

**Family & Relationship Services  
Family Counsellor**  
Position Description

The Family Mediation Centre is a not for profit organisation, funded by Government, and has been providing services to the community since 1985. The organisation has branches in the eastern, south eastern and western metropolitan areas of Melbourne - Moorabbin (Head Office), Narre Warren, Ringwood, Caroline Springs and Broadmeadows. Outreach offices are located at Frankston and throughout Gippsland. The organisation operates Family Relationship Centres based in Traralgon and Chadstone.

The Family Mediation Centre is committed to providing high quality relationship services, consultation and training to individuals, couples, children, groups and professionals, which aim to enhance functioning and well being in families, organisations and the wider community.

Programs provided include:

- Family Dispute Resolution
- Supporting Children after Separation Program
- Family Relationship Centres
- Family and Relationship Services including Individual, Family and Couple Counselling.
- Financial Counselling
- Post Separation Parenting Programs and groups
- As a Registered Training Organisation FMC provides a range of training programs

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## **General**

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### ***Aims of Position:***

- To provide high quality counselling, conflict resolution and groupwork services to individuals, couples and families who may be experiencing distress or conflict with the aim of improving wellbeing and enabling them to better manage their relationships with partners, ex-partners, parents, children and step children.
- To otherwise assist in the development of services for the Family Mediation Centre.

### ***Location:***

- Narre Warren

### ***Conditions:***

- Family Mediation Centre Enterprise Agreement 2012
- A three month review period applies.

### ***Hours:***

- Subject to funding.

### ***Classification and Salary:***

- Experienced Practitioner
- Salary in accordance with qualifications and experience.

### ***Accountability:***

- To Branch Manager

### ***Qualifications:***

- Tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work, Social Science or Family Therapy or equivalent.
- Eligibility for membership/registration with the appropriate professional body (desirable)

### ***Mandatory Requirements:***

- Current Victorian driver's licence
- Current satisfactory National Police check
- Working with Children Check (Victoria)

### ***Knowledge, Skills and Experience Required:***

- Thorough understanding of the effects of conflict on families and relationships.
- Knowledge of the critical life stages in a family's development, and how individuals manage these stages.
- Understanding of the difficulties faced by men in particular in maintaining, developing or re-building relationships with significant others after separation / divorce.
- Knowledge and experience of brief therapy approaches, conflict resolution approaches and short-term counselling processes.
- Understanding of power differentials, patterns of communication, violence issues, parenting, and child development in the context of family dynamics.
- Experience in working with young people, couples, families and individuals in providing short-term counseling, family therapy and other assistance.
- Experience in facilitating groups.
- Demonstrated skills in screening and assessment of family violence.
- Demonstrated skills in managing and resolving conflict.
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills. Realistic reflective self-assessment skills essential
- Experience in working with a multi-disciplinary team, and in supporting and developing team members in their work.

- The ability to think creatively and develop creative responses to situations as they arise.

***Theoretical Bases:***

- A thorough understanding of the theoretical constructs surrounding the application of family therapy, counselling and family conferencing
  - Articulated theoretical constructs surrounding men in relationships, the difficulties they encounter, how relationships change, and the coping strategies used by separated men.
  - Demonstrated theoretical bases in respect of gender issues in reference to relationship development, parenting, and adolescence.
  - A good understanding of couple issues and the complex issues couples experience in relationships.
  - Understanding of specific issues relating to the involvement of children in family dispute resolution, issues of family violence and cultural matters.
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**Duties*****Direct Service:***

- Conduct mediation sessions using the theoretical concepts and practices of mediation. Training will be provided if necessary.
- Provide short-term counselling for individuals, adolescents, couples and families.
- Provide appropriate information and referral for parties, including referral to other programs within the Family Mediation Centre and external organisations.
- Provide groupwork as appropriate.
- Work closely with other Family Relationships Centre staff in developing a co-ordinated and integrated approach to assisting clients to resolve relationship difficulties effectively.
- Participate in telephone duty as required.
- Maintain knowledge of, and adhere to, the policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Provide supervision to students when required.

***Community Liaison and Networking:***

- Establish and maintain contact with relevant community service organisations, departments, and individuals as appropriate.
- Respond efficiently, creatively, and in a timely fashion to developments in the delivery of mediation and therapeutic services.
- Participate in promotional activities and the community education program of the Centre.

***Program Responsibilities:***

- Promote teamwork through the sharing of skills and knowledge.
- Participate in staff activities including but not limited to staff meetings, staff development, on-going training activities and case review.
- Be willing to reflect upon own professional and personal practice within the organisation and demonstrate integrity and honesty based on a commitment to high quality professional practice
- Attend clinical and management supervision meetings as required.
- Keep records of all work undertaken including accurate and up to date case files and statistical records.
- Participate in the annual staff appraisal process.
- Participate in service planning and policy development.
- Report as requested to the Program or Branch Manager.

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## General Performance Requirements

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*The incumbent is required to undertake the role in a manner that demonstrates a commitment to the Family Mediation Centre's values:*

- **Respect** for the human dignity and worth of each person who is involved with the Family Mediation Centre. This means that people are treated with courtesy, consideration and tolerance, and that services are provided for all people regardless of age or socio economic status, race, colour, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religious beliefs;
- **Quality service**, providing appropriate, efficient and effective services by competent, qualified staff in a professional and skilled manner;
- **Social justice** and natural justice, encompassing the principles of fairness, equity, access and participation in all the work we do;
- **Integrity** and truthfulness in all our dealings with everyone involved with the organisation;
- **Accountability** and transparency in our work. This includes our Duty of Care to all involved in the organisation, with a commitment to their safety and welfare;
- **Empowerment** - acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of those with whom we work, and their power to resolve their own difficulties with appropriate assistance;
- **Co-operation** - whilst recognising the reality of some competition in our external environment, the practice of co-operation with each other, our clients and other organisations wherever possible;
- **Ecological sustainability** - in terms of both work practices and office design, the application of principles of ecological sustainability in our work environment;
- **Reform** - a commitment to the development and reform of practice and policy in the areas in which Family Mediation Centre operates.
- **Professional and Ethical Standards** - a commitment to maintaining high professional and ethical standards in all aspects of our work. All staff are bound by the organisation's Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics of their respective professional associations.

<b>Key Selection Criteria</b>	
<b><i>Mandatory:</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate tertiary qualification of at least three years with an orientation to behavioural sciences, education or other relevant degree.</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Essential:</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A thorough understanding of the theoretical concepts of mediation, family therapy and counselling, and the ability to apply these concepts.</li> <li>▪ Formal counselling qualification and /or experience</li> <li>▪ Experience in working with couples, families and individuals in providing short-term counselling and other assistance.</li> <li>▪ Experience in dealing with parenting issues, adolescents and complex family dynamics.</li> <li>▪ A thorough understanding of the effects of conflict on families and individuals.</li> <li>▪ Experience in facilitating groups</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the effects of separation and divorce on families.</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the critical life stages in a family's development, and how individuals manage these stages</li> <li>▪ Experience in working with a multi-disciplinary team, and in supporting and developing team members in their work.</li> <li>▪ Minimum of two years experience in counselling or related field.</li> <li>▪ Effective interpersonal and communication skills.</li> <li>▪ Self motivation.</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Desirable:</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligibility for membership/registration with the appropriate professional body.</li> <li>▪ Mediation experience with adolescents and parents.</li> </ul>	