



POSITION DESCRIPTION

STARTTS is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and anti-discrimination policies.

POSITION NUMBER: 1160

Date reviewed/created: November 2022

POSITION TITLE: Early Childhood Counsellor/Project Officer

TEAM: Clinical Team – Early Childhood

LOCATION: Sydney Metropolitan area

AGREEMENT: “NSW (Non-Declared) Affiliated Health Organisations’ Professional and Associated Staff Agreement”.

CLASSIFICATION: Health Education Officer, or other relevant classification based on qualifications, experience and requirements of the role.

A generous salary packaging scheme is also offered.

PERIOD OF APPRAISAL: Performance will be assessed within 3 months of commencement and a 6 month probationary/qualifying period will also apply.

Background to STARTTS

STARTTS is a state-wide service funded by the NSW Department of Health and Commonwealth Department of Health to provide high quality assessment, treatment and rehabilitation services to people living in NSW who have experienced organised violence or trauma associated with the refugee experience. STARTTS is an Affiliated Health Organisation (AHO), a Non-Government Organisation whose services are deemed to be part of the NSW public health system.

STARTTS’ service provision philosophy is predicated on a bio-psycho-social framework that incorporates a large range of clinical and psycho-social interventions informed by the latest advances in neuroscience and evidence based practice in relevant fields. As such, STARTTS provides a broad range of services including assessment; counselling for all age groups; psychiatric assessment and interventions; family therapy; group interventions; body-focused interventions such as massage, physiotherapy, acupuncture and pain management groups; support groups; programs for children and youth; and various strategies to increase the capacity of support networks and refugee communities to sustain their members.

The focus of the STARTTS’ approach is on building capacity and empowering people and communities to take control over their own lives, using a strengths-based approach and building on individual, family, community and cultural strengths.

Background to the Program Area of the position

The Clinical Services Team consists of a group of clinicians specialised in various areas who provide direct client service as well as act as a resource for other STARTTS staff. Its services include Early Childhood Clinic, Student Clinic, Physiotherapy and Body Centred Therapies and Psychiatry.

This position is within STARTTS Clinical Team - Early Childhood (sub-team). It will involve providing direct services to children aged between 0-6 years, their parents/caregivers and families; group-based interventions; program and intervention evaluation; participation in research projects; training, and community capacity building activities. This position is within the STARTTS Clinical Team-Early Childhood (sub-team).

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Responsible to: Clinical Services Team Leader.
2. Responsible for: Nil.

SELECTION CRITERIA:**Essential Criteria:**

1. Relevant tertiary qualifications in health, counselling, behavioural or social sciences, and experience in early childhood intervention or early childhood care and education.
2. Knowledge and understanding of refugee issues, and the impact of torture and refugee trauma on families, and children 0-6 years old from a refugee background.
3. Demonstrated ability to conduct individual observations and/or assessment and short to medium term interventions with children 0-6 years old.
4. Demonstrated experience in running groups with children 0-6 years old and their parents
5. Advocacy and community development skills and experience.
6. Excellent oral and written communication skills and proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office.
7. Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team within a multicultural environment.
8. Relevant experience in conducting individual and/or group information sessions or training.
9. Current NSW Driver's Licence.

Desirable Criteria:

1. Relevant experience in conducting consultancy and support to child care and preschool providers and teachers working with refugee children 0-6 years old.
2. Demonstrated understanding of the NSW Early Childhood services and Education system and needs of children 0-6 years old with their parents.
3. Experience working in a multicultural context.
4. Trained in the running of Circle of Security Parenting courses, or other relevant parenting/family programmes.

*This position is considered child-related employment and will require a Working with Children Check and a National Police Check.

COVID -19 REQUIREMENTS

*In line with the Public Health Order, all STARTTS workers are considered Health Workers and are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19. In order to be eligible for consideration for employment with STARTTS, all recruits must provide evidence of vaccination against COVID-19, or alternatively provide a Medical Contraindication in the approved form which complies with the requirements of the Public Health Order, prior to appointment. Should you not be able to comply before your commencement date, the offer of employment may be withdrawn.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ROLE

This position forms part of STARTTS Clinical Team – Early Childhood (sub-team). It will assist children aged between 0-6 years, their parents/caregivers and families. The position is to facilitate delivery of individual, family and group-based interventions, research, and community capacity building activities.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide a bio-psycho-social assessment, intervention and referral service to refugee families with children 0-6 years old, in the stated areas.
2. To provide short to medium term clinical services to refugee families with children 0-6 years old.
3. To provide group work and support for playgroups, or other early childhood programmes, including providing follow-up counselling for these programmes, as needed.
4. To work with the STARTTS clients in capacity building processes for refugee communities, and collaborative Early Childhood project development, within the target refugee communities.
5. To work with other early childhood services, families and communities in the target areas, to ensure effective case coordination.

6. To assist in developing and providing resources and training workshops for families, communities and other service providers who support 0-6 year olds with their families
7. To be adaptable to the needs of the families and children and be able to provide telehealth sessions effectively as required.

PRIMARY DUTIES:

1. Assessment and Counselling

- 1.1. Provide a bio-psycho-social and psychological assessment and referral service for refugee families with 0–6-year-olds in the project catchment area.
- 1.2. Provide short to medium term counselling and family interventions for children 0-6 years old with their caregivers.
- 1.3. Participate in case conferencing as appropriate.
- 1.4. Undertake training, and develop competency, in the use of approved early childhood assessment tools including the STARTTS Screening Tool, and Parent Commencement and Completion Survey, and Observation of Interactions tool, and other approved tools, when conducting assessments with refugee families with children 0-6 years old.
- 1.5. Conduct agreed assessments and make the results available for collation by STARTTS for evaluation and research purposes.
- 1.6. Support refugee families and help them develop a better understanding of the issues which may affect them and their children, and the services that are available to them. Provide referrals to individuals and families as appropriate and required.
- 1.7. Facilitate the Early Childhood Research Focus Groups and provide any necessary counselling or debriefing after the sessions.
- 1.8. Facilitating Communities for Children programmes or other projects as needed, and provide any necessary counselling or debriefing after the sessions.
- 1.9. Develop culturally appropriate strategies to engage children 0-6 years old with their caregivers in counselling and group work.
- 1.10. Introduce and conduct Early Childhood group interventions programmes as needed.
- 1.11. Assist with preparation for, and running of, Playgroup sessions as needed with target refugee communities, in partnership with communities and/or other service providers.
- 1.12. Prepare presentations on cases for discussion at weekly clinical meetings on a roster basis.
- 1.13. Proactively organise and facilitate STARTTS Early Childhood Holiday program as needed.

2. Clinical, Community Development and Capacity Building in the Early Childhood Programme

- 2.1. Develop and maintain productive partnerships with existing mainstream early childhood services, including attendance at relevant network meetings.
- 2.2. Serve as a STARTTS contact person for, and build collaborative relationships with specific target refugee communities represented by the additional refugee intake, as agreed with the Clinical services team leader and Community Services Coordinator.
- 2.3. Share learnings relating to these relationship building activities with other members of the Early Childhood Sub-Team.
- 2.4. Prepare Early Childhood psycho-education materials for refugee families and communities.
- 2.5. Resource other Direct Services Counsellors with information, assessment techniques, short term interventions, referral resources and contacts as well as on other current issues affecting refugee children 0-6 years old and their families.
- 2.6. Liaise and co-operate with other relevant STARTTS staff working with children 0-6 years old with their families or communities on joint projects of benefit to the target communities.
- 2.7. Liaise and consult with relevant staff working within external early childhood services in order to provide support and develop specific interventions for refugee children and their families.
- 2.8. Participate in a process of capacity building and development of early childhood projects in the target areas.

3. Training

- 3.1. In association with the STARTTS Training Team, assist in providing consultancy, or assist in conducting training programmes or workshops, for service providers working with refugees, in particular on the issues affecting refugee children 0-6 years old with their parents, as agreed with the Clinical Services Team Leader.
- 3.2. Provide input to development of training materials relevant to the needs of services working with refugees, and in particular the issues faced by children 0-6 years old with their families.
- 3.3. Supervise, or assist with supervision of, Early Childhood Education or other students, as required.

4. Administration

- 4.1. Ensure that required workload, including individual counselling, group work and Community Development (CD) activities, is fulfilled.
- 4.2. Maintain proper medical records of client contact and assessment, referral and follow-up and interventions.
- 4.3.
- 4.4. Participate in STARTTS Early Childhood Network and other networking meetings as required, and share relevant information with other Early Childhood Counsellor/Project Officers (ECCPOs).
- 4.5. Participate in the evaluation of the effectiveness of services provided.

5. Reporting

- 5.1. Provide bi-monthly progress reports to the Clinical Services Team Leader.
- 5.2. Assist with project coordination, evaluation and reporting activities of projects undertaken.

6. Personnel

- 6.1. Participate in STARTTS Performance Management program and in the development of an annual Work Plan.
- 6.2. Be an active participant in team meetings to maximise contribution to the work of the team.
- 6.3. Participate in STARTTS staff meetings and other relevant meetings.
- 6.4. Work to ensure professional and co-operative working relationships within own team and with other departments across STARTTS.
- 6.5. Participate in identifying quality improvement initiatives/strategies.
- 6.6. Attend and participate in all training opportunities identified for the role.
- 6.7. Liaise with and seek senior advice as required.

7. As a STARTTS employee you are expected to:

- Have commitment to Human Rights, EEO, WHS and Safe Work Practices.
 - Carry out the role and responsibilities in a manner that is consistent with delegations, policies, procedures and operations systems of STARTTS and in line with STARTTS Code of Conduct.
 - Maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion in relation to all STARTTS matters.
 - Actively seek to improve skills and knowledge that will benefit the organisation.
 - Project a professional image at all times and in all situations.
 - Undertake any other duties that may be required within the area of work.
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Equal Employment Opportunity and Staff Relationships:

- STARTTS is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and encompasses its philosophy and practice.
- STARTTS rejects racism and sexism in all its forms and is committed to the elimination of racial and gender discrimination including direct and indirect racism and sexism, racial vilification, and harassment.

STARTTS Workplace Policies

You must observe and comply with the provisions set out in any and all written policy, practice or procedure of STARTTS. A breach of STARTTS’ policies, practices and procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of your employment.

Work Health & Safety responsibilities:

- Comply with STARTTS WHS policies and procedures.
- Work with due care and consideration to safeguard your own health and safety and the health and safety of others, and to report to your Supervisor any potential hazards, mishaps, incidents or injuries that may occur or become aware of during the course of work.

Risk management responsibilities: All staff have a responsibility to identify any risks (i.e. the chance of something happening that will have an impact on the objectives of the organisation) in the course of their work and to inform their supervisor, as per the *STARTTS Risk Management Policy and Program*.

Smoke-free Workplace

STARTTS is completely smoke-free. This means that smoking is not allowed in any STARTTS’ buildings, vehicles or grounds, there are no designated smoking areas. As an employee you are required to comply with the ‘Non-smoking’ Policy.

I have read the **Early Childhood Counsellor/Project Officer** Position Description, understand its contents and agree to work in accordance with the requirements of the position. I understand and accept that I must also comply with STARTTS’ policies and procedures and can be required to work in any location under the jurisdiction of STARTTS.

I also agree to strictly observe STARTTS’ policy on confidentiality of client information or such other sensitive or confidential information that I may come across in the course of my employment.

Employee Name: _____
Please print

Employee Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Jorge Aroche

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

The review for this Position Description is due: November 2024