

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Family Preservation & Reunification Early Years Practitioner/Case Manager POSCS3131



ISO9001 | Approved by Neos Zavrou | Next Revision: 18/08/22



Location:	Richmond
Classification:	OH3
Reports To:	Manager: Child and Family Services
Direct Reports:	N/A

The Organisation

Odyssey House Victoria (OHV) is a place of hope and positive change for individuals working towards breaking their pattern of addiction. At OHV we believe that every person should have the opportunity to change and grow. Our diverse teams work with individuals, families and communities to reduce drug use, improve mental health and reconnect people to their family and the community.

Position Objective

The Victorian Family Preservation and Reunification Response (the Response), is funded as a one-year pilot by the Department of Health and Human Services. It was co-designed by representatives from the child and family services sector and implemented by Victorian registered children and family service providers. Continuing funding is dependent on the results and success of the pilot.

This Response includes an initial intensive intervention phase, delivered through a mobile and integrated approach. This is followed by a sustained service support phase, aimed at preventing at-risk children entering or re-entering care. The Response will link to, align with, and build on (and not duplicate) existing child and family services within the broader service system, providing an enhanced continuum of care across the state. It will be evaluated and continuously developed to enhance the Family Preservation and Reunification (FPR) evidence-base for Victorian child and family services (including Child Protection).

The model is an integrated and evidence-based/evidence-informed approach targeted at supporting and problem solving with families and preventing children and young people's re/entry to out of home care. The team will work as a cohesive whole and report directly to the FPR Practice Team Leader.

The OHV Early Years Practitioner will be part of a Multi-disciplinary and Multi agency team which is led by the McKillop Family Services FRP Team Leader.

This pilot will test if an intensive family preservation response linked to a clinical therapeutic service can reduce the demand for residential care services for some of the most complex children and young people in Victoria.

The FPR team will bring an innovative and wrap around service that will outreach to families with unborn and preschool children and families with young adolescents.

Role Responsibilities:

Key responsibilities for this position include:

- Conducting broad educational and psycho-social screening assessments, inclusive of risk assessments, of children and families and the multi-disciplinary team on an ongoing basis
- Assisting parents to identify and achieve parenting goals through assessment of parenting needs, and the collaborative development and implementation of intervention plans that strengthen parenting capacity and effectiveness. This includes the provision of parenting skills training and the development of relapse plans
- Providing families with social and community support through establishing and strengthening family-community links. This may include improving relationships with extended family, improving links with school, supporting participation in recreational activities and playgroups, and supporting access to child and respite care and other formal support services
- Supporting parents to participate in drug and mental health treatment through direct provision of counselling, referrals, and/or linkage to and collaboration with AOD and mental health workers
- Liaising with agencies and workers involved with the family
- Providing client education on drug and alcohol use during pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding, and promoting the use of specialist obstetric, and maternal and child health services
- Advocating for the needs of family members
- Ensuring the implementation of the case plans for client is being followed in consultation with the Early Years Practice Leader and other staff as appropriate
- Ensure the rights of the young women and their children are always protected
- Assisting, organising and co-facilitating school holiday programs for children and their parents
- Working collaboratively with other drug and alcohol and mental health agencies to increase the level of child, parenting and family support offered to their clients
- Providing peer support to other case managers
- Contribute to the continuing development of OHV Child Safety policy and procedures and ensure that all staff and program areas promote and adhere to child safe practices.
- Providing secondary consultation to professionals working with substance abuse and family issues
- Participating in professional forums and the development of professional networks
- Presenting work and knowledge at forums and conferences
- Actively participating as part of a multi-disciplinary team to meet the various complex needs of the families in order to achieve their goals.
- Working in close collaboration with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), placement services and other stakeholders as appropriate
- Attending regular staff meetings and in-service training sessions

- Maintaining records of the activities undertaken (including detailed client case notes) and providing reports as requested
- Other duties as required.
- Provide high-quality intensive, flexible and responsive early parenting support suited to client needs, including role modelling, outreach, groups and centre-based interventions.
- Provide emotional and practical support and guidance to young pregnant women and young mothers experiencing difficulties in relation to parenting and providing for the health, safety and well-being of their babies and children.
- Provide information and assistance in building confidence of the parents to access a range of services and support their development towards independence.
- Support therapeutic intervention to young parents in supporting their healing from possible traumatic experiences that may be impacting on their parenting.

Key Selection Criteria

1. High level communication skills, both written and oral, particularly in relation to:
 - working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
 - establishing rapport with children of all ages and their families; and
 - forming and maintaining effective relationships with internal and external parties
2. Ability to work in a highly motivated, self-directed, ethical and results driven manner
3. Sensitivity to the needs of all family members including children, adolescents and parents
4. Commitment to a strengths-based approach to practice
5. Ability to develop client plans (collaboratively with clients) and manage clients in accordance with those plans as well as undertaking therapeutic, child and family interventions in groups, families and with individuals
6. Strong organisation and time management skills with the ability to work autonomously
7. Ability to find and implement effective and timely solutions to problems
8. Knowledge and understanding of:
 - Child, adolescent and family developmental processes
 - risk and protective factors for child and adolescent development; and
 - relevant legislation and policies
 - family violence interventions; including Safe & Together practice model
 - alcohol and other drug /mental health issues
9. Understanding of and demonstrated experience working with issues such as attachment, trauma, and intergenerational disadvantage
10. Direct use of pragmatic (i.e., structural, strategic, and functional) family therapies and/or behavioural therapy targeting behavioural change in children at home and school
11. Demonstrated understanding of cultural safety with sound knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal history, values, the stolen generation, practices and culture
12. Understanding of attachment and trauma theories related to Aboriginal children, young people and families and ability to use this knowledge to guide practice with Aboriginal children, young people, and families
13. Commitment to the Sanctuary Model:
 - Non-Violence - Mean what you say and don't be mean when you say it
 - Emotional Intelligence - Look out for yours and other people's feelings
 - Social Learning - We all learn from, and teach each other

- Democracy - Everyone is heard
- Open Communication - Be honest and share information
- Social Responsibility - We all help each other ... It takes a village to raise a child
- Growth and Change - Open to new ideas and ways of thinking

Essential Requirements

- Relevant Tertiary level Health, Social or Welfare related qualification and experience
- Specialist knowledge in one relevant area such as AOD, mental health, family violence, attachment and trauma informed practice, etc.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake complex casework with families and children who have experienced trauma
- Demonstrated capacity to develop collaborative relationships across professional and organisational boundaries, as well as knowledge of relevant Community Service Organizations, local and State Government (DHHS) and the ability to network with these services
- Satisfactory outcome of a confidential Police Check and Working with Children Check. OHV is committed to child safety and is a child safe organisation
- Certificate IV Alcohol & Other Drugs, or willingness to complete within 12 months
- Empathy for those whose lives have been affected by problematic alcohol and other drug use and mental health disorders.
- Possession of a current Victorian Driver's License.
- Information technology skills, including proficiency in Microsoft Office suite.
- Eligibility to work in Australia.

Desirable Requirements

- First Aid Certificate.
- Current knowledge of OH&S practices.
- Registration with relevant professional body.