



VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

VOLUNTEER ROLE TITLE	Children's Playgroup and Program Assistant
TEAM/AREA	Jindi Family and Community Centre
PORTFOLIO/GROUP	Children, Youth and Inclusion
REPORTS TO	Jindi Volunteer Manager
VOLUNTEER DAYS/HOURS	Weekdays, as agreed
LOCATION	Mernda

ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE

At the Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL), over 1400 staff and approximately 1,000 volunteers and students support our vision. Our work is focused in Melbourne and Victoria but branches out through our partners to every state and territory in Australia.

In Australia, poverty and disadvantage is experienced more in some communities than others. Our work focuses on places and groups of people experiencing hardship such as early school leavers and the unemployed. We create programs which prevent and alleviate poverty during four key life stages: childhood, adolescence, midlife and retirement.

One of our priorities is to work with state and federal governments and other community organisations to grow our successful programs. Our approach is informed by the best evidence, including the work of our own research and policy department.

PORTFOLIO OR GROUP PURPOSE

Children, Youth and Inclusion Division is one of eight portfolios across BSL, with a key focus on supporting children, youth and families, jobseekers and those newly arrived in Australia.

The Children's Programs area has a specific focus on early years programs, parenting supports, integrated approaches to working with vulnerable communities and evidence-based group program delivery.

This organisational area provides several programs including Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) Australia and BSL, Connie Benn Community Centre, Community Impact, Jindi Mernda Child and Family Centre.

TEAM PURPOSE

BSL and GoodStart Early Learning have partnered to develop new Children and Family Centers across outer Melbourne. The first of these, the Jindi Family and Community Centre, opened in Mernda in January 2015.

The partnership aims to develop new, innovative models to assist children, parents, and communities to grow and thrive. Bringing together BSL's experience in family support and economic participation and GoodStart's experience in providing high quality early learning and social inclusion programs, the partnership delivers integrated support to children and families at a crucial point in their development.

ROLE PURPOSE and IMPACT

As a Children's Playgroup and Program Assistant, you will play a crucial role in Jindi's supported playgroups by building positive relationships with the local families and children and helping the Jindi team run a weekly session. You will also have the unique opportunity to develop and facilitate parts of the session's themed activities, including running story time, with the guidance of the Jindi team.

Though volunteering with the Jindi team, you will play an important role in:

- Enhancing child learning and development
- Improving family and parent/carer wellbeing
- Increasing connectedness to community and other families
- Supporting the BSL team to provide a higher quality program

ROLE TASKS

- Attend the Early Years playgroups or programs
- Welcome families and children into the hall and encourage them to explore the activities and play areas.
- Connect and build positive relationships with the children and caregivers.
- Assist the Jindi team in-session, ensuring the activity areas are neat and appealing for children to play
- Help with manual handling tasks in setting up and packing up of the toys/activities before and after each session.
- Debrief with playgroup or program practitioner after the session
- Where appropriate, develop and facilitate a child's activity or story time, with the guidance of the Jindi team.
- Attend / participate in any role-specific training requirements
- Collaborate with the team to create a positive team environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
- Perform all tasks in accordance with BSL health and safety requirements

This role will involve direct contact with children and/or vulnerable people.

Depending on your experience, skills and training, your supervisor might ask you to undertake other tasks relevant to this role's purpose. All role-specific training will be provided by BSL.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WITH:

- Experience or ability to work in a vibrant and busy group setting
- Ability to work with children and families from diverse backgrounds and support them from a strengths-based perspective
- Understanding of early childhood development.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills in building positive and trust- based relationships with children
- Ability to work independently and effectively within a team environment
- Understanding of and empathy with the values of BSL and GoodStart.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal Liaisons: BSL Children’s Programs staff and other volunteers

External Liaisons: Playgroup attendees, including children and families

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

We embrace diversity and work with people from many cultural and religious backgrounds. We take our Safeguarding responsibilities seriously and we are committed to providing an environment that is safe for children. Our stringent recruitment procedures make sure the safest and most suitable people work with the children in our programs. All successful candidates will undergo a robust screening process prior to starting in a volunteer role. We provide our staff and volunteers with ongoing supervision, support, and training in their work with children and vulnerable people.

CONDITIONS OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

- 1. This role requires both police and working with children checks. Your volunteer role will not begin until the necessary checks are complete.
- 2. Volunteers must take responsibility for their own and others' workplace health and safety and to adhere to policies which keep the Brotherhood of St. Laurence a workplace committed to equal opportunity, free from discrimination and harassment.
- 3. All BSL volunteers must be eligible to volunteer in Australia.

AGREEMENTS

I understand that I am a volunteer who contributes my time and effort without expectation of remuneration.

I understand that as a volunteer I must to adhere to Brotherhood of St. Laurence policies and procedures. I have read BSL's **Code of Conduct** and **Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy** and agree to abide by these policies during my time with BSL.

In the event of injury sustained in performing my volunteer role I understand that I can make a claim against the Brotherhood of St. Laurence's insurance policy for 85% of my non-Medicare costs up to the relevant policy maximums. Activities taken on my own initiative outside of this role are at my own risk.

I will keep all personal or sensitive information about customers and participants, other volunteers and the BSL team in the strictest confidence by only discussing such details within the bounds necessary to undertake my duties and responsibilities as a volunteer with the Brotherhood of St. Laurence.

I have read the above conditions of volunteering with BSL and agree to act in accordance with this agreement.

Volunteer Name: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____