

Position Description

Position title	MST – Psychiatric Family Therapist
Program/Unit	FPR Response/ Clinical Services
Classification	SCHCADS Level 7 – Dependent on qualifications and experience.
Position reports to	MST Psych Supervisor

Organisational context

Established in 1997, MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) strives to ensure all families are supported to provide children with a safe and permanent home, and the best possible start to their lives.

Continuing the child and family welfare programs of our three founding agencies – the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St Joseph and the Christian Brothers – we provide early intervention programs to support the most vulnerable families, and provide education, disability support, home-based care and out of home care for vulnerable children and young people in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia.

MacKillop has almost 1,500 staff, operating out of more than 50 sites, and has forecast annual revenue for the 2023/24 financial year of close to \$300 million.

Like our founders, we are deeply committed to our work, and are driven by social justice. We believe every child should be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation, and are a child-safe organisation that is committed to protecting and advocating for the best interests of children and families across all our programs.

Our work is underpinned by our values, and by a deep understanding of the impact of trauma, informed by the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is a blueprint for organisational change, which supports organisations to provide a safe, non-violent environment for people affected by trauma. It also supports staff and carers to form communities that are safe and caring, and to maintain a culture that reflects these qualities at every level within the organisation. MacKillop is the only licensed provider of training in the Sanctuary Model in Australia.

MacKillop is deeply committed to promoting diversity. Our diversity encompasses differences in ethnicity, gender, language, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, physical and mental ability, thinking styles, experience, and education. We believe that the wide array of perspectives that results from such diversity makes us more creative, flexible, accessible and productive.

Our purpose

MacKillop Family Services continues our founders' passionate commitment to social justice – to work for the rights of children, young people and families to be safe, to learn, feel nurtured and connected to culture. We provide high quality services to promote healing from trauma and loss, and to enable hopeful futures.

MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

Our vision

Children, young people and families are welcomed and supported by MacKillop to be empowered and thrive.

Our values

We commit to the following five foundational values which we continue to embed in the culture of our organisation and practice:

JUSTICE. We believe in the right of all people to experience respect and to have access to quality services irrespective of sex, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, marital status, disability, sexuality or age. We advocate for inclusiveness and social justice in the wider community and commit to these principles across our organisation and all services we provide. ***We believe in the right of all people to be treated justly and fairly.***

HOPE. We commit to creating positive and hopeful relationships where people find meaning in their experiences and relationships and are able to learn, explore their strengths and create possibilities for growth and change. ***We seek to foster hope that assists people to find meaning.***

COLLABORATION. In our work with individuals, families and other organisations and groups, we commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment. ***We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment.***

COMPASSION. Compassion is an attitude of the heart, an expression of our shared humanity and a deep desire to alleviate another's suffering. We commit to creating an attitude of openness to others and to their circumstances. ***We seek to foster compassion, an attitude of the heart and a response to exclusion and suffering.***

RESPECT. We value ourselves and other people, the earth and all creation. We seek to listen and learn from each other and build relationships with respect, being proud of what we hold in common and with understanding and tolerance of our differences. ***We seek to act with respect with regard to each other, the earth and all creation.***

Our Sanctuary Commitment

Our values are brought to life through our commitment to the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is an evidence-supported, whole-of-organisation framework that guides how we practice as an agency. Sanctuary enables a shared language, knowledge, and response to the impact of trauma and loss on all of us.

Our seven Sanctuary Commitments are as follows:

- Non-Violence - Mean what you say and don't be mean when you say it
- Emotional Intelligence - Look out for yours and other people's feelings
- Social Learning - We all learn from, and teach each other
- Democracy - Everyone is heard
- Open Communication - Be honest and share information
- Social Responsibility - We all help each other ... It takes a village to raise a child
- Growth and Change - Open to new ideas and ways of thinking

Position purpose

The Victorian Family Preservation and Reunification Response (FPRR), is funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. It was co-designed with representatives from the child and family services sector and implemented in 2020-21 by MacKillop across 9 regions throughout Victoria, and other Victorian registered children and family service providers.

The FPRR team delivers an innovative wrap around service that provides intensive early intervention support families with 0-17-year-old children and young people. The model is an integrated and evidence-based/evidence-informed approach to support families to live together safely and decrease the risk of children and young people entering or re-entering care.

FPRR links, aligns, and builds on without duplicating existing child and family services within the broader service system, and delivers an enhanced continuum of care across the State. MacKillop is partnered with Monash University to evaluate outcomes and continuously enhance the FPRR evidence-base for Victorian child and family services (including Child Protection).

MacKillop has implemented the Evidence Based Model – Multisystemic Therapy –Psychiatric (MSTP) in the metro regions to focus on families with 9 – 17 year old young people. The psychiatric stream of MST integrates intensive mental health and substance abuse treatment with systemic family practice to provide clinical therapeutic support to young people and their families.

Psychiatric assessments and consultation are available to families one day per week. MST Services (USA) provides weekly telephone consultation with the team and supervisor. The consultation supports the team in case conceptualization, goal development, intervention strategies, and continuously reviewing progress. MST-P is a community-based, family driven intervention with a focus of empowering caregivers. Therapists carry small caseloads so they can visit families up to three times per week. In addition, team members are rostered to provide 24/7 crisis response to a family if needed.

Key result areas and responsibilities

The therapist role is at the core of the clinical intervention. Each therapist has a case load of 4 families, and the therapeutic intervention lasts for 4-7 months, averaging 8 over the course of a year. Caseload size variation is determined by the age and relative complexity of the families currently in treatment. Duration of treatment should range from 4-7 months, averaging 6 months. For ongoing programs, maintaining accreditation requires each therapist to treat at least 8 families annually.

The 4-7 months of the MST-Psych intervention is delivered in the home and community where the young person and family reside. This will involve intensive home-based treatment and family visits which may be required initially as frequently as daily. In addition, 24/7 face-to-face crisis response by a member of the MST-Psych team is available to the family when needed.

The therapist will meet with families on a flexible schedule that may include evenings and weekends. Crisis calls after hours on weekdays and on weekends are received by an MST-Psych team member familiar with the family's situation on a rotating on-call schedule. Most crisis calls are handled by telephone, but the on-call therapist needs to be available to respond face-to-face when appropriate.

The Therapist will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in a culturally safe and competent way. This includes engaging in regular consultation with the program's Cultural Advisor and including ongoing training.

The MST-Psych Therapist will:

- Conduct MST assessment including review of referral information, identifying and engaging key participants, identifying systemic strengths and weaknesses, and developing an analysis of the fit of problem behaviors within the ecological context
- Engage primary caregiver and other key participants in active change-oriented treatment by identifying and overcoming barriers to engagement
- Implement a problem conceptualization, treatment planning, intervention implementation, outcome review and strategy revision procedure using the MST Analytic Process
- Maintain clear and concise documentation of treatment efforts that promote peer and supervisory review and feedback, and that demonstrate compliance with the nine MST Principles and the MST Analytic Process
- Collaborate with all relevant systems and key participants within each system to ensure their buy-in and cooperation throughout MST-Psychiatric treatment
- Provide direct clinical treatment using methods compatible with MST principles and practices.
- Participate in all MST-Psychiatric training, supervision and consultation activities
- Build strong relationships and work in close collaboration with community stakeholders (i.e., DHHS, court counselors, other providers, judges, schools, etc.) to ensure cooperation among service providers
- Demonstrate ability to work with Aboriginal children, young people, and families with complex trauma needs.

Key selection criteria

The role requires a Bachelors degree and work experience in Psychology, Social Work, Counseling or a related subject area. Masters degree preferred. The role will at times require evening and weekend hours plus a rostered on-call schedule, therefore it is essential that the successful applicant's life circumstances allows some flexibility to undertake this role.

Preferred Experience:

- Direct use of pragmatic (i.e., structural, strategic and functional) family therapies
- Individual therapy with children and adults using cognitive behavioral techniques
- Behavioral therapy targeting behavioral change in children at home and school
- Trauma treatment for adults and children using exposure, cognitive therapies, and stress inoculation training
- Implementation of interventions within or between systems in the youth's natural ecology that affect or influence the behavior of youth (i.e., family, peer, school, and neighborhood)
- Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

Preferred Knowledge:

- Family systems, social ecological and behavioural theory and application
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy theory and application particularly in the areas of depression and anxiety
- Child development research and its application in treatment

- Research or training in diagnostic assessment, mental status examinations
- Social skills assessment and intervention
- A knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values and an awareness of the current issues faced by Aboriginal children, young people and their families
- Demonstrated ability to undertake complex casework with families and children who have experienced trauma

Required Personal Skills:

- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with a demonstrated capacity to work collaboratively with others and exercise influence in a diversity of contexts.
- Ability to participate collaboratively and constructively within teams of peers, staff and other stakeholders, as well as initiative and effective personal judgement when working alone.
- Available to work outside normal business hours and to participate in an on-call roster.

Other information


The incumbent is required to:

- Sign and actively abide by MacKillop's Code of Conduct.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's P.8 People and Workplace Policy.
- Observe and fulfil health and safety responsibilities as contained within 'WHS-P-001 Responsibility Statements' document.
- Attend mandatory and other training as required.
- Actively participate in MacKillop's Bid Management process as required.
- Participate in and promote continuous quality improvement processes.
- Promote an environment that is culturally safe and strengths focussed.
- Abide by principles and commitments of the Sanctuary Framework.
- Incorporate cultural safety into your practice with Aboriginal families.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Victorian Driver's Licence.
- Valid and current Victorian Working with Children Card
- Valid and current NDIS Worker Check (for NDIS risk assessed roles).
- Satisfactory criminal history check conducted by MacKillop Family Services.

Approval

• Approver's full name:	Kerry Sullivan 	Date:	29/09/22
Approver's position title:			
Incumbent's full name:			
Incumbent's signature:		Date:	



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services.



MacKillop celebrates and draws strength from diversity and respects the dignity of all people. Every person at MacKillop has the right to be safe and to be treated justly. We value every person's ability, cultural or linguistic backgrounds, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, relationship status, religious or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, and age.