

Position Description

Position title	ITC Senior Therapeutic Specialist
Document ID	
Program/Unit	Clinical Services/ITC
Term	Permanent Full-Time
Classification	
Position reports to	PSP District Manager, ITC Northern NSW

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 1,100 staff, operating out of more than 40 sites, and has forecast annual revenue for the 2018/19 financial year of over \$125 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.

NSW Services

MacKillop's NSW Services Division consist of the following programs: Northern NSW, Metro Sydney, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Southern NSW, MacKillop Rural Community Services (Dubbo) and Northern NSW.

- Metro Sydney provides foster care, Intensive Therapeutic Care, Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services, Homelessness Youth Assistance Program, early intervention and case management services. The program is based in Blacktown and operates across the FACS Western Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains Districts. Services are funded through the FACS Permanency Support Program, Specialist Homelessness Services, HYAP and Targeted Early Intervention program funding streams; and the Family Preservation and Restoration Program through Their Futures Matter.
- Northern NSW provides foster care, Intensive Therapeutic Care and case management services. The program is based in Grafton and Lismore and operates across the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) Northern NSW District. Services are funded through the FACS Permanency Support Program.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven provides foster care and Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare. Offices are in Wollongong and Nowra. The program operates across the FACS Illawarra Shoalhaven District. Services are funded through the FACS Permanency Support Program and the Permanency Support and Restoration program through Their Futures Matter.
- Southern NSW provides foster care, Intensive Therapeutic Care and a Family Referral Service. Offices are in Batemans Bay, Bega, and Queanbeyan, with outreach in Cooma. The program operates across the FACS Southern NSW District. Services are funded through the FACS Permanency Support Program and the Ministry of Health (Kids and Families).
- MacKillop Rural Community Services (MRCS) has three main service streams, child and family services, youth services and disability services. Services are based in Balranald, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Coonabarabran, Coonamble, Gulargambone, Lightning Ridge, Nyngan, Walgett and Warren with the headquarters based in Dubbo.

Position purpose

The Senior (ITC) Therapeutic Specialist role within MacKillop's Clinical Services and reports through to the NSW Principal Practitioner. The position works closely with the Managers and Staff of the Intensive Therapeutic Transition Care (ITTC), program to deliver clinical and therapeutic services for children, young people, families and carers who are clients of the programs. This new senior position supervises other Therapeutic Specialists (TS) in the ITTC program as well as other TSs in other parts of the Intensive Therapeutic Care program. The position carries a half case-load.

The Senior Therapeutic Specialist is responsible for guiding and supporting carer and staff interactions with children and young people, conducting assessments, developing therapeutic treatment plans and leading reflective practice to support carers and staff to develop their therapeutic skills. In addition, the Senior Therapeutic Specialist will as required provide therapeutic services including Family Therapy directly to the children, young people and families who are clients of our services.

The STS, as part of the Clinical Services team, and as directed by the Principal Practitioner, will work closely with the Managers, program staff and other service partners in the management of complex cases and practice quality issues. This includes the provision of specialist expertise and assistance, case consultancy and review and the promotion of reflective and evidence-based practice.

A significant focus of the program and role is working with Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Primary objectives

The Senior Therapeutic Specialist in the ITC program is the clinical expert who will work as part of the ITTC. They are integral to the ITC system as practice experts that ensure knowledge transfer and have the responsibility to develop and progress the therapeutic aspects of Case Plans and facilitation of Care Team meetings assessment, formulation and service coordination.

Key result areas and responsibilities

Mackillop will ensure there is one Senior Therapeutic Specialist for each ITTC, and that there are equivalent Therapeutic Specialists, who report to them, for up to 12 children across the ITC range of service types.

The Senior Therapeutic Specialist will;

- Provide supervision, direction and support to other Therapeutic Specialists in the ITC system.
- Be primarily responsible for facilitating Care Team Meetings and coordinating the formulation and progression of the therapeutic aspects of Case Plans.
- Ensure that client level data is collected and distributed to Care Team Meetings to inform Case Plans.
- Provide clinical expertise in therapeutic care.
- Conduct and coordinate assessments of children and young people to ensure the needs of children and young people are identified and to inform Case Planning and review processes.
- Consistently responding to the identified needs of children and young and providing guidance to carers and staff in this regard.
- Working collaboratively with the child or young person's Care Team, family and cultural representatives to ensure all relevant parties are involved in the child's life.
- Comprehensive transition planning to prepare the child or young person for a less intensive placement type.
- Facilitate referrals to external specialist services when required.
- Provide support and coordinate services for birth families, carers, relatives/kin, to assist them to understand the needs of children and young people and meet permanency outcomes.
- Drive therapeutic practice within the organisation and across ITC by ensuring the application of the Ten Essential Elements of Therapeutic Care.
- Ensure that the organisation's guiding philosophy of therapeutic care is consistently implemented by all staff.
- Mentor and support the Care team and facilitate Reflective Practice.
- Collaborate with FaCS Central Access unit (CAU), to determine client mix.
- Encourage innovative multidisciplinary responses to the individual needs of children and young people.
- Have a working knowledge of service pathways, networks and initiatives.
- Coordinate preventative strategies to mitigate placement breakdown.
- Influence the ongoing development of therapeutic services and the Permanency Support Program as a whole.
- Provide therapeutic leadership and trauma informed interventions, based on sound practice expertise, contemporary research and program guidelines that deliver positive outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families.
- Ensure that appropriate assessment procedures, risk assessment, therapeutic planning processes and outcome measurements are undertaken for each child or young person in the programs as required.
- Facilitate the development of Behaviour Support Plans and Therapeutic Care Plans.
- Facilitate group work and provide training for carers and staff especially in the areas of trauma and its impact on the child or young person.
- Report regularly through clinical supervision to the Principal Practitioner.
- Participate in organisation-wide service provision, training, quality assurance mechanisms and service development.

- Assist in the development of quality assurance and quality improvement frameworks for trauma informed service delivery.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with key internal and external stakeholders.
- Represent MacKillop Family Services as required.
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities as required.
- Be available for on-call and after-hours support as part of a second tier roster.

Key selection criteria

- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work or a related discipline is essential.
- Current registration as a psychologist with the Psychology Board of Australia and/or a higher degree in psychology or Social Work at Masters level is preferred.
- Post Graduate training in relevant child, adolescent and family clinical practice, family therapy and systemic thinking is strongly preferred.
- A minimum of five years' experience in the field.
- Experience working with children, young people and their families where there has been a history of complex or intergenerational trauma, abuse and neglect including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- 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
- Practice knowledge relevant to working with traumatised and vulnerable children, young people and families such as: child development and the impact of trauma; including the ability to provide therapeutic clinical assessment and trauma informed interventions.
- A well-developed understanding of Attachment and Trauma Theories, their relationship to child abuse and neglect, together with an understanding of social, emotional and cognitive disabilities and an ability to assist others to understand their associated implications.
- Experience in providing supervision, 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, FACS, other agencies and the community.
- Demonstrable analytical problem-solving skills, the ability to assess options and identify and implement creative, innovative and flexible solutions.
- Evidence of a holistic 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.
- Evidence of personal values consistent with the values of MacKillop Family Services including a willingness to embrace the Sanctuary Model and Principles.

Other job-related information

The incumbent is required to:

- Commit to the purpose and values of MacKillop Family Services and the Sanctuary model;
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's Work Health & Safety policy and strategy.
- Attend mandatory and other training as required.
- Actively participate in MacKillop's Bid Management process (as required)
- The position may require some intrastate and interstate travel.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Driver's Licence;
- Satisfactory criminal history check; and
- Valid Working with Children Check

Approval

Approver's full name:	Jude Ekerick	Date:	January 2020
Approver's position title:	State Director, NSW 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.