

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Reconnect Youth & Family Worker at Community Connections. Please find attached an application kit containing the following documentation:

- Position Description (Reconnect Worker)
- Selection Criteria
- Community Connections Mission Statement & Six Core Values
- Reconnect Good Practice Principles
- Trauma, Vicarious Trauma, Burnout and Self Care Policy and Procedure

Community Connections works alongside young people (aged 12-18 years) and families where there are issues that could lead to early home leaving and/or early disengaging from school. Using an early intervention and community development framework, our work encompasses individual support, group and project work as well as creating links with the school and wider community.

Community Connections is seeking a highly skilled Reconnect Youth & Family Worker to provide early intervention support to young people and their families where the young person is at risk of homelessness. We invite applications from practitioners with a Bachelor of Social Work or Human Services to apply.

This is a full time position (38 hours/week) with a contract through till 30 June, 2022 with possibility of extension dependent on the continuation of Reconnect program funding. Remuneration is at a SCHCADS Level 4 or 5 depending on the experience of the applicant. There is the opportunity to increase your income through inclusion in our salary sacrificing program. The SCHCADS award can be accessed here:

https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/documents/modern_awards/award/ma000100/default.htm

Benefits of working at Community Connections:

- Diverse practice and skill development opportunities
- Receive day-to-day practice support and regular formal supervision by a qualified and experienced social worker (weekly during probation and monthly after probation)
- Attend weekly team meetings for case reflections, project and team development
- Access to ongoing professional development opportunities

If you are interested in applying please provide responses to the attached selection criteria including examples to illustrate your practice.

Applications to be emailed to reception@communityliving.org.au by 9am Monday 13 December 2021.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview to be held in the week beginning 13th December 2021 with the role to commence in January 2022.

Community Connections

ROLE DESCRIPTION

YOUTH AND FAMILY WORKER (RECONNECT PROGRAM)

Community Connections aims to assist young people in seeking safe outcomes and gaining increased connectedness to their community and to enhance and develop the response of the network of agencies in North Brisbane - via joint service delivery and collaborative projects, identifying gaps and working with government and community to develop solutions. The service acknowledges the diverse communities within the North East Brisbane area, and aims to be inclusive of Indigenous, Culturally and Linguistically diverse and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and individuals.

Community Connections targets young people aged 12 –18 years and their families, where the young person:

- is at imminent risk of leaving the family home prematurely, marked by severe conflict and relationship breakdown;
- has spent periods of time moving in and out of the family home; or
- has left their family home prematurely and been referred to the program within the first 12 weeks.

Purpose of the Position:

To assist young people who are at risk of homelessness or who have recently left home to remain connected (or to reconcile) with their families and their community (including school), through direct service delivery (e.g. individual support, family support/mediation, group work), sector and community development.

Tasks Include:

- ◆ To provide direct support to young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (family mediation, counselling, group work and support work, skills development, advocacy and referral.)
- ◆ To provide direct support to parents /families /caregivers and or services (government and non-government) who are in contact with or support young people who are homeless.
- ◆ To provide information to parents/families/caregivers and / or services (government and non-government) regarding the needs and issues of young people who are homeless.
- ◆ Networking and collaboration with young people /parents/ families/ caregivers of young people.
- ◆ To work collaboratively with services and community to provide support for young people and families.

- ◆ To participate as a member of the Community Connections Team in data collection, service documentation, evaluation and service development.
- ◆ Support the Team leader in the task of liaising with relevant government departments regarding policy and program issues /implications relating to the needs and issues of young people who are homeless.

Responsibilities

The position is part of a team of Youth and Family Workers funded through Reconnect. These workers, as a team, are known as Community Connections. Responsibility is to the Team Leader, who is in turn responsible to the Coordinator of the Community Living Association Inc.

Reconnect Youth & Family Worker Selection Criteria

The successful candidate will have a demonstrated ability and/or capacity to perform the tasks outlined in the selection criteria listed. **Please note** – it is essential to write 1/2– 1 page responses for each selection criteria (with the exception of SC8), and use examples of work that you have been involved in.

SC1 – Highly developed skills in proactive communication and relationship building with young people including individual support, group work and family work.

SC2 - Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the causes of family breakdown, and the issues and needs of young people who are at risk of becoming homeless or recently homeless.

SC3 - Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of trauma and attachment and how this impacts the development of young people and families.

SC4 – Demonstrated ability to work across systems including community sector and government agencies

SC5 – Demonstrated skills to work with diverse communities including ATSI, CALD and GLBT young people, families, services, and communities.

SC6 - Demonstrated ability to respond to conflict, ethical dilemmas and complex practice issues.

SC7 - Ability to reflect on work, participate effectively as a member of a team and contribute to further development of the service.

SC8 - Eligibility for blue card; Current drivers licence and access to private vehicle for work purposes; Fully Vaccinated against COVID19 including booster shots as required by the Public Health Order (PHO), *“Workers in a Healthcare Setting (COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements) Direction.”*

The successful applicant’s appointment will be subject to the ‘working with children check’.

Social Work, Human Services or related degrees essential.

Applications to be emailed to reception@communityliving.org.au by 9am Monday 13 December 2021.

The application is to include the following:

- A brief letter stating the position title of the vacancy and your name, address and phone number.
- A resume/curriculum vitae.
- Your ¾ to A4 page response to each of the selection criteria. Applicants who do not address all selection criteria will not be considered.
- The name, positions and phone number of at least two (2) referees who can comment on your abilities regarding the selection criteria.

Community Connections Mission statement

1. We engage with young people at risk to minimise the risks currently experienced in their lives and increase opportunities to:

- Enhance and maintain relationships with their families, friends and others in the community that are meaningful and matter to them
- Improve access to information and resources regarding housing, income and education
- Promote safety, and emotional and physical well being

2. We work with school communities by providing:

- Information on issues affecting or impacting on young people
- Resources for groups and projects around identified themes
- Support for young people at risk

3. We work with families by providing:

- Information and referrals to help them stay connected with their young people
- General support and mediation services to enhance and maintain relationships and facilitate connections in families whether the young people are living at home or out of the home.
- Support for young people at risk

4. We work with the broader community (inc. young people, families, and other community members) to facilitate:

- A response to system and structural issues that impact on young people; whether it is in families, neighbourhoods, schools, employment, recreational or housing etc.

Community Connections Six Core Values

1. RESPECT

- We believe in the inherent good in everyone and that everyone has something to offer.
- We recognise the dignity and value of each and everyone we work with.
- We are committed to modelling mutual respect by challenging situations where dignity and/or value is compromised.

2. COLLABORATION (PARTICIPATION)

- We are committed to working with others (e.g. young people, families, school communities, broader community etc.) on shared goals and actions, around common issues and themes, and to draw on the diverse knowledge, skills and strengths of the participants to achieve those shared goals.
- We believe that young people should have the opportunity to be included, have their voices heard in a non-threatening environment, in recognition that it can be difficult for young people to participate in action and change processes at an individual, group and structural level.

3. EMPOWERMENT (CAPACITY BUILDING)

- We believe that young people and their families are experts in their own lives, in that they have their own knowledge, experience and resources to offer.
- Young people have the right to make decisions that impact on their lives.
- Young people have the right to have access to support, resources, information and connections to others, which enhance their capacity and skills.

4. RELATIONSHIPS

- We believe in the inherent benefits of young people being connected to others, in that young people (as people) don't exist in isolation, and with the acknowledgement that relationships can be positive and/or exploitative.
- We are committed to facilitating positive relationships and connections in our work with young people and others.

5. REFLECTION

- We are committed to a practice which is congruent with Community Connections' Core Values.
- We are committed to utilising a number of mechanisms that enable the service to change and evolve in response to learnings and reflections to increase our effectiveness in our work with young people and others.

6. EQUITY

- We are committed to challenging and addressing structural disadvantage alongside young people and families where there is inequity and barriers to accessibility.

Reconnect Good Practice Principles

Accessibility of Services

Maximising accessibility to parents, other family members and young people is an important element of good practice. Key features of accessibility include effective promotion, immediacy of response and outreach.

Promotion

- promotional materials need to use simple language, either plain English or in relevant community languages;
- there is no universal form of promotion - services may need to be promoted differently to each target group;
- the use of language is important, as people do not like to be perceived as 'problem subjects' - there is a need to universalise the issues being faced; and
- promotional materials should be distributed widely in the community, rather than just relying on perceived 'first to know agencies'.

Immediacy of Response

When a parent or young person makes contact, a quick response is extremely important. The capacity of a Reconnect worker (rather than the intake officer of a service) to respond within 24 hours appears to decrease the possibility of young people leaving or being expelled from the family home.

Outreach

Outreach can reduce the stigma people may feel about accessing a 'welfare' service. Outreach can be provided at venues where young people (and in some cases, their parents) feel comfortable, such as at homes, schools, parks, cafes and community or youth centres.

Client Driven Service Delivery

Flexible services that can adapt to the needs of both young people and families are important and can be achieved by:

- providing young people with formal needs assessment and goal setting early, where they identify issues and are assisted with strategies to address them;
- recognising the different stages families and young people may go through after seeking assistance, e.g. families may want more active, practical assistance in the short-term before being moved to explore underlying issues;
- using different models of intervention. Within the Reconnect pilot projects, it was found families and young people reacted well to solution-focused approaches that provided skills to deal with situations at the time and in the future; and
- linking participants with a range of supports and ensuring they are referred to appropriate services. Brokerage funds, incorporated in the budget, may enable a service to respond creatively by purchasing specific services.

Holistic Approaches to Service Delivery

Services need to work from an understanding that problems are not isolated from other aspects of a participant's life. This means:

- viewing a person's situation in the context of employment, education, family and community participation;

- working with families rather than just individuals;
- improving housing outcomes; and
- experienced case managers with a “tool box” of interventions such as counselling, group work, mediation, family meetings and practical assistance.

Working Collaboratively

This involves working with a range of core services in the early intervention network including:

- schools, community agencies, (such as family support agencies and generalist and specialist youth services), income support agencies, and state/territory community service departments; and
- specialist services such as cultural-specific and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, drug, alcohol and health services including community and mental health.

Service providers are required to devote a proportion of their time to networking and developing effective working relationships with other agencies. Working together can extend to case coordination and the integrated case management of individuals and families where multiple providers are involved. Four key features of good practice in engaging other agencies in collaborative early intervention work have been identified:

- a clearly defined task or issue that needs to be addressed;
- mutual benefit to be gained;
- organisational commitment to working together; and
- good relationships with individuals in other agencies.

Culturally and Contextually Appropriate Service Delivery

Flexibility in responding to the different needs of different communities is good practice. Promoting a service, assessing needs and issues and providing support, require a sensitive approach to cultural and contextual differences.

Contextual considerations may include:

- geographical location (urban, rural or regional);
- distances to be travelled; and
- key issues affecting families in the community being served.

Cultural considerations may include:

- the effects of migration on families;
- the different values within diverse cultural groups and in particular, the difference in the culture of the country of origin and the new culture (conflict between parent and young person);
- differences in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and between generations; and
- language issues (potentially requiring bilingual staff, translation and interpreters).

Review and Evaluation

Ongoing review and evaluation is important in ensuring that early intervention services are effective and responsive to the needs of participants. Evaluation methods such as Participatory Action Research assist service providers to provide flexible services. Building in regular feedback from participants and other agencies should enable adjustments to service delivery and have additional positive benefits, such as improvement of young people’s situations.

Sustainability

Building sustainability is an important principle of good practice because it recognises the importance of ensuring continuity of support for individuals and families, e.g. by identifying gaps and barriers in services over the medium to long term. It also means working in a way that empowers individuals and communities by developing their knowledge and skills so they can sustain their own change processes.

In addition to these principles, there are several important partners with which a specialist early intervention service needs to work; these include:

- schools;
- state/territory agencies responsible for the care and protection of young people;
- income support agencies; and
- other government and non-government community agencies.

Community Living Association

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Trauma, Vicarious Trauma, Burnout and Self-Care

PREAMBLE

Work in community services and at CLA can be stressful and tiring as well as fulfilling and rewarding. The work at CLA can also involve working with people who have experienced trauma and may be experiencing trauma on a continuing basis. Work at CLA can also at times include involvement in situations where workers (paid staff) and volunteers may feel personally threatened. This happens rarely but can happen.

CLA identifies this potential not as a way of deterring people from working in the organisation but as a reality which people should be prepared for.

We encourage prospective workers, including students at CLA to reflect on their personal history of trauma and whether a) this might prevent them applying for a job at CLA or b) whether it is something they consider in their self-care plans. Prospective workers are encouraged to reflect on how they will plan for an appropriate work/life balance, monitor their sleep and self-care plans; if you are successful in being offered a position at CLA we will support you to reflect on these matters.

POLICY

CLA recognises the potential for burnout, vicarious trauma and trauma impacts of this work and will work with its workers to maintain appropriate self-care.

PROCEDURE

- Applicants for work at CLA will receive a copy of this policy and procedure as part of the Application Pack – included in Recruitment Checklist.
- Interview processes will include questions related to potential for exposure to vicarious trauma and trauma.
- This policy will be included in Induction Checklist.
- Supervision will include checking with workers on self-care plans and strategies. This will be written into every supervision agreement. (See Supervision Agreement).
- Workers are encouraged to consult resource material on burnout/vicarious trauma and trauma/self-care and sleep hygiene. (See Related Documents).
- Team Leaders and workers are reminded that if there are concerns about worker safety then safety plans need to be established. (See Section 2.4.12 Outreach Worker Safety Policy).

- It is not an expression of personal failure for workers to experience fatigue, apprehension or distress. It can be a natural reaction to stresses on the job. We encourage workers to be open about these feelings with their supervisor.
- Where workers are experiencing negative impact due to the work, team leaders will engage with them around remedial actions. These may include: self-care plans, safety plans, counselling, critical incident responses, disengagement from certain situations.