

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Team Leader- Lakidjeka Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice Support Service
Reports to	Senior Program Manager
Direct Reports	Caseworker x 4 and Case Administration worker
Status	Full time (38 hrs pw)
Location	Wangaratta / Wodonga (Covering both Goulburn & Ovens Murray areas)

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 600 staff and delivers more than 70 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.

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 will play 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 following the recent decision of the Victorian Government.

VACCA is implementing cultural therapeutic ways which is an agency wide framework that underpins our work with the community, our clients and staff.

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 Team Leader 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 or young person.
- 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 management group
- Liaise and develop several external working relationships with Child Protection, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services.
- Develop and maintain strong partnership arrangements with Child Protection

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Lakidjeka Intake & AHS team, Ovens Murray Early Intervention & Family Support, Kinship Care & VACCA Permanent Care

External: Department of Families Fairness & Housing – Child Protection, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, (particularly Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making, Cultural Support, Out of Home Care & Early Intervention & Family Support), Community Service Organisations & Children's Court Victoria

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Commitment to VACCA's vision and purpose.
- Sound knowledge and understanding of

- Aboriginal culture, values and practices
- Issues related to Aboriginal child and family welfare including issues facing Aboriginal children and families today
- 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 Aboriginal 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 a rostered 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.

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, always provide backup for staff and to be available to case advisors by mobile phone except when otherwise negotiated.
- To closely liaise with DHHS Child Protection Regional Offices to establish and maintain effective working relationships and partnerships
- 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 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 of staff.
- 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 any state-wide meetings.

- To provide professional education to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services and community education to Aboriginal communities regarding the role of the regional Lakidjeka Program.
- Ensure Aboriginal culture is embedded throughout all aspects of the program to ensure cultural safety in line with VACCA's *Cultural Therapeutic Ways*.
- 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 into 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.
- To undertake intra-state travel as required.
- To participate in the After-Hours roster

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

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and supporting strong, safe, thriving Aboriginal communities and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity, honouring all cultural backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and spiritual beliefs.

VACCA is a child-safe organisation and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with zero tolerance for child abuse. All successful applicants will be required to undertake a National Police Record Check and Working with Children Check prior to commencement of employment and periodically following commencement.

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