

The Bridge Youth Service



POSITION DESCRIPTION –

Early Years Practitioner Full time on-going 37.5 hours Shepparton

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.

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.

OVERVIEW:

This position will work within both the Cradle to Kinder and Integrated Family Services programs.

This role provides a strong case-management response to the underlying areas of concern associated with the family's vulnerability, with the provision of intensive and specialised early parenting support. It aims to strengthen the relationship between the parent/s and their child/ren and assist parents to meet the health, development, safety and wellbeing needs of their infants and young children. The program provides a combination of individual and group, centre/community and home-based interventions and supports.

Cradle to Kinder (C2K) /Integrated family Services (IFS) are DHHS funded programs. These programs are delivered via the provision of specialised early parenting support with goals to strengthen the relationship between the parent/s and their child/ren and to assist parents to meet the health, development, safety and wellbeing needs of their infants and young children. The program provides individual case management, including home-based interventions and supports and connection with youth specific and generic community programs/services.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

To provide an integrated and co-ordinated child focused family centered service system response to vulnerable families and their children, to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of children and to assist parents to make positive changes to their lives.

The objectives and expected outcomes for the program are:

- Child health, safety, stability and developmental outcomes are optimised
- Parent's confidence and competence in parenting and caring for their child is strengthened
- Family relationships are strengthened, including the parent-child bond
- Families are connected to their communities
- Families are able to make positive changes to their lives and undertake steps towards becoming economically self-sufficient with reduced reliance on government supports

Approaches within the IFS/ C2K program include:

- A model of which includes case management and group-work to assist families where there is substantial welfare concerns. This may involve assertive outreach, assessment, referral and service coordination.
- The provision of in-home support to families to enhance their parenting and/or personal coping skills. This may involve practical support, role modelling, referral to other agencies as well as development of self-esteem and confidence in parenting.
- The provision of counselling, both individual and family, to assist with difficult life transitions and to strengthen family relationships. A variety of counselling techniques may be applied with an emphasis on enhancing the relationship between parents and children.

TARGET GROUP:

Young parenting and/or pregnant women (under 25 years) living within the identified Child FIRST catchment:

- Where a Report to Child Protection has been received and the referrer has significant concerns about the wellbeing of the unborn child, or
- Where there are a number of indicators of vulnerability/concern about the wellbeing of the unborn child/children.

Priority access will be given to young women who are, or have been, in out-of-home care, Aboriginal women, and women who have a learning difficulty. Priority of access will also be given to young women and their families who have previously been receiving Cradle to Kinder services but who have moved to a new Cradle to Kinder catchment. Engagement with the program is voluntary.

OUTCOME INDICATORS

- Child health, safety, stability and developmental outcomes are optimised
- Parent's confidence and competence in parenting and caring for their child is strengthened
- Family relationships are strengthened, including the parent-child bond
- Families are connected to their communities
- Families are able to make positive changes to their lives and undertake steps towards becoming economically self-sufficient with reduced reliance on government supports
- Children are able to remain living safely at home with their family
- Children are engaged with early childhood education and care services including maternal and child health and kindergarten
- Parents undertake further education or vocational training or obtain employment

HOURS AND CONDITIONS:

37.5 Hours per week. Terms and condition according to the Social, Community, and Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award.

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

ACCOUNTABILITY:

The position is accountable to the *Young Pregnant and Parenting Programs Manager*. All work carried out is to be in accordance with The Bridge Youth Service philosophy, policies and procedures.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Service Delivery

- Conduct client assessments as required, determine the issues impacting the functioning of the family and work with individuals and families to establish plans and set goals.
- Assertive outreach, referral, service coordination and brokerage allocation.
- Conduct counselling sessions applying The Bridge Youth Service's systems and strength-based philosophy, together with a wide variety of therapeutic interventions to achieve optimal outcomes for children, individuals and families.
- Assess the skill level of parents and or caregivers referred to the service.
- Apply a range of other approaches as appropriate and determined with the Program Manager (including assertive outreach, case management, intensive in-home support, parent education and skill development, or the application of brokerage funding to secure other services that may be required)
- Work as a member of a team and accept direction as appropriate.
- Promote a broader understanding of relevant State and Federal legislation that impacts upon children and family welfare including the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 and the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Increase engagement with families to promote safety, stability and child development
- Work collaboratively with other services and in particular with Child Protection.
- Contribute as a member of a care team or professional network to support case planning and ongoing risk assessment.
- Work intensively with children and families, delivering effective interventions that increase parenting capacity, improve family functioning, achieve child safety, and enhance conditions for child development with the aim of achieving better outcomes for children
- Establish and maintain an effective and collaborative working relationship with Child Protection staff and other relevant stakeholders

Data Collection & Reporting

- Maintain program administrative requirements including maintenance of comprehensive case notes.
- Meet and maintain electronic data collection requirements.
- Provide internal reports to the Team Leader as required.

Representation & Advocacy

- Identify gaps in services available to program clients and advocate on their behalf as necessary and appropriate.
- Attend network meetings and other related local forums or meetings as required.

Quality Improvement & Evaluation

- Conduct activities as required to measure the effectiveness of interventions applied.
- Meet occupational health and safety requirements of the organisation, particularly regarding outreach arrangements.
- Ensure that program policies and procedures are adhered to.
- Participate in supervision and appraisal activities as appropriate and according to

The Bridge Youth Service Policy and Procedures.

- Identify training needs in consultation with the Team Leader and attend professional development as deemed appropriate.
- Attend internal program and team meetings as required.
- Fulfill other reasonable duties as directed.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. Bachelor of Social work, suitably qualified Children's Services worker, Diploma in Welfare studies or Registered Nurse, or other tertiary qualifications relevant to social welfare practice.
 2. Demonstrated skills and understanding of family functioning, parent/child relationships, parenting skill development, child and adolescent development and household management.
 3. Ability to quickly establish rapport with young people from a range of backgrounds.
 4. Demonstrated skills in casework practice with an emphasis on family and individual functioning, assessment, counselling, case-planning, and parent education.
 5. A working knowledge of *Best Interests Assessment & Case Practice Framework*.
 6. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of relevant theoretical perspectives including family dynamics, life stages and child and adolescent development.
 7. Demonstrated high level interpersonal and communication skills, including skills in conflict resolution.
 8. Demonstrated skills in working as a member of a team.
 9. Demonstrated computer literacy including the basic Microsoft Office Suite.
 10. A working knowledge regarding issues surrounding adolescent pregnancy and parenting, and a capacity to assist young parents in the development of parenting skills.
- A current driver's license is required
 - A current Working With Children Check is required
 - The position is subject to a successful Police Check

The Bridge Youth Service is a Child Safe Standard compliant organization.
This position is subject to a 6 month probationary period.

Applications addressing the Key Selection Criteria are to be forwarded to shepparton@thebridge.org.au