



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Bridge Youth Service

### Youth & Family Support Practitioner

12 Month Family Leave Position with possibility of extension  
Based in Wallan / Seymour (Negotiable)

**Hours per week are negotiable (minimum of 22.5hrs)**

#### **Organisational Overview:**

The Bridge Youth Service (TBYS) plays a key role across the Goulburn Valley in youth support and advocacy. With offices located in Shepparton, Seymour and Wallan, TBYS delivers services and supports to young people and their families with a particular focus on those from marginalized and/or disadvantaged backgrounds but with a philosophy that includes the provision of services to all young people. TBYS offers a range of programs funded by government, private foundations and the local community. Programs focus on a diversity of issues and services include placement prevention, family reconciliation, family mediation, antenatal, parenting, housing support, mentoring and education support. For more information visit our website: [www.thebridge.org.au](http://www.thebridge.org.au).

**Our Vision:** By 2020 we will have a greater presence in the community through innovative programs and practices.

**Our Mission:** To create opportunities that value and empower young people, build family harmony and foster supportive communities – enabling all young people to reach their full potential.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

- We believe people have the power to change their situations.
- We view people in the context of their situation, their environment and their communities.
- We use frameworks to guide practice.
- We actively increase community belonging and connectedness.
- As we grow we are clear about what, when and why.

#### **Position Overview:**

**The position involves three key program components:**

##### *Specialist Homelessness Support*

Providing case management support to young people aged 15-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We aim to assist them to resolve difficulties that may have contributed to the current situation, access and/or maintain suitable housing and achieve independence.

##### *Family Reconciliation*

This component provides a 'front end' family reconciliation response as a means of addressing the causal link between family conflict and youth homelessness. The program targets young people aged 16-25 years who are newly homeless or at risk of homelessness due to family conflict or breakdown. Referrals may be received from families themselves, community and professionals.

*Finding Solutions/Adolescent Support Program:*

This component involves a rapid response (generally within two working days) and intervention for families where there may be protective issues for the young person. This may include family mediation, family reconciliation, providing strategies and support aimed at keeping the family unit together and resolving issues that may otherwise lead to intervention by DHS Child Protection. Generally the age group of young people involved in this component of the position is 12-17yrs with 90% of referrals received from DHS Child Protection.

Families and young people accepting support from the Youth and Family Support Practitioner do so on a voluntary basis.

**Program Objectives:**

- Decrease the number of young people at risk of homelessness by maintaining the young person's place at home or assisting in their return home.
- Empower young people to resolve issues leading to homelessness and break any homelessness cycle that may be occurring.
- Provide a range of intensive family focused intervention strategies to assist the family in resolution of identified issues.
- Provide support to parents and young people that assists them to identify and resolve behaviors and /or issues that are placing their relationship at risk of breakdown.
- Provide support to parents and young people in order to ease tension in the family without severing links or reducing parents' capacity to care for the young person.
- Provide effective mediation and facilitate family difficulties where applicable.
- Prevent the need for more intrusive DHS Protective Services involvement.

**Hours and Conditions:**

22.5 - 37.5 hours per week Monday to Friday. Terms and conditions as per the Social, Community, Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award 2010 Level according to qualifications and experience. Flexi-time may be utilized according to The Bridge Policies and Procedures, for the benefit of the young people and families we serve.

The Bridge is committed to promoting a positive workplace culture and being an employer of choice. Significant Salary Sacrificing benefits are available to all full and part-time employees from the date of commencement.

This position includes a bonus of three additional days of annual leave each year – generally taken around Christmas. (If these days are your usual work days)

**Accountability:**

The position is accountable to the *Youth and Family Services Manager (Shepparton)*. All work carried out is to be in accordance with The Bridge philosophy, policies and procedures.

**Key Responsibilities:**

1. Work within a case management framework (referred to "Service Management" at The Bridge Youth Service), utilizing strength based principles with young people and their families.
2. Provide early response and medium to long term support and assistance to families and adolescents where there is risk of family breakdown.

3. Undertake assessments, provide family mediation; facilitate family reconciliation; develop family plans and goals; support families to develop strategies that strengthen family relationships.
4. Provide intensive support to families and young people to assist them to use their own strengths to address difficulties that are impinging on their well being or functioning.
5. Link young people and their families into other appropriate services/supports to further enhance their lives.
6. Advocate for young people and their families in a variety of settings i.e. Legal system, school/education, housing services.
7. Implement and regularly review support plans for families and young people.
8. Maintain client records, data and statistics to the standard of the funding body and Bridge Policies.
9. Consult with the *Manager* and other team members where appropriate and actively participate in staff and team meetings.
10. Engage in regular supervision with the *Manager*, attend Team Meetings and undertake annual appraisal.
11. Work within the philosophy, Policies and Procedures of The Bridge Youth Services at all times.

**Key Selection Criteria:**

1. A degree in Social Work or post secondary qualifications in a relevant community services field i.e. Youth Work.
2. An understanding of child and adolescent development.
3. An understanding of relevant risk and need assessments.
4. A working knowledge of case management frameworks and the strength based approach to client services.
5. Ability to undertake youth centered and family focused assessments and develop an intervention plan (including mediation and negotiation intervention) that will address the needs of the young person and their family.
6. A demonstrated capacity to work effectively with the adolescent age group, including young people with complex issues and needs, and including the ability to assertively outreach and engage young people and their families whom may be reluctant to receive services. This requires personal attributes such as the ability to show warmth, empathy, openness and honesty.
7. Good communication and interpersonal skills that include the ability to provide open and honest feedback to young people and families about (for example) behavioral and parenting issues, and the ability to mediate and negotiate effectively with young people and their parents to resolve issues and strengthen family decision-making and relationships.
8. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to effectively liaise, consult and negotiate with a wide range of staff, service providers and service users.
9. Demonstrated computer and keyboard skills.
10. A current Victorian driver's license and current Working with Children Check.

This position is subject to a successful Police Check. Ongoing employment is subject to a three month probation period.

**Selection Criteria MUST be addressed in the application** along with three referees, one must be your current line manager.

Applications close at 5pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Please forward to [shepparton@thebridge.org.au](mailto:shepparton@thebridge.org.au)