

Parent to Parent West

A newsletter for parents of children with a disability or developmental delay (0 –18) and living in the western region of Melbourne.

Term 2, 2022

Contents

Feature Article: Red Flags at MacKillop	2
MacKillop Parent Support Groups	3
COVID-19 Information	5
Carer Support	6
Carer Information, Workshops & Advocacy	7
Podcasts	11
NDIS Information & Workshops	12
Resources for Children and Young People	14
Groups for Toddlers, Children and Young People	18

Carer Gateway Emergency Respite

If you are a carer experiencing an urgent, unplanned, and imminent event that temporarily restricts your ability to continue caring and when no other services are available, call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 for emergency respite.

**Call Carer Gateway 24/7 on
1800 422 737**

Welcome to the Term 2 edition of Parent to Parent West. I hope that your child or children are well settled into the school year and that routines are becoming well established. As always, the purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with up to date and relevant resources and opportunities to help you be the parent or carer you strive to be! (Or at least a close approximation to that, remembering the concept of a 'good enough' parent.)

In this edition, we introduce you to the Red Flag tools. These tools act as conversation starters, helping to build understanding and communication between you and your child's significant adults. This can include teachers, allied health professionals and other adults who play a significant role in your child's life. Parents have found them helpful when discussing their child's behaviour or progress.

Wishing you a fabulous Term 2,

Wendy White

Strengthening Parent Support Program
Facilitator

If you would like to receive this newsletter, please email me at wendywhite@mackillop.org.au or sign up here: [Strengthening Parents | MacKillop Family Services](#)



Feature Article:

Red Flags – Tools to build understanding and communication



Term 2 is an important time of the year for all children. We hope by now that children are settling into their groups and grades; teachers are getting to know each child; children are feeling confident with their teachers; and the relationships between parents and educators are strengthening. These relationships and established routines support children's progress, which is essential after two very disrupted and challenging years. If a child's additional needs haven't yet been identified and adjustments made, this is often the time where parents and teachers have further conversations. This can be instigated by families or educators, dependent on the presentation of concerns and sometimes their severity.

Over my many years working with families, I've had numerous conversations where families have shared their concerns about their child's development. This has included worries about their child's behaviour, learning, emotion regulation or social skills. Parents regularly report that their child's behaviour at childcare, kindergarten or school is very different to at home. Some parents share experiences of frequent 'meltdowns', instances where their child has shut down, shown distress and school refusal.

For some families, educators will raise developmental, behavioural or emotional concerns that are new to a family and may feel unfamiliar and potentially scary. Some school behaviours simply don't reflect a child's behaviour at home.

As a primary school educator and now as a parent educator, the importance of clear and specific information sharing is very clear to me. Basically, communication is key! As a school leader, I wish I had access to [Red Flags School-aged Guide - Supporting conversations and service engagement for children with neurodevelopmental concerns \(health.qld.gov.au\)](#)

I initially discovered this tool when I listened to the Emerging Minds Podcast, [Identifying developmental concerns in school-aged children \(emergingminds.com.au\)](#). I was so impressed by the tools that I contacted and spoke with Susan Pagel. Susan is a Speech Pathologist from Queensland Health, Clinical Excellence Division.

She worked extensively with a diverse team of highly skilled professionals to create the guide. Susan and I had a rich conversation in which we discussed the benefits of families and professionals including school staff and allied health professionals, using this tool as a conversation starter. By raising developmental, behavioural, or emotional concerns about a child, families and professionals create a **shared understanding** of the issues. This collaboration allows them to:

- identify the **area(s) of concern** and the identify the **frequency and severity** of the concerns,
- look at the **impact** or functional aspects of the concerning behaviour,
- determine some **next steps** or **goals** when supporting children, and
- where children are ready, discuss areas of difficulties with them, making these more **visible** to everyone, especially the child or young person.

This tool can also be used to determine referral pathways. Susan explained that if a child is experiencing difficulties in one area, working with one therapist or addressing it specifically may be beneficial. If the child's concerns are across multiple areas, a team may need to provide support.

By being informed and using this evidenced-based tool, conversations can be purposeful, and hopefully reduce some of the frustrations and feelings of not being listened to or understood.

There is also a Red Flag Guide for the Early Years, which is a health resource for professionals supporting children aged 0-5 years. This resource was developed 13 years ago and has been used extensively in Australia. Find out more here: [red-flags PDF \(health.qld.gov.au\)](#).

Feel free to contact me directly to discuss ways to use this tool as a parent, teacher or allied health professional. I'm very happy to help in any way possible.

Wendy White

Strengthening Parent Support Program Facilitator.



MacKillop Strengthening Parents Support Groups

MacKillop Strengthening Parents Support Program SPSP – Parent Support Groups

For parents/carers of a child with a disability or developmental delay aged 0 - 18years. While most of the below groups meet face-to-face, some groups have nominated to continue meeting online for the rest of this year for the flexibility this offers parents.

Mandarin Parent Support Group – Online

A Parent Support group for Mandarin speaking families with children with a disability.

When: First Thursday of the Month, next meeting is **Thursday 5 May**

Time: 10.30am - 12pm

Where: Online via Zoom

Contact: Juliet_xnzhu@hotmail.com or Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au for more information or to book in and receive the Zoom meeting link.

Wyndham Parent Support Group

For families living in the Wyndham area.

Where: Quantin Binnah Community Centre, 61 Thames Blvd, Werribee Victoria 3030

When: First Monday of the month, next meeting is **Monday 2 May**

Time: 10am - 12pm

Contact: Wendy on 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au to book in.

Vietnamese Families Special Needs Group

A vibrant support group for carers of children with a disability living in the west.

When: **Thursdays weekly** except school holidays)

Time: 9:30am - 11:30am

Where: MacKillop Family Services office, 114 Commercial Rd, Footscray.

Contact: Thi on 0448 417 513 or vn.specialneeds@gmail.com
Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au



Moonee Ponds Walk and Talk Parent Support Group

Meet some like-minded parents and have a relaxed chat while you exercise, followed by a coffee!

When: Last Thursday of each month except school holidays, next meeting is **Thursday 26 May**

Time: 10am - 12noon

Where: Queens Park, Curators Collective Café, Moonee Ponds

Contact: Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au

Point Cook Parent Support Group – Online

A newly formed support group for carers of children with a disability living in the Point Cook area.

When: **Monday afternoons**

Time: 4pm - 5pm

Where: Online via Zoom

Contact: Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au

Mackillop School (Maidstone) Parent Support Group

A newly formed support group for carers of children who attend the MacKillop School in Maidstone.

When: Third Thursday of each month, next meeting is **Thursday 19 May**

Time: 10 - 11am

Where: Meeting at a local café, still to be decided

Contact: Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendywhite@mackillop.org.au

Yarraville Special Developmental School Group

Starting this term, this group is for carers of children who attend Yarraville SDS.

Where: Yarraville SDS, 117 Blackwood St, Yarraville.

When: First Thursday of each month, next meeting is **Thursday 5 May**

Time: 1.30pm - 3pm

Where: Yarraville SDS. Go to the office for directions

Contact: Wendy 0448 015 023 or wendy.white@mackillop.org.au

If you are interested in joining any of the above groups or would like to request a group being formed near you, please contact Wendy White on 0448 015 023 or wendy.white@mackillop.org.au

Following are some of MacKillop's other highly successful, evidenced based programs:

Western Regional Parenting Programs Parenting Calendar | Term 2, 2022

Please register to attend by contacting the program contact as specified below.

For our programs via Zoom, a link to the program will be sent via email following your registration.

Sing and Grow

MacKillop Family Services and Sing&Grow Australia™ are partnering to offer music sessions for parents and children 0-5 years to participate in a fun and interactive music session.

When: Wednesday mornings from 27 April - 15 June (eight weeks)

Time: 10am - 10:45am

Where: Newport Community Hub

Cost: FREE

Contact: Please contact Sharon Phillips on Sharon.Phillips@mackillop.org.au on 9680 8444

Please note, you will be required to provide proof of your Covid vaccination to attend.

Money Minded

When: Friday mornings from 6 May - 27 May (4 weeks)

Time: 9:30am - 11am

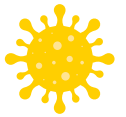
Where: Mackillop Family Services, 118 Commercial Rd, Mackillop Family Services

Cost: FREE

Contact: Please contact Sharon Phillips at sharon.phillips@mackillop.org.au or on 9680 8444

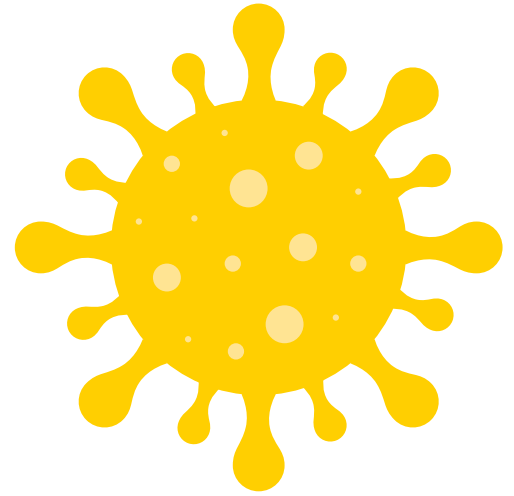
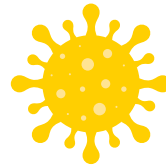
Program	When	Time & Location	How to join (Registration required)
Circle of Security 7 Weeks	Tuesday 26 April – 7 June	100 -2.30 Online Via Zoom	https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/circle-of-security-7-week-parenting-program-tickets-301195262137
Tuning into Kids 6 weeks	Tuesday 10 May – 14 June	10:00-11.30 Quantin Binnah Community Center 61 Thames Boulevard, Werribee	https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/tuning-into-kids-6-week-parenting-program-tickets-301234519557
Bringing Up Great Kids 6 Weeks	Thursday 26 May – 2 June	10:00 -11:30 Mackillop Family Services 118 Commercial Rd, Footscray	https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/bringing-up-great-kids-6-week-group-program-tickets-301238732157
Stepping Stones Triple P 8 Weeks For families with a child a disability and or emerging behaviours	Wednesday Group Sessions 11 May – 1 June Individual Sessions 8, 15, 22 June Finial Group 29 June	10.00 -11.30 Online Via Zoom	Contact Kelly Russell 0418 167 791
Tuning into Dads 6 Weeks	Wednesday 11 May – 8 June	5:00-6.30 Online Via Zoom	https://www.eventbrite.com.au/x/tuning-into-dads-tickets-301244158387

COVID-19 Vaccine, Update, Information & Support



Coronavirus Hotline Victoria – 1800 675 398.

- If you need an interpreter, please call 131 450 first
- If you suspect you may have Covid-19, call the dedicated DFFH hotline on 1800 675 398 (open 24/7)
- Please use Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only
- National Coronavirus Line 1800 020 080



COVID-19 page

For more up to date information on COVID-19 including easy English information about the vaccine, visit the COVID-19 latest information page on our website: [COVID-19 vaccines | Coronavirus Victoria.](#)

Disability support needs for receiving the vaccine

If you have specific disability support needs in accessing the vaccine, email the Disability Liaison Officer at DLOCoordinator@dhhsvic.gov.au. If your child or young person would benefit from accessing a social story about getting a vaccination, go to: [Translated social scripts: Going to a vaccination clinic to get my COVID-19 vaccine \(Child - low sensory\) \(amaze.org.au\)](#)

Food and basic supplies for people with disabilities and families

The Association for Children with a disability ([ACD](#)) provides extensive and up to date information for families. This includes a list of how to obtain food and basic supplies for people with disabilities. Sign up to the [ACD Noticeboard Monthly Newsletter here.](#)

If getting to the shops is difficult due to caring for a child with a disability, you can register for priority online delivery with [Coles](#) or [Woolworths](#).

Given the recent rises in petrol prices and inflation, families are increasingly experiencing financial hardship. Families under financial stress can find local services that provide [emergency food relief here](#). If you or your child has a chronic medical condition you can now get [prescriptions via free home delivery](#).

COVID-19 vaccine boosters and at-home vaccinations are now available

COVID-19 boosters are available to anyone aged 18 and over who has had their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine more than 3 months ago. You can get a COVID-19 booster dose from a GP, pharmacy or Victorian [vaccination centre](#).

You can also get your first or second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine at home. The at-home service is currently not available to those needing a vaccine booster dose.

Read more about how to [book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment](#).

Moonee Valley City Council Targeted Vaccination Program:

If you or someone you know has not been able to access the vaccine, Moonee Valley City Council can help until Sunday 15 May.

Supports include:

- Access to specialist counselling support
- Transport to and from vaccination appointments
- In-home vaccination
- Presence of a therapy dog to help ease anxiety during the vaccination.

For more information or to make a booking, please contact Nerida Fearnley-Gill (Targeted Vaccination Program Project Coordinator) on 0439 561 363 or nfearnley-gill@mval.vic.gov.au.

Carer Support

EACH – Family Relationships Supports for Carers

This is a Victoria-wide service supporting families caring for someone with a disability. EACH supports family members who care for someone with the following disabilities:

- Intellectual
- Physical
- Neurological
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Acquired brain injury
- Mental illness
- Sensory

There are no costs for these services and no waiting list at the time of publication.

For more information contact EACH on 1300 303 346 or email: frsc@each.com.au

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many people feeling anxiety, fear, sadness, and other kinds of mental distress. Some people are experiencing this for the first time, and for others, the pandemic has further impacted their mental health concerns.

How can cohealth help?

cohealth's skilled wellbeing and peer coaches are available to support you individually to help improve your mental health and wellbeing. Everybody is welcome to use this free service, no matter where you live. You don't need a Medicare card.

How to access: Available via phone, telehealth consultations and face-to-face. Call for an appointment on 1300 375 330 or go to: [Mental Health - cohealth - Community Health](#)

Cohealth hub locations and hours

Melton

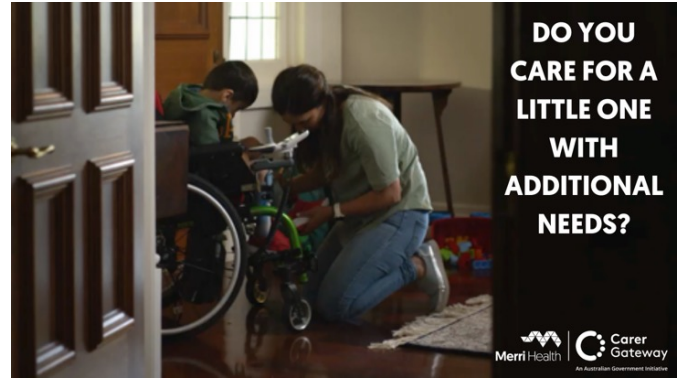
95 Barries Road
Mondays 10am-4pm,
Tuesdays 10am-1pm

Kensington

12 Gower Street
Mondays 10am-4pm,
Tuesdays 10am-4pm

Sunshine

2 Devonshire Road
Wednesdays 10am-4pm,
Thursdays 10am-4pm



Merri Health is now working in the West

Do you care for a little one with additional needs? Does your caring role affect your wellbeing or ability to work, study or socialise?

Merri Health can provide free coaching, counselling, respite care, financial support and connecting with other carers.

Merri Health has supported Carers in the North Metro region of Melbourne for over 20 years. They work in partnership with carers and offer a range of supports, services and activities to strengthen carers' wellbeing and the wellbeing of the person they are caring for.

Merri Health is now offering carer supports and services through Carer Gateway, in the following LGAs: Brimbank, Moonee Valley, Maribyrnong, Wyndham and Hobsons Bay.

Visit www.carergateway.gov.au to find out more or call 1800 422 737 to register.



Carer Information, Workshops & Advocacy

Disability Inclusion and Program for Students with Disabilities

Schools are required to put reasonable adjustments in place to ensure all students with disability can participate in all learning activities. For some students with disability, extra funding is available for schools.

The Victorian Government has announced a new way of funding students with disability called Disability Inclusion. This will replace the 'Program for Students with Disabilities' (PSD) over the next few years

For more information, including the roll-out, what it means to your child and the eligibility criteria, visit: [Funding in government schools - Disability Inclusion - Association for Children with Disability \(acd.org.au\)](http://www.acd.org.au/funding-in-government-schools-disability-inclusion-association-for-children-with-disability).

MiAccess: Multilingual Information Access

This is a new resource for people with disability and their carers to access translated resources on disability and the NDIS. The main features of the website include:

- providing a hub where both people with disability and their carers can find collated translated resources on disability and the NDIS
- hosting newly translated materials from peak disability NGOs that have not previously existed thereby filling a range of gaps in the current access to information
- delivering an easy to navigate site for CALD people disability. The website and web app is designed with accessibility mind working in multiple languages.

MiAccess can be fully navigated in 10 languages and carries information resources in 57 languages. The navigation languages will be increased over time, and new multilingual resources will be added frequently. For more information, visit: <https://miaccess.com.au/find-a-resource>

The Association for Children with Disability

As well as offering user-friendly information, ACD also runs a range of workshops. In Term 2, ACD is offering workshops on two topics:

1. Teens and Beyond

Are you the parent of a teen with disability?

Transitioning to adulthood can be difficult for teenagers. Research shows that teens with disability face more challenges than their peers in areas such as employment, friendship and independent living. Parents may also face challenges accepting their child's growing independence and lack the confidence, skills and information to support them.

This free, three-part workshop series provides practical information to support parents whose teenagers are transitioning to the next phase of their lives. Workshop facilitators are all parents of children with disability who share the demands of juggling their child's independence with life's other challenges. To get the most out of this series, parents are strongly encouraged to attend all three workshops.

When:

- Option 1 - Tuesday 17, 24, 31 May at 10am
- Option 2 - Tuesday 17, 24, 31 May at 7:30pm
- Option 3 - Wednesday 18, 25 May, 1 June at 10am
- Option 4 - Thursday 19, 26 May, 2 June (regional focus) at 10am

Register your place at <http://acdvic.eventbrite.com>

2. Successful Secondary Years

Students do best when families and schools work together. This workshop aims to give you the skills and confidence to help your child get the support they need at secondary school.

What this workshop covers:

- Reasonable adjustments at secondary school
- Social connections and wellbeing
- Communication with school
- Supporting your child to self-advocate

Who is it for:

This is a workshop for parents and carers of children with disability in Year 7 and above

When:

- Tuesday 21 June 10:00 am via Zoom
- Wednesday 22 June 10:00 am via Zoom
- Thursday 23 June 10:00 am via Zoom

How to join:

Bookings open from 12 June: <http://acdvic.eventbrite.com/>

For more information, visit: <https://www.acd.org.au/workshops-and-peer-support> or call 03 9880 7000 or 1800 654 013 (regional).

Autism Connect: 1300 308 699 or email info@autismconnect.org.au

Autism Connect is a free, **national Autism helpline**, providing independent and expert information via phone, email, and webchat. It supports autistic people, their families and carers, health professionals, researchers, teachers, employers, and the broader community.

Autism Connect advisors offer expert advice in many areas, including:

- exploring autism and autistic identity
- assessment and diagnosis support
- school and education
- the NDIS
- transition to employment
- behaviour and communication strategies
- referrals to services peer support connections,
- finding autism-friendly places and events, and
- making environments accessible.

For a fabulous poster, available in different languages, go to: [What is Autism? Poster \(including translations\) \(amaze.org.au\)](#)



Want to speak to an advisor in a language other than English?

You can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) to speak to an Autism Connect advisor in a language other than English. TIS National provides operator-assisted access to an immediate phone interpreter in over 160 languages. To access this service, call the TIS National Contact Centre on 131 450 and ask to speak to Autism Connect on 1300 308 699.

Family Planning Victoria education and courses

Family Planning Victoria has a long and proud reputation of delivering a variety of courses designed to cater for young people and their families when navigating sexuality while living with a disability. An upcoming course is: [Sex education training for cognitive disability professionals and carers | disability sex education training | sexual education services for professionals - Family Planning Victoria \(fpv.org.au\)](#)

For other courses, please go to: [Sexuality and Cognitive Disability - Training for Professionals - Family Planning Victoria \(fpv.org.au\)](#)

Positive Partnerships – Working together to support school-aged children on the autism spectrum.

Positive Partnerships run free webinars to support families, carers and educators of children on the autism spectrum. Each webinar runs for an hour and discusses a range of topics. The webinars are recorded and can be viewed later on their [website](#), [YouTube](#) channel or [Vimeo](#) page. They are also available in a variety of languages: <https://www.positivepartnerships.com.au/resources/in-other-languages>

Strong, Safe and Fabulous

The Strong, Safe and Fabulous team provides support and resources to members of the LGBTQ+ community so that they and their families can live their best and most colourful lives. They host events that connect LGBTQ+ families, particularly those that are feeling isolated because of social pressures, financial difficulty or where they live. For more information go to: <https://strongsafefabulous.online/latest-news>

Webinar: How to Include Diverse Families This Mother's Day

The Strong Safe and Fabulous team offers resources for parents, carers along with professional learning opportunities. This webinar is designed to help schools and early learning centres be more inclusive of diverse families. It will include practical tools and tips to improve inclusivity in schools, preschools and other systems. Speakers include Ashley Scott (#StrangSafeFabulous, and Rainbow Families) and Moo Baulch (WAGEC).

When: 29 April at 3:30pm

Find out more and [register here](#).

Local Councils offer so much!

Parenting in Maribyrnong

Maribyrnong council offers a variety of information sessions for families in the area. Here are a couple:

Promoting Resilience – Raising Confident Children

Monday 19 May, 7.30 - 9.00pm. This session is for families with children 0-8 years of age. It will cover: Understanding resilience and guiding behaviour to promote resilience, how to talk to your child to encourage confidence and resilience, helping your child understand and negotiate the rules of friendship and conflict, plus some discussion on coping with disappointment, anger and aggression.

The presenter: FKA Children's Services.

To book: maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events/Promoting-Resilience-Raising-Confident-Children

Children's Services Information Session

Are you new to parenting or new to the Maribyrnong area? This online session will provide an overview of Council services and include information on maternal and child health, immunisation, libraries, playgroups, and how to navigate the central registration system to register for kindergarten and childcare. There will also be an opportunity for questions.

- Tuesday 31 May 2022, 10 - 11.00am (presented in English)
- Thursday 16 June 2022, 7.30 - 8.30pm (presented in English)

Bookings: [Children's Services Information Session Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

For more information, contact Maribyrnong City Council on 9688 0211 or via

infoearlyyears@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

For other events in Maribyrnong, please go to:

[Maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events](https://maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events)

Brimbank City Council

Libraries after dark

Brimbank Libraries will open until 10pm on selected Thursday evenings. Libraries will offer an array of events, programs and workshops to explore and inspire. Come along and make new friends, spend time learning new skills, or simply relax and unwind in the comfortable, welcoming space that is Your Community Lounge.

To view upcoming dates and events, visit:

[Brimbank Libraries - Libraries After Dark](#).

Moonee Valley – Groups for carers

For carers living in Moonee Valley, there are many ways of connecting. One example is: Valley Carers - Together, we care. Do you provide unpaid support to a family member or friend with a disability, psychosocial or medical condition, complex needs or ageing? The role of the carer can be stressful and lonely. It's important for carers to be cared for as well.

The Valley Carers is a friendly support group for people with lived experience of the caring role, who understand how difficult it can be. In partnership with Moonee Valley Council, information and resources are shared, wellbeing activities are offered to enable you to connect with other people who understand the complexities of your lives. It aims to create a sense of community amongst carers, so you don't feel alone. Together, we care.

To join the mailing list, please send an email: valleycarers@gmail.com or call Lisa for more information: 0409 949 948. For more information about Moonee Valley groups, contact: Carers@mvcc.vic.gov.au.

For more information about what's happening in Moonee Valley, go to: <https://mvcc.vic.gov.au/live/my-family/carers>

Carers Victoria

Carers Victoria is a state-wide voice for family carers. It represents and provides support for carers in Victoria. They run workshops for carers on many topics, including

- General information and skills, legal and financial
- Disability
- Mental health, carer health and wellbeing

To view their current calendar, [visit the Carers Victoria website](#).



Yellow Ladybugs

Yellow Ladybugs is dedicated to improving the lives of girls and women on the Autism Spectrum.

Yellow Ladybugs is a volunteer community group who creates social events where girls can come together and have the opportunity to meet and bond over their similar journey.

For further information please go to:

Contact: info@yellowladybugs.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/yellowladybugs/

Website: www.yellowladybugs.com.au

Community Based Organisations

Social Structures Allied Health

Social Structures Allied Health is a branch of psychology clinics located in the inner west and northern suburbs of Melbourne. They have clinics in Altona North, Werribee, and Bundoora. Social Structures provide assessments and intervention services to participants and services to children and adolescents with autism, ADHD, and other neurodiverse conditions, including anxiety, depression, and school refusal. They understand the importance of working with families to ensure the child receives a well-rounded level of support to build the social structures they need to live their best lives.

At time of publication, they have availability across all clinics. To submit an enquiry or refer someone, visit www.socialstructuresalliedhealth.com.au or call 03 9454 0894.

WCIG

WCIG is a community-based not-for-profit organisation committed to improving lives through practical responses to unemployment and disadvantage. Registered NDIS supports include:

- Development of daily living and life skills
- Tenancy & accommodation support
- Support workers - no wait period
- Assistance to access and maintain employment or education
- Participation in community, social and civic activities
- Group and centre-based activities
- School leaver employment supports (SLES)
- Finding and keeping a job

Please send all enquires to Josie Marchione-Djordjevic at: JosieM@wcig.org.au

Mambourin Training Centre

Based in Derrimut, Mambourin can open the world of work for students 16 years and over living with a disability or learning difficulty.

Traineeships

Supply Chain Operations - Certificate II and III:

Trainees will develop their ability to undertake a range of tasks and work confidently, effectively and safely in a modern warehouse.

Eligible trainees can also obtain their Forklift Ticket by completing an eight-week intensive course.

Horticulture - Certificate II:

Students gain the basic skills and knowledge needed for employment in the industry - including all they need to know about plant species, lawn management and commercial garden upkeep.

School Leaver Employment Support (SLES):

SLES is a NDIS support for Year 12 school leavers. It is a two-year program to help young people build the confidence and skills they need to get ready for work. SLES is tailored to meet each person's individual employment goals.

Enrolment: Mambourin is now taking Traineeship applications for 2023. A mid-year intake may run in 2022 if sufficient interest.

Want to know more? Phone: 9731 9200, email: hello@mambourin.org or visit the Website: www.mambourin.org

Podcasts

Podcasts are another way of accessing information. Following are some highly respected and engaging podcasts. If you enjoy them, please provide feedback to wendywhite@mackillop.org.au. We also welcome you to share podcasts you enjoy and recommend for us to include in future newsletters.

Emerging Minds

is a podcast for families and professionals interested in learning more about current research and approaches to mental health. It also provides a selection of outstanding resources, found here:

[Resources - Emerging Minds](#)

Some recommended podcasts include:

- [Tuning in to Kids and the value of emotionally connecting with children - Emerging Minds](#)
- [Supporting dads in their role as fathers - Emerging Minds](#)

Parental As Anything

is a very accessible podcast by Author Maggie Dent. Maggie is fun and very authentic and has tips and ideas for real-world parenting dilemmas. A couple of her recent podcasts include:

- [Parenting children with ADHD - Parental As Anything - ABC Radio](#)
- [Parenting autistic kids - Parental As Anything - ABC Radio](#)

Family 360

is another very accessible podcast about family life. A couple more great episodes include:

- [Family 360 Podcast: Dr. Deborah MacNamara - Attachment, Separation & Belonging on Apple Podcasts](#)
- [Family 360 Podcast: Dr. Gordon Neufeld - True Play & The Six Stages Of Attachment on Apple Podcasts](#)



Listenable

Dylan Alcott and Angus O'Loughlin speak to people living with a disability about their lives and ask questions you might think are off-limits. Ever wondered what it's like to be a parent of a child with a disability? Do you find out before birth? And if you do - would you keep the baby or not? Or is there a manual to teach you all the tricks and tips to help you bring up your disabled child? This week, Dylan Alcott and Angus O'Loughlin chat to Mandy and Kate from Too Peas in a Podcast, who both have disabled children and are very proud of it. This episode is a tear jerker in some spots, and a must for anyone with or wanting children. [ListenABLE: #14 - Too Peas In A Podcast \(Mothers of children with disability\) on Apple Podcasts](#)

Sue Larkey

Enlightens, and entertains with valuable insights into Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, ODD and PDA. Covering strategies from the Early Years to Teens Years and Beyond. The following two podcasts provide a great overview of effective accommodations, adjustment and tools.

[Sue Larkey Podcast: SLP 147: How to Use 10 Types of Accommodations and Adjustments on Apple Podcasts](#)

[Sue Larkey Podcast: SLP 140: 10 Tools Every School & Home Needs in 2022 on Apple Podcasts](#)

This podcast has inspired me to purchase these resources and showcase them during the rest of the year. I'm currently contemplating forming a bookclub, showcasing a different resource each month. If you're interested in joining, email wendywhite@mackillop.org.au

NDIS Information and Workshops



National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

If you are a person with a disability or care for a person with a disability and would like to join the NDIS, you will need to meet its access requirements and make an access request to NDIA. To find out more, visit the [NDIS Access criteria](#) page and read the [evidence requirements](#) section.

Access Request form

[Download an NDIS Access Request Form Here](#)

You can also get an Access Request form from your Local Area Coordinator, Early Childhood Early Intervention partner (if your child is under seven), or your local NDIA office or you can call 1800 800 110.

The [NDIS website](#) has a lot of useful information, including translations in many different languages.

The NDIS has released [a guide for Victorian families of school aged participants](#).

If you live in Melbourne's West, the Local Area Coordination (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Partner is Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL).

Contact Details:

Local Area Coordination (LAC) - Phone 1300 275 634 or email ndis.info@bsl.org.au

Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) - Phone 1300 275 323 or email ECEI.access@bsl.org.au
www.bsl.org.au

Carers Victoria 'NDIS Kids Connect'

NDIS Kids Connect provides information and linkage to families with a child 0 - 7 with a disability, to successfully transition and connect to the NDIS. Parents may have begun transitioning from other funding such as Better Start, be seeking access to the NDIS, planning or implementing their child's first NDIS plan and need some extra assistance.

NDIS Kids Connect can also provide information to service providers with clients in this target group who are experiencing barriers to effective NDIS pathways.

For more information, please contact Michele Semmens at ECEI.Advice@carersvictoria.org.au

Association for Children with a Disability (ACD)

ACD has developed NDIS Fact Sheets cover the following topics and more:

- 10 tips for your child's NDIS planning meeting
- Getting ready for your child's NDIS plan review meeting
- Getting respite under the NDIS

There is information on Early Years, Teenage Years, and 'Help for you and your family'.

[ACD NDIS Resources](#)

MacKillop Family Services

MacKillop Family Services is a registered NDIS provider and offers Support Coordination

For more information or to refer to our services, contact Disability Services Manager via ndisvic@mackillop.org.au or [visit the MacKillop website](#).

There are many other services that provide clinical supports and NDIS information and Support Coordination. Two such organisations include:

- Felicity Group of Holistic Care - 1300 589 176, and
- AFFORD Services - 1300 233 673

Action on Disabilities within Ethnic Communities (ADEC)

ADEC provide a range of services: Access and support, advocacy, social support groups, NDIS, aged care, disability support and capacity building.

Contact: ADEC Werribee Office 10am-2pm 4A Watton Street, Werribee VIC 3030
Phone: 1800 626 078 or 9480 7000
Email: info@adec.org.au

ADEC is offering a **NDIS Education workshop series**

When: Every Tuesday starting 3 May, 10:30-11:30am

Where: Melton Central community centre

These workshops are **free** for community members and will focus on building capacity to navigate NDIS. Opportunities to solve queries and concern around NDIS will be provided. For further information please contact Sana Saiyed on 0490 059 026 or 03 9480 7000 or email sana@adec.org.au.

Registration is essential.

At MacKillop

MacKillop Family Services offers a diverse range of programs to support vulnerable children and families, including those with a disability. The **Specialist Disability Practitioner Support** program helps children and parents with a disability to access disability supports and make the most of their NDIS plans.

The program assists families to navigate systems of disability support, including the NDIS, disability advocates, disability service providers and mainstream services. The Practitioner works with family services providers as well as directly with families to offer this service.

For more information please go to:

www.mackillop.org.au/programs/specialist-disability-practitioner-support



Resources for Children and Young

Robot Song

When Juniper May receives a petition signed by her entire class stating that she is 'the most hated person in the school', her life is thrown into complete meltdown. After exhausting all other avenues, her parents resort to the only thing they have left: a giant singing robot.

"Gorgeously told and superbly crafted..."
(Fiona Parker, ABC)

Written and directed by Jolyon James. Presented by Arena Theatre Company and Nicholas Clark Management.

Date: Friday 13 May

Times: 10am-11am and 1pm-2pm

Location: The Bowery Theatre, 33 Princess Street, St Albans

Recommended for children 8 to 12 years old.

A performance for the general public is available on Saturday 14 May at 3pm.

[Find more details here.](#)

Rhythm 'N' Beats Workshop with R.Xs.P

Rhythm 'N' Beats is a crash course in beatmaking with the music producer, rapper, and sound designer R.Xs.P (Rexson Pelman). Come along on Friday afternoons to learn how to use studio software, experiment with your sound, and meet other emerging westside artists. You'll be able to make it and take it, as beats created in this workshop will be mastered and featured on a Rhythm 'N' Beats EP. You can bring your own laptop/device or use one at the workshop.

Date: Fridays in Term 2 (April 29 - June 17)

Time: 4.30pm-6.30pm

Cost: FREE

Location: St Albans Community Centre in the Arts & Culture Program Room

For anyone aged 12-25 interested in beatmaking.

[Register here.](#)

Toddler Tuesdays

Toddlers and their grown-ups are invited for outdoor crafty fun times with artist friends every Tuesday. This is a Brimbank City Council program that facilitates creative play for children aged 2 - 5 years.

When: Tuesdays 10am - 12pm.

Location: St Albans Community Centre (STACC), 33 Princess Street, St Albans

Koorie Homework Club

Koorie Homework Club (KHC) are weekly catch-ups for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (years 3-6) or tutoring (secondary or tertiary students). The program offers a safe space to catch up on homework and take part in cultural activities. Koorie guests incorporating Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art & Culture practice visit regularly throughout the year.

When: Mondays, 3:30-5pm during school term, excluding public holidays

Where: St Albans Community Centre (STACC), 33 Princess Street, St Albans

Cost: FREE

Program Facilitators: Lee-Anne Clarke, Stefany Brajanovski and Jo Trevathan.

Registration is required by contacting Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) Lee-Anne Clarke on Lee-Anne.Clarke@educationvic.gov.au or 0477 719 366. Alternatively please send email to stacc@brimbankvic.gov.au.

[Find out more here.](#)

Library time in Maribyrnong

In term 2, the West Footscray Library will be holding Bilingual Story Time at 10.30am on the following dates:

Monday 2 May	Arabic
Wed 4 May	Vietnamese
Friday 6 May	Hindi
Thur 12 May	Chinese
Monday 16 May	Arabic
Wed 25 May	Vietnamese
Thur 2 June	Chinese
Friday 3 June	Hindi
Mon 6 June	Arabic
Wed 15 June	Vietnamese
Thur 23 June	Chinese

Mighty Owen

Picture story books are a powerful way to engage children. The Adventures of Mighty Owen is a wonderful book written by Mighty Owen himself, his mother Emma and his brother Liam. It provides a springboard for discussion and is a tool for broadening the understanding of others.

[Find out more here.](#)

Camps and Holiday Programs

Gateways Support Services' offer high-quality recreation and camps to build skills while providing loads of fun for children, teenagers and adults with a disability. Designed and led by a team with deep experience in autism, intellectual disability and complex behaviour, the programs give participants the opportunity to learn and practice real life skills with peers and within the community.

Programs for kids and teenagers include:

- After school and weekend activity programs
- School holiday programs
- Overnight camps and short breaks
- Boost 4 Kids overnight stay for children and young people with complex medical support needs (Geelong)
- Recreational overnight programs (Getaway House - Warrnambool)
- Therapy-led recreation programs tailored to each participant's individual NDIS goals
- Social groups for kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder attending mainstream schools

For more information [visit their website](#) or for term 2 activities go to: [Term 2 RecActivities-Youth/Juniors \(gateways.com.au\)](#)

You can also call 9749 7388 (Werribee) or 9396 1111 (Footscray).

Bikes for Free

Wyndham Reclink has over 100 bikes you can nominate to deserving members of your group or school. In partnership with more than 450 community organisations, Reclink Australia's programs create pathways to improved health and wellbeing, education and employment. For more information contact Peter Cullen on 0421 442 340 or peter.cullen@reclink.org

Cosmic Kids Yoga

This is a YouTube channel that tells kids stories through yoga.

[View the Disney Frozen yoga routine here.](#)



Wheelchair-friendly beaches in Australia

To enhance the beach-going experience for people with a disability, beach wheelchairs are now available at several new locations. They provide and improve access to the beach and ocean, with children and adult-sized options to allow children in particular, to have access to and be included in a range of activities such as playing in the waves and exploring rock formations usually found at the ends of a beach". The list includes beaches that have beach wheelchairs and accessible beach matting. Here is a round-up of the newest additions at Accessible Victorian Beaches.

Half Moon Bay

Mobi-Chair/Beach Wheelchairs are available for hire. Amenities include an accessible bathroom, shower and changeroom. Accessible parking is available beachfront. The beach wheelchairs are available during patrolled hours between 12pm and 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays during the peak summer season. Booking is essential before 4pm the Friday before.

[Further information here.](#)

Hampton Beach

Accessible beach matting and Mobi-Chair/Beach Wheelchairs are available. Including an accessible bathroom, shower and change room for the public. The beach wheelchairs are available during patrolled hours between 12pm and 4:30pm on Saturdays and Sundays during the peak summer season. Booking is essential before 4pm the Friday before.

[Further information here.](#)

Carrum Beach

Accessible ramp, bathroom, change room and parking available. Carrum Surf Life Saving Club offers a beach wheelchair for public use. No hoist available.

[Further information here.](#)

[See the list of all new wheelchair-friendly beaches in Australia here.](#)

Groups for Toddlers, Children and Young People

There are a variety of outstanding playgroups, meeting the needs of families and children alike.

Melton, Maternal and Child Health, free parent groups:

Parents are invited to join Melton's free parent groups and have a chat with the Parenting Group Facilitators. It's an opportunity to ask questions, hear from other parents, and get information and support. There are seven different groups for you to choose from:

- Development at 12 Months
- Development at 18 months
- Development at 2 years
- Development at 3 ½ years
- Toddler nutrition and fussy eating
- Toilet training
- Toddler play and development
- Managing challenging behaviour

To register your interest to attend, please email: NewParentGroupMCH@melton.vic.gov.au

Please specify which group(s) you would like to attend. The Maternal and Child Health Team will be in contact with more information regarding dates, times, and locations.



MyTime

MyTime is for parents and carers of children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition. It is a great way for parents/carers to connect with others sharing similar experiences. It is a world away from appointments and therapy. All our team members have lived experience of raising children with disability or chronic illness and are a wealth of information on varying topics. MyTime is federally funded and free to attend. Children and siblings are welcome and engaged in play with a play helper.

MyTime Locations

Avondale Heights

When: Mondays 10am - 12pm

Where: Rhonda Davis Centre,
54 Lake Street, Avondale Heights.

Tarneit

When: Mondays 10am - 12pm

Where: Tarneit Community Learning Centre,
150 Sunset Views Blvd, Tarneit

Maidstone

When: Tuesdays 10am - 12pm

Where: Maidstone Child and Family Centre,
Cnr Burns and Sonley Streets, Maidstone

Manor Lakes

When: Tuesdays 10am - 12pm

Where: Manor Lakes Community Learning Centre,
86 Manor Lakes Blvd, Manor Lakes

Newport

When: Fridays 10am - 12pm

Where: Newport Gardens Early Years Centre,
51 Maddox Road, Newport

Point Cook*

When: Wednesdays 10am - 12pm

Where: Featherbrook Community Centre,
33-35 Windorah Drive, Point Cook

**This group is currently meeting virtually via Zoom, each fortnight, to ensure families who work from home or prefer not to venture out in these Covid times can attend. Please contact kim.mace@tweddle.org.au for the Zoom link.*

Families are invited to come along, meet new friends and chat with facilitators about resources and support. Contact MyTime Coordinator Kim Mace on kim.mace@tweddle.org.au or (03) 9689 1577 for more information.

PlayConnect

PlayConnect playgroups in the western suburbs are located at Braybrook and Werribee.

- Braybrook Community Hub: Mondays
10am-12pm
- Werribee PlayConnect: Thursdays
12pm-1:30pm

The PlayConnect program provides a playgroup for children with Autism (or similar developmental or behavioural concerns). A diagnosis is not required. PlayConnect is a free, government funded program for families. At time of publication there are currently vacancies at both groups. For enquiries please contact Anne Shute: ashute@playgroup.org.au or Mob: 0434 769 341.

Western Parents with Pride

Playgroups: For LGBTIQ+ parents and caregivers.

These groups are held on Tuesdays in Term 2. Please read below for specific details of venues and dates:

- Melton: 38 Station Road, Melton South: 26 April, 10 May, 24 May, 7 June and 21 June.
- Werribee: 211 Watton St, Werribee: 3 May, 17 May, 31 May and 14 June.

Craftafternoons: For LGBTIQ+ parents, carers and their children.

This group meets once a month on a Thursday afternoon in Melton for an afternoon of arts, crafts and good company. Light meal is included.

Where: 38 Station Road, Melton South

When: 6.30pm - next meeting is on 26 May.

Contact: Alex for more upcoming dates or further information on 0456824477 or email alex.brown@salvationarmy.org.au.

Social activities:

Superheroes Social Skills Group

This is a group-based weekend and holiday program for young people with high-functioning autism who attend mainstream school. The primary goal is to develop social skills with like-minded people while providing participants opportunities to make friends, practice new skills and try new experiences in a safe, fun and supportive environment. [Find out more here](#) or contact Felicity Holistic Care on 1300 589 176.

The AList – Where Autism Gets Social

This is the place where young autistic people can search for autism friendly activities and connect with like-minded people with similar interests. Try a new hobby or explore your interests further. Connect with a peer mentor. Find your passion. Get social. For more information go to: [Home - The A List \(alisthub.com.au\)](http://Home-TheAList(alisthub.com.au)); contact the A list on 1300 2888 98; or hello@alisthub.com.au.

The Lab

The Lab program is a technology club for young people aged 10 - 25 on the Autism spectrum. The Lab offers mentoring in programming, 3D digital design and gaming, as well as the chance to meet others with similar interests.

Group 1	Ages 10-17 years Niddrie Library Tuesdays, 4.30 - 6.30pm
Group 2	Ages 18-25 years Avondale Heights Library Wednesdays, 4.30 - 6.30pm
Group 3	Ages 10-17 years Sam Merrifield Library Saturdays, 10am - 12pm
Group 4	Ages 10-17 years Avondale Heights Library Saturdays, 1 - 3pm

For more information visit [The Lab Network](#) or contact Council's Carer Support Officer on 9243 8781 or email carers@mvcc.vic.gov.au.

Different Journeys

Different Journeys is an ASD teen playgroup based in Victoria. It was born from two mothers who couldn't find any opportunities for their teenagers to connect with similar friends. For one mother, it was about friendships and the other, inclusion and getting out of the house in a safe and supportive environment.

This term Different Journeys have two scheduled Autism Family Swim and Social event at Windy Hill Fitness Centre, 74-78 Napier St, Essendon. The events will be held between 4.00-6.00pm on Saturday 21 May and Saturday 18 June. It costs \$10pp which includes a BBQ dinner upon entry. For more information go to: [Different Journeys \(autismawareness.com.au\)](http://DifferentJourneys(autismawareness.com.au))



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 spsp@mackillop.org.au

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 **03 9680 8444**

 spsp@mackillop.org.au

Contact Us

If undeliverable or if you would like to contact us please write or call:

Mackillop Family Services
Strengthening Parent Support Program
118 Commercial Rd,
Footscray, Vic 3011
Telephone: 03 9680 8444

All returned copies will be taken off mailing list

Not all events listed in this newsletter are run by Mackillop Family Services. If further event information is required, please call the hosting organisation via the contact details provided.



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