

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Cultural Support Advisor
Reports to	Team Leader
Direct Reports	NA
Status	Full Time
Location	Based at either the Werribee or Melton office

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. 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

As part of a new initiative funded by the Victorian State Government through the Department of Health and Human Services, you will be working in a critical role to support Aboriginal children and young people living in out-of-home care maintain and develop their connection to their Aboriginal cultural and community. Your work will include assisting care teams with the development, assessment, and review of cultural plans to ensure they meet the cultural needs of Aboriginal children and young people.

You will build connections between care teams and Aboriginal communities and recommend to senior management the endorsement of cultural plans.

You will play a lead role with local child protection and mainstream agencies to increase the awareness of, and participation in Aboriginal cultural activities by Aboriginal children and young people.

POSITION SUMMARY

The position is responsible for supporting the development, endorsement, implementation, and review of cultural plans for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people living in out-of-home care. This position will support the development of cultural plans by care teams, assessing and providing support where needed, and recommend cultural plans are endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer. This includes reviewing cultural plans and working with care teams to ensure they are of a suitable standard and address the cultural needs of vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people.

The Advisor works collaboratively as a practitioner with the Chief Executive Officer and senior managers to provide effective service delivery and support to child protection and other agencies.

The position will also support child protection practitioners and contracted case managers in the implementation of contemporary methods, systems and approaches to enhance the capacity of care teams to better respond to Aboriginal children and young people. The Advisor will have a lead role with local child protection and mainstream agencies to increase the awareness of, and participation in Aboriginal cultural activities by Aboriginal children and young people. This will include contributing to the development, implementation and maintenance of the cultural information portal.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: State-wide Co-ordinator & Senior Advisors Aboriginal Cultural Planning, Out of Home Care Teams, Lakidjeka ACSASS, AFLDM convenors

External: Child Protection workers and Managers, Senior Advisors Aboriginal Cultural Planning, DHHS AFLDM Convenors, Community Service Organization Case Managers and Senior staff, Care Team members.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Commitment to VACCA's vision and purpose.
- Awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal societies and cultures and an understanding of the issues affecting Aboriginal people in contemporary Australia and the diversity of circumstances of Aboriginal people

EXPERIENCE

- Expert knowledge of the unique history and current circumstances of Aboriginal children, families and community and ability to apply this to Child Protection cultural planning.
- Expert knowledge of Aboriginal cultures and communities, preferably Victorian communities.
- An expert understanding and ability to embed in practice, the core responsibilities and principles underpinning cultural planning for Aboriginal children residing in out-of-home care (Foster Care).
- Expert knowledge of child development, attachment and trauma theories as they relate to child and family welfare practice.
- Demonstrated ability to work with Aboriginal children and their families in a complex environment to gather and analyse information that promotes development and implementation of their cultural plan.
- Demonstrated ability to build professional networks across a range of organisations and individuals to promote collaborative working groups that focus on meeting the best interests of vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people.
- Experience in delivering results that focuses on the best interests of the child and achieves positive, long lasting outcomes for children and families at an advanced level.
- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card.

QUALIFICATIONS

- A recognised Diploma of Community Services Work, or similar qualification which is studied over a minimum of two academic years of full-time study (or part time equivalent) or extensive equivalent experience

This is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander designated position, classified under Section 12 Special Measures of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. This employment opportunity is only available to Aboriginal and people.

POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Build on/establish working relationships and work in collaborative partnerships with Child Protection; ACSASS; Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations; children/young people, their families and extended families; Aboriginal Elders and community; Community Service Organisations and care givers to develop CSP's.
- On receipt of referrals from Child Protection, develop, implement and monitor CSP's for Aboriginal children/young people who are in Out of Home Care and subject to Guardianship to Secretary Order or Long-Term Guardianship to Secretary Orders in line with the legislative requirements.
- Participate in and contribute to regular reviews of the CSP, in line with Child Protection Case Planning processes.
- Work with Child Protection and other relevant services to ensure CSP commitments to the child/young person are met and to ensure the CSP is a living document that grows and develops with the child.
- Engage and educate families and community about the purpose of the CSP, encouraging active participation by extended family, kinship groups and community in maintaining a child's cultural connection and self-identity.
- Report on program delivery to track completion of CSPs; contribute to program data reporting and analysis to improve service delivery and to contribute to program development work.
- Accurately update and maintain client data via the DHS electronic Client Relationship Information System for Service Providers (CRISSP) and Client Relationship Information (CRIS) electronic data systems.
- Assist in Quality Improvement activities to ensure agency compliance with the Community Service Organization Registration Standards

LEADERSHIP

Provide effective leadership by:

- modelling agency values
- working in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer and senior managers
- supporting and mentoring care teams to develop cultural plans
- providing guidance and expertise in relation to highly sensitive cases and challenging issues
- promoting and increasing awareness of Aboriginal cultural activities for children and young people in the community

PROVIDE ADVICE

- Provide quality, timely and effective specialist knowledge to care teams, including complex matters, in developing and reviewing cultural plans. Assist care teams to ensure cultural plans meet the cultural needs of vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, as well as reflecting the best interests' principles as the primary consideration for all child protection planning.
- Prepare documentation, present information, and make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer on cultural plans, ensuring decisions and actions are in the best interests of the child.
- Provide information to children, families, carers and service providers on procedures, practices, and guidelines and provide advice and case consultation on the Aboriginal cultural needs of Aboriginal children and young people, including services available to help meet needs.
- Actively contribute as a collaborative team member in the ongoing development and review of cultural plans, related to strengthening Aboriginal children and young people's connection to their Aboriginal community and culture.
- Monitor, analyse and review cultural plans; assess the effectiveness of the plan provided to Aboriginal children and young people and provide well-developed recommendations on future actions required to support the maintenance and strengthening of Aboriginal children and young people's connection to their Aboriginal community and culture.
- Provide authoritative advice and opinion to professionals in other disciplines; lead or participate in case conferences, including family decision making, with other professionals.
- Identify and apply appropriate research in forming interventions and develop innovative solutions to complex and difficult cases, drawing on a range of professional networks to identify gaps in case assessments.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

- Collaborate with care teams to ensure Aboriginal input into all cultural plans; and ensure care teams undertake reasonable steps to identify, gather information, and explore vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people's Aboriginal heritage and family. When necessary, work with and Aboriginal children and their families to obtain information and develop plans.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships, ongoing communication and successful negotiations with Child Protection and key stakeholders

ADMINISTRATION

- Use a range of IT/web-based applications to manage workflow.
- Participate actively in supervision and professional development opportunities.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Regular travel is required for this role
- 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 internal policies, systems and processes.
- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

OTHER

- Generate general and specific communication to stakeholders via effective and timely use of Staff Bulletin, intranet, forums and other opportunities as they arise.
- Participate proactively in team project initiatives
- Support other team members in periods of high demand and during periods of absence.
- Participate in project groups from time to time
- 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.