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## Mallee Family Care highlights social work's value and impact on World Social Work Day

A leading provider of child and family services in the Mallee region is using World Social Work Day to honour the vital impact social workers have in improving the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities.

Mallee Family Care currently employs 30 social work professionals, paid interns and students on placement across the agency and Chief Executive Officer Teresa Jayet said it was important to recognise and amplify their contributions.

“These professionals provide vital services, support, and advocacy to those in need, working tirelessly to address challenges and promote wellbeing in every aspect of life,” Ms Jayet said.

“Whether it’s guiding families through difficult times, offering counselling services, conducting research, or helping clients navigate complex systems, social workers are integral to the mission of our organisation.”

A qualified social worker herself, Ms Jayet said social workers were also critical to the child and family services sector.

“Social work is a challenging yet deeply rewarding profession, and we encourage individuals with a passion for helping others to consider a career in this field,” she said.

Mallee Family Care is dedicated to creating a highly skilled, diverse, and fit-for-purpose child and family services workforce and offers a paid placement program for students undertaking tertiary studies in the field.

“Social workers are needed now more than ever to address the evolving needs of families and communities. The demand for skilled, empathetic professionals is growing, and there are so many opportunities to make a meaningful impact through this career,” Ms Jayet said.

To highlight the diverse nature of the profession and showcase the career pathways that are possible, four Mallee Family Care social workers shared their professional stories on film in the lead up to World Social Work Day.

The videos can be viewed on Mallee Family Care’s YouTube channel and social media pages.

Mallee Family Care team members featured in the videos include:



### Media enquiries

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**Janet Bonython**, Principal Practitioner and Team Leader Early Help Family Services

*“I wanted to pursue social work after seeing the issues that youth were experiencing in the education system. And I wanted to see how I could make their lives better,” Janet said.*

*“What I love about Social Work is being able to advocate for the needs of the people you work with.*

*“Social Work is so diverse and important. You can work in so many different fields, from politics to education, to working in community, to HR. Whatever your passion is, you can pursue that through Social Work.”*

**Sarah Taha**, Senior Family Violence Social Worker

*“I work at the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre,” Sarah said.*

*“The thing I find most rewarding about social work is that whether you’re working directly with people or working in a policy or a research area, you are focusing on the goal of supporting people and supporting the community.*

*“Social work is very challenging, but it is so rewarding at the same time. You work alongside people; you see them heal and grow and make lots of big changes. I love that it is so diverse, and I am contributing to the community.”*

**Kane Alderson**, Manager, Mental Health & Wellbeing Services

*“I have always had a passion for mental health. I studied at La Trobe University in Mildura and my career started at Mallee Family Care in community mental health services,” Kane said.*

*“In my current role I oversee our NDIS services, our suite of mental health services - for people accessing the services themselves - and a service for their carers, family members and loved ones.*

*“I find it really rewarding to work with people and it’s a really privileged position to be in where people are comfortable with you and feel safe to share their stories and experiences with you.*

*“I also find it rewarding to be in leadership roles, to empower workforces, influence change and improve the quality of the services we deliver to our community.”*



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**Rhonda Smith**, Manager, Early Years

*“I’ve been working at Mallee Family Care now for about 17 years. When I first started, I worked in programs with young children – like playgroups, in home learning and other programs with families with young children,” Rhonda said.*

*“I’ve had the opportunity to work with individuals, families, groups and to also work with service systems. I’m passionate about influencing system change and to advocate for the community when systems are making challenges even worse.*

*“I initially started studying a Masters in Social Work at La Trobe uni, but I was balancing that with full time work and raising young children and ended up finding that was a bit too much. So, I stopped for a couple of years and then swapped to distance learning with Charles Sturt uni, studying online, which fitted much better with my work life balance.*

*“Eventually, eight years later, I did graduate, and I am really glad that I stuck in there and was able to finish my qualification.”*

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