

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Position** Therapeutic Practitioner – Northern Family Services Program

**Reports to** Family Services Program Manager

**Direct Reports** NIL

**Status** 1 Full time position

**Location** 340 Bell Street, Preston

## 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 organization'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 400 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.

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.

## OUR VISION

VACCA's vision is for our children, young people, families and communities to be thriving – culturally strong, empowered and safe.

## OUR PURPOSE

To work towards the healing of the Aboriginal community through strengthening the safety, wellbeing and cultural connectedness of vulnerable community members particularly children.

## PROGRAM AREA

Family Services program such as Aboriginal Family Preservation reunification response, Intensive, Family Services and the Family Restorations are integrated placement prevention and reunification programs designed to provide a coordinated service system response for children and families involved with Child

Protection or likely to have Child Protection involvement. The service model is designed to achieve better outcomes for children and families, including:

- Improved capacity to address safety, wellbeing and trauma for children and their families;
- Reduced demand for first time entry into out-of-home care;
- Reduced time spent in care for first time entrants;
- Reduced long-term involvement of children and families in Child Protection.

The services' target group include children who are at imminent risk of being removed and placed in out-of-home care or children who are in out-of-home care and Child Protection have determined that they could safely return home to their parents' care if appropriate supports were available to the child and family. Another component of families within the Intensive Services programs has no Child protection involvement, but are young and/or first time mothers and fathers who require intensive supports for their boorais to have a great start on their journey from pregnancy to preschool. The latter target group receive an intervention aimed at strengthening parenting skill development across the life of their child's early years stage.

Families in our Intensive Services program receive dedicated, holistic and hands-on outreach parenting supports that can range between four months to four years. The practice model has the healing component that enhances access to therapeutic supports for some families. In addition, the programs have flexible funds that allow families to access fee paying services and/or resources to enhance outcomes.

## POSITION SUMMARY

VACCA is in the process of implementing trauma informed practice across all of its programs. The Therapeutic Practitioner within Family Services will support Case Managers and Families from this program where is identified by management.

The Therapeutic Practitioner will:

- Provide direct outreach client therapeutic work
- Provide trauma informed practice leadership in accordance with program guidelines for the Family Services programs.
- Undertake assessments and develop therapeutic plans to address the needs of children living in families where there has been a history of abuse or other trauma.
- Participate in care team meetings for families they are supporting as required
- Participate in regular fortnightly supervision sessions with the Family Services Manager and monthly task meetings with the Family Services Program Manager and Team Leaders to assist in the development of quality assurance and quality improvement frameworks for the therapeutic healing care of children in VACCA's Northern Family Services programs.

**Please note: 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 Torres Strait Islander people**

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

*Internal:* The Therapeutic Practitioner will:

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- Participate in care team meetings for families they are supporting as required
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*External:* The Therapeutic Practitioner will be expected to develop and maintain respectful, collaborative and robust relationships with all professionals in each child's care team, representatives of DHS Child Protection and representatives of other services. A demonstrated capacity to work with the statutory child protection system is essential.

## KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- 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.
- 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
- Sound knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values and the ability to effectively communicate with Aboriginal children and their families and a demonstrated ability to contribute to Aboriginal children's emotional, physical, psychological and cultural development
- A proven ability to work successfully with Aboriginal children with a range of complex and diverse needs and an ability to respond therapeutically to Aboriginal children's pain-based behaviours indicating an understanding of the impact of trauma and disrupted attachment on children.
- Developed understanding of the importance of culture and community connection as a means of addressing childhood trauma.
- An appropriate tertiary qualification in Psychology, Social Work, Family Therapy or a related discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to provide leadership and direct service in trauma informed assessment and therapeutic practice with children and young people and their families.
- Highly developed ability to successfully provide secondary consultation and advice to other professionals in keeping with Aboriginal styles of learning in a practice area that is challenging and complex.
- Demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively and with the capacity to negotiate and liaise with DHHS, other agencies and the community.

- A sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the service system and the issues involved in providing services to statutory clients.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Personal values consistent with the values of VACCA

## POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Provide trauma informed practice leadership in accordance with program guidelines for service delivery
- Contribute to the continuing successful development, implementation and review of the Northern VACCA's Family Services programs.
- Participate in regular fortnightly supervision sessions with the Manager and monthly task meetings with the Family Services Program Manager
- Work with the Manager, all relevant managers, Case Managers and other relevant people to identify how policy and practice can be improved and implement such changes.
- Assist the Manager to identify issues in the service system and assist with devising strategies to address problems or initiate service development.
- Attend all relevant staff meetings at Northern VACCA and fortnightly team meetings.
- Provide secondary consultation and guidance in culturally appropriate therapeutic healing techniques to address trauma and its consequences in respect of children and families in Family Services programs and members of each child's care team and network.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of Education Support Plans for each child where appropriate.
- Assist in the development of quality assurance and quality improvement frameworks for therapeutic healing interventions for children in these programs
- Provide leadership in the implementation of culturally & trauma informed therapeutic practice including assessment procedures, needs identification, risk assessment, practice guidelines, case documentation and case planning.

## 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.