

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position</b>	<b>Practice Leader Nugel</b>
<b>Reports to</b>	Senior Program Manager
<b>Direct Reports</b>	NA
<b>Status</b>	Full time (38 hrs pw)
<b>Location</b>	Gippsland Office (Morwell)

## 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 Victorian Government is working with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to support their increased responsibility for vulnerable Aboriginal children and young people, including those in out of home care. In creating a fair, just and restorative child and family welfare service for Aboriginal children and families a number of programs are taking place concurrently to achieve this goal.

### Section 18 - Nugel

To make a difference in the life of a child we need to do things differently. As it is culture that defines who an Aboriginal child is, how they think, how they communicate and what they value, decisions about their future are best made by an Aboriginal organisation. Taking this approach supports Aboriginal children to grow up strong and resilient, with cultural identity and connection to family, kin and community. At VACCA this is what we want for our children and families.

Section 18 of the Victorian *Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005* supports this approach to working with Aboriginal children. An Aboriginal person, the CEO of VACCA, (referred to in the Act as ‘the principal officer’) will be authorised to perform all decision making (specified functions and exercise specified powers conferred on the Secretary, DHHS) in relation to a protection order in respect of an Aboriginal child. This will enable VACCA to make all decisions in relation to the care, case planning and case management of an authorised Aboriginal child. The name for VACCA’s S18 program is Nugel, a Wurundjeri word meaning “belong”.

This program builds on VACCA’s existing range of services and expertise in working with vulnerable children and complex families. It takes on the learnings of an earlier pilot project to progress a culturally appropriate model of child protection. This ground breaking initiative is an important and significant step towards realising self-determination in the child protection arena in Victoria.

## POSITION SUMMARY

VACCA are currently recruiting for a culturally strong, dynamic and experienced Practice Leader to join the Nugel team.

The Nugel Practice Leader is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and expert cultural advice to staff and managers in the Nugel team
- Embedding and integrating VACCA’s Cultural Therapeutic Ways within the Nugel program
- Providing mentoring and delivering professional development to the Nugel team, so that Aboriginal cultural practices underpin all aspects of the practice approach
- Ensuring a cultural lens is applied to working with children and families, in particular risk assessments, safety planning, case management and decision making.

The Practice Leader also works with Aboriginal children and families, government and sector partners

to reduce the over representation of Aboriginal children involved with Child Protection, achieve better outcomes for children, and to build capacity in families so that children can remain at, or be, transitioned home.

## KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

### KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, the values that underpin VACCA' vision and purpose and the capacity to take a leadership role in championing these internally and externally
- Demonstrated awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal societies and cultures, and commitment to continually build knowledge of such, along with a high level of awareness of the key issues which impact upon Aboriginal communities
- Demonstrated ability to use this knowledge to guide practice with Aboriginal children, families and carers
- Highly developed skills and ability to provide advice on risk assessment, safety planning, case management and decision making based on cultural principles and the Children Youth and Families Act (CYFA) 2005
- Sound knowledge of, and ability to, administer the CYFA 2005, and the Child Wellbeing Act 2005 in the best interest of Aboriginal children and families
- Ability to provide leadership to staff, and mentoring and professional development
- Demonstrated understanding of complex casework with children and families who have experienced trauma and may present with challenging behaviours, including using culturally safe therapeutic approaches to heal and build resilience
- Demonstrated ability to effectively communicate and negotiate with Aboriginal children, families, carers and other service providers to achieve outcomes

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Ability to role model and provide cultural leadership in solution focused, strength-based practice
- Ability to embed Aboriginal cultural practices into children protection work
- Adaptable: is flexible and adaptable to change
- Open and curious: adopts an open and curious approach to child protection work
- Takes initiative: works proactively in creating solutions and solving problems

### EDUCATION/QUALIFICATIONS

#### **Mandatory**

A recognised Social Work degree or 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) and includes:

- a primary focus on child development, human behaviour, family dynamics and/or impacts of trauma
- supervised fieldwork placements (ideally completed within the child and family welfare sector) and at least one unit of study in case management, case work practice or counselling

### **Desirable**

- Providing cultural leadership

## **REQUIREMENTS**

- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence, a current employment Working with Children Check card and a National Police Check.
- Current COVID-19 vaccination (minimum one dose, prior to commencement)

## **POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES**

The Nugel Practice Leader has the following accountabilities.

### **CULTURAL LEADERSHIP**

- Provide expert consultation and advice on Aboriginal culture and practices in child protection work
- Ensure the principles and practices of Cultural Therapeutic Ways are applied in the statutory case management of children authorised to VACCA under section 18 of the CYFA 2005, and are integrated into all aspects of the Nugel program and practice approach
- Exercise a range of authorities and legal delegations under section 18 of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 and other specific delegations and functions including adherence to relevant practice standards.
- Lead the development and continuous improvement of Nugel practice approaches to ensure they have a strong cultural focus
- Mentor, provide secondary consultation and deliver professional development to Nugel staff and managers, to build and maintain a strong cultural focus across Nugel
- Work closely with, and support, the Nugel Team Leader to deliver supervision to staff and students working from a strengths and solution focused approach
- Actively participate in, and lead the development and implementation of, programmatic and practice changes
- Chair and facilitate as necessary any meetings (team meetings, care team meetings, family decision-making meetings, and inter and intra agency meetings)

### **ENGAGEMENT WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES**

- Ensure that engagement with Aboriginal children, young people and families occurs in a culturally safe and appropriate manner

- Ensure risk assessment, case planning, case management and decision-making are undertaken within a cultural lens and in accordance with the principles of Cultural Therapeutic Ways
- Encourage and support reflective practice through a cultural framework
- Convene family meetings and support Aboriginal led decision-making
- Ensure children and families in the Nugel program are supported to practice culture and access community activities, including return to country, camps, community events, etc.
- Ensure cultural support planning meets the needs of children and young people at different stages of their cultural journey
- Support staff to foster connections for children and young people with wider family and community networks, some of whom they may have been disconnected with for long periods of time

### **CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASE PLANNING**

- Ensure risk assessment, safety planning, case management and decision making are underpinned by a cultural lens
- Lead the Cultural planning for children authorised to VACCA under section 18 CYFA.
- Support the Nugel Team to prepare documentation, present information and make recommendations to the Children's Court of Victoria and other relevant courts and tribunal processes on decisions and actions in the best interests of the child.
- Lead case reviews for complex cases
- Chair the High Risk Panel meetings
- Mentor and advise staff on ways to incorporate cultural and healing approaches, within casework and case planning procedures and practice

### **PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION**

- Work closely with other VACCA Units, in particular the Healing Unit to integrate and embed Cultural Therapeutic Ways into Nugel's practice approach
- Engage and build connections with the Aboriginal community, including Elders, respected persons and community leaders, and impart community knowledge to Nugel team members
- Establish and maintain excellent working relationships with key stakeholders both internal and external.
- Represent and promote Nugel with a range of external stakeholders including all DHHS divisions, Aboriginal organisations and community service providers
- Work collaboratively with key service providers to deliver improved outcomes to Aboriginal children, families and carers.

### **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