

YOUTH HOUSING AND MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE

YAC values diversity in all its forms and welcomes applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people; those from ethnically diverse communities; and LGBTIQ+ persons.

Position overview	
Award:	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHCADS) – Level 4 / Level 5 (depending on experience)
Purpose:	To support the implementation of a new project – Positive Moves (Youth and Family Advocacy Support Program) Provide specialised case work support for young people 14-19 years who have no stable housing to transition to and/or sustain housing, in particular young people exiting the justice system and addressing emotional, psychological and social well-being.
Location:	16 Peel Street, South Brisbane
Hours:	22 hours per week (<i>must be able to work between the hours of 6am and 8pm, Monday to Friday</i>)
Term:	Fixed term contract to 30 June 2026
Applicants should note:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role involves working with young people and families with significant and complex issues. YAC supports the wellbeing of its staff who are encouraged to access regular supervision, including external supervision. The role includes significant travel within Brisbane (a car is provided) There is an expectation that staff will be reliable and punctual, both within the office and in responding to young people and their families, and support diversity and respect in the workplace and their practice. 	
Role and responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide specialised case management, needs assessment, case planning and outreach support to young people 14-19 years who have no stable housing to address their legal, mental health and housing needs, with a particular focus on young people in the justice system. Provide flexible support to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage with young people in a range of outreach locations (including youth detention and prison) undertake needs assessment with young people to identify their needs and goals young people exiting the justice system to transition to stable housing. navigate and access tailored community and other supports (in particular, connect with health and well-being supports) to assist a young person's capacity to improve their health and wellbeing and housing is sustained. provide coordinated, innovative and client centred responses to young people. undertake specialised case management and outreach support to achieve housing sustainment and build skills and resilience. build knowledge and self-advocacy skills to enable young people to effectively communicate and understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, resolve tenancy issues and improve their capacity for independence. Being a strong advocate for young people, and their families where appropriate, in relation to their needs and interests and ensuring that their voices are heard. Work collaboratively with other stakeholders to ensure coordinated and holistic support. Build relationships within the community to identify flexible and innovative accommodation and support options. 	

- Completion of all administrative recording and reporting in relation to the above to ensure accountability to funding body.
- Other duties as reasonably required.

Required skills & qualifications

Prerequisites

1. a university level qualification in Social Work, Human Services or other relevant discipline and at least three years working in a relevant environment – eg. housing, mental health **OR** a youth work qualification plus at least five (5) years' work experience in similar roles.
2. a current positive Working with Children check ("Blue Card")
3. a current clean driver licence which allows you to drive in Queensland
4. Australian citizenship or permanent residency or hold a visa which would allow you to work as advertised

Essential

Demonstrated:

1. Significant experience in working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who are in the justice system.
2. Ability to work with young people in an outreach capacity, including those with complex needs, and with their families where appropriate.
3. High level of interpersonal, oral communication and advocacy skills.
4. High level ability to apply effective case management strategies, including assessment, case plan development, referral, and networking/engagement with relevant stakeholders
5. Cultural capability, particularly in engaging and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, families and communities of peoples of CALD backgrounds.
6. Ability to work autonomously, and to work as part of a small team
7. Excellent time management and record-keeping skills, advanced computer literacy skills including use and maintenance of cloud-based computer systems and software programs including Microsoft 365 and Adobe suite, and database coordination and reporting
8. Effective organisational skills including self-management, planning, and prioritisation and the ability to work under pressure
9. Commitment to Social Justice and human rights principles, particularly in relation to children and young people.

Desirable

1. Sound knowledge of the criminal justice system, youth accommodation and family support sectors.
2. Ability to provide tenancy information / self-advocacy workshops to young people in conjunction with other team members.

Framework and practice principles

Client centred - staff will be flexible in terms of meeting with young people and their families, going to where they may feel most comfortable. Staff may need to be available before and after formal office hours.

Strengths based – the Service will draw on the strengths and resources of the individual and community to address the challenges they face.

Trauma informed - the Service will be trauma informed, recognizing the impact of early years' trauma on brain development and the need to identify trauma informed behaviours.

Culturally competent – the Service will align with the Australian Institute of Criminology’s National Crime Prevention Framework’s best practice guidelines for preventing involvement in crime for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Persistent - means being visible to young people and showing that you are available to support in a non-paternalistic or patronising manner. Responses will include continuing to work collaboratively with services within the local service system and being visible to groups or at places until rapport is established. It also means being persistent in advocating for the needs of the young person where that intervention is agreed.

Reliable - is another fundamental: many vulnerable and disadvantaged young people feel let down by the adults around them. Building rapport with young people means showing that you are reliable in your support: staff must be where they say they will be when they say or do what they say they will do.

Practical - will be a key part of the case plan developed with the young person. This also means that responses must be realistic. A young person must feel that they are moving forward and effecting change in their lives and this means strategies and outcomes must be practical and achievable.

Comprehensive - recognised that a holistic response to young people’s life challenges is the only way to effect change.

Additional Information for Applicants

This is a great opportunity to join a well-respected community legal and social welfare agency and play your part in helping young people and their families to get their lives back on track!

YAC is a community legal and social support agency that provides free and confidential support to young people who are involved in or at risk of being involved with the youth justice system, child protection system, or homelessness in Queensland.

Vision

Young people achieve their full potential through the community accepting collective responsibility for their importance, empowerment, rights, well-being and humanity.

Mission

To increase young people’s access to legal and social justice by actively supporting and speaking out with and for young people.

Philosophy

- Unconditional commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Confidential, professional and honest engagement with young people
- Respectful engagement with stakeholders and others for the benefit of young people
- Holistic responses to address the interconnected and interdependent issues in young people’s lives
- Advocacy for young people collectively as well as individually
- Collective responsibility as a staff for working as a team and upholding and delivering on YAC’s mission and philosophy

For more detail about YAC and its programs, please see our Annual Reports on our website – www.yac.net.au/About/Governance