

Position Description

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| Position title | Neurofeedback Clinician |
| Program/Unit | Brain Physio / Clinical Services |
| Classification | Schads Level 6 - Dependent on qualifications & experience |
| Position reports to | Manager MST Psychiatric |

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 2022/23 financial year of over \$213 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 race or ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, sexual orientation, language, age, religion, socio-economic status, relationship 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

This position is situated within the Clinical Services Unit which is responsible for the development and continuous improvement of therapeutic clinical services, the delivery of quality practice and the professional culture of the client facing workforce delivering services to children, youth and families across the organisation.

This program has been funded as a pilot by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Services to test if Neurofeedback (NFB) therapy within a systemic family therapy modality for the treatment of trauma can reduce multiple placement breakdown for young people in residential care services or at high risk for entering residential care services. The pilot has been refunded through the 30th of June 2024.

MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) is trialing the use of NFB with small number of young people placed in out-of-home care or at risk of placement in out-of-home care with multiple placement breakdowns due to severe dysregulation and high-risk taking behaviour.

Neurofeedback (NFB) is a computer augmented therapy used as a medication free method of training brain regulation for the treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dissociative Identity Disorder, Developmental Trauma and other psychiatric conditions which may impact on individual and family functioning. NFB is becoming a widely recognised method of treating trauma and recognised by leading trauma psychologists such as Bessel Van Der Kolk (Van Der Kolk ,2014).

Each family is allocated a neurofeedback clinician who is also family therapy trained and a psychiatrist. The NFB Clinician will visit the home once to three times per week depending on individual client needs, for a duration of six to twelve months. The model implemented at MacKillop involves a wholistic mental health service including outreach NFB and psychiatric care delivered within a systemic family therapy model embedded in Polyvagal Theory as described by Forges (Forges, 2011).

Common themes impacting on young people include childhood sexual abuse, parental alcohol and other substance use, family violence and intergenerational trauma which impact on parenting capacity. In the context of this trauma, children are often removed from the family home years later due to the impacts on mental health or high-risk taking behaviour of the child. Therefore, family members are also offered the NFB program within a family therapy model.

The program is delivered by one team and will serve Metro and regional Melbourne.

Primary objectives

NFB's primary objective is the stabilisation of a young person's behaviours that are leading to placement breakdown in care in order to provide the other necessary therapeutic supports to work towards reunification.

The target group for this pilot is young people aged 9-17 years, currently in residential care due to serious behavioural problems and co-occurring mental health symptoms and substance use/abuse with a history of developmental trauma.

Key result areas and responsibilities

The Neurofeedback Clinician role is at the core of the clinical intervention. Each Clinician has a case load of 6 - 9 families, and the therapeutic intervention will on average last for 5 - 6 months, with some cases up to 12 months. Caseload size variation is determined by the age and relative complexity of the families currently in treatment.

The intervention is delivered primarily in an office setting with some sessions in the home and community where the young person and family reside if needed to obtain engagement and alignment. 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 MacKillop's Cultural Advisor and including ongoing training.

The Neurofeedback clinician will:

- Conduct thorough initial assessments including review of referral information, identifying and engaging key participants, identifying systemic strengths and weaknesses, and developing an analysis of problem behaviors within the ecological context
- Engage primary caregivers 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
- Maintain clear and concise documentation of treatment efforts that include peer and supervisory review and feedback

- Collaborate with all relevant systems and key participants within each system to ensure their buy-in and cooperation throughout NFB treatment
- Provide direct clinical treatment using NFB best practice methods
- Participate in all training, supervision and consultation activities as made available or required
- Build strong relationships and work in close collaboration with community stakeholders (i.e., DFFH, 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 Masters degree in Psychology, Social Work, Counseling or a related subject area and training in Neurofeedback. Work experience in a relevant area is preferred. The role will require evening and weekend hours therefore it is essential that the successful applicant's life circumstances are sufficiently flexible to undertake this role.

Preferred Experience:

- Direct use of Neurofeedback equipment, EEG/QEEG analyses and use of various protocols in the treatment of developmental trauma and other mental health diagnosis
- Direct use of pragmatic (i.e., structural, strategic and functional) family therapies
- 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:

- Neurofeedback in the treatment of Developmental Trauma
- Family systems, Polyvagal and attachment theories and application
- Child development research and its application in treatment
- Research or training in diagnostic assessment, mental status examinations
- 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.

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 Driver’s Licence.
- Valid and current 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

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| Director or General Manager’s full name: | Kerry O’Sullivan  | Date: | 30-06/2023 |
| Director or General Manager’s position title: | Director Clinical Services | | |
| 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.