



Position Description

Kinship Family Services Worker

Program	Kinship Care
Job Title	Family Services Worker 0.8 to full time SACS Award Class 2 and 3
Location	Various sites across Southern Region
Immediate Manager	Team Leader – Kinship Care
Manager-one-removed	Assistant Manager, Child and Family Support Services

Organisational Context

OzChild has a history of helping children which dates back to 1851. Today, the organisation is continuing to build on this strong foundation, with around 170 staff and 500 volunteers.

OzChild's vision is to improve life opportunities for children across Australia and beyond by delivering a range of integrated, diverse and accessible services that are outcome focussed and recognised for excellence.

OzChild's mission is 'Looking after tomorrow, today'. This is set within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. OzChild's purpose is to improve the quality of care, life opportunities and status of children by:

- Taking or initiating action to protect or enhance the rights of children
- Providing or enabling direct services, through a variety of disciplines, for the benefit of children
- Influencing decisions or actions of individuals, organisations and governments, where relevant to children and their families.

Kinship Care Service Context

OzChild has been delivering a new model of Kinship Care Services across two catchment areas in the Southern Region for 12 months. OzChild has operated a Kinship Care service in the Southern region for the past 12 years and has developed extensive knowledge and expertise in working with complex kinship families.

The new model has 3 distinct but integrated program areas: Placement & Support; Family Services; and an Information & Advice Service and works with statutory and non-statutory clients. All kinship work is underpinned by four key elements; relationship building, partnerships, engagement and empowerment and aims to build on and enhance existing strengths and skills within a kinship family. We work in partnership with carers, birth parents, extended family and professionals to strengthen the carers' capacity to provide a safe and stable environment which focuses on the best interests of the child/young person.

The Kinship Care team are looking for dynamic, passionate, energetic and flexible workers to drive and be part of this new innovative model. The Family Services Worker positions are critical positions in the service delivery to kinship families in the broader community.

Position Purpose & Objectives

The Kinship Family Services Worker will provide brief, occasional and short term interventions to carers and children/young people residing within kinship placements (primarily non-statutory/informal arrangements).

The Family Services Worker also plays an important role in providing secondary consultation to ChildFIRST Intake Service and other professionals to ensure a coordinated response to Kinship Families.

In addition, workers will assist in the development and facilitation of a range of support and skill-based groups for carers and children/young people.

The key objectives of this work is to support carers to provide best possible kinship care, minimise/prevent Child Protection involvement and assist families to become self-managing.

Key Responsibilities

1. Case work

- Provide brief, occasional and short term family support within the family environment.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with carers, children and young people with complex needs and entrenched family patterns
- Develop innovative approaches with kinship families which encompass 'Best Interest' principles and enhance existing strengths and resilience within the family
- Promote positive relationships in family systems including birth parents, carers, children/young people and extended family
- Participate in family care team meetings and initiating/facilitating family decision making meetings when required
- Maintain accurate client records on CRIS/CRISSP system & prepare professional reports as required.

2. Linkages and Secondary Consultation

- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with other professionals and provide secondary consultation in regards to kinship matters
- Assess the needs of children/young people and carers and make timely referrals to appropriate, relevant and/or specialist support services (including groups).
- Provide advocacy on behalf of children/ young people and kinship carers within the broader service system

3. Team Work

- Establish collaborative working relationships within colleagues and contribute to team discussion and an open-learning culture
- Participate in team meetings, supervision and professional development as required

4. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- Provide services according to Oz Child Kinship Care and DHS policies and practices and in accordance with relevant legislation
- Participate in continuous improvement initiatives including policy and program development when required

Key Selection Criteria

Applicants wishing to apply for this position need to respond to each of the following key selection criteria, providing evidence of knowledge and practice skills in each.

1. Previous experience in the child and family welfare field (such as Child Protection, Out of Home Care, Family Services) and demonstrated practice skills in working with vulnerable, 'at risk' families with complex needs.
2. A thorough understanding of issues relating to children in alternative placement contexts (including additional themes for kinship care) and families who have had Child Protection involvement.
3. Clear understanding of the developmental needs of children and families and demonstrated skills in conducting comprehensive assessments.
4. Demonstrated capacity to develop collaborative relationships and provide professional consultation and guidance to a range of professionals.
5. Proven ability to work independently and make sound autonomous practice decisions.
6. Demonstrated knowledge and skills in applying theories and frameworks such as attachment, trauma, grief & loss and permanency planning principles.
7. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with a range of families and professionals. Demonstrated capacity to utilise a respectful, non-judging and strengths based approach.
8. Excellent written skills and ability to write high quality case notes/reports that are both comprehensive and analytical.
9. Previous experience in facilitating a range of support and skill-based groups
10. Demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively and cooperatively within a team environment.
11. Displays a willingness to approach new challenges and adjusts plans to meet new priorities including a capacity to work flexible hours

Qualifications & other requirements

- Applicants must have completed a Social Work degree (approved by the AASW for current practice as a professional Social worker) or hold an equivalent qualification.
- The successful applicant must hold a current drivers licence
- The successful applicant must have a clear working with children check and a satisfactory police check.

Conditions of Employment

Full time staff are paid for 76 hours a fortnight. In order to perform the duties of the role effectively you may be required to work additional hours or vary your working times as appropriate and necessary from time to time. OzChild has a flexible approach to hours of work. Overtime is not payable; however time in lieu can accrue in accordance with the Oz Child Certified Agreement.

Salary for the position will be based on the appropriate rate in accordance with the Social and Community Services – Victoria Award.

OzChild has very generous salary packaging provisions for staff, permitting staff to salary package up to \$16,050 per annum. This provides considerable tax savings to our staff. Staff may also elect to package up items such as meals and entertainment and accommodation; this is additional to the salary packaging.

Oz Child's Certified Agreement contains above award conditions including 6 weeks paid maternity leave, generous sick and carers leave and additional ex-gratia days at Christmas and Easter.

Superannuation is paid according to the Superannuation Guarantee (9%) but there is no limit to the amount staff may elect to salary sacrifice to a superannuation fund of their choice. Oz Child offers staff choice of superannuation fund.

Application Procedures

Applicants are required to provide a copy of their resume, with a covering letter addressing each of the key selection criteria of the position.

For further information please contact Bronwyn Harrison, Assistant Manager, Child and Family Support Services on 9212 5600.

After Interview:

The potentially successful applicants will be requested to complete a police check and will be expected to provide a clear working with children check.

OzChild conducts thorough reference checks – you will be asked to provide contact details of three referees, one of which is to be your most recent supervisor or manager.

Potentially successful applicants will also be required to provide a copy of their qualifications and complete a pre-existing injury/disease declaration. If your application is unsuccessful, all copies of documents will be destroyed.

Closing date: 5pm Monday 27 February 2012

Forward application to:

Oz Child - Kinship Care Program
Bronwyn Harrison, Assistant Manager Child and Family Support Services
By Email: bharrison@ozchild.org.au