

Position Description

Position details

Position Title:	Child Youth and Family (CYF) Counsellor Advocate	Reports to:	CYF Team Leader
Team:	Direct Services	Location:	Sunshine
Classification:	Level 6	Status:	Fixed term 0.8 EFT

The Organisation

The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc. (VFST), also known as Foundation House, provides services to advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of people from refugee backgrounds who have experienced torture or other traumatic events.

Established in Melbourne in 1987, Foundation House is non-denominational, politically neutral and non-aligned. It is constituted as a not-for-profit organisation managed by an elected Board of Management and is funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments, philanthropic organisations and donations from private individuals.

Foundation House is a state-wide agency offering services in metropolitan, regional and rural areas. Offices are in Brunswick (head office), Dallas, Dandenong, Ringwood and Sunshine. Services are also provided in partnership with other agencies outside of the metro area. With approximately 200 staff the organisation:

- Provides services to clients in the form of counselling, advocacy, family support, group work and complementary therapies
- Works with client communities and the sectors they interact with
- Offers professional and organisational development
- Advocates to governments for improvements to policies and programs
- Conducts and contributes to research

Working with approximately 5,000 clients a year a trauma recovery informed service model guides the integrated organisational structure which is comprised of the following areas:

- Direct (Client) Services
- Practice and Sector Development
- Community Capacity Building
- Corporate Services

Foundation House is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children and this is reflected in our organisational policies, protocols and staff development.

Mission

To advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of people from refugee backgrounds who have experienced torture or other traumatic events.

Organisational Area Summary

Direct Services provides services to survivors of torture and other traumatic events in the form of counselling, advocacy, family support, group work, psycho-education, information sessions and complementary therapies. Direct Services comprises three regions (Western, Northern and South East), the Intake and Access Team, Complementary Therapies Team, Ucan2 and Rural and Regional Services. There is also Mental Health Clinic activity in each region and the General Manager Direct Services (GMDS)

Position Description

has overall responsibility for the provision of this service. The regional management units are responsible for the delivery of counselling and advocacy services to clients in their geographic regions. Services are delivered through onsite and outreach counselling and advocacy. As an organisation we also undertake comprehensive systemic work with organisations and agencies that provide assistance to survivors.

Direct Services teams are currently located in metropolitan Melbourne with offices in Brunswick, Sunshine, Dallas, Dandenong and Ringwood.

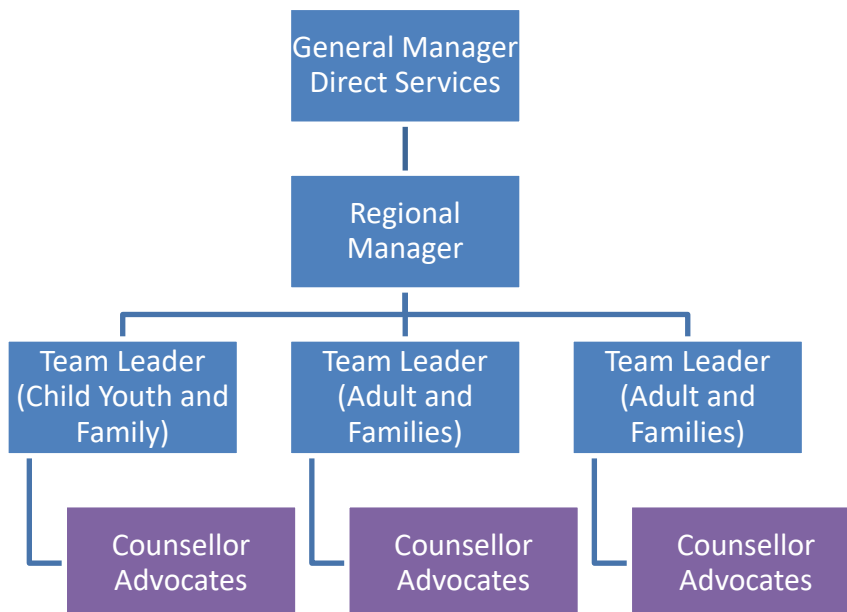
Position Summary

The key role of the Child, Youth and Families Counsellor Advocate is to deliver effective and appropriate assessment, counselling and advocacy services to children, youth and their families who are survivors of torture and/or other traumatic events. Working within the context of the Foundation House Integrated Trauma Recovery Model, the Counsellor Advocate will provide a wide range of interventions designed to address the psychological effects and social consequences arising from a client's past experiences of human rights violations.

The Counsellor Advocate will deliver short, medium and long term direct services to clients who have permanent residency and living in the community and to asylum seekers living in held detention and in the community. Outreach work is a required aspect of the role and can be conducted in homes, community settings, held detention, correctional facilities and mostly in schools.

Scope & Dimensions:

Budgets: Nil
Number of staff: Nil
Reporting lines:



Key Responsibilities

Assessments

Conduct comprehensive psycho-social assessments with children, young people and families to formulate case plans informed by the VFST Integrated Trauma Recovery Service Model.

- Intake assessments of children, young people and their families to ensure client eligibility and provide a basis for prioritisation for service provision.
- Risk assessments to establish and implement a risk management plan.
- Establish expectations of service provision and set goals with client.
- Review, revise and evaluate case plans against goals established with client and in consultation with Team Leader.

Counselling

Provide high quality short, medium and long term counselling interventions with children, young people and families utilising a range of therapeutic approaches to deliver agreed client and program outcomes.

- Provide psycho-education to children, young people and their families in group settings.
- Use family based and early intervention approach where indicated.
- Use culturally appropriate approaches to maximise outcomes for clients.
- Provide counselling and advocacy according to client needs.

Advocacy

Undertake advocacy and liaison on behalf of clients with a range of relevant health, community, education, legal and government services to enable access to and use of those services.

- Provide secondary consultation to external service providers as needed and/or as required by the program.
- Facilitate referrals to relevant agencies
- Provide written client psychological reports as required to health, legal and government bodies.
- Contribute to identifying systemic issues affecting children, young people and their families and to inform relevant policy.

School-based Outreach

- Provide counselling and advocacy interventions for children and young people across a number of school sites
- Establish and maintain good working relationships with relevant school staff
- Offer secondary consultation and learning opportunities for school staff in collaboration with the VFST School Support Team

Youth Justice

- Provide onsite and place based counselling and advocacy interventions to children and young people referred by VicPol and Youth Justice
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with Youth Justice and other relevant services
- Provide secondary consultation for workers and other supports in relation to the needs of young people of refugee background

Position Description

Client Information & Reporting

Document and record all client information required to maintain a comprehensive client record in the client management system - Penelope.

- All direct and non-direct client service activity must be accurately entered as required in a timely way.
- Maintain timely and accurate client records, meeting all requirements of Direct Services and applicable policy
- Prepare documentation and reports for relevant parties as required by the Regional Manager
- Book relevant resources (e.g. rooms, cars, interpreters) to facilitate the provision of services in an effective and efficient manner.

Organisational Obligations

- Attend and participate in all agency activities which meet VFST's organisational and professional development requirements. These include staff, team and agency meetings, professional development sessions, supervision and debriefing.
- Undertake a range of project or other duties required to support the effective delivery of direct services to clients

Health & Safety

Actively contribute to health and safety at Foundation House by being aware of safety policies and procedures and consciously applying these every day to ensure the health and safety of our workplace.

Personal Qualities

- Genuine interest in working with vulnerable clients and promoting well-being
- Ability to work autonomously and as a member of a multidisciplinary team
- Ability to manage competing priorities
- Commitment to ethical practice, human rights and social justice
- Flexible and adaptable approach to meeting goals.

Selection Criteria

Qualifications:

Relevant tertiary qualifications in social work, psychology or a related discipline

Skills

- Demonstrated ability to undertake intake assessments, comprehensive psychosocial assessments and risk assessments with children, young people and families
- Demonstrated knowledge and skills in providing effective, trauma informed and family centred therapeutic interventions including risk management, for children, young people and families who are presenting with psychological distress and/or mental health difficulties
- Cross cultural competencies including working with interpreters
- Experience with advocating on behalf of children, young people and families with respect to a range of issues related to health, welfare, legal and government



Position Description

- Ability to write psychological reports for medical and allied health professionals, other services, legal and government bodies
- Experience working as part of a multidisciplinary team and ability to work both independently and collaboratively in partnerships and with service providers
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills
- Previous engagement with human rights and social justice
- Computer literacy skills in direct data entry for client information, word processing and internet use

Knowledge

- Demonstrated knowledge of trauma and the psychosocial impact on children, young people, families and communities
- In depth understanding of child development and relevant theories for working with children, young people and their families
- Understanding of health and other service systems and how they operate in Victoria
- Understanding of communities and their role in promoting recovery

Conditions of employment

- VFST promotes the safety and well-being of children
- A satisfactory police check, WWC will be required of the successful applicant.
- The position is in accordance with the Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture Enterprise Agreement
- This position will require travel between sites, attending schools and home visits and therefore the successful applicant must hold a current drivers licence.
- The right to live and work in Australia

Approval and Acknowledgement

Date PD last reviewed:	April 2021
PD Approved by:	GM Direct Services
Date of approval:	March 2021