



VACCA
Connected by culture

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Life Skills Specialist
Reports to	Team Leader – Family Violence
Direct Reports	N/A
Status	Full-time – fixed term
Location	Inner Gippsland - 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 800 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

VACCA Morwell delivers a range of Family Violence Therapeutic Services that offer a culturally safe and trauma informed, one on one counselling and group based work with Aboriginal women, men, children, adolescents and families who are impacted by family violence.

Culture, Connection and Healing are central to the design and delivery of Family Violence Therapeutic Programs to Aboriginal families. The program model is family focused and where possible, all family members will be involved and supported, individually and as a family. Staff will work within VACCA's Aboriginal therapeutic framework.

There is a strong component of action research throughout the program in order to build an evidence base of best practice for working with Aboriginal families. Collaborative working and proactive sharing of the evidence base and lessons learned is essential to this role.

Also operating in the Inner Gippsland region is the Orana Gunyah (meaning Welcome, Place of Shelter) site in Morwell, a purpose built cluster model facility that provides short term accommodation and support services for up to five women and their children at a time escaping or experiencing family violence.

POSITION SUMMARY

Located at the Orana Gunyah site, the Life Skills Specialist role has been created to facilitate a range of programs with Aboriginal women and children who have been impacted by family violence. The position will involve the design and delivery of activities both 1:1 and in groups, educating and supporting Aboriginal women to learn new life skills. The Life Skills Specialist will:

- Engage with residents currently in refuge
- Support the client in group readiness, including pre-group individual sessions where needed
- Develop and deliver activities/programs for Aboriginal Women and children that are provided in a culturally safe place allowing individuals to build trust, yarn up, open up in their own time and heal through the use of therapeutic interventions
- Educate and support Aboriginal women to develop/enhance life skills in areas including: financial literacy, budgeting, tenancy matters, cooking classes & healthy meal planning, relationship building, women's groups & healing day trips (which may include travel back to country)
- Establish effective working relationships with Elders, community & partnering agencies
- Support residents to attend other groups and Women's business outside of Orana Gunyah
- Connect families to Cultural activities eg: NAIDOC week events, Sisters' Day out etc.
- Assist to strengthen family and community networks/relationships

A trauma-informed approach interwoven with psychoeducation promotes healthy respectful relationships and will assist women to build confidence, achieve greater independence and to further strengthen their healing journey.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Inner Gippsland Management Team, Aboriginal Family Violence Practice Lead, Family Violence Case Managers, Family Violence Therapeutic Practitioners and Aboriginal Therapeutic Group Workers and the Research and Evaluation Team

External: Community, Community Service Organisations, local program partners

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- 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
- A comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and impact of family violence in Aboriginal families
- A demonstrated ability to work with Aboriginal women, children and families who have been impacted by family violence
- Substantial and relevant experience working across Family Violence, Child and Family Welfare Services and the Aboriginal sector.
- An understanding of relevant legislation and professional guidelines including children and young people at risk, MARAM, Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, Child Information Sharing Scheme and privacy requirements
- Excellent communication skills and an ability to develop trusted relationships with Aboriginal community members.
- Demonstrated experience in the development and facilitation of group activities

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Tertiary qualification in social work, psychology, family therapy or a related discipline along with demonstrated experience, or willingness to obtain.

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 (Including booster dose, as applicable)

POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Deliver culturally safe and high standards of service delivery to Aboriginal children and families impacted by family violence
- Conduct comprehensive risk assessments and safety planning when activities are based off-site
- Preform in a client-led adaptable manner which aims to utilise any time, space or environment to establish or build or the relationship i.e. whilst transporting a client, in a home visit, going for a walk
- Preparation of resources required for groups/activities including catering
- Provide current and accurate information, resources and supported referrals to clients where needed
- Participate in program evaluation through collection of evaluation data (in particular client outcomes data) and contribute to discussions regarding program improvement
- Maintain positive, collaborative working relationships with all professionals and with other community services
- Ensure all group risk assessment plans are completed and implemented as required for each group session.
- Contribute to a centralised body of best practice for family violence programs across VACCA
- Maintain accurate client records and case notes and contribute to report writing
- Maintain quality and up to date database information that meets privacy and legislative requirements
- Provide other support and engage in other tasks as required



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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.