

Position Description

Position title	Therapeutic Specialist
Document ID	
Program/Unit	Therapeutic Residential Care Eastern Metropolitan Region
Classification	
Position reports to	Principal Practitioner

Organisational context

Established in 1997, MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) strives to ensure all families are supported to provide children with a safe and permanent home, and the best possible start to their lives.

Continuing the child and family welfare programs of our three founding agencies – the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St Joseph and the Christian Brothers – we provide early intervention programs to support the most vulnerable families, and provide education, disability support, home-based care and out of home care for vulnerable children and young people in Victoria, NSW and WA.

MacKillop has almost 1,500 staff, operating out of more than 50 sites, and has forecast annual revenue for the 2019/20 financial year of over \$145 million.

Just like our founders, we are deeply committed to our work, and are driven by social justice. We believe every child should be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation, and are a child-safe organisation that is committed to protecting and advocating for the best interests of children and families across all our programs.

Our work is underpinned by our values, and by a deep understanding of the impact of trauma, informed by the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is a blueprint for organisational change, which supports organisations to provide a safe, non-violent environment for people affected by trauma. It also supports staff and carers to form communities that are safe and caring, and to maintain a culture that reflects these qualities at every level within the organisation. MacKillop is the only licensed provider of training in the Sanctuary Model in Australia.

Our vision

All children, young people and families are safe, thriving and connected to culture and community. MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

Our values

Justice: We believe in the right of all people, regardless of belief or culture, to be treated justly and fairly;

Hope: We commit to creating an atmosphere of hope where people find meaning in their experiences and relationship;

Collaboration: We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, and partnership;

Compassion: We commit to creating an attitude of openness to others and to their circumstances; and

Respect: We seek to listen and learn from each other and to build relationships with respect.

Position purpose

This position is situated within the **Therapeutic Residential Care (TRC) Program** which is responsible for intensive and time-limited care for a child or young person in statutory care that responds to the complex impacts of abuse, neglect and separation from family. Therapeutic care is achieved through the creation of positive, safe, healing relationships and experiences informed by a sound understanding of trauma, attachment and developmental needs.

The Therapeutic Specialist provides therapeutic leadership and trauma informed interventions based on sound practice expertise and contemporary research that delivers positive outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

The Therapeutic Specialist is a member of the Clinical Program and reports to the Principal Practitioner.

Primary objectives

The primary objective of this role is to add value over and above the residential and case management aspects of the TRC program, by developing therapeutic strategies and plans for each individual child or young person, supporting and guiding staff in the implementation of these strategies and plans to facilitate the development of new skills and perspectives to help them expand their strengths to facilitate healing and recovery. The Therapeutic Practitioner will also collaborate with the care team to plan and implement processes that strengthen the child/young person's relationship with their family and community.

Key result areas and responsibilities

The Therapeutic Specialist will:

- Provide support to staff, carers and members of each child's therapeutic network. This will include facilitating group reflective practice and training for staff especially in the areas of trauma and its impact on the young person.
- Ensure that appropriate assessment procedures including SDQ and HoNOSCA assessments, risk assessment, therapeutic planning processes and outcome measurements are undertaken for each child or young person upon entry to TRC at all relevant times during referral, placement and transition to further options.
- Facilitate the development and timely review of Individual Therapeutic Care Plans (ITCP) for each child and young person in TRC.
- Work in collaboration with the area manager, program staff and regional services and provide secondary consultation concerning the mental health needs of clients of MacKillop Family Services.
- Plan and implement interventions, in collaboration with the care team, to engage families, communities and young person in a process that assists relational repair and increased family/community connection
- Report regularly through clinical supervision to the Principal Practitioner. Undertake duties as required.
- Attend and contribute to team meetings.
- Participate and assist in organisation wide service provision and development of training, quality assurance mechanisms and improvement frameworks for trauma informed service delivery.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with key internal and external stakeholders, particularly other mental health providers, to improve health and well-being outcomes including education performance, for each client in the program.

Key selection criteria

The incumbent will have:

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work or a related discipline is essential. Post Graduate training in relevant child, adolescent and family clinical practice, family work and systemic thinking is strongly preferred.
- Demonstrated practice knowledge areas relevant to work with traumatised and vulnerable children, young people and families which may include child development and the impact of trauma clinical work with children, young people and families, mental health, drug and alcohol, disability or other trauma related behaviours.
- Evidence of a well-developed understanding of Attachment and Trauma theories, the relationship to child abuse and neglect, together with an understanding of intellectual disability and an ability to assist others to understand the implications.
- Experience in completing assessments for children and young people and using the findings to complete a comprehensive therapeutic written report/care plan designed to inform staff and child interactions and the Care Team's planning
- Established high level ability to provide secondary consultation, training and advice to clinicians, other professionals, staff and carers
- Proven highly developed interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence and excellent engagement skills, especially in engaging children and young people who have experienced significant trauma, disrupted attachment and demonstrate extreme emotional and behavioural dysregulation.
- A track record of working collaboratively and the demonstrated capacity to negotiate and liaise with internal and external stakeholders including other mental health providers, Department of Human Services, other agencies and the community.
- Evidence of a sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the child protection and out-of-home care service system and the issues involved in providing services to statutory clients
- Understanding of and commitment to MacKillop objectives, values and Sanctuary Commitments
- A knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values and an awareness of the current issues faced by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Other information


The incumbent is required to:

- Sign and actively abide by MacKillop's Code of Conduct.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's P.8 People and Workplace Policy.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's OH&S policy and strategy.
- Attend mandatory and other training as required.
- Actively participate in MacKillop's Bid Management process as required.
- Participate in and promote continuous quality improvement processes.
- Promote an environment that is culturally safe and strengths focussed.
- Abide by principles and commitments of the Sanctuary Framework.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Victorian Driver's Licence.
- Valid and current Victorian Working with Children Card.
- Satisfactory criminal history check conducted by MacKillop Family Services.

Approval

Approver's full name:	Kerry O'Sullivan 	Date:	23/12/2020
Approver's position title:	Director Clinical Services		
Incumbent's full name:			
Incumbent's signature:		Date:	



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services.