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New Kids on the Block for MTHCS Early Years Management Team.

With state-wide shortages in early years educators and childcare workers Mallee Track Health and Community Service are holding their own and ready to tackle any challenges with their new Early Years Management Team. The restructure took place in September and has already seen a renewed focus on recruitment to help meet the needs of our growing community.

“Childcare wait lists caused by higher staff to child ratios in the under 3yo space have a ripple effect across the whole community not just the families involved, and we understand how important it is to meet the demand. We’ve got a great track record of growing our own, through staff training and work placement arrangements and now we’re doing even more to support individuals throughout their education journey.

We’ve created two new roles. One being the Family Engagement Officer and we’re very lucky to have Chloe Conforti in the driver’s seat here, a solid point of contact for families. And Carla Grayling has taken on the role of Workforce Development and Ouyen Childcare Manager. Carla will support staff through traineeships and offer additional support to staff who are working towards a qualification. We’ve also been joined by Kc Okoye as our new Administration Officer. In a female dominated industry it’s great to have a male on the team.” says Kyra Nathan MTHCS’ Early Years Manager.

Casey Crothers People and Culture Advisor commented, “We’re a learning organisation, not only do you come to work here but you come to learn. There are attractive employment opportunities for already qualified educators too. We’re currently offering a \$5000 sign-on bonus for diploma qualified early years educators. For individuals that are starting out, we want you to join us for a traineeship. This can be for a mature age person or a school leaver. For those who are already enrolled and studying on their own and want to get practical experience, MTHCS is a great choice to make. Each of our centres has no more than 30 children on site, we’re a small boutique service with a strong connection to local families.

There are so many benefits to living and working in the Mallee and we’ve recently undertaken a joint recruitment campaign with Mildura Base Public Hospital to attract workers to relocate to the area.”

The uniqueness of MTHCS early years offering, is the number of services they offer across six locations covering such a large area across the Mallee. In Sea Lake, Murrayville and Underbool early years services are integrated with both childcare (care) and kindergarten (education).

“The best part of our services is the quality of education and care that we deliver. We have great staff that are always upskilling, the children and the families that we cater for are wonderful ... it’s just a relaxed and engaging environment. We get to watch these children grow from birth to when they go to school in a tight knit community and that’s pretty special!” enthused Nathan.

Lyndal Munro, Director of Community Services highlights the importance of the work being done to expand MTHCS early years workforce. “Our critical need right now, is to attract qualified educators to our services across the Mallee and particularly our Sea Lake Early Learning Centre. A sign on bonus of \$5000 is a real incentive we are offering and shows how serious we are in our endeavours to address shortages as well as continuing to cultivate local staff.

We’ve got many success stories like Annie Brown, who completed a Cert III traineeship with us and has recently received a scholarship from the Foundation of Mallee Track to continue her studies to complete a Diploma of Early Education and Care.

MTHCS is in a unique position to support staff to undertake their Bachelor of Early Education. Not many people get the opportunity to work and study ... that’s what makes it unique. We’ve got five staff in the early years team that are completing their bachelor’s degree. Like Leisa Cronin who started at Mallee Track as a trainee and has just completed her undergraduate qualification, all whilst working and studying online.” says Munro proudly.

“Staff wellbeing is at the forefront of Mallee Track’s people focused culture. Adopting the four pillars of wellbeing: physical, financial, social, and emotional wellbeing, is the key to getting the best from our people. Advocating for a professional, fun and friendly working environment is at the core of our successful and thriving organisation” said MTHCS CEO, Dr Frances Peart.

To speak with the MTHCS Early Years Management Team please contact Mallee Minors (03) 5091 0292 or email earlyyears@mthcs.vic.gov.au

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Contact: Sharon Maloney
Community Engagement
Mobile: 0411 104 598
Email: smaloney@mthcs.vic.gov.au

Images for use: New Early Years Management Team (L to R): Chloe Conforti, Hayley Jackson, Carla Grayling, Kc Okoye, Kyra Nathan.





