

Position Description

Position title	Family Engagement Worker
Program/Unit	Integrated Family Services (IFS), Engaging Melton Families Program, Community Programs
Term	Full time
Classification	SCHCADS Level 5 - dependent on qualifications & experience
Position reports to	Coordinator IFS Melton

Organisational context

Established in 1997 MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) continues the child and family welfare ministries of the Christian Brothers (Oceania), the Sisters of Mercy (Melbourne) and the Sisters of St. Joseph (Victoria) in Western Sydney, Wollongong, NSW South Coast, Melbourne, Geelong, Warrnambool and Perth.

Programs include Home Based and Residential Care, Disability Services, Youth Support, Education and Training, Family Support and support of women and men who as children were in the care of our founding agencies.

MacKillop Family Services involves a staff of some 1000 personnel and nearly 500 volunteers. Operating out of more than 30 sites our budget expenditure is \$100 million.

MacKillop acknowledges the important work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in promoting child safe policies and practices to better protect children. MacKillop is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in its programs. MacKillop believes that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse and has a zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect and exploitation. The protection of children is a shared responsibility between MacKillop, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the MacKillop community.

MacKillop Family Services has embarked upon a journey of change through its adoption of the Sanctuary Model. The Sanctuary model is underpinned by the commitments of: Nonviolence, Emotional Intelligence, Social Learning, Open Communication, Social Responsibility, Democracy, Growth and Change.

The Sanctuary Model is a blueprint for clinical and organisational change which, at its core, promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community. A recognition that adversity is pervasive in the experience of human beings forms the basis for the Sanctuary Model's focus not only on the people who seek services, but equally on the people and systems who provide those services.

MacKillop acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Elders in each of the communities where we work, affirms the significant place and identity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders hold as First Australians, values and celebrates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and actively commits itself to the truth telling, justice and healing that is required for reconciliation.

Our vision

All children, young people and families are safe, thriving and connected to culture and community. MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

Our values

Justice: We believe in the right of all people, regardless of belief or culture, to be treated justly and fairly;

Hope: We commit to creating an atmosphere of hope where people find meaning in their experiences and relationship;

Collaboration: We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, and partnership;

Compassion: We commit to creating an attitude of openness to others and to their circumstances; and

Respect: We seek to listen and learn from each other and to build relationships with respect.

Position purpose

In 2015, The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Victoria provided additional funding to the Brimbank Melton Child FIRST & IFS Alliance (“the Alliance”) to trial a model of service delivery that responds to the increasing demand for support for families with an early intervention approach for identified priority groups, providing outcomes-measured interventions.

The Family Engagement Worker is a part of the IFS team at MacKillop, and one of two Family Engagement Workers for the Melton area – recruited to MacKillop and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA). This position will provide practical assistance and family strengthening support to families with children in selected early education settings, with an added focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) children and their families to promote the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and their families.

This position is primarily based in Melton, and initially with MacKillop. This position will work alongside Melton Student Support Services, Teachers or School Counsellor(s), the Koorie Engagement Support Officer, Kirrip Aboriginal Corporations, Babaneek Booboop Early Years Project, and other universal and specialist service providers. The aim is to deliver a collaborative, well integrated response that demonstrates positive outcomes for those children, parents, carers and family members’ most needing support, in a timely and efficient manner.

The Family Engagement Worker will apply their professional knowledge and skills to engage children, parents, and other significant people. With the family, they will be an enabler and developer of a plan that meets the best interest of the children and the parent or carer and builds on the family’s strengths and aspirations.

All outcomes are measured and analysed, with regular reports provided to partner agencies within the Alliance and the host agencies MacKillop and VACCA, are accountable for the projects to the Executive. It is envisaged that the learnings from this project learnings are shared across the Alliance staff, resulting in practice and system changes that better support the needs of the Melton Community, and in particular, the ASTI Community.

This position will operate in accordance with the philosophy, aims, policies and procedures of MacKillop Family services and the Alliance operational manual.

This is an ongoing position that may (along with its partner VACCA position) develop and change over time to be responsive to the service needs of families in the Brimbank Melton catchment and align with DHHS Child Youth and Family strategic directions.

Primary objectives

- To provide a high-quality family service that is responsive, respectful of diversity, culturally safe, competent and outcome based to an agreed number of vulnerable children and their families, prioritising the ATSI Community.
- To work closely with the VACCA Engaging Melton Families Worker.
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with related stakeholders including, but not limited to, Melton Student Support team, Teachers or School Counsellor(s), the Koorie Engagement Support Officer, Djerriwarrh Health Services, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Brimbank Melton Child FIRST and Alliance Partner agencies particularly Melton City Council and with other Family Support and universal services as above.
- To collect data, participate in ongoing review of the project and implement a range of outcome measurement tools that promote measurement of service effectiveness.
- To identify gaps in the services required by families and contribute to the ongoing review and development of an integrated and responsive service system that supports parents in their parenting role.

Key result areas and responsibilities

The Family Engagement Worker will:

- Actively engage with vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families, in partnership with prioritised early education settings and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
- Provide information and advice about the role of Child Protection, Child FIRST and Integrated Family Services, as well as other referral points.
- Identify initial needs, assess risk in consultation with Child Protection, Aboriginal and other culturally specific services as appropriate.
- Provide timely, safe, and culturally appropriate outreach support to vulnerable and disadvantaged children, families and individuals, including utilisation of group work and other services as required, in a timely manner.
- Collaborate closely with VACCA family worker and other stakeholders in work with families.
- Review client progress regularly; building capacity for them to self-manage and achieve independence, by ensuring they are linked to and receive the community services required to achieve their goals.
- Ensure transition from the service is effectively planned at case closure.
- Meet agreed targets and comply with the program's administration and reporting requirements that include the writing of case notes and maintenance of families' case files to a professional standard, recording of work time, collection of data, reflections, client feedback and participation in evaluations as required.

- Commit to monthly reflections, inputting data, gathering client feedback and participation in evaluations as required for the project.
- Participate in supervision in accordance with MacKillop policy.
- Participate in IFS Team Meetings.

Key selection criteria

The incumbent will have:

- Tertiary qualification(s) in social work or other relevant fields.
- Proven experience in engaging families and a collaborative approach to needs assessment, goal development and implementing support strategies for children and families.
- Proven case work and case management skills, ideally with at least 5 years' experience.
- Demonstrated experience and interest in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Experience working with non-English speaking communities.
- Strong understanding of referrals process and services available to families in Melton.
- Sound knowledge of the Children, Youth and Families Act (2005) and polices relating to child welfare, family services and Child Protection services.
- A knowledge of child development and ability and experience in developing and delivering individual and group work sessions to children and parents.
- 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.
- Well-developed interpersonal, negotiation, written, verbal and computer skills.
- Demonstrated interest in innovation and change.
- Demonstrated capacity to develop collaborative relationships across professional and organisational boundaries.
- Eligibility for membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) or Australian Psychological Society (APA) (desirable).
- Experience of working within an early education or school environment (desirable).

Other information

The incumbent is required to:

- Sign and actively abide by MacKillop's Code of Conduct.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's OH&S policy and strategy.
- Attend mandatory and other training 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.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Victorian Driver's Licence.
- Valid and current Victorian Working with Children Card.
- Satisfactory criminal history check conducted by MacKillop Family Services.

Approval

Approver's full name:	Niki Pillios	Date:	September 2020
Approver's position title:	Manager Family and Community Programs		
Incumbent's full name:			
Incumbent's signature:		Date:	