



POSITION DESCRIPTION

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

POSITION NUMBER: 1045-1

Date reviewed/created: February 2024

POSITION TITLE: Direct Services Child & Adolescent Counsellor / Project Officer

TEAM: Direct Services Program – Rural and Regional – Northern Region of NSW

LOCATION: Newcastle (with provision of counselling in Armidale and other Rural & Regional areas, requiring fortnightly travel)

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.

VACCINATION REQUIREMENT: Category A

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

Direct Services Teams Counsellors are responsible to provide service to a diverse client age population across NSW, including children and adolescents.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Responsible to: Direct Services Rural and Regional Team Leader Northern Region
2. Responsible for: Nil.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Essential Criteria:

1. Relevant tertiary qualifications in counselling, social work, behavioural or social sciences, psychology, or a related field with eligibility for membership of the relevant professional association.
2. Demonstrated understanding of refugee issues, and the effects of torture and trauma on families, children, and adolescents from a refugee background.
3. Demonstrated ability to conduct individual assessment and short to medium term interventions with children and adolescents.
4. Demonstrated experience in running groups with children and adolescents.
5. Demonstrated understanding of the NSW Education system and needs of children and adolescents.
6. Excellent oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills and proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office and relevant experience in conducting training and the ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team within a multicultural environment.
7. Demonstrated advocacy and community development skills and experience.
8. Current NSW Driver's License.

Desirable Criteria:

1. Relevant experience in conducting consultancy and support to school counsellors and teachers working with refugee children and adolescents.
2. Community development skills and experience in a multicultural context.

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

VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

***This role is a Category A role.** It is mandatory for Category A workers to meet and maintain the vaccination criteria (as per the current NSW Health and STARTTS policies) including annual Influenza vaccinations. Two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine will be required to provide a record of your COVID-19 vaccination status. *If successful you must provide evidence of vaccination.*

Additionally, vaccination and/or assessment is required for Category A workers for the following transmissible diseases – measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox), hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) and tuberculosis. *If successful you must also provide evidence of vaccination and/or assessment.*

Should you not be able to comply with vaccination requirements before your commencement date, the offer of employment may be withdrawn.

If you have a medical reason for why you cannot be vaccinated, a medical contraindication evidence will be required.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ROLE

This role provides individual/group treatment to children and adolescents and liaising with schools in the area. While the primary location is Newcastle, the Child & Adolescent Counsellor / Project Officer will be required to provide counselling in Armidale and other Northern NSW Rural and Regional areas, which involves fortnightly travel.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide a psycho-social and psychological assessment and referral service to refugee families, children and adolescents in NSW.
2. To provide short to medium term counselling and support services to refugee families, children and adolescents.
3. To provide group work (Clinical and Community Development), regularly attend STARTTS' Youth Camps.
4. To work closely with the STARTTS School Liaison Officer providing support to local schools, by developing projects for refugee children.

5. To resource other Direct Services (DS) Counsellors across DS teams with information, assessment techniques, short term interventions, referral resources and other current issues affecting refugee children, adolescents and their families.
6. In conjunction with other DS staff to develop and maintain productive partnerships between the DS Teams and other services throughout NSW relevant to the needs of newly arrived refugees, particularly those services working with children and adolescents, to ensure effective case co-ordination.
7. To provide consultancy and/or training to other service providers working with refugees, especially on issues affecting refugee children and adolescents.

PRIMARY DUTIES:

1. Assessment and Counselling

- 1.1. Provide a psycho-social and psychological assessment and referral service refugee families, children and adolescents.
- 1.2. Undertake training in use of the Refugee Comprehensive Assessment Tool (R-CAT) and utilise this tool when conducting assessments with refugee families, children and adolescents.
- 1.3. Support refugee families to develop a clear understanding of the issues which may affect them and their children, and to understand what services are available to them.
- 1.4. Work together with other STARTTS staff to develop culturally appropriate strategies to engage children and adolescents in counselling and group work.
- 1.5. Provide short to medium term counselling and family interventions to adolescents, children and their families and identify needs for further referrals.
- 1.6. Co-ordinate and follow-up the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) referrals of refugee families, adolescents, and children to mainstream health service providers, the Refugee Health Service, and/or relevant settlement services as determined by client need.
- 1.7. Promote on-arrival counselling services in conjunction with HSS Case Coordinators to newly arrived refugee families, adolescents and children through an information strategy including community information sessions, printed information in community languages and community radio. This includes translation of relevant information regarding STARTTS services where appropriate.
- 1.8. Introduce and conduct group programs (such as the Jungle Tracks, Settling In and Families in Cultural Transition (FICT) program) specifically designed to assist children and adolescent to address certain areas of their needs.
- 1.9. Maintain proper medical records of client contact and assessment, referral and follow-up and interventions.
- 1.10. In conjunction with other DS counsellors, develop and maintain productive partnerships between STARTTS' Program Areas and other services throughout NSW relevant to the needs of refugee children, adolescents, and their families to ensure effective service provision.
- 1.11. Prepare presentations on particular cases for discussion at weekly clinical meetings on a roster basis.
- 1.12. Provide counselling in Armidale and other Northern NSW Rural and Regional areas, which involves fortnightly travel.

2. Child and Adolescents Related

- 2.1. Develop and maintain productive partnerships with existing mainstream child and adolescent health services by strengthening STARTTS established referral network of child and adolescent health services. Attend relevant network meetings.
- 2.2. Resource other DS Counsellors with information, assessment techniques, short term interventions, referral resources and contacts as well as on other current issues affecting refugee children, adolescents and their families.
- 2.3. Liaise and co-operate with other relevant STARTTS staff working with children and adolescents on joint projects of benefit to refugee young people.

- 2.4. Liaise and consult with relevant staff working within the NSW school system in order to provide support and develop specific interventions for refugee children and adolescents.

3. Training

- 3.1. In association with the STARTTS Training Team, conduct training programs for service providers working with refugees, in particular on the issues affecting refugee children and adolescents.
- 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 refugee children and adolescents.
- 3.3. Provide consultancy to other service providers working with refugees, especially on issues affecting refugee children and adolescents.

4. Reporting

- 4.1. Provide bimonthly progress reports to the Team Leader.
- 4.2. Prepare other reports as required.

5. Personnel

- 5.1. Contribute to the STARTTS strategic planning process and report on relevant Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 5.2. Participate actively in the STARTTS Performance Management program and contribute to the development of an annual work plan that aligns with the organisation's Strategic Plan.
- 5.3. Be an active participant in team meetings to maximise contribution to the work of the team.
- 5.4. Participate in STARTTS staff meetings and other relevant meetings.
- 5.5. Work to ensure professional and co-operative working relationships within own team and with other departments across STARTTS.
- 5.6. Participate in identifying quality improvement initiatives/strategies.
- 5.7. Attend and participate in all training opportunities identified for the role.
- 5.8. Liaise with and seek senior advice as required.

6. 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.

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.
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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 **Direct Services Child & Adolescent 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: February 2026