

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position</b>	Team Leader- Lakidjeka Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice Support Service
<b>Reports to</b>	Regional Program Manager
<b>Direct Reports</b>	Caseworker
<b>Status</b>	Full time (38 hrs pw)
<b>Location</b>	Dandenong

## BACKGROUND

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organization of its kind in Australia. VACCA is an Aboriginal community-controlled organization that supports and advocates for the Aboriginal community. Our strength lies with our people. Our team is committed to the organisation's vision and values; advocates for our children and other vulnerable community members; and shows respect for, observance and compliance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice and ceremony. Our Aboriginality is what distinguishes us from mainstream services and what enables us to deliver the positive outcomes we achieve for our people.

VACCA employs over 500 staff and delivers more than 50 programs across the state. VACCA's experience and expertise in the delivery of therapeutic interventions are underpinned by culture, connection, and healing. VACCA designs, develops and delivers programs with self-determination and an understanding that the intergenerational trauma experienced by our community requires intergenerational and community healing. Through Cultural Therapeutic Ways VACCA is implementing a whole of agency approach to guide VACCA's practices of healing for Aboriginal children, young people, families, community members and carers who come into contact with our services, as well as creating a safe and supportive workplace for staff.

Central to VACCA's work is the importance of connection to family, community and culture as essential to Aboriginal children's safety, stability and ensuring that they have an ongoing sense of belonging. As Victoria's largest Aboriginal child welfare agency, VACCA plays a key role in the process of transitioning the care and case management of Aboriginal children from government and non- Aboriginal organisations to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

## OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be.

## OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities.

## PROGRAM AREA

The Lakidjeka Aboriginal Child Specialist Advise Support Service (ACSASS) provides specialist advice and case consultation to Child Protection about culturally appropriate intervention in respect of all reports relating to alleged harm of children and significant decisions in all phases of child protection.

The Lakidjeka program does not have direct responsibility for case work. The role of the program is to provide advice and support to inform the respectful engagement of families, risk and other assessments, planning, monitoring and reviews undertaken by child protection.

The program works closely with the child protection offices within the local region to:

- Provide an Aboriginal and cultural perspective on all risk and safety assessments
- Support child protection to engage Aboriginal children and families in a fair and respectful manner
- Improve case management and decision-making processes concerning Aboriginal children
- Advocate for the rights and interests of Aboriginal children in all assessments, planning and decision making and at court
- Support Aboriginal families to meet with child protection and understand the legal processes

## POSITION SUMMARY

This role is to:

- Provide independent consultation advice to Child Protection on the best ways of keeping children and young people safe. This advice will include the importance of strong connection to Aboriginal culture, community and family when making decisions in the best interest of the child.
- Manage the day to day operations of locally based ACSASS team including the direct supervision and support of staff
- Report to a Program Manager as well as contribute to a larger state-wide ACSASS team.
- Liaise and develop a number of external working relationships with Child Protection, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

*Internal: VACCA Early Intervention & Family Support, Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making, Out of Home Care & Permanent Care*

*External: Department of Health Human Services – Child Protection, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Community Service Organisations & Children's Court Victoria*

## KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Sound knowledge and understanding of
  - o Aboriginal culture, values and practices
  - o Issues related to Aboriginal child and family welfare including issues facing Aboriginal children and families today
  - o Issues related to Aboriginal child and family welfare and Child Protection Systems
- Undertake team management, including monitoring, evaluation and maintenance of standards.

- Ability to work closely with child protection and other services to advocate for the child and support the best interests of children
- Demonstrated ability to supervise and train staff.
- Ability to communicate effectively, including consultation and liaising sensitively and effectively with a wide range of organisations including government departments (DHHS)
- A sound understanding of child and adolescent development, intervention techniques and strategies related to the protection of children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- Preparedness to participate in an after-hours on call service.
- Ability to work flexible hours.
- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card.
- Commitment to VACCA's vision and purpose.

### DESIRABLE:

- A relevant welfare qualification
- Understanding of the *Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005 (Vic.)* & Department of Human Services (Protective Services) procedures and policies regarding case planning

## POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Be responsible for the implementation and daily operation of a high quality Regional Lakidjeka ACSASS program.
- To provide direct supervision and support to Lakidjeka program staff.
- To manage a caseload, provide backup for staff and to be available to caseworkers by pager/mobile phone at all times except when otherwise negotiated.
- To participate in case planning meetings, Aboriginal and family group conferences and other meetings involving Aboriginal children and their families.
- To advocate on behalf of Aboriginal children, families and communities their issues when dealing with Child Protection and the welfare system.
- To ensure that statistics are collated, recorded and monitored for the regional Lakidjeka program including quarterly reporting data.
- To be involved in the establishment, review and documentation of Policy, Procedures, Standard and practice models/frameworks.
- To closely liaise with DHS Regional Offices to establish good working relationships and partnerships
- To consult, negotiate and liaise with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies and with government departments to ensure appropriate services are provided to Aboriginal children and families.
- To be involved in staff recruitment, training and appraisals.
- To be aware of and familiar with current policies, legislation, programs and practices in relation to child welfare.
- To participate in training sessions, team and staff meetings including supervisors and state-wide unit meetings.
- To provide professional education to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services and community education to Aboriginal communities regarding the role of Regional Lakidjeka Program.
- To undertake intra-state travel as required.
- To participate in the After Hours roster

- Ensure Aboriginal culture is embedded throughout all aspects of the program to ensure cultural safety in all activities.
- To be responsible for maintaining and updating knowledge in relation to relevant legislation, policies, processes and templates, both internally and externally of the organisation.
- The incumbent is also responsible for guiding staff within their Program/s to embed these frameworks in to their practices.
- Ensure awareness and compliance by self and staff to Client Services policies, including cyber safety, substance abuse in out-of-home care, responding to children and young people with trauma related behaviour, responding to problem sexual behaviour, restraint and critical incidents.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Ensure compliance with the OH&S Act and VACCA policies.
- Contribute positively and proactively to team and organisation wide OH&S activities.

## QUALITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure compliance with legislation, contract and policy requirements in your day to day work in order to meet the organisation's audit, contract and registration obligations.
- Proactively apply your specialist knowledge in the review and maintenance of policies, systems and processes.
- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

## OTHER

- Participate proactively in team project initiatives
- Support other team members in periods of high demand and during periods of absence.
- Participate in project groups and attend events
- Undertake other duties as directed

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

VACCA's recruitment processes align with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. All employees are required to undergo a National Police Records Check, a Working with Children Check and comply with the Code of Conduct policy.

VACCA is an equal opportunity employer and has a smoke-free workplace policy.