



Our Vision

Life is great for children and young people

Our Mission

Provide a range of support services for children and young people who have not had a fair deal in relation to housing, homelessness, mental health and participation

Our Ethos

We need each other to make life work

Our Values

We make our own choices

We take risks

We make mistakes and learn

We recognise our differences and challenge judgments

Introduction on MACS Children's Therapeutic Community:

MACS have established a Therapeutic Community (Home/House) for 3 children aged between 6-13 years old. The children can live in the House for 2 years. The House is in a rural setting; approximately 15mins car journey from Belfast.

The children referred will have experienced significant trauma and will therefore show us complex needs and extreme behaviours. Their needs and risk taking behaviours cannot be met in mainstream Children's Homes or Foster Care. This is a fast paced Service and the team will need to be capable of responding to arising behaviours in a compassionate, skilled and flexible way. This Service works to a Trauma Informed Model. We do not take a punitive approach when working with risk or challenging behaviours. When children show us their pain and fear through their complex, and often extreme behaviours, we respond with confidence and compassion, applying interventions as agreed in therapeutic planning and seek out natural consequences as appropriate. We are informed by 'Connection before Correction'. In any role in the House staff will be expected to have the skills, experience and resilience to work with a range of very challenging and complex behaviours including (this is not an exhaustive list); Sexualised behaviour, sexualised behaviour towards others; making allegations; spitting; running away/hiding; prolonged periods of distress and anger; rages; enuresis; cruelty to animals; biting, hitting, hair pulling, slapping, nipping, punching, kicking; road safety risk; throwing and breaking household items; damaging personal items; theft.

This is an exciting opportunity for MACS to deliver something brand new and ground-breaking in Northern Ireland. We have completed extensive research into the needs of these children, taking into account the views of young people who have been through the Care system and from professionals working in the field. We strive to maintain a multi – disciplinary team drawing on those from Social Work, Youth Work, Teaching and Psychology, as well as people who have a range of relevant experience working with children and young people who have experienced trauma. Sensory Processing, Trauma and Attachment theories will underpin all interventions with the children.

We will be using the Just Right State model which facilitates the process of self-regulation through the use of sensory activities, food and an enriched environment. The model is based on the principle that when somatosensory based experiences are incorporated into daily life routines, the child will learn to develop the capacity to remain regulated in activities that have been challenging for them.

In order to emulate a family environment and to provide vital consistency, caring and safety a staffing model based on longer hours will be essential. 'House Parents' will live at the House, alongside the children for 5 consecutive 24 hour periods followed by the same off i.e. 5 days on and 5 days off; Activity Workers and Day House Parents have a working pattern that spans days, evenings and weekends on a rotational basis.

Activity based interventions will be core to the life of the House and for each child. Activity workers and Day House Parents will be the main link with statutory partners, family, education / schools,

doctors, clubs and networks etc. therefore mirroring what happens in any ordinary household. A range of clinically informed structured and semi structured play based interventions will be led by these workers. Activity Workers provide what is widely known as a 'key worker' role.

House Parent Support Staff (Sessional Workers) will provide support to House Parents when planned or unplanned absences arise. They will support with maintaining the House routine (shopping, cooking, cleaning, covering breaks, facilitating access to a range of meetings) and children's routines (supporting them to travel to and attend events / school, holding boundaries, completing morning / bedtime routines, working therapeutically to meet needs / manage risk).

All staff will be expected to maintain records and adhere to the range of systems and processes in place to support communication, implementation of Care Planning and manage risk and to ensure that the House is in good safe repair.

The staff team will be skilled and experienced in areas of personal and emotional resilience, communication, showing love and compassion, maintaining routines that work for children, needs and risk assessment, self-reflection, use of self, working autonomously, giving and receiving feedback and understanding personality types within a team.

There will be no cooks or cleaners - as living in any family home the team will be expected to run the House involving the children where applicable.

The staffing model consists of:

- 6 House Parents; 3 on together for a minimum of 5 consecutive 24 hour periods followed by the same off i.e. 5 days on and 5 days off.
- 2 Part Time House Parent Support Workers (providing annual leave and unforeseen absence cover)
- 1 Day House Parent
- 3 Activity workers to work with the children during the day and to liaise with statutory partners and outside agencies where applicable ('Key Worker' role).
- A number of House Parent Support Staff (Sessional workers)
- A House Lead
- A part time Clinical Psychologist.
- **A Service Manager (Registered Manager) who will have overall responsibility for the House.**

MACS Children's Therapeutic Community

JOB DETAILS

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| JOB TITLE: | House Parent Support Staff |
| CONDITIONS: | Casual Contracts |
| RESPONSIBLE TO: | Service Manager |
| LOCATION: | Dundrod, Co. Antrim |
| WORKING PATTERN: | There are a range of working hours available from 8 or 12 hour day and weekend shifts, as well as a range of 24 hour sleep in shifts, up to 5 days working pattern to cover House Parents. This will include weekends and bank holidays. |
| SALARY: | £9.00 per hour |

It will be a requirement of this post to be registered with the Northern Ireland Care Council (NISCC).

OVERALL PURPOSE

To ensure each child experiences a warm, loving and nurturing home environment. As part of a team you will be required to implement the therapeutic interventions as assessed by the Clinical Psychologist and relevant professionals including the Trust.

The service manager is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the service.

Just right state philosophy – The Just right programme looks at the use of sensory activities and foods, to help children learn how to self-regulate their emotional states and behaviour. It refers to the capacity of being able to achieve and maintain an appropriate level of arousal, whether it's the calm alert state required for engagement of any sort, or calm relaxed state for resting and sleeping. The ability to regulate our levels of arousal is essential for everyday function and even survival.

Self-managing Team – You will be required to work in partnership with a team that is self-managing. This means that the team are encouraged to make the day to day decisions that promote the effective working of the home. Where appropriate, you will be expected to contribute to the MACS decision making model when core staff are making significant decisions. This model places emphasis on seeking advice from experts both within the team, the children and externally. In order to work alongside a self-managing team, you need to be self-sufficient and be able to organise your own work, be perceptive both towards your fellow team players and the children.

This Job Description demonstrates the job role, who you will be accountable to in carrying out your duties and an explanation of why.

| Job role | Accountable to | Why? |
|---|---|---|
| Carry out day to day chores to run a home as agreed by the team and children and work within an agreed budget. | Children Team members on shift with you | To create a warm and loving environment. Fairness, balance of work load. |
| Ensure that your practise promotes normalised living and adheres to the House Policy and Procedures. | Children Social Services | Ensure continuity of care and approach. Maintenance of clear boundaries and routines. Maintenance of faith and trust in our quality of practice. |
| Nurture within a warm and loving environment. This includes all the normal routines a family home would have. | Children | Traumatised children need security, predictability, love and a non-judgmental attitude. |
| To be resilient and can project containment and confidence when working with intense trauma based behaviours (sexualised behaviour towards other children / workers, spitting, running away, lashing out, physical assault, biting, prolonged periods of distress and anger, catastrophic rages, fire fascination, enuresis, cruelty to animals). | Children Team Clinical Psychologist | Consistent and fair approach to all children, focusing on the child's needs and not the behaviour No one avoids dealing with challenging behaviour – there is a fair and consistent approach To use their expertise in relation to their deepening your own capacity for resilience, containment and confidence |
| Adhere to HR Policy and Procedures. | Team | Ensure effectiveness and harmony of the team. |
| Maintain Health and Safety Standards as stipulated in the Children's home standards 2006. | Children RQIA | To avoid risk of significant harm. Retain Registration. |
| To support the administration and management of Medication. | Children RQIA Team | To avoid risk of significant harm and stress. Retain Registration. Risk of miss-medicating and malpractice. Compromising other staff if they do not have correct information. Potential investigation into practice across the team. |
| To help the child with homework and their overall learning experience | Children | Attainment of a basic right to education. |
| Reflection and professional development both individually and as part of the team. | Children Clinical Psychologist Team | Better insight into the child's traumatised behaviour. Awareness of your own triggers and what to do Development of resilience in practice. A clinical and theoretical perspective that guides practice and professional development. To hold each other to account. To give each other honest feedback. |

| Job role | Accountable to | Why? |
|--|--|---|
| Recording and communicating in line with statutory requirements. | Children Social Services Service Manager | The child understands why information is shared with outside agencies. Corporate Parent. Ensure statutory requirements are met. |
| Ensure child is safe and protected and have a full understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding. | Children Social services Service Manager Team | The child understands when child protection actions need to be taken. As corporate parent – Social services are ultimately responsible for the child’s welfare. Ensure statutory requirements are met. Ensure child is safe and protected. |
| Any other duties that may be required. | Team Service Manager | To be a good team player Responding to arising needs of the service and always putting children first |

PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS:

We are looking for someone who is:

- Passionate about caring for children and getting the best for them.
- Who is compassionate to a child’s and team member’s needs.
- Resilient and can stay motivated in an at times challenging but rewarding environment.
- Nurturing and kind to the children, the team and the wider community.
- Adaptable to meet the needs of the community, working flexible hours.
- Good fun and a team player.
- Willing to be a part of and embrace community life and who will actively engage with our strong routines and rituals.
- Willing to be challenged personally and professionally.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

| SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY POST HOLDER | |
|---|------------------|
| CRITERIA 1 | |
| 2 years' experience of working with children / young people who have experienced significant trauma and an understanding of the associated behaviours. | ESSENTIAL |
| CRITERIA 2 | |
| Experience of working with children and young people who display aggressive and distressed behavior. | ESSENTIAL |
| CRITERIA 3 | |
| Ability to reflect on practice; take feedback and learn from mistakes. | ESSENTIAL |
| CRITERIA 4 | |
| Experience of working compassionately with children and young people in a group setting. | ESSENTIAL |
| CRITERIA 5 | |
| A full current driving licence and access to a car is required so as to be able to meet the requirements of the post in full. | ESSENTIAL |
| CRITERIA 6 | |
| Experience of working with children and young people in a residential setting (children's home, leaving and aftercare, Hospitals, residential centres, respite centres) | DESIRABLE |