



POSITION TITLE:	Foster Care Practitioner
POSITION NUMBER:	OH028
POSITION LOCATION:	Warrnambool
CLASSIFICATION:	SCHADS Level 3-4 (PayPoint will be dependent on qualification and years of experience within the relevant field consistent with the SCHADS Award)
TEAM /DIVISION:	Foster Care Team – Out of Home Care Division
EMPLOYMENT CHECKS:	Current National Police Check, Working with Children Check and NDIS Worker Screening Check

OUR ORGANISATION

Brophy Family and Youth Services (Brophy) is a not for profit organisation, with a community based Board of Directors. Our service provides a wide range of family, youth and children services across South West Victoria. We are a multi – site organisation, and employees may be required to work at any of our sites. These sites are based in Warrnambool, Portland and Hamilton.

Brophy values the safety of all children and young people and has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse or harm. We listen to and ensure the participation and empowerment of all children and young people.

The cultural safety of First Nations people is important to us. We seek to maintain a safe environment so the diverse and unique identities of First Nations people are respected and valued.

Brophy actively values and promotes diversity in our community and affirms our commitment to be inclusive and respectful to all, regardless of gender, age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, level of ability, cultural or language background.

We welcome people who are LGBTIQ^A (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex, queer, plus other sexual minority identities), and are accredited under the Rainbow Tick Standards for LGBTIQ^A inclusive practice.

Our values are: Social justice, Professionalism, Empowerment, Responsiveness and Partnership.

DIVISION AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Out of Home Care Services Division of Brophy looks after children and young people when a family needs support, in cases of family conflict or if there is a significant risk of harm or abuse in the family home. A number of key frameworks and models are used by the division's enthusiastic and skilled staff to achieve this purpose. These include but are not limited to: Gender and Trauma Informed practice, Advantaged Thinking, Motivational Interviewing and task focussed interventions.

The Foster Care Program looks after children and young people when a family needs support, in cases of family conflict or if there is a significant risk of harm or abuse in the family home.

The Foster Care Program cares for children and young people across the Great South Coast. There are a number of service frameworks within this program including: the Best Interest and Looking after

children frameworks, developmental theory, attachment and trauma theory, solution focussed and task centred models and mediation.

PRIMARY PURPOSE OF ROLE

The Foster Care Program looks after children and young people when a family needs support, in cases of family conflict or if there is a significant risk of harm or abuse in the family home.

Working from a trauma informed lens and actively embedding new learnings, the Foster Care Practitioner provides support and guidance to foster carers, and monitors the quality of care being provided to children and young people placed in family-based placements.

This includes support and supervision of volunteer care givers. This requires the understanding and application of a number of service frameworks including: the Best Interest and Looking After children frameworks, developmental theory, attachment and trauma theory, solution focussed and task centred models and mediation.

The role also involves:

- Case management and departmental case contracting.
- Developing trusting and supportive relationships with children, young people, families and their care givers.
- Develop innovative and flexible solutions to deliver the Foster Care program.

The position is required to develop trusting and supportive relationships with children, young people, families and their care givers, having an understanding of the issues being faced. The ability to advocate and provide excellent customer service to this client group is also required, whilst being able to develop innovative and flexible solutions to deliver the Foster Care program.

In this role, the practitioner is expected to have a sound knowledge of the principles and processes of relevant legislation pertaining to children, young people and their families.

This position also requires the incumbent to have knowledge of trauma informed care & ability to undertake or capacity to undertake further training as required specific to the program area.

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Foster Care Practitioner will establish appropriate community contacts and develop and maintain working relationships with a broad range of stakeholders in the provision of case management services towards achieving outcomes for children and their families. A commitment to provide excellent customer service to a diverse range of clients across a number of issues is required, along with the ability to negotiate, consult and liaise with industry professionals is key to this role.

This role requires the ability to make sound decisions, in some instances in crisis or stressful situations, whilst maintaining confidential and professional boundaries. A sound understanding of child development and the impacts of trauma on a child's development using an attachment and trauma lens. The role is required to work autonomously and as part of a team, maintain accurate records, expected to actively participate in and contribute to program service planning, along with all annual improvement activities to achieve organisational outcomes.

As this position regularly engages with other agencies, the Foster Care Practitioner must be able to work collaboratively with others, maintain professionalism and actively promote Brophy Family and Youth Services to the region.

REPORTS TO

The position reports to and is supervised by the Team Leader – Foster Care.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Personal and Professional

- Embrace Brophy's commitment to child safety and wellbeing and demonstrate this through practice that reflects equity and inclusion, cultural safety and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.
- Manage crisis and stressful incidents and monitor staff well-being.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing skill development and training relevant to the role both personally and professionally.
- Have the capacity to undertake further trauma informed training relevant to program area which includes (but is not limited to) TCI, TCI/F & Power to Kids.
- Participate in supervision, secondary consultation within scope of practice and professional development as negotiated with Line Manager.
- Participate actively in team meetings, team planning days and agency activities to ensure an integrated approach to service delivery.
- Participate in all core training to ensure integrity of the agreed model of service delivery.

Technical Skills

- Engage with children, young people and their families using a variety of engagement strategies such as assertive engagement, outreach, and persistence and pacing.
- Assist the recruitment workers with the facilitation of the Shared Stories Shared Lives caregiver training and ongoing training activities and undertake the Step by Step assessment process of potential caregivers as required.
- Undertake annual care giver reviews as required.
- Support children, young people, their families and care givers utilising a variety of interventions and frameworks such as: the Best Interest and Looking After children frameworks, developmental theory, attachment and trauma theory, solution focussed and task centred models and mediation.
- Undertake case management including intake, assessment, case/care planning, case coordination, supported referrals, case reviews and case closure.
- Establish, facilitate and maintain care teams for children and young people in out of home care.
- Facilitate, support and supervision access arrangement for children and young people.
- Flexibility to respond to crises beyond business hours at times.
- Participation in the Brophy on call service is an expectation for all foster care staff, but participation is voluntary.
- Ensure you have access to and comply with legislation, standards, policies, practices and procedures relevant to the program area.
- Ensure a professional standard of care and service provision according to the philosophy of Brophy Family and Youth Services.

Customer Service

- Promote the program's services and the Agency throughout the region.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with a broad range of stakeholders and services, across a variety of sectors to ensure an integrated and collaborative approach that supports positive client outcomes.
- Demonstrate an awareness and practice in response to the diverse needs of clients.
- Demonstrate an understanding of rural communities and the issues they face.

Continuous Quality Improvement

- Seek regular consumer feedback regarding the effectiveness of the programs services as part of BFYS Clinical Governance Framework.
- Participate in program evaluation activities that promote advantaged thinking and contribute to improved outcomes for clients.
- Participate in and contribute to BFYS quality improvement processes and other activities to meet service and accreditation standards.

Team Work and Communication

- Undertake team intake duty as required.
- Support a positive team approach across the program area, Agency and with other service providers and partners.
- Manage conflict and disputes in a professional manner and in accordance with Brophy policy and procedures.
- Promote effective team communication and development by working professionally and co-operatively with all stakeholders to achieve the Agency's objectives.
- Participate in the development of consumer participation activities within your team and Agency.
- Undertake other appropriate duties as directed by the Line Manager.

Administration and Documentation

- Be responsible for case management case contracting requirements such as best Interest plans as required.
- Appropriately utilise and apply for program brokerage and placement support monies.
- Assist in the completion of placement and support funding application to the Department Of Human Services.
- Write reports and assessments ensuring best practice and professional standards for written correspondence are adhered to.
- Complete after hours documentation including client information and contact notes.
- Take responsibility for accurate, confidential and timely case-noting, record keeping, filing and general maintenance of client information, in accordance with relevant program and agency requirements and standards.
- Ensure all relevant program planning, documentation; evaluation and reporting are completed in a timely and accurate manner.
- Ensure all relevant policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to, including the complaints handling procedures and methods for responding to critical incidents.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Adhere to Brophy's Employee Code of Conduct, and internal policies and procedures.
- Embrace and abide by Brophy's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

- Actively participate in all required supervision, annual performance management process, professional development and training activities.
- Participate in and contribute to Brophy Family and Youth Services quality improvement process and other activities to meet service and accreditation standards.
- Participate and contribute to the culture of a Learning Organisation environment.
- Maintain a healthy and safe work environment including supporting the monitoring and management of risk and WHS systems.
- Participate in the development of consumer's participation activities within your program and Brophy.
- Act on any incidents of racism or discrimination.
- Demonstrate and commit to Brophy's organisational values and model these daily.

This position description describes in general terms the requirements for this position to operate on a normal day to day basis. However, these duties maybe amended or varied from time to time, within the normal capacity of the role without changing the level of responsibility.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications:

- A minimum qualification of a sector recognised and accredited Bachelor of Social Work or Diploma in Community Welfare Work or equivalent. (Qualifications must be approved by recognised professional bodies: ie. AASW, Community Services Council, APS etc.)
- A current Drivers Licence.

Experience, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate will have the best combination of the following characteristics:

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of issues confronting disadvantaged children, young people and their families, particularly clients involved with the child protection system and out of home care program.
- Ability to make timely, sound decisions and assessments regarding children, youth and families, particularly under pressure.
- Capacity to engage with involuntary young people and their families, as well as have demonstrated understanding of working with volunteer caregivers and the associated challenges.
- Understanding of trauma informed practices.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the appropriate legislation, case management practice, and the ability to adhere to policy and procedures.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills including the ability to demonstrate experience in liaising with a diverse range of clients.
- Ability to maintain positive, effective working relationships with colleagues, peers, and relevant stakeholders in a wide range of government, business and community organisations.
- Ability to use Microsoft office suite of products, along with experience in electronic databases and case file noting.

AUTHORISED BY

NAME: Angela Wheeler

POSITION: Executive Manager – Out of Home Care Services
DATE: November 2021

ACCEPTED BY INCUMBENT

NAME: _____
SIGNED: _____
DATE: ____/____/____