



YOUTH HORIZONS | KIA PUĀWAI

*Our youth, our future*

## Functional Family Therapist - Auckland

- Want to make a difference in some of our most at-risk and vulnerable young people?
- Keen to be part of a professional team working together to change lives?

Youth Horizons are looking for Functional Family Therapists to join our Auckland team. If you are looking for a challenge, have clinical experience and want to work for an organisation that is making a difference in the lives of at-risk young people - we'd like to talk with you.

As a Functional Family Therapist, you will play a key therapeutic role in a Ministry of Social Development funded Conduct Disorder Contract for children and young people in the Auckland region. You will engage therapeutically with families, whānau, caregivers and/or other significant people involved in the care of the child or young person to support them to address the child or young person's mental health, emotional and/or behavioural issues and maximise their developmental potential.

You will hold a Bachelor's degree in psychology, psychotherapy, social work, or a related mental health field.

To be successful in this role you will have:

- Cognitive-behavioural therapy or psychotherapy experience operating as a practitioner, in particular working with families, children and adolescents.
- Experience working systemically (especially with families) and inter-sectorally (e.g. in schools and community settings). Demonstrated ability to work as part of a treatment team.
- Ability to build strong relationships with peers and stakeholders
- Experience working with a range of cultures
- Experience working in a computerised office environment
- An understanding of CYF processes
- Strategic focus with a 'whatever it takes attitude'

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an empirically grounded, well-documented and highly successful family intervention programme for youth with behavioural dysfunctions. Applied to a wide range of at-risk youth aged 10-17 and their families, including youth with problems such as conduct disorder, violent acting-out and substance abuse.

### About Youth Horizons

Youth Horizons is a specialised non-profit organisation providing therapeutic services for young people who have complex behaviour and/or mental health needs. Our innovative approach combines evidence-based models of practice along with a focus on our core values of Manaakitanga, Wairuatanga, Aroha and Whanaungatanga. Our national office is in Auckland and we have over 250 staff and caregivers supporting young people and their families and whanau across Northland, greater Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Lower North Island and Lower South Island. To find out more about Youth Horizons, visit [www.youthhorizons.org.nz](http://www.youthhorizons.org.nz)

**For a copy of the position description, or to apply please contact Sophie by email:**

[sophie.k@youthhorizons.org.nz](mailto:sophie.k@youthhorizons.org.nz)

# **Functional Family Therapy (FFT)**

## **FFT Therapist**

### **Position Description**

## Position Purpose

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Youth Horizons is a non-profit organisation providing evidence-based sustainable solutions for young people, children, family/whānau, who are at risk of poor outcomes due to complex behavioural and/or mental health needs. These include young people with conduct disorder/antisocial behaviour and who may have co-morbid mental health issues.

The organisation provides a range of interventions in residential and foster care settings, and intensive clinical support services in the community for adolescents and children with severe behavioural problems and/or mental health issues.

The FFT Therapist will play a key therapeutic role in a Ministry of Social Development funded Conduct Disorder Contract for children and young people in the Auckland region. The purpose of the contract is to provide intensive clinical assessment and treatment services to children and young people who are known to Child, Youth and Family with serious and/or complex mental health, behavioural and/or emotional needs. The FFT therapist will engage therapeutically with families, whānau, caregivers and/or other significant people involved in the care of the child or young person to support them to address the child or young person's mental health, emotional and/or behavioural issues and maximise their developmental potential.

Many of the children and young people will present with a diagnosis or potential diagnosis of Conduct Disorder including coexisting mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) disorders like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), learning difficulties, mood and anxiety disorders, AOD difficulties and suicidality. Improving the wellbeing of these children and young people will have long term flow on effects on their life outcomes including their future education and employment, ability to positively parent their own children and reduced benefit dependency.

The Therapist will generally be required to carry a caseload of 8 to 10 families, providing services from between eight to thirty weeks for each depending on the needs of the family. All team members are expected to take responsibility for efficient service management to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the programme and they are expected to apply the intervention with high levels of FFT model adherence and competence.

## Youth Horizons' Values

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The Articles of the Treaty of Waitangi underpin the development and delivery of all services at Youth Horizons. We are committed to professional practice which demonstrates an understanding of wairuatanga, aroha, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga.

1. Our paramount professional focus is the well-being of the young person within the context of the family/whānau and community:
  - a. We strive to understand their needs
  - b. We treat them and their family/whānau with respect
  - c. We work with families/whānau in ways that lead to sustainable positive change
  - d. We persevere in our attempts to help until we have done all that we are able.

2. We value and engage with the personal, cultural, ethnic and professional differences that exist within our staff and client group:
  - a. We build upon the common concerns that we have for children and their families/whānau
  - b. We value the different perspectives that people bring to our work
  - c. We seek to understand ethnic and cultural similarities and differences, and engage with both.
3. We act with integrity:
  - a. We are honest in our actions
  - b. We are trustworthy
  - c. We are loyal to the organisation and to each other
  - d. We take responsibility for our actions.
4. We are professional in our actions and approaches:
  - a. We take partnership seriously and work collaboratively
  - b. We are always working towards best practice, and emphasise evidence based practice
  - c. We are committed to following the standards set
  - d. We take steps to ensure the safety of all involved
  - e. We are open to feedback and committed to learning.
5. We care for our well-being and that of others:
  - a. We endeavour to keep a balance between our home and work-life
  - b. We establish and nurture supportive working relationships
  - c. We balance the seriousness of our work with humour.

## Position

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FFT Therapist

## Location

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The position is based at the Youth Horizons office in Auckland

## Key Relationships

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**Reports to:** FFT Practice Leader

The reporting structure may periodically change to meet changing organisational needs.

### Internal Relationships

- Regional Manager: Intensive Services Northern
- Leadership Team members
- Other Therapeutic Services Staff
- FFT Team
- Administration Staff
- Learning and Development Manager

## External Relationships

- FFT USA Therapeutic Specialists
- FFT Programme Families
- Related NGOs
- Schools
- Child Youth and Family
- Youth Justice
- Primary Health Care services

## Key Result Areas

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This job is responsible for the following key result areas and tasks:

### Organisation

- Be an outstanding representative of the organisations values, plans, professionalism and commitments.
- Contribute to the culture of the organisation in ways that deliver value for the participants and for Youth Horizons.
- Adhere to Youth Horizons values, code of conduct, relevant legislation, relevant quality standards, organisational policies and professional standards and ethics.

### Role Specific

- Provide family therapy to referred children, young people and their families using the FFT treatment model with a consistently high level of model adherence and competence.
- Contribute to and support the development of a strong, confident, reflective, and open team culture within the FFT therapy team.
- Ensure that all families in the Service receive a high standard of care, consistent with accepted best practice and the agreed model of care.
- Create an extensive stakeholder network. As the role requires you to work independently you will be responsible to ensuring you engage with key stakeholders and maintain effective working relationships with them.
- Be the key liaison with other stakeholders in the family's life, e.g. teachers, justice system, Child Youth and Family.
- Work collaboratively with the FFT consultant in the United States and the local FFT supervisor to ensure a strong therapeutic understanding of the programme.
- Integrate culturally appropriate practices within the FFT Service.
- Integrate other evidence-based or best-practice strategies such as cognitive-behavioural therapy or social learning theory during the behaviour change phase of treatment in order to address identified mental health and behavioural concerns of the child or young person.
- Ensure that the FFT supervisor is kept well informed of the assessments, treatment plans and risk management plans and ensure that these are consistent with and/or adherent to the FFT model.
- Ensure all clinical processes are documented and adhered to, and that clinical record keeping conforms to the audit standards by which the service will be assessed.
- Support the development and ongoing evaluation of best practice clinical/therapeutic interventions within the FFT Programme. Ensure ongoing data collection for clinical and evaluation purposes is timely and comprehensive.
- Provide timely reports to the FFT Supervisor regarding clinical risk, service development needs and practice matters relating to quality and model adherence.

- Engage families who may not want assistance, adapt and individualise programme interventions to utilise family strengths and skills, and empower families to solve their own problems.
- Participate in the development of team members' family treatment plans and assist to revise plans as needed.
- Participate in team supervision and engage in reflective analysis of the work. Be receptive to feedback from supervisor, colleagues and families concerning their therapeutic competence, model adherence and effectiveness.
- Carry a caseload of 8 to 10 families, providing services anywhere from 8 to 30 weeks. Working with families within their own homes, often after hours.
- Attend all team meetings, mandatory training and individual supervision as required.

### **Model Specific – FFT**

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an empirically grounded, well-documented and highly successful family intervention programme for youth with behavioural dysfunctions. Applied to a wide range of at-risk youth aged 10-17 and their families, including youth with problems such as conduct disorder, violent acting-out and substance abuse.

Conducted primarily as a home-based model, it is a treatment technique that is appealing because of its clear identification of specific phases, which organise intervention in a coherent manner, thereby allowing clinicians to maintain focus in the context of considerable family and individual disruption. Each phase includes: specific goals; assessment foci; specific techniques of intervention, and therapist skills necessary for success. The three phases are:

1. The engagement and motivation phase - building alliance between the therapist and each family member and between all family members; reducing negativity and blame; developing a shared family focus to the presenting problems; building hope and an expectation of change.
2. The behaviour change phase - changing individual and family risk patterns through activities both within and outside the therapy sessions in a way that matches the unique relational functions of the family and, is consistent with the obtainable change of this family, in this context, with these values.
3. The generalisation phase - generalise the changes made in the behaviour change phase to other systems, issues and challenges; maintain changes made in generalisation through focused and specific relapse prevention; support and extend the changes made by the family by incorporating relevant community resources into treatment.

### **Stakeholder Management**

- Manage all external relationships to the highest standard of professionalism.
- Collaborate with other teams in the same service/contract group(s) and with other teams working within the same model of practice within Youth Horizons.

### **Health and Safety**

- Ensure adherence to organisation Health and Safety Policy and Practice including but not limited to, as applicable:
  - Monthly vehicle checks

- Report of all accidents, near misses and incidents

#### **Other**

- Undertake any project work required from time to time and any other duties as reasonably directed by the Manager.

## **Qualification Requirements (or equivalent level of learning)**

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The following qualifications are considered important to the effective execution of this role:

#### **Essential**

- Bachelor's degree in psychology, psychotherapy, social work, or a related mental health field.

#### **Desired**

- Master's Degree in psychology, psychotherapy, social work, or a related mental health field.
- Post graduate qualifications in child or family therapy specialty
- Registered health professional under the HPCA Act or Social Work registration

## **Experience**

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The following experience is required for the effective execution of this role:

#### **Essential: The person will have:-**

- Relationship building - building and maintaining relationships with people at all levels, internal and external to the organisation.
- Cognitive-behavioural therapy or psychotherapy - experience operating as a practitioner, in particular working with families, children and adolescents.
- Working systemically (especially with families) and inter-sectorally (e.g. in schools and community settings). Demonstrated ability to work as part of a treatment team.
- Working independently – managing day to day tasks
- Experience in contributing to harmonious and effective bicultural and multicultural working environments.

#### **Desirable**

- Experience with the administrative components of treatment (case documentation) preferred.

## Competencies

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The following competencies are required for the effective execution of this role:

- Teamwork and relationships
- Initiative and innovation
- Cultural awareness
- Organisation commitment
- Communication
- Position specific expertise
- Information technology
- Concern for effectiveness and results
- Leadership and management
- Financial and physical resource management
- Strategic focus

### Change to Position Descriptions

*From time to time it may be necessary to consider changes in the position description in response to the changing nature of our work environment– including technological requirements or statutory changes. This Position Description may be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle or as required.*

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Employee Name/ Position Title

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Date

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Approved: Manager Name/ Position Title

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Date