



POSITION DESCRIPTION

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| Position title: | Children's Specialist Group Worker/Case Manager |
| EFT/Hours: | 1.0EFT/38hours |
| Award/Classification: | <i>Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010. Social and Community Services-Victoria-Award 2000. The National Employment Standards. Social Worker Class I, Year 7 (Transitional provisions apply) & MOSS MOU.</i> |
| Funding: | Department of Human Services |
| Tenure: | Contract to 30 June 2013 |
| Fringe benefits: | A car for work & personal use (full-time worker) |
| Union: | Australian Services Union (ASU) |
| Reports to: | Team Leader, Operations Managers and CEO. |

Organisational Context:

Merri Outreach Support Service (MOSS) was established in 1989 with the aim of providing better access to support housing and social options for people who are homeless. The Agency also seeks to address the underlying social and structural causes of homelessness. This is the context from within which all decisions, policies and office procedures are developed.

MOSS provides a range of services to homeless and marginalised, men, women and children in the North and West Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. The Agency is committed to providing the delivery of holistic team case management to a high needs cross target group.

Merri Outreach Support Service has a strong commitment to research and community development and all staff are expected to participate in these activities. Consumer participation is highly valued in the planning and management of the agency.

MOSS currently offers a number of services to homeless people through a range of programs:

- North and West Regional Children's Resource Program
- Bright Futures
- Transitional Outreach Support Team (TOST)
- Crisis Response Program (CRP)
- Community Connections Program (CCP)
- Housing Support for the Aged (HSAP)
- Hume Transitional Support Programs (T1 & T2)
- Shrivings Planned Activity Group (PAG)
- Brunswick High Rise Volunteer Program
- Brunswick Older Persons' High Rise Support Program
- Northcote Older Persons' High Rise Support Program

Position summary:

The Children's Specialist Group Worker/Case Manager position sits within the newly funded Bright Futures - Children's Specialist Support Service (CSSS). The Children's Specialist Support Service is auspiced by Merri Outreach Support Service and targets vulnerable children from families living in the North and West Metropolitan Region of Melbourne who have been impacted by homelessness.

Whilst the service is newly funded, it is based on the *Bright Futures* model developed by Merri Outreach Support Service over several years and delivered under various funding streams. It reflects MOSS's commitment to children who experience homelessness and will have a strong link to the North and West Regional Children's Resource Program (as based at MOSS in Broadmeadows). The funding until June 30, 2013 creates a great opportunity to deliver this type of support in a substantial way and the realisation of a long term commitment by MOSS.

The Service is primarily delivered by a team of four full-time workers comprising a Team Leader, Children's Specialist Group Worker/Case Manager and two Children's Specialist Case Managers based at the Broadmeadows office. The service model involves collaborative work with other agencies and referring workers. Co-case management and shared facilitation of groups are features of the service.

The Children's Specialist Group Worker/Case Manager will be involved in 50% group work facilitation and co-ordination and 50% specialist case management.

Group work will involve working closely with the Team Leader to co-ordinate, develop, and facilitate therapeutic creative arts groups for children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and/or family violence. Responsibilities will include assessing the children's eligibility for the group and maintaining strong communication with the family throughout the duration of the group.

Communication with the school will also be a key responsibility throughout the groups. Other responsibilities will include liaising with other agencies in the DHS North and West Metropolitan Region to implement groups. This will include organising venues, transport and budgeting around resources and costs associated with the group.

Specialist case management will include being involved in assessment, referral and case management of the children being supported by Bright Futures. Children are referred into the Bright Futures program by homelessness support and family violence agencies throughout the North West region. The assessment phase will determine appropriate service response and Bright Futures offers Enhanced Case Management for clients. This Case Management provides:

- Intensive support focussed on social, recreational, emotional, health and educational needs.
- Identification and linkages to appropriate services.
- Supporting positive peer interaction with peers and family.
- Advocacy on the rights of children and young people to access services within their community.

Key Selection Criteria:

1. A tertiary qualification in child development, social work, psychology, welfare studies or equivalent.
2. Demonstrated experience and highly developed skills in undertaking therapeutic group work, particularly with children.
3. Demonstrated experience and highly developed skills in the assessment and provision of case management to children and families who experience disadvantage.
4. Highly developed team work skills and the demonstrated ability to work independently and in partnership with other agencies.
5. Demonstrated understanding of child development and the impact of homelessness on children and families along with a commitment to supporting marginalised people.
6. Demonstrated knowledge of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), the homelessness service system and current developments including the Homelessness Support Accreditation Standards and the Opening Doors framework.
7. Excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills, including:
 - Interviewing and counselling skills
 - Writing skills – reports, correspondence, case notes, records entry
 - Oral skills – liaison, consultation, negotiation, telephone

- Advocacy skills
- Networking and presentation skills
- IT competency including use of a database
- Experience in the facilitation of training programs would be considered an advantage.

Additional Information:

Office: This position is based at 22 Lakeside Drive, Broadmeadows.

Hours of work: The agency is open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. The Children's Specialist Group Worker/Case Manager may need to work after hours some days to minimise disruption to children's schooling and to facilitate groups.

Occupational Health and Safety: All employees are required to carry out their duties in a manner that does not adversely affect their own health and safety and that of others by reporting all incidents and injuries as well as co-operating with any measures introduced in the workplace to improve OH&S.

Equal Opportunity: Merri Outreach Support Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All staff members have a responsibility to be familiar with the MOSS's Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Employment is subject to:

- **a current Working With Children Check**
- **a current Police Records Check**
- **a current Victorian Driver's Licence**

Privacy Notification:

We are collecting your personal information for the purposes of processing and considering your application for employment. We will use and disclose the information we collect from you only for these purposes. Unsuccessful job applications are retained for six (6) months and then securely destroyed.

Your personal information is kept secure and confidential and managed in accordance with the Merri Outreach Support Service's Privacy Policy and Confidentiality Policy.

Application process and contact information:

For more information about the position please contact: Michelle Atlas **9359 5493**.

Please address the Key Selection Criteria in your application and include 2 referees, at least one of whom is a current/recent supervisor.

The **closing date** for applications is 5pm, Monday 6th February 2012.

Please forward applications to:

Katrina McAuley
Operations Manager
Merri Outreach Support Service
22 Lakeside Drive
Broadmeadows VIC 3047

or email katrina@merri.org.au

Interviews will be held on Monday 13th February, 2012.

Duty Statement

Consumer Services:

- Respond to referrals to the service within an acceptable time frame.
- Develop and facilitate at least two therapeutic groups per school term.
- Provide assessment, support and advocacy for children including referral for enhanced case management, *Bright Futures* group, mainstream and specialist services.
- Engage with children's parents/caregivers and keep them informed about their child's involvement with the service.
- In consultation with the team and children, undertake assessment tasks and the development and monitoring of enhanced case plans.
- Undertake collaborative case management with workers from MOSS and other homelessness services.
- Manage and maintain case load, case files and case notes.
- Actively participate in team case meetings.
- Work in conjunction with children, their family and referring agencies to assist the achievement of case plan goals.

Community Liaison and Networking:

- Actively and positively promote Merri Outreach Support Service and Bright Futures amongst the homelessness and family violence service system in the North and West Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.
- Develop partnerships with these agencies to become actively involved in the Bright Futures group. This may include encouraging workers from these agencies to co-facilitate the groups.
- Maintain a broad and current knowledge of resources and support services that can be accessed to meet consumers' needs.
- Follow established protocols between Merri Outreach Support Service, Bright Futures and partner agencies.
- Provide assistance and appropriate information to services we refer consumers.
- Provide assistance and appropriate information to services about referral pathways for consumers they wish to refer to Bright Futures.
- Actively participate in the development and delivery of training packages

Policy, Planning and Community Development:

- Through direct service provision to identify areas of common need or themes affecting children experiencing homelessness and possible responses within the region.
- Maximise opportunities to increase the understanding of mainstream and specialist services as to the needs of children experiencing homelessness and identify practices which will facilitate improved access for this target group ideally without need for program intervention.
- Assist in regular reviews of service operation and ongoing development, including participation in planning days.

- Undertake implementation of improvements/changes in program operations as directed by management
- Maintain a broad understanding of government policies which have a direct impact on children and families experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness.
- Contribute to the development of responses to government policy, and systemic issues which may affect children and their families as directed by management.
- Participate in forums which contribute to the broader development of policies/practices relevant to children and homelessness.
- Participate in Merri Outreach Support Service's Quality Improvement initiatives.
- Contribute to Agency development including participation in working groups and internal committees.

Reporting and Administration:

- Maintain service and consumer records, case files, including use of the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) database.
- Maintain filing systems as required for effective function of the program.
- Timely recording of consumer information and data recording in accordance with DHS requirements.
- Prepare evaluation reports as required.
- Assist in the preparation of reports as directed.
- Submit for approval by management all formal outgoing correspondence.
- Adhere to agency financial recording practices.

Accountability:

- Work in accordance to Merri Outreach Support Service's Policy and Procedures Manual.
- Meet Homelessness Support Accreditation Standards.
- Be responsible to the Team, Team Leader, Operations Manager and CEO.
- Actively participate in team case planning meetings.
- Attend fortnightly agency meetings.
- Actively participate in scheduled supervision with the Team Leader.
- Attend Committee of Governance meetings (with your team) on a rostered basis.
- Submit timesheets and leave application forms within required timeframes.