

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

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| <b>Position :</b>       | <b>Senior Placement Support Case Worker</b> |
| <b>Division:</b>        | Kinship Care Service                        |
| <b>Position status:</b> | 2x Full time / 1x Contract 9 months SOC 3   |
| <b>Reports to:</b>      | Team Leader – Kinship Care Services         |
| <b>Date:</b>            | March 2010                                  |

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### INTRODUCTION

Bethany's mission is to **support and strengthen communities**. We work to build better family relationships, support parents caring for children, assist people who are homeless or at risk and those affected by family violence, crime and problem gambling. We have a focus on supporting and strengthening disadvantaged communities.

Bethany is a dynamic not for profit and non denominational organisation that was originally established in 1868 and has responded to the changing needs of the community ever since. The organisation is governed by a Board of Management, has an annual operating budget of \$6 million and employs around 100 staff. 95% of the Bethany's income is provided by state and federal governments with the remainder generated from community and philanthropic sources.

Bethany fulfils its mission by the provision of a broad range of prevention, intervention, support and educational services to individuals, children, young people and families based on contemporary research, international best practice and professional standards. Services are designed to build upon individual's and community strengths to achieve both personal and social change.

Services are provided to a population of over 230,000 people in the Geelong and surrounding districts through our main office in North Geelong and out posted service sites in Norlane, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and the Bellarine Peninsula.

### OUR VALUES

- **Openness**

We interact with people in a transparent, honest and respectful manner.

- **Social Justice**

We believe in every person being actively involved in decisions which affect them and their lives.

- **Innovation**

We are committed to creatively and proactively responding to community needs.

- **Collaboration**

We engage in collaborative partnerships and relationships that strengthen community.

- **Wellbeing of staff**

We will be responsible for a professional and supportive environment in which staff can achieve their full potential.

- **Accountability**

We will be accountable for all aspects of the organisation.

**POSITION CONTEXT:**

The Kinship Care Services is a new program being implemented at Bethany that will be located within the Child and Family Services Division, managed by the Family and Parenting Services Manager and coordinated by a Team Leader, Kinship Care Service. Whilst the Kinship Care Services will be a team specialising in Kinship Care, location within this program area will provide valuable links to the well established practice knowledge of working with families and extended family groups that exists within this program. It will facilitate strong linkages with the Child FIRST program also located within this service area, as well as access to the wide range of support services available through Bethany Community Support and other community services.

The Kinship Care Services will outreach to the Colac and Corangamite Local Government areas.

Bethany Community Support Kinship Care Services will provide the three service areas:

- Kinship Information and Advice Service;
- Kinship Family Service; and
- Kinship Placement Support Service.

The primary aim of Kinship Information and Advice Services is to deliver the three required responses of community information dissemination, brief contact work and group work. The overall aim of the Kinship Care Family Service is to provide brief, occasional and short term family support when needed, to enable self-managing kinship care arrangements to manage changes in circumstances and emerging issues through their own networks. The overall goals of the Kinship Placement Support are to provide statutory kinship care placements the best possible start and to encourage them to become self-managing within the first six months of establishment, to enable the minimum level of ongoing professional intervention from the formal service system. The service also aims to provide long term kinship care placements that are arranged for the most vulnerable children, as a result of Child Protection involvement, are monitored and supported to ensure they meet each child's ongoing safety, stability and developmental needs, and all their case contracted case management obligations are met.

The program will operate under the Child Youth and Families Act 2005, the Best Interests Principles and Case Practice Model and the Looking After Children (LAC) Framework for relevant areas of the service. Practice will also be underpinned by the principles of Family Decision Making, family inclusive practice, collaborative practice and integration of service delivery, with a primary goal of enabling self managing kinship care placements.

**POSITION ROLE & ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The Senior Kinship Care Placement Support Case Worker is located within the Child and Family Services Division and reports directly to the Team Leader – Kinship Care Services.

Other programs within the Child and Family Services Division include:

- Barwon Child FIRST
- Integrated Family Services Case Work
- Early Intervention Parenting
- NEWPIN Early Years
- Children's Contact Services

**PURPOSE OF THIS POSITION**

To provide support for children and young people placed with kith and kin by the Department of Human Services by

- working collaboratively with children, young people, extended families and professionals to establish and maintain kinship care placements, and
- providing a range of information, education, referral and support activities to kinship carers in Geelong, Surf coast, Colac and Corangamite areas

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Understanding and knowledge of and capacity to apply
  - issues relating to the placement of children in alternative placement contexts and key themes for kinship care arrangements
  - theories and frameworks of child development, attachment, trauma. Loss and grief issue and permanency planning principles
  - the relationship between resilience, risk factors and protective factors
  - the Best Interest Case Practice Model, family decision making principles, strengths based, child centred, family focused approach
- Work collaboratively with children, their families, the community and other professional to ensure the best interests of the children are being met
- Provide placement support during establishment for up to 6 months, case contracted transitional support or long term case contracted case management and including the utilisation of Looking After Children (LAC), facilitating family meetings and family decision making processes and ensure optimal available supports are identified and linked in for the kinship carers
- Assist kinship carers to
  - resolve issues impacting on carer's capacity to meet children's ongoing safety, stability and development needs
  - become self-managing with minimal need for ongoing professional involvement as soon as possible.
  - (in collaboration with Child Protection) to assume guardianship either by utilising appropriate Family Law options or seeking a Permanent Care Order in the Children's Court, including undertaking permanent care assessments
- Work respectfully with all children, young people and families to ensure that services provided are culturally appropriate
- Liaise with DHS Child Protection and build links with other relevant services in relation to referrals and case management issues
- Participate in group work and training for kinship carers as required
- Actively participate in regular informal and formal supervision and annual performance appraisal with the Team Leader
- Support and participate in the agency's continuous quality improvement process.
- Work collaboratively with volunteers toward achieving family goals and provide case specific supervision to the volunteers.
- Make an active commitment to the development and maintenance of a cohesive team and participate in team and agency meetings, staff development and team planning.
- Participate in the provision of the After Hours On-Call roster to kinship care placements
- Meet the reporting requirements of the program using CRIS/SP and including LAC
- Operate with in the Legislative requirements of Child Safety and Children Youth and Families Acts (CYFA) 2005
- Operate within the agency's policies, procedures and guidelines
- Perform other duties/task appropriate to the position and in conjunction with the implementation of the Children Youth and Family Act 2005

## **KEY SELECTION CRITERIA**

### ***Qualifications***

1. A relevant tertiary qualification in social work, psychology, Early Childhood Specialist and/or related behavioural sciences at degree level or diploma level
2. Desirable - Experience in the establishment and facilitation of group work activities

### ***Knowledge and Skills***

3. An understanding of the inter-generational factors and complex inter-relationships between extended family members that can promote and impede their capacity to collaboratively provide good care of a child

4. Demonstrated experience in working with and understanding the development and therapeutic needs of vulnerable children with complex and multiple needs who have experienced abuse and neglect
5. Extensive experience in strengths based, attachment and trauma informed, child centred, and family focused case work and case management
6. Comprehensive understanding of relevant risk and needs assessment frameworks and appropriate experience in the application of these frameworks
7. A sound knowledge of service responses and interventions that can positively impact on a child's development, and those that can assist in promoting change in behaviour to increase parenting capacity.
8. Demonstrated experience in working with families involved in either Kinship Care or Out of Home Care
9. Demonstrated experience in using family decision making processes to actively engage kinship families in decision-making processes
10. Extensive experience in actively engaging vulnerable and/or families that may be unwilling to receive services through strategies of assertive outreach. This includes personal attributes such as the ability to demonstrate, empathy, openness and honesty in communications and case work with families
11. Well developed verbal communication, advocacy, negotiation and motivation skills including the ability to deal openly and effectively with children, young people, families, carers and service providers.
12. Ability to establish, and maintain positive and productive working arrangements with Child Protection and other key Service Providers.
13. Highly developed written and computer literacy skills and the ability to prepare detailed, logical and concise reports, case notes, court documentation and correspondence and maintain client records and agency databases. Experience using CRIS/SP client data system desirable.
14. A sound knowledge of the Children, Youth and Family Act 2005, including the information sharing provisions
15. To have the capacity to work flexible hours – some evening work will be required

***Personal Attributes***

16. A demonstrated robustness and resilience and a level of maturity that supports independence practice and ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
17. Ability to work both individually and as a member of a team, and to contribute to program development, implementation and evaluation

***Other***

18. A current full Victorian Driver's Licence.
19. Hold a Working with Children Card
20. Satisfactory completion of a police check

**SALARY & CONDITIONS**

These positions are fulltime. Two positions are ongoing and one position is contracted for 9 months. The positions are based on the Bethany Community Support Enterprise Agreement 2008, Class 3. Salary commences at \$50,579 per annum.

Hours of employment are 76 hour fortnight, worked between 9am to 5pm.

This position may be required for occasional overnight accommodation at agency cost to provide support intervention to children in the outer areas of the program.

Other employment conditions are as per the Bethany Community Support Enterprise Agreement (2008). Salary packaging is available in accordance with Government guidelines for public benevolent institutions.

Appointment to this position is subject to a successful police record check and Working with Children check. A three month probationary period will commence upon appointment and a review will be conducted during this period.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Contact: Lyrae Love  
Manager – Family and Parenting Services  
Phone: (03) 5278 8122

**APPLICATIONS FORWARDED TO:**

Applications must address the key selection criteria and include the names and current contacts of three referees, including current employer.

Lyrae Love  
Manager – Family and Parenting Services  
Bethany Community Support  
1 Gibb Street  
NORTH GEELONG 3215  
Email: [llove@bethany.org.au](mailto:llove@bethany.org.au)

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE: 5pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010. The successful applicants will be required to provide a current police check and have or register for a working with children check.**