



## **Counsellor Job Description and Personal Specification**

### **About Friends of the Family**

Friends of the Family supports local families dealing with adversity to face the future with confidence. We walk beside families, equipping them with the support and skills needed to help themselves.

We have been working in Winchester and district for almost 30 years, and we support families through three main services:

- Mum's and Young Children – provides a non-judgemental, therapeutic group supporting mums dealing with challenges in their lives. Supported by a team of volunteers who take care of the children, this is a safe space for mums and their children enabling them to develop their parenting skills and make positive life choices.
- 5s to 13s Befriending Service provides early support to children and families with difficult home lives, helping them to develop strategies to build a more positive future.
- Support for Dads – many dads experience feelings of inadequacy as a parent, and our qualified male counsellor helps them to cope with challenges in family life.

Our approach is based on getting involved early in the life of a family that is experiencing difficulties, and we work closely with other local services.

### **Counsellor**

We are seeking a counsellor(s) to offer one-to-one support for some of our mums that the charity supports. The mums are supported by two of our services, Mums and Young Children Group and the 5s to 13 Befriending Service.

**Mum's and Young Children Group** – 2.5 hours on a Friday morning, face to face.

You will offer one-to-one counselling for mums who have been supported by our group, helping them to move on; or to mums who have been referred to use but need additional support before joining the group. The successful candidate will need to work closely with the Mum's and Young Children team to ensure that we are offering a holistic support to the mums.

**5s to 13s Befriending Service** – 6 hours on a Thursday starting in September (with scope for the day to be changed to suit the successful candidate).

You will offer one-to-one counselling for mums whose children are being supported by the Befriending Service. This is complementary individual support for our families.

## **Job Description**

### **Counsellor**

#### **Role Purpose**

To provide one-to-one counselling sessions that compliment and support the service delivered by the Mum's and Young Children's Group and 5s to 13s Befriending Service.

#### **Counselling Responsibilities**

- To provide 8 x 50-minute counselling sessions per week to individuals referred via our services and complete the associated administration tasks
- To act in line with Friends of the Family policies and procedures and ethos
- To attend regular clinical supervision provided by Friends of the Family
- Systems and processes and record management - maintain up to date attendance and care records on the Friends of the Family CRM system
- To work with the DSO in relation to incidents or issues relating to safeguarding and main appropriate records in line with Friends of the Family policy
- Impact measurement - to provide information about the impact that the counselling is having on request
- Support the MYC Group Coordinator to ensure a joined-up approach and effective delivery of the service in terms of childcare
- To attend any team meetings as necessary - one per quarter for approximately 2-3 hours.
- To act within the code and ethics of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and work within the boundaries of professional confidentiality and following the policies and procedures of Friends of the family

#### **Personal Specification**

##### **Experience and qualifications**

- Minimum of 3- 5 years' experience in counselling/ psychotherapy with relevant qualification.
- Experience in parenting, building self-esteem, confidence and working with vulnerable families is highly desirable.
- Understanding of mental health diagnosis and how it may impact your work.
- Sound experience of building good relationships and working within a wider team / charity or organisation in a counselling context
- Organised, familiar with IT with good administrative skills
- Relevant experience of working with children and parents in challenging circumstances would be an advantage.

##### **Qualifications**

- Accredited training from a recognised professional body, for example British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), British Psychological Society (BPS).
- Knowledge of, or training in safeguarding would be an advantage. We will provide relevant training in this area as part of your induction.

**Personal attributes**

- A passion for what we do and a desire to make a difference.
- Team player, with an ability to listen and communicate effectively with a variety of stakeholders and people from all walks of life.
- Due to the nature of the mums' that we work with, and that the counselling you provide aims to support the group work, we are looking for someone who enjoys working as part of a team and can make a positive contribution to the charity.
- Empathic listening skills with sound judgement and common sense.
- Resilient and self-aware, able to work with clients who bring multiple challenges and trauma to the sessions.
- Can-do and proactive attitude, able to spot improvements or bring new ideas and best practice to the team.
- Flexible in how you work – we are a small team who all work part time over the course of the week. Ideally you will be someone who thrives working as part of a small team towards a common goal.
- A commitment to working with our Equality and Diversity Policy and an ability to reflect this in your practice.

**Responsible to:**

Operations Director with a close working relationship required with Services you support. Supervision will be provided by Friends of the Family.

**Location:**

This role is based at our offices on Colebrook Street in Winchester on a Friday morning to support the Mums and Young Children Group. The Befriending counselling slots takes place at a central winch location, and there is scope for flexibility on which day this is.

**Working Hours:**

Mum's and Young Children: This role is term time only (39 weeks of the year), initially for 2.5 hours per week. You will need to be available on a Friday between 9.30am – 12pm.

This counselling provision is a new offering that we are introducing to support our families. There is scope in time for an additional 2.5 hours on a Tuesday morning.

5s to 13s Befriending: This role is also term time only, for 6 hours on a Thursday during the day.

Additional hours agreed in advance, for example to attend team meetings would be paid at the hourly rate.

This would be a permanent position, salary dependant on experience and what you can bring to the role. We pay in line with the NHS Agenda for Changes (Band 5).

Please enquire for more information, we are keen to find the right individual(s) to develop this counselling support for our families.

**Conditions of Employment:**

- You will be required to undertake regular supervision which FOTF will provide.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete an enhanced DBS disclosure and provide two references. Mandatory safeguarding training will be provided.

- The counselling sessions are for women who have had very challenging homelives, many of whom come from a backdrop of abuse and negative relationships. Often men play a significant part in these experiences and subsequent trauma. Our services are effective because we build a safe, non-judgemental space with women who have had similar experiences; therefore, it is for the wellbeing of our mums that we are only able to accept female applicants for this role.
- Salary will be dependent on experience and what you can bring to the role.

**Training:**

There will be opportunities to undertake training, and you will be encouraged to take part in available and relevant training, aimed at further developing your practice.

**To apply**

This is an exciting opportunity for the right person to help us on our journey to develop a vital and much needed service in Winchester and make a difference to the lives of mums and their children in our local community.

If you'd like any further information, or for an informal chat to find out more, please contact Jo Smith, Operations Director, on [admin@fotfwinchester.org](mailto:admin@fotfwinchester.org) who will be happy to answer any questions and talk to you further about the vacancies available.

We are accepting applications on a rolling basis with a view to the successful candidate(s) starting at the end of April 2025 for sessions in the summer term. If you are interested, please complete our application form or get in touch as soon as possible.

Thank you for your interest, we look forward to hearing from you.