment advice to Child Protection, Placement Co-ordination Unit, foster care providers and other referrers regarding the eligibility and placement matching of children into the program.
- Participate as an active member of the care team in all relevant care team meetings, operational groups and panels and maintain regular planned telephone consultation with care team members as agreed with regard to the needs of the child, care family and other key stakeholders.
- 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 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.
- Participate in meetings with relevant professionals including formal DCJ case planning meetings where required. This may include annual/unscheduled reviews and liaising, where appropriate, with other agencies/organisations in the child's context who are critical to the care and placement plan, e.g. Child Protection, school, child care and other therapy providers.

2.3 Therapeutic Work with Children

- Undertake specialised trauma assessments for children and young people referred into the program and from other sources.
- Provide direct individual and carer/child trauma therapeutic intervention to children and the key people caring for them according to the integrated model implemented by ACF.
- Co-ordinate any specific services for children in the program or referred to ACF, including liaison with existing therapeutic service 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.

2.4 Delivery of Training on Trauma and Therapeutic Care

- Contribute to the collaborative development of specialist trauma-based training to carers, staff and identified professionals to promote a shared understanding and approach to the therapeutic care and support needs of the child and deliver training as required.
- Contribute to the collaborative development of written resource material for distribution to carers and support staff relevant to their needs and on issues such as responding to the needs and behaviour of children who have experienced abuse-related trauma.
- Deliver training programs to out of home care staff and carers as required.

2.5 Advocacy and Research

- Promote the rights of children to safety and security at an individual case practice level.
- Contribute to the ongoing review of public policies and practices that affect children.
- Participate, engage and support the research activities of the organisation.
- Participate in the development and provision of additional training workshops.
- Keep abreast of relevant theoretical, legislative and policy development.

2.6 Administration Requirements

- Meet the administrative requirements of the Australian Childhood Foundation.
- Participate in program meetings and training, organisation workshops and meetings, and other meetings as appropriate.
- Meet all program documentation standards and requirements and contribute to the development of the organisation's policies and practice guidelines.
- Develop relevant program documentation in consultation with the Senior Management

2.7 Other duties

- Participate in and follow the requirements of the Australian Childhood Foundation Quality Management Systems.
- Provide two additional full day training workshops on topics developed jointly with the ACF Professional Education program.
- Perform other duties as required by the CEO or senior management

3. CODES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- Abide by the policies of Australian Childhood Foundation.
- Observe the Code of Practice of the Australian Association of Social Workers, the Australian Psychological Society or other relevant professional body.
- Adhere to and promote the Foundation's Code of Conduct.

4. MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND QUALITIES

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work or a related discipline.
- Eligibility for membership of the relevant professional association.
- Demonstrated ability to provide leadership and direct service in the clinical assessment and treatment of children, young people and families.

- Highly developed ability to provide secondary consultation and advice to clinicians and other professionals.
- Demonstrated capacity to lead and manage in an area of challenging and complex practice.
- Demonstrated knowledge of trauma, attachment and neurobiology frameworks and theories.
- Substantial experience in the area of child abuse and/or in working with traumatised children.
- Demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively and the capacity to negotiate and liaise with individuals who make up the network of support around children and young people, including carers, child protection, other agencies and the community.
- A sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the service system and the issues involved in providing services to statutory clients.
- A current NSW driver's licence or equivalent.

5. PREFERRED SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Post Graduate qualification or additional training in relevant child, adolescent and family clinical practice.
- Demonstrated ability to provide therapeutic leadership and guidance to a range of professionals and members of the child's network.
- Demonstrated capacity to communicate effectively and positively within a team environment.
- A well-developed ability to assist others to understand the implications of Trauma and Attachment theories and their relationship to child abuse.
- Knowledge of and expertise in delivering a range of appropriate therapeutic interventions to the client group.
- Demonstrated commitment to a learning culture and continuous improvement.
- Capacity to articulate and relate theory to practice in a training environment.
- Ability to understand and manage the complexities inherent in working in a home based care setting, including flexibility in meeting the needs of carers and care teams.
- 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.
- Personal values consistent with the values of the organisation.

5. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The Australian Childhood Foundation is compliant with legislation, regulations and standards relevant to safeguarding children. 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 pornography 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. LOCATION OF STAFF

The OurSPACE service is available in all of NSW. OurSPACE has regional workers with and our head office is in Norwest (Western Sydney). This role will be based in Norwest with regional travel part of the role as this is an outreach role.

7. 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 full time gross salary range for this position is \$110,109.83 and \$114,983.44 not including superannuation.

The successful employee will also be provided with the use of a fully maintained car for work and reasonable personal use subject to a personal contribution of \$20 per non workday toward the private use of the vehicle.

The successful employee will be able to salary package (including the grossed-up value of the car) 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.

8. 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. Australian Childhood Foundation is committed to E.E.O principles and a smoke-free workplace.