

Job Description– Therapeutic Children’s Support Worker, Refuge

Reporting to:	Children’s Team Lead
Location:	Various refuge locations in North West Surrey
Salary:	Circa £25,750-£27,000 pa (full time equivalent based upon 36 hours per week) depending upon experience
Working Hours:	Full time 36 hours per week, Monday to Friday
Special Conditions:	Emergency on-call/out of hours helpline rota responsibilities (for which an additional shift allowance will be received). Post holders must live within maximum 45 minutes driving distance from our offices in Woking. This is so that occasional emergency on call rota responsibilities can be fulfilled in the event of callout to our premises to provide urgent support. Clinical supervision provided during working hours.

A full driving licence and use of a reliable car for work purposes is essential.

Please note that this job description is not a definitive list of tasks but is designed to give an overview of the role. All employees are expected to undertake reasonable additional duties as required and to understand that job descriptions develop and change over time.

Purpose of the post: To be responsible for developing and providing a service, across two refuges, to children of both pre-school and school age who have been adversely affected by domestic abuse and subsequently may have experienced multiple or extensive Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Through therapeutic support and play, the aims are to help children understand the abuse was not their fault; to rebuild self-esteem and develop confidence and emotional resilience, as well as improving the emotional relationship between mother and child.

Overall Outcomes:

- To improve the social skills and help build confidence
- To improve the mother and child relationship
- To enable children to experience safe and secure attachment styles
- To increase the self-esteem of children in refuge

Key duties and responsibilities:

Service Delivery

- Act as DDSL in refuge under the guidance of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with responsibility for ensuring team adherence to refuge safeguarding procedure, appropriate actions and record keeping.
- Group work and 1:1 sessions utilising a range of different creative media to provide opportunities for communication and self-expression, in a safe and nurturing environment.
- To be responsible for developing child centred support and safety plans in conjunction with the mother and refuge colleagues to encourage future emotional resilience.
- Provide advocacy support with a child-centred focus in dealing with external voluntary and statutory agencies (e.g. social services, schools, health professionals).
- Proactively seek feedback and input from the child and mother to aid the progression of support and service development.
- To work with the women in refuge to develop improved parenting and bonding skills that may have been impacted by the abuse they have experienced.
- To be responsible for managing and developing a team of volunteers ensuring motivation, encouragement and retention to help support the children's service.
- To be aware of the impact of ACEs on the children who come into refuge and how this can impact their physical/emotional/psychological wellbeing.

Resource Management

- To be responsible for the upkeep and presentation of the children's play rooms and outside play facilities, including appropriate storage and distribution of all child related charitable donations.
- Provide a range of accurate monitoring information for the Therapeutic Services Lead, Children's Team Lead and funders including attendance registers, outcomes information and other data as required. To proactively develop the service through data analysis and to maintain appropriate records.
- At all times to work in a safe and efficient manner, to be aware of health and safety policies, ensuring the safety of service users and team members.

Overall responsibility and development

- Plan an active role in team meetings and proactively progress actions as agreed for the development of services.
- Ensure the safety of all who work with and use the YS services – in particular by the support and active development of our policies and procedures with regard to (but not limited to) confidentiality, child protection, safeguarding, health & safety, equality & diversity.
- To be responsible for furthering the strategic aims of YS and all its services as part of on-going personal objectives and performance.
- To be flexible as required in order to provide continuity of all YS services.

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Person Specification

Applicants will need to be committed to the aims & objectives of Your Sanctuary and demonstrate our values. Applicants must be able to develop an understanding of domestic abuse and the needs of children & young people affected by domestic abuse.

A strong commitment to equal opportunities and the potential to understand particular needs and expectations of children from different backgrounds will be required.

The Your Sanctuary values are:

Compassion – to have an understanding of the experiences of survivors of domestic abuse and others coupled with a determination to support and help

Empowerment – to work alongside survivors and colleague to achieve autonomy, self determination, and space for action

Collaboration – working together with survivors, colleagues, agencies and the wider community to achieve our aims

Non-judgemental – to be accepting, understanding and respectful of other's experiences, decisions and values

Essential

Knowledge and Experience

- Experience coordinating the delivery of a service working directly with children, young people and their families
- Experience of working directly with children, young people and their families (paid or voluntary) and managing your own caseload.
- Knowledge and understanding of child development
- Experience of working with children and young people through a range of difficult situations and supporting them accordingly
- Experience of working therapeutically with children and young people
- Knowledge of Safeguarding Children, Child Protection legislation and legal responsibilities
- Knowledge of the Children Act 1989 and 2004, issues surrounding child contact, residence and other relevant legislation
- Understanding of, and commitment to, equal opportunities in practice

Skills and Abilities

- The ability to empower & support colleagues
- Able to work under own initiative
- Strong organisational skills
- Take responsibility for prioritising and organising own caseload
- Able to work under pressure

- Able to problem solve – to prioritise and deal effectively with planned and unforeseen eventualities
- Able to maintain professional boundaries
- Good communication skills: written and verbal and effective negotiation skills
- Hold a current driving licence and have access to a car
- Computer literate: word processing, email etc.
- Able and willing to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary partners
- Able to set up and run support and therapeutic groups for children and young people

Personal Qualities

- Proactive
- Compassionate and non-judgmental
- Willingness and commitment to undertake regular training and qualifications deemed relevant to the role
- Ability to work as part of a team and motivate others

Other

- Be prepared to deliver training and awareness raising presentations to other statutory and voluntary agencies and professionals with the support of your line manager
- Be prepared to undertake flexible working when required to fulfil the responsibilities of the role
- Be able and willing to produce monthly activity reports for the Trustees and management team and work with line managers to ensure specific projects are delivered on time and within budget

Desirable

- Awareness of domestic abuse and its effect on children & young people
- Experience of planning a programme of activities for children and young people
- Understanding of attachment-based practice, neuro science, and protective behaviour strategies.
- Experience of working within an ethical framework.
- Knowledge/Understanding of **Adverse Childhood Experiences** and how this impacts the children we support.
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The refuges are located within North West Surrey. Exact locations cannot be disclosed until the post has been offered. Please be aware that the post-holder must live within 30-40 minutes' drive due to on call responsibilities.

It is important that the post holder has the required personal attributes and holds values and ethics in line with those held by YS. As a result, applicants may still be considered for the post if they have alternative experience, qualifications, skills and knowledge which do not directly match with the above requirements.

All post holders will be required to have a DBS check at the appropriate level (generally Enhanced with Barred lists where legally required). Applicants will also need to satisfy the interview panel that they have an objective distance from any personal experience of abuse.