



Athlone Community Services Council CLG

Esker House Domestic Abuse Support Services

Esker House Women's Refuge and Domestic Abuse Service, is a service provided by Athlone Community Service Council CLG (ACSC), operating from Athlone, Co Westmeath. Those who use our Service are women either at risk from an abusive partner or have suffered abuse at the hands of a partner in the past. Our role is to provide a safe space for each woman and her children and then to assist her in exploring options and making decisions which will lead to a better life.

The suite of services we offer is composed of a number of strands:

REFUGE – The refuge has four family units which provide short-term emergency shelter to any woman who is at risk, who is in danger and for whom no other place of safety can immediately be found. The emphasis in refuge is on safety and allowing each woman calm and time to consider her next steps.

SUPPORT SERVICE – working with women who continue to live in the community in their homes and who do not avail of refuge, whether by appointment or drop-in. We offer advocacy or referrals for engagement with other agencies, eg, Intreo, local housing authorities, social services, etc.. ACSC, Esker House offer outreach provision in Athlone and surrounding areas, including Monkland/ south Roscommon.

CHILD AND YOUTH SERVICE – this Domestic Abuse Service offers a dedicated Children's Service, working with children, to manage the impact of abuse and to support in healing and the building of resilience and feelings of safety.

COURT SUPPORT SERVICES – women using our Service often seek support in attendance at court, engagement with legal aid or legal support,

TRAINING & AWARENESS – we are committed to addressing the causes of abuse within our community and to challenging the societal norms that can appear to make abuse acceptable. This is done through our Training & Awareness programme, providing training to statutory and voluntary agencies as well as working with schools, colleges and community partners.



ADVOCACY – ACSC, Esker House Domestic Abuse Service operates from a rights-based approach, and espousing a principle of empowerment. Our work involves advocating with and for each woman, to advance her own case, in addition to providing a voice for women in respect of shared issues.

Job Title: Social Care Worker; Child and Youth Services

JOB DESCRIPTION

Location:	Athlone
Salary:	€38,134
Hours of Work:	37.5 hours per week Monday to Friday (flexible working may be required outside of normal working hours)
Holidays:	20 days per annum (pro rata)
Reporting to:	Co-Ordinator Child and Youth Services

The Successful Candidate

The candidate will have significant experience in the area of child and family support services. A key element of this role will be forming and maintaining professional, nurturing relationships with children and young people who have been subjected to domestic violence and abuse by building trust through active engagement. As a Therapeutic Project Worker, you will provide holistic care and work within a Trauma Informed model with children and young people with high and complex needs within a therapeutic support setting. The successful candidate will have an excellent knowledge and understanding of domestic violence and abuse and the impacts this has on children and young people. The social care worker in the Child and Youth Service will provide support and structured services to children and young people with an emphasis on progressing needs and ensuring the safety and security of children and young people within a refuge setting and community.

Duties:
Support for Children and their Parent/Guardian



- To assist in the development and delivery of a children's support service.
- Offer emotional and practical support to children and their parent/guardian, using an empowerment approach.
- To support and assist children to identify their needs and goals, and to develop a support plan to achieve these goals.
- To support and assist children to carry out their support plan and monitor/review the plan in line with the service case management policy and procedure.
- To ensure that the needs of children are central to the work in accordance with the service standards of the organisation.
- To provide children and young people with a safe environment where they can explore their feelings and experiences, and the impact of domestic violence on their lives using a child centred approach.
- Support mother/guardian in understanding the effects of domestic violence on their children.
- Effect positive changes for children who have experienced domestic violence using evidenced based interventions.
- To create plenty of opportunity for children to engage in non-directed play to explore the playroom environment, choose their own activity and develop relations with other children in their own time and space.
- Provide parenting support to mother/guardian.
- Facilitate group support programmes for children and women who have experienced domestic violence.
- Provide education and information to children and young people regarding healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- To welcome new residents with children to refuge and ensure that the children are familiarised with refuge, practices, services, and activities available.
- To work collaboratively with the refuge keyworkers to best meet the needs of the family while they reside in refuge accommodation.
- To develop and implement suitable programmes to meet the needs of the children in refuge and community services.
- To work in a trauma informed manner with each child/family that comes into the service.
- To ensure that all of the children's support planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes are inclusive of the voice of children and young people and their parent.
- To make referrals as necessary.
- To attend and participate fully in all team planning, meetings, training, supervision as part of your professional development provided by the organisation.



- To advocate for children when appropriate.
- To ensure that all services are delivered in line with best practice standards.
- To participate in Case Conferences/Meitheal's as required.

Communication

- Work collaboratively with other team members to ensure that children and women are provided with an integrated domestic violence service.
- To implement Esker House's policies and procedures at all times.
- To participate in monthly supervision with the Line Manager.
- To participate in team meetings.
- To produce reports and other documents as required
- To participate in training as required
- To adhere to Esker House's quality standards and participate in the performance management systems.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.

Information

- To keep abreast on information, resources and research developments in the area of domestic violence including new methods of work, changes in policy, legalisation, additional supports etc.
- To liaise effectively with other statutory and voluntary bodies.
- To be cognisant of any concerns regarding the protection and welfare of children and to bring them to the attention of Esker House Designated Liaison Person in a timely manner, in keeping with Esker House Child Protection Policies.

Service Administration

- To adhere to procedures relating to client services, data collection and financial management.
- Actively participate in regular evaluation of the services provided.
- Adhere to all relevant national policies including Children's First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.
- To work in accordance with Esker House's analysis of violence against women as a gendered issue.
- To adhere to all practices, policies, procedures, and protocols of Esker House.
- To ensure that the IT system is used for the accurate collection of service data.



- Recognise and monitor job stress and personal needs and take active responsibility for personal well-being in the workplace.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and Skills

- A commitment to the mission, vision, and goals of Esker House
- Clear understanding and analysis of social justice, domestic violence, and other gender-based forms of violence against women.
- Evidence based programmes and approaches to working with children and young people affected by trauma and to demonstrate an understanding of the impacts of trauma on children and young people.
- Current legislation and key policy documents relevant to children and young people including on topics such as children's rights and child welfare.
- Understanding of safeguarding procedures and child protection issues
- Working knowledge of domestic violence and the associated issues facing children and young people
- Assessing the needs and risks to children, young people and their families
- The importance of health and safety within a work environment with children
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills
- Understanding of and commitment to using an empowerment approach to inform work with children and women.
- Ability to use own initiative.
- Effective in working as part of team.
- Good writing and presenting ability.
- Good attention to detail
- Active listening skills
- Good IT skills
- Good record-keeping skills
- Good problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Good time management skills
- Knowledgeable on legal, housing, and social welfare issues
- Good understanding of the issues facing children and families who have experienced/are experiencing domestic violence.



Team Work

- Works effectively with team members to accomplish results.
- Liaises with manager, colleagues, and Board members as necessary.
- Listens and responds respectfully to members of the team.
- Responds constructively to suggestions.
- Implements actions agreed at meetings and supervision follows through on tasks.

Accountability/ Professionalism

- Works in accordance with the ethos and principles of the organisation and ensures others do likewise.
- Adheres to internal procedures in delivering a support service to women and children.
- Maintains confidentiality about the organisation, colleagues and service users.
- Maintains appropriate boundaries with service users.
- Works to promote the strategic goals of Esker House
- Demonstrates good time keeping and attendance practices.

The above Job Description is a guide to the general range of duties and is neither definitive nor restrictive and will be subject to periodic review.

Essential Criteria

- A recognised third level practice qualification in either Social Care, Social Work, or related discipline.
- A clear understanding of domestic abuse as a gender-based crime and understanding of the impacts it has on women and children's lives.
- Ability to work in a non-judgmental, proactive, calm manner.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to work on own initiative.
- Experience of prioritising case load safely and sensitively
- Computer skills with competence in using email, internet, and MS Office (and the ability to learn new applications).
- The ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with colleagues and service users.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.



- Full clean driving license.

Desirable Criteria

- 2 years' experience working with children experiencing trauma in a support role in the area of domestic violence or similar field.
- Experience working with children and families with complex needs.
- Experience in facilitating group work.

Staff Benefits Package

- Work with a supportive engaged team in trauma informed organisation.
- Employer Pension Contribution
- Continuous Professional Development Opportunities
- Access to comprehensive training
- 23 days Annual Leave

Application Process

Please apply by sending a detailed CV and Cover letter for the attention of the Head of Services Deirdre Berry at recruitment@eskerhouse.ie Applications are by email only. Closing Date is 3rd May 2024 @5pm.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please note any offer of a position is subject to Garda Clearance. Esker House along with Athlone Community Services is an Equal Opportunities Employer

This post is funded by Cuan, Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Agency, Department of Justice.

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