



**Position Description**

<b>Position Title</b>	Senior Worker – Placement Prevention and Reunification
<b>Directorate</b>	Family Services
<b>Reports to</b>	Team Leader Family Services
<b>Date of Job Description</b>	27/11/2017
<b>Conditions</b>	Conditions of employment are documented in the Mallee family Care Enterprise Agreement 2012
<b>Employment Status</b>	Full-Time Ongoing, Subject to Funding
<b>Salary</b>	This position is classified as Band 5, Senior Caseworker dependent upon qualifications and experience, with a salary range of \$64, 588 - \$73, 819 plus superannuation and the ability to salary package up to \$15,834 tax free, pro-rata.
<b>Hours of Work</b>	This is a full time position. Work outside normal office hours may be required.

**Position Objectives**

The Family Services directorate is responsible for the delivery of the following programs:

- Home Based Care (Foster Care and Therapeutic Care)
- Integrated Family Services
- Family Preservation
- Stronger Families
- Cradle to Kinder
- Refugee Minor Program
- Support for Relative and Kinship placements
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy – Children and Schooling
- Family Support Programs
- Safe Aboriginal Youth Program - Night Patrol
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy – Safety and Wellbeing
- Family Referral Service
- Wemburra Tulkalana

Services are delivered in the Mallee and across the river into far west New South Wales. This position is based in Mildura, Victoria.

The Senior Worker will maintain a case load from primarily from the Family Preservation and Stronger Families programs, and at times be required to support case work from the Cradle to Kinder program.

## **FAMILY PRESERVATION**

The Family Preservation Program is a voluntary specialist home-based program. The program provides intensive support to children and their families who are either at immediate risk of a child being placed into safe custody or as part of a planned reunification of a family. Referrals to the program are from Child Protection Services. The service can engage intensively with children and families for a time limited period. The program aims to:

- Address the protective concerns and enhance family functioning of referred families whilst ensuring the safety and wellbeing of child(ren) and family members in accordance with the specifications and expectations of the Family Preservation Program.
- Undertake best practice in casework and provide intensive support (up to 20 hours per week), assistance and opportunities for children and families utilising the Family Preservation Program.

## **STRONGER FAMILIES**

Stronger Families offers intensive, longer term, whole-of-family case support and specialist services to enable children, who are at imminent risk of being placed in care for the first time, to remain at home with their parents or to support their return home to their parents' care when it is safe to do so. The Stronger Families Service is an integrated placement prevention and family reunification service providing intensive case work support to vulnerable families as well as specialist youth, therapeutic and early parenting support. Flexible funds are included in the model to enable tailored and timely service responses.

The service aims to work with families to address underlying issues and build the capacity of parents to safely care for their children. The service allocates a dedicated case worker from a multi-disciplinary team to each family for up to 12 months, providing a therapeutic assessment, co-ordination of a child and family action plan, as well as case work and practical support. Key elements of the service include ensuring families have access to specialist supports and flexible funding to deliver on the agreed goals of the child and family action plan, as well as timely access to specialist services they may need. The target group is families with children who:

- Are involved with child protection, where protective concerns have been substantiated (or likely to be substantiated upon birth), and
- Are considered to be at imminent risk of being placed in out-of-home care for the first time if appropriate supports are not available to the child and family, or
- Have recently entered out-of-home care for the first time, and child protection determines they could safely return to their parents' care if appropriate supports are available. For the purpose of these specifications, recent entry into care would include children in care for up to six months.

<b>Key Responsibilities &amp; Duties</b>	<b>Performance Expectations</b>
To provide hope, encourage change and reward success in families.	To be a good role model for families and young people in our community.
Support, supervise, and manage staff, colleagues and volunteers.	Attend regular supervision. Manage case load. Expected target of approximately 4 Stronger Family cases per day plus 1 Family Preservation case. Provide support and advice to fellow Family Workers from all three program areas. Assist with aspects of organisational management and program development Assist with the selection, development and formal supervision of caseworkers and case work assistants as required.

<p>Intake and Assessment for program area.</p>	<p>Attend regular Placement Prevention Panel meetings.</p> <p>Utilise the Best Interest Case Practice Model Risk Assessment tool.</p> <p>Develop Family Action Plans with families within the first month of support.</p> <p>Gather relevant information from external sources to inform best practice, ensure have read through Child Protection referrals before making contact with the family.</p> <p>For Stronger Families complete the North Carolina Assessment tool.</p> <p>Facilitate care team/ family support meetings.</p> <p>Attend regular Case Plan Meetings.</p> <p>Facilitate and attend professionals meetings.</p> <p>Attend and arrange school meetings when required.</p> <p>Organise, facilitate and attend review meetings at 4, 8 and 12 week intervals.</p> <p>Make contact with families within three working days of receipt of referral from Child Protection.</p> <p>Complete pre-home visit checklist prior to first home visit.</p> <p>Undertake home visits, both planned and unscheduled.</p> <p>For Stronger Families make timely and appropriate referrals for therapeutic support - Berry Street, in home support – Anglicare, youth mediation and support – MASP and other services as identified.</p> <p>Identify any trends or barriers.</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of child protection legislation relating to family work and children protection practice within the community based sector.</p> <p>Ensure assessments are ongoing, assess risk and inform family action plans.</p>
<p>Ensure best practice.</p>	<p>Undertake comprehensive and thorough assessments which enable supports to be tailored to the particular needs of the family.</p> <p>For Family Preservation referrals develop 4, 8 and 12 week reports for child protection.</p> <p>Ongoing use of CRISP as per program requirements.</p> <p>Case notes completed within specific time frame.</p> <p>Ongoing use of IRIS as per program requirements.</p> <p>Have regular and consistent contact with families.</p> <p>To make appropriate referrals and establish a care / family support team.</p>

	<p>To creatively utilise brokerage resources to ensure the family has the best chance of succeeding in caring for their child/ren.</p> <p>To work as part of a team that has been established to meet the specific and identified needs of vulnerable families. For Stronger Families, this includes working in partnership with Anglicare (intensive in home parenting support), Take Two (therapeutic treatment services) and MASP (youth mediation and support services) who provide specialist services as part of the program.</p> <p>Facilitate Family Support Meetings/Care Teams. Develop Family Action Plans according to the Stronger Families and Family Preservation practice manual.</p> <p>To assess the needs of individuals and families and provide linkages with appropriate organisations to enable clients to achieve their maximum potential and ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children.</p> <p>To undertake periodic review and any renegotiation of family goals.</p> <p>To understand and operate within the child protection system.</p> <p>Collect service user feedback and utilise this information to improve service delivery.</p> <p>Ensure quality assurance requirements are met. Advocate on behalf of clients when they are unable to do this for themselves while building their capacity to do this in the future.</p> <p>Develop a shared approach with external and internal agencies and programs.</p> <p>Flexibility with hours of work to cater for the needs of the families.</p> <p>Keep abreast of changes to DHHS standards and evidenced based best practice.</p> <p>To assist in the development and implementation of appropriate service user feedback processes and regular program evaluation assessments, ensuring the program operates in accordance with quality assurance and best practice principles.</p> <p>Work co-operatively within a team setting recognising expertise and the contribution of all members.</p> <p>To ensure adequate lines of communication are maintained amongst all and promote sound communication.</p> <p>Work within the parameters of the Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005 To engage children and families using a strengths based approach to practice. As appropriate, to develop and</p>
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	<p>facilitate group work to enhance the parenting skills of the client base. Ensure that services are delivered in a timely and culturally sensitive manner. Ensuring that children’s cultural needs are being met. To provide direct family support services in an assertive outreach capacity. To provide in home support to carers with children with particular focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing and maintaining healthy family routines e.g. sleeping patterns</li> <li>- Nutrition and feeding</li> <li>- Child safety and risk assessment</li> <li>- Play and stimulation</li> <li>- Parental well-being in relation to their care of children</li> <li>- Parent/child bonding and attachment</li> <li>- Children’s behaviour</li> <li>- Understanding child development</li> <li>- Transition stages</li> <li>- General parenting</li> </ul> <p>Work in consultation with Child Protection and partner agencies in the Best Interests of the Child.</p> <p>To work as part of a team that has been established to meet the specific and identified needs of vulnerable families.</p>
Reporting and data requirements.	<p>Establish and maintain client files, maintain statistical records, and prepare case notes and reports as required.</p> <p>To collect data and prepare reports in accordance with the requirement of Mallee Family Care and the program funding body using the identified database and assessment tools.</p> <p>Collect data and prepare reports in line with agency and funding and service agreement requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- North Carolina Assessment,</li> <li>- Family Action Plans,</li> <li>- IRIS,</li> <li>- Risk Assessments</li> <li>- Client closure process etc.</li> <li>- CRISSP, CRIS</li> <li>- Compile 4, 8 and 12 week reports within specific time frames.</li> <li>- Best Interest Case Practice Model</li> </ul> <p>Regular contact with Child Protection as required.</p>
Represent agency and program.	To maintain close links and work collaboratively with support services.

	<p>To regularly liaise with relevant agencies and statutory bodies in order to achieve best outcomes for families and children.</p> <p>Represent the agency and directorate in relevant, public or professional forums. Attend all meetings as necessary to provide input into service provision, including staff meetings, review meetings and case/team meetings.</p> <p>To facilitate family support/care team meetings to ensure that everyone is working together to address the identified concerns.</p> <p>To ensure adequate lines of communication are maintained amongst all and promote sound communication between service areas and the team.</p> <p>Regularly consult with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Attend and participate in identified meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family Services team meetings,</li> <li>- Family Support / care team meetings,</li> <li>- Case Plan meetings,</li> <li>- School meetings,</li> <li>- Professionals meetings</li> <li>- Peer Support meetings etc.</li> </ul> <p>Information sharing with Child Protection and other agencies as required.</p> <p>Ensure written and verbal communication is professional, purposeful and confidentiality is respected.</p>
Quality Improvement.	<p>To ensure that practice is in line with relevant standards.</p> <p>To review files to ensure quality assurance requirements are being met and that outcomes are being achieved.</p> <p>Completion of work within timelines.</p> <p>To contribute to the development of policies and procedures in relation to the agency, program, intake, assessment and case work.</p> <p>To assist in the implementation of systems and structures to promote the good governance of the program and fulfil our funding requirements.</p> <p>To ensure standards are met across all areas of service provision by developing and assisting with quality assurance activities. Participate in agency audits – internal and external.</p> <p>Gather feedback and report this appropriately.</p> <p>Timely response to matters identified in corrective action records.</p>
Managing the agencies programs and resources.	<p>Review program manual as required.</p> <p>Identify when there is a resource issue and discuss these with the team leader.</p>

	<p>Manage the brokerage funds to ensure that families have timely access to the resources they require to address identified concerns.</p> <p>Use any TIL in a timely manner as agreed with the Team Leader.</p> <p>Utilise internal resources such as fellow colleagues and programs.</p>
Participate in the agency's On-call / Re-call roster as required.	Participate in the agency's On-call / Re-call roster.
To participate in regular supervision and learning.	As per Mallee Family Care Supervision Policy.
To be compliant with e3Learning courses.	Completing allocated courses every quarter.
To undertake other duties as may reasonably be required.	Undertaking other duties required by your Line Manager.

**Qualifications and Experience:**

- A person employed as a Senior Case worker will be expected to have significant previous relevant experience in the field and will be required to hold an accredited qualification relevant to the position at Degree Level or above.
- A current drivers licence, a willingness to travel and preparedness to be accommodated overnight when required.
- Experience in dealing with children who have experienced trauma and interrupted attachment preferred – but not essential.

**Key Selection Criteria:**

- Well-developed verbal and written communication skills that include the ability to constructively provide open and honest feedback to families in relation to both strengths and deficits in parenting skills/practices, relating to making changes in the best interests of children.
- Time management, planning, organisational skills and ability to share information with other workers.
- Ability to liaise effectively with the public on sensitive issues relating to family relationship issues.
- A sound understanding of the casework issues as related to the target group, including a demonstrated awareness of cultural sensitivity.
- Demonstrated high levels of interpersonal relations, including the ability to actively engage families that maybe unwilling to receive services. This requires personal attributes such as the ability to demonstrate empathy, persistence, openness and honesty in communication and case work with families.
- Patience and the ability to 'stick with' families' to address identified issues.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Strong, open and mutually respectful relationships with all team members, State Department personnel, senior management and staff within the organisation.
- Positive and constructive relationship with all clients, volunteers and other organisational stakeholders.
- A demonstrated understanding of relevant risk and needs assessment frameworks and appropriate application of these.
- A demonstrated understanding of child development and factors that can impede a child's development, including early indicators and patterns of behaviours leading to cumulative harm.
- A demonstrated 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.
- Strong commitment to strengths based practices, advocacy, client confidentiality and privacy.
- Appropriate qualifications and experience.



### **Organisation Structure and Values**

Mallee Family Care is an Incorporated Association with an elected community based Board of Management. It was established in 1979 and is a large and diverse community service organisation, providing a wide range of services to the communities of North West Victoria and South West New South Wales.

Day-to-day management for the agency is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Director, Director Corporate Services, and Director Client Services.

This structure has been designed to ensure a clear focus on the delivery of services and to utilise the skills and experience of staff in the most efficient and effective manner.

### **Our Vision**

Empowering the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our communities.

By this we mean we want:

- Communities where vulnerable children will be protected.
- Communities where disadvantaged families and individuals will be supported.
- Communities that are committed to supporting those in need.

### **Our Mission**

To enrich lives and to increase opportunities (for those in need) through:

- Services;
- Education
- Research; and
- Advocacy

### **Our Approach**

Our approach to achieving this strategic intent will demonstrate that:

- We are focused on the resolution of issues and will be flexible and adaptive in our approach.
- We understand our communities, we are informed by practice and our focus is on outcomes that matter.
- We work in partnership with stakeholders.

We consult broadly and engage with our communities.

**Other Information:**

At Mallee Family Care we are deeply committed to the people with whom we work. We therefore go to great lengths to ensure that the positions we make available are filled by the most appropriate applicants. To assist with this we undertake a number of selection processes beyond initial interviews.

Appointment to the position will be subject to the satisfactory completion of the following:

- Psychological Personality Assessment – California Personality Index (CPI)
- Medical Disclosure
- Six month probationary period
- Referee Checks (two nominated referees including your supervisor if you are currently working)
- Photocopy of Driver’s Licence.
- Police Check
- Working with Children Check

Benefits of working at Mallee Family Care

- Discounted membership of your nominated gym/health club.
- Direct salary deduction
- Partially paid study leave and practical assistance available for approved courses after two years of employment
- Confidential, responsive counselling available for time when personal and work related issues may affect your ability to perform at work (Employee Assistance Program – EAP)
- Flexible working arrangement options (were appropriate)
- Up to date and ergonomic furniture
- A happy and family friendly work environment

**Applications addressing the Key Selection Criteria outlined in this position description should be sent to:**

**Attention:** Maree Fullgrabe  
**Mailed to** PO Box 1870, Mildura 3502  
**Hand delivered to** 122 Ninth Street Mildura 3500  
**Emailed to** mfullgrabe@malleefamilycare.com.au  
**Closing date for applications:** 5.00pm Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Office Use Only

**Position Description Approved by Director**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Copy of Position Description forwarded to Human Resource Manager** YES  NO