



Position Description

Position title:	Children's Advocate – Therapeutic Responses
Location:	Croydon North
Program	Therapeutic Response
Job Status:	Full Time
Reports to:	Manager of Safe in the Community
Date:	December 2017
Award:	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Award

Our Vision

The Safe Futures Foundation believes all children, young people and adults have the right to live safely in their community. Engaging and partnering with those that can influence and create change, the Foundation is committed to building understanding on the long term impact and cycle of violence, creating solutions to protect those at risk or experiencing violence or abuse, and to have a community united in their commitment to ensure a safe future for all.

We believe that a response ensuring those first to know are also those first to act is central to a solution that provides safety and support at the earliest possible time. We are committed to providing every child, young person and adult with choices and opportunities to holistically heal the mind, body and soul and to reach their potential after the experience and trauma of violence or abuse. We invite those who have gained strength and resilience to walk with others and inspire them to become empowered and self-determining.

Our Model

The Safe Futures Foundation has successfully developed and implemented an alternative to the traditional response that waits until a crisis point has been reached. The model expands referral from traditional sources to include organisations that are the first to recognise the indicators of violence in the home, often even before individuals identify their experience as violence. Rights and needs of children are paramount. The response is open to all those who have experienced violence in the home or identify they are at risk. The response is premised on a triage approach with comprehensive assessment of safety and support needs, and direct accesses to responses and resources ranging from safety strategies and immediate necessities through to therapeutic, educational and wellbeing programs. The response is informed by individual assessments for safety and support and offers a holistic family centred response focused on achieving outcomes determined by the client.

Core Business

Safe Futures Foundation supports women, children and young people through three key programs:

- Safe in the Community
- Community Connect
- Safe Children, Bright Futures

These programs:

- Partner with professionals that are first to recognise violence in the home to offer safety and support options at the earliest possible time
- Partner with emergency services and crisis referral agencies to provide emergency accommodation, safety and support options to those that are rendered homeless due to violence in the home

- Support children, young people and adults to develop and implement holistic care plans that offer pathways to safety, stability, resilience, self determination and provide opportunities for all to achieve their potential
- Provide equity of access and specialist responses to support clients that are:
 - Indigenous Australians
 - From diverse cultural, linguistic and spiritual backgrounds
 - Experiencing temporary or long term physical or mental health challenges, or a disability
 - Elder.

Guiding Principles

Respect for individuals

Valuing individuals and respecting differences between them

Equity in access

Ensuring equal opportunity and the allocation of resources and services in a fair, consistent and inclusive manner irrespective of an individual's or groups cultural or linguistic background, their religion or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, gender, age, or abilities

Participation

Providing opportunities for clients to have genuine participation and consultation about decisions affecting their lives

Empowerment

Building the capacity of people to exercise choice, gain access to resources and achieve change in their lives

Corporate social responsibility

Upholding our integrity with a genuine commitment to our community and respect for the environment

Recognising cultural diversity

Respecting and being sensitive to people from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds and their community ties

Respect for Indigenous culture and heritage

Respecting the culture, history and the importance of kinship and land to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Privacy and confidentiality

Respecting and upholding rights to privacy and confidentiality in all aspects of practice and management

Quality of work environment

Providing a safe, productive, comfortable and flexible work environment to enhance worker health and wellbeing and work–life balance

Partnerships and collaboration

Working with others with the same vision to achieve Safe Futures mission and objectives

Quality and integrity

Remaining visionary, professional, and transparent in all aspects of practice, management, leadership and governance

Children’s Advocate- Therapeutic Responses

The Role

The Safe Futures children’s response incorporates case management, intensive case management, and recovery programs within a trauma informed framework for every child. A Children’s Advocate works with each individual child and their mother to identify the supports needs of the child and their family within a holistic framework, and then assists with referrals to appropriate support agencies.

The Case Manager – Therapeutic responses will work within the overall Eastern Metropolitan Region Children’s Therapeutic Response framework operating across a number of Organisations including: Wesley Uniting Care, Safe Futures Foundation, Australian Child Hood Foundation and EACH.

Both an individual case management role and a group facilitation roll will be required in order to meet the range of programs available.

Duties

The Children’s Advocate – Therapeutic Responses has primary responsibility for the management and delivery of a range of therapeutic program responses services to women and children with complex needs, including disability, who are experiencing family violence and are accessing the Safe Futures Foundation programs from Safe Futures support areas and from other support programs in the Eastern Region.

The children’s Advocate – Therapeutic Responses within Safe Futures Foundation holds a key position in the organisation and is accountable to:

- Support women and their children experiencing family violence within a feminist framework
- Provide case management to the children of clients who are referred to the Safe Futures therapeutic response and who have complex needs
- Develop and coordinate case plans, from initial intake through to exit planning
- Undertake risk and needs assessments which are reviewed and updated regularly
- Ensure that clients are actively engaged in the planning and decision making process in relation to their child/ren
- Provide advocacy and referral to appropriate agencies and professionals
- Knowledge and experience to work with women and children with specific needs including: Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including competency in the use of interpreters and telephone interpreters
 - Indigenous backgrounds
 - Disability
 - Drug and / or alcohol dependency
 - Mental health issues
 - Sexual diversity

- Provide secondary consultation and advice to other professionals specific to the needs of children who experience family violence
- Work in collaboration with a range of children’s agencies and service providers including educators to ensure that each individual child’s needs are met
- Maintain concise, accurate and legible client records and ensure that they are filed in a safe and secure location
- Maintain accurate statistical data as required by SFF and DHS
- Provide all information and reports to relevant Manager in a timely manner
- Participate in the On Call Roster
- Other duties as directed by the Manager.

Key Selection Criteria

Core Capabilities

A capacity and ability to demonstrate Safe Futures’ Core Capabilities is required to be successful in the role. The capabilities describe how you will go about fulfilling this role. Safe Futures core capabilities are Demonstrates Leadership, Cultivates Productive Working Relationships, Delivers Quality Outcomes, Thinks Clearly and Manages Self. Please refer to Band (C) of Safe Futures Core Capability Framework.

Knowledge, skills and abilities required to fulfil the role

- Ability to actively engage women in the decision making processes around the child/ren specific needs
- An understanding of the family violence factors and the associated complexities which impact on women and their children who experience family and domestic violence
- An ability to work with children, young people and families through an attachment and trauma based lens
- A commitment to delivering quality client focused outcomes which are adaptable to supports and manage changing environments
- Demonstrated understanding of the key components of case management
- Ability to establish and maintain positive and productive working arrangements with Child Protection, Child First and Integrated Family Services
- Strong communication and written skills and the capacity to negotiate and communicate with a range of professionals and individuals
- Ability to make timely, sound decisions about interventions required, and consult for the purposes of assessment and decision-making in the best interests of the child/ren
- A sound knowledge of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- A sound knowledge of the Victoria’s Best Interest Framework.

The Core Capability Framework document articulates the definition of each element and indicators relevant for each Band.

Key Performance Indicators

Skills and Expertise

- A comprehensive understanding of the Integrated Family Violence Service System
- Knowledge of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- Knowledge of the Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF)
- Knowledge of The Children’s Act with the ability to recognise child protection issues and guide decisions on reports to DHS or Child First Agency
- Knowledge of Assessing Children and Young people experiencing family violence practice manual
- Knowledge of The Privacy Act
- Knowledge of The Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Knowledge of client grievance procedures – – Homelessness Advocacy and Rights Service, Assessing children and young people experiencing family violence practice guide and internal agency policies and processes
- Awareness of the rights of accompanying children – a familiarity with the internal policy and the Homelessness guidelines for the safety and well-being of children
- Experience in using computerised client management information systems
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills with the capacity to develop and implement key strategic projects and plans where relevant to the role
- Strong communication skills that build effective internal and external relationships
- Sensitivity to issues related to the provision of services in a community of high cultural diversity
- Knowledge of key factors relating to children’s wellbeing and demonstrated understanding of having a child focused approach when working with families
- Knowledge of family dynamics and understanding of issues and systems that impact on individuals and families; including the assessment of parenting capacity in the context of family violence
- Understanding of the impact of family violence on the mother-child relationship
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in relevant theoretical models and age appropriate applications
- Experience in successfully engaging and working with vulnerable families
- Ability to demonstrate initiative and be pro active in the community
- An understanding of participative case planning and goal setting in relation to the identified needs of the client
- Self-reliance and ability to work independently and innovatively within the policies and protocols of Safe Futures Foundation
- Sound appreciation of, and commitment to, good corporate governance.

Desirable: A sound understanding of the family violence issues faced by Indigenous and CALD communities is desirable.

In addition to these key deliverables the following areas are also required of the role:

Program Development

- Partner and engage with external services networks and local agencies
- Participate in a range of interagency meetings and other forums in order to share information and best practice as required.

Quality

- Ensure that all relevant external standards are achieved
- Participate in the continuous improvement process/s
- Deliver efficient and high quality services in line with best practice
- Actively participate in internal and external clinical supervision and organisational health and well being opportunities
- Attend relevant staff meetings, practice reflections and professional development sessions.

Information Management

- Adhere to relevant record management systems and comply with relevant Privacy Legislation.

Human Resource Management

- Take responsibility for own observance of work safe practices and safe work environment and undertake no actions or omissions which will adversely affect the health and safety of other persons
- Identify and report hazards, risks, accidents and incidents
- Consult immediately with the General Manager re all Category 1 critical incidents and the Team Leader and/or Manager re all Category 2 and 3 critical incidents.

Financial Management

- Ensure that all financial transactions are undertaken in line with approved Safe Futures Foundation policy and delegations
- Provide timely, accurate receipts to meet all reporting and accountability requirements.

Behavioural Competencies

Teamwork

- Evidence of strong relationships with other team members which assists in building a cohesive workplace
- Communicate with all staff and work with them to meet organisational objectives consistent with the values of Safe Futures Foundation
- Demonstrate on a continual basis, a commitment to assist and support colleagues in all workplace activities
- Promote positive organisational workforce culture to promote high organisational performance
- Participate in and contribute to staff meetings.

Leadership

- Demonstrate commitment and expertise to promote the organisation's values and a sound organisational culture of client service, performance, accountability and integrity
- Generate ideas for innovation and enhanced working practices to achieve organisational mission.

Communication

- Style that fosters participation and personal growth
- Lead with exceptional interpersonal and communication, negotiation skills

- Produce well structured concise reports and correspondence
- Maintain confidentiality on all issues relating to Safe Futures Foundation, clients and colleagues.

Working Relationships

Internal

- CEO
- Manager
- All staff

External

- Clients, their families and advocates
- Community
- Community Service Organisations and Partners

Qualifications and Experience

- Relevant qualifications and/or experience – preferable tertiary qualifications in Social and Community Services or relevant field
- Experience in providing case management services to women and their children escaping family violence
- Experience in assessment of client’s emotional and material needs
- Proven knowledge of essential community networks and resources
- Use of client data management systems for case management and other record management for quality systems
- The ability to approach all interactions with a customer service focus
- Experience in Microsoft office and Client data Systems
- The ability to complete tasks accurately and efficiently
- Exceptional organisational skills in order to juggle different tasks and meet tight deadlines
- Basic research skills
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- A commitment to promoting the Safe Futures Foundation programs and services
- A commitment to confidentiality.

Salary and Conditions

- The position is full time (75 hours per fortnight).
- Salary packaging is available
- Classification for this position is as per Modern Award: Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award Dec 2012. Year negotiable
- Appointment to this position is subject to passing a National Police Check
- Hold a valid Working with Children’s Check
- Probationary period of six months
- Current drivers licence
- First Aid Level 2
- Safe Futures Foundation is committed to complying with privacy and confidentiality legislation. All employees are required to sign a Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement as part of the employment offer and contractual agreement.