



# WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

*Community Newsletter*

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**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative**

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[www.wathaurong.org.au](http://www.wathaurong.org.au)



**Congratulations to our Under 14 Boys CHAMPIONSHIP WINNING Basketball team!**  
Read more on Page 25

## *Calendar of upcoming events*

### **APRIL 2023**

**7th** - Good Friday Public Holiday (Co-op closed)  
**10th** - Easter Monday Public Holiday (Co-op closed)  
**19th** - Monthly Community Dinner  
**7th-23rd** - School holidays (see page 30)

### **MAY 2023**

**6th** - Sista's Self Care Day (see page 32)  
**14th** - Mother's Day  
**17th** - Monthly Community Dinner  
**26th** - National Sorry Day  
**27th** - Anniversary of the Referendum  
**28th** - Rec in the Park (see page 33)  
**27th-31st** - Reconciliation Week

### **JUNE 2023**

**1st-3rd** - Reconciliation Week  
**3rd** - Mabo Day  
**14th** - Monthly Community Dinner  
**26th-30th** - School Holidays



Join our socials!  
[@wathaurong](https://www.facebook.com/wathaurong)



# CEO UPDATE

We acknowledge the Country that we work and live on is and has always been Wathaurong Country. Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong) provides supports to our Community living on Wathaurong, Gulidjan and Gadabanud country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and to all Aboriginal people on Country who have contributed to the diverse Aboriginal Cultural Society we have today.

It has been a great start to the year, with lots of Community events and activities and plenty to celebrate. We kicked off with our school holiday program in January, with Cultural activities such as boomerang throwing, arts and crafts, and a fun family day out at Serendip Sanctuary.

Pako Festa also returned to its full form this year on Pakington Street, with our Wathaurong community leading the parade and our deadly float winning the prize for Most Innovative use of theme – ‘Sharing & Connecting Cultures’. Well done and thank you to everyone who put in the hard work to



get it ready and make the day run smoothly.

We hosted our 2021/2022 Annual General Meeting on Country out at Wurdi Youang on the 26th February 2023, and held an in person election for the first time in a long time to elect our newest Board members. Congratulations to those elected, and thank you to those who have recently served on the Board and are now stepping down. You can read more about our new Board members in this newsletter.

## **RULEBOOK REFRESH & COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Late last year we held several Community meetings to begin the process of refreshing our Wathaurong Rulebook. We will be holding more Community meetings throughout April and May to continue this process as we move into Stage 2 of the Rulebook

# CEO UPDATE

Refresh. Keep an eye on our social media pages or get in touch with us at the office if you'd like to be involved. Dates will be confirmed soon.

## **VACSAL BASKETBALL CARNIVAL**

After postponing the basketball carnival last year, it was great to get back to Shepparton on the March long weekend and have our teams and families participating in the tournament again. A big congratulations goes to our Under 14 boys' team for taking out the championship in their division! You can read more about it and check out the photos in this newsletter. There's also a great video from the weekend to check out.

## **2022 YEAR 12 GRADUATES**

In this edition of the newsletter, we also celebrate those in our Community who graduated from Year 12 in 2022. Our kids have shown such resilience over the past 3 years, through COVID19 and beyond, and it is important that we acknowledge and celebrate their achievements in completing their high school through this time.

## **FORSTER STREET UPDATES**

As you would know, our Forster Street site will soon begin renovations to transform into our Youth Healing Hub. It is expected that works will begin sometime after Easter, and we remain hopeful that the renovation will be completed, and the building opened in November of this year. While the renovations are taking place, the site will not be able to be used for regular Community events such as Women's Group, Men's Group, Bringing Them Home or Homework Club.

We will advise where these regular Community activities will be moved to once we have secured new locations during the building works.

Nyatne (thanks)

Simon Flagg

CEO

# STAFF UPDATES

## WELCOME NEW STAFF

Welcome to some of our newest staff members who have joined us over the past few months:

- Debbie Adams (Midwife (KMS))
- Genine Trickey (Art Facilitator)
- Michael Sinclair (Lawns & Gardens Team Member)
- Misty Collins (Alcohol and Other Drugs Worker)
- Ryan Trickey (Aboriginal Primary Healthcare Trainee)
- Sally Laver (Case Support Worker)
- Violet Pearson (Aboriginal Hub Practitioner)
- Ebony Rayner (Disability Support Worker)
- Edward Carson (GP Registrar)
- Jade-Maree Atkinson (Social & Emotional Wellbeing Worker)
- Karen Scanlon (Family Violence Team Leader)
- Kiara Smith (Disability Support Worker)
- Miranda Watson (Caseworker - Kinship)
- Mohana Priya Govardhanan (GP Registrar - Paediatrics Post)
- Nicole Smith (Out of Home Care Caseworker)
- Robyn Del Rio (Family Violence Project Worker and Mentor)
- Thomas Dilks (GP Registrar)

## FAREWELLS

Sending our best wishes to staff who have left Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative in the past few months to take up other opportunities, including:

- Mahalia Cubby (Foster Care Recruitment Officer)
- Shantelle Baillie (Cradle to Kinder-Best Start Facilitator)
- Dale Wiseman (Towards Home Plus Worker)

## MARK SHAW

Executive Manager of Corporate Services, Mark Shaw, has decided to move on from Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, with his last day on February 24th. On behalf of the Board, Staff and Community, we thank Mark for his passion and commitment over the last two and a half years supporting our Community and wish him all the best in his return to public service.

Rose De Jong will take on the role of Acting Executive Manager of Corporate Services until further advised.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are you or someone you know looking for a job? We have a number of job vacancies at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, ranging from casual to full time.

We offer generous and attractive employment packages, including:

- Generous leave provisions (five weeks of annual leave)
- Gifted Christmas/New Year leave
- Not for profit salary packaging, reducing your taxable salary



Check out our available jobs on our website now by scanning the QR code!



# AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Lewis Brinkworth was lucky enough to be one of 35 Under 16 boys selected from across Australia to take part in the Rugby Australia Lloyd McDermott Team at the Ella 7s Tournament in Sydney recently.

The Ella 7s is the marquee event for Indigenous Sevens Rugby in Australia and is named after the famed Ella Brothers, Gary, Glen and Mark. The Ella 7s is the flagship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rugby Union 7s tournament, that attracts around 400 athletes, 20 State Class Referees and ball boys, and over 20 officials from Rugby Australia and NSW Rugby Union.

The tournament is a key tool to bringing the game of Sevens to the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, with many of the players going on to represent the Australian Sevens program.







His team despite never playing with one another before won all their games, and made it to finals!



## WATHAURONG'S NEW WEBSITE

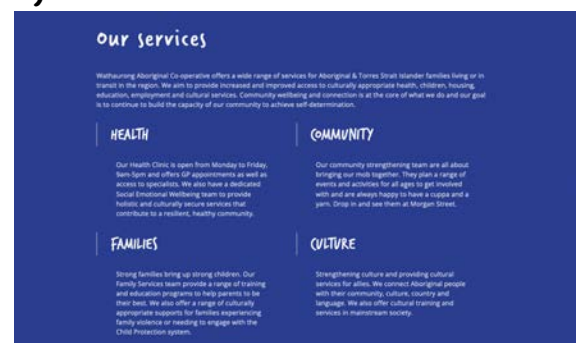
GUESS WHAT??

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative has a BRAND NEW website, with a DEADLY new design! The new website will be the go to place to find out all the latest news, events, information, and much more. Some of the features of our new website include:

-  A quick exit button, that will take you to a blank Google page - important for family violence safety
-  online forms that you can fill out direct on our website
-  Easier to navigate menus
-  A dedicated events page, where we will list all our upcoming events and activities
-  A brand new "Community Jobs Board", where we will list any jobs available in the Geelong region specific to our mob (as well as our usual Wathaurong Careers page for jobs available with the Co-op!)
-  A donation link for anyone keen to support Wathaurong in our community activities

(check it out today, and let us know what you think!)

[www.wathaurong.org.au](http://www.wathaurong.org.au)



# AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## YEAR 12 GRADUATION

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative would like to congratulate all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who completed Year 12 in 2022. It is a great achievement that you should be very proud of.

We wish you all the best in your next steps, whatever they may be!



**Bree  
Hutchinson**

*Clonard  
College*



**Jiealla  
Guttie-Galpin**

*Clonard  
College*



**Charlotte  
Hardy**

*Colac  
Secondary College*



**Teleisha  
Cubillo**

*Geelong  
College*



**Cassie  
Peris**

*Geelong  
Grammar*



**Marley  
McNamara**

*Geelong  
Grammar*



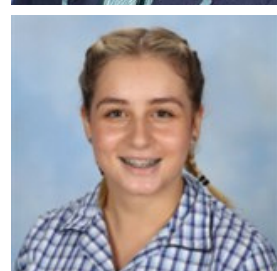
**Tahlia  
See**

*Geelong  
Grammar*



**Troy  
Brown**

*Geelong  
Grammar*



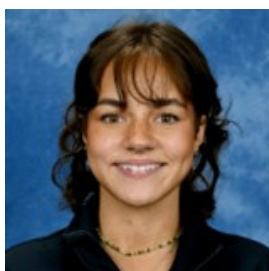
**Anthia  
Bond**

*Geelong  
High School*



**Rowdy  
Latimore**

*Geelong  
High School*



**Keira  
Beckley**

*Matthew  
Flinders*



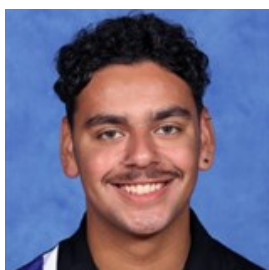
**Neisha  
Beckley**

*Matthew  
Flinders*



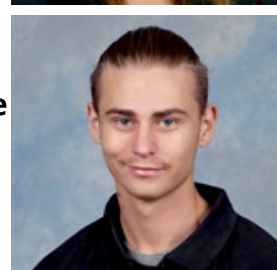
**Jasmine  
Anderson**

*North Geelong  
Secondary College*



**Cory  
Williams-Megee**

*Northern Bay  
College*



**Joel  
Sawbridgeworth**

*Northern Bay  
College*



# AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## YEAR 12 GRADUATION



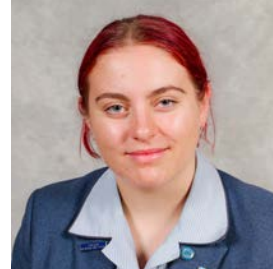
**Jaymee  
Drever**

*Oberon  
High School*



**Raymond  
Davies**

*Oberon  
High School*



**Bridie  
O'Malley**

*Sacred Heart  
College*



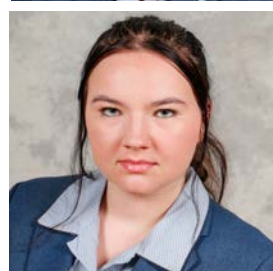
**Dakota-Ray  
Tapping**

*Sacred Heart  
College*



**Olive  
Morrison**

*Sacred Heart  
College*



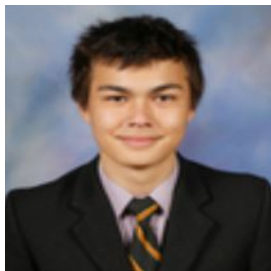
**Julia  
Adams-Xiberras**

*Sacred Heart  
College*



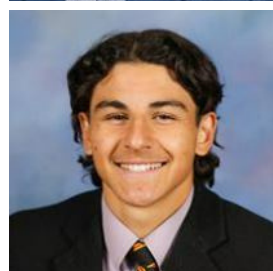
**Jack  
Roberts**

*St Joseph's  
College*



**Jai  
McGough**

*St Joseph's  
College*



**Jacob  
Assemani**

*St Joseph's  
College*



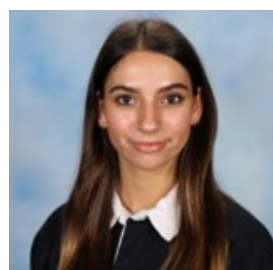
**Lucas  
Renfrey**

*St Joseph's  
College*



**Will  
McDougall**

*St Joseph's  
College*



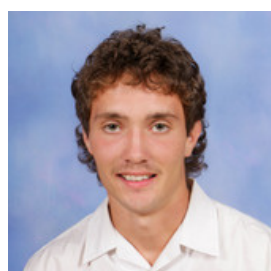
**Ella  
Cooke**

*Western Heights  
College*



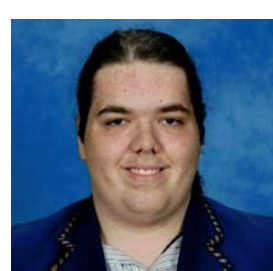
**Joely  
Aylen**

*Surfcoast  
Secondary College*



**Myles  
Brinkworth**

*Surfcoast  
Secondary College*



**Diesel  
Uppill**

*Geelong  
Lutheran College*

**Vincenza Bonnano** - *Sacred Heart College*

# AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

On March 1st, 13 of our deadly Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Staff celebrated their achievement of graduating from RMIT with a Graduate Certificate in Family Violence.

This pilot educational program was co-designed to deliver education in a culturally safe way and in a setting that allowed for collaboration, connectedness and provided space for trauma informed practices to be implemented in the learning environment.

Staff from all areas of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative were involved in completing their Graduate Certificate in Domestic & Family Violence, including team members from Social & Emotional Wellbeing, the Colac Gathering Place, Family Services and Community Strengthening.

Not only have these staff graduated with a formal qualification, they have also been armed with new tools and knowledge to help them to provide the best possible support for our community.

Wathaurong would like to say a huge thank you to RMIT and Ngarara Willim, in particular Dr Lisa Harris who delivered the educational component of the Graduate Certificate, for their support and understanding of the need to deliver education in a different way.

Funding for the delivery of this Graduate Certificate to our staff was provided through Family Safety Dhelk Dja and we thank them, and in particular the Barwon South West Dhelk Dja, for their support through this process.

The staff celebrated with a graduation ceremony at Wah Bar on the Pier, with RMIT staff, newly appointed Board member Uncle Glenn Shea, and Member for Geelong Christine Couzens in attendance to congratulate our newest graduates.





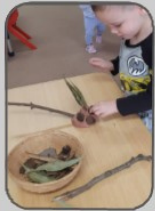
## Wathaurong Playgroups



At Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Op  
Children Services building  
62 Morgan Street, North Geelong

### Kitjarra Booboop

Playgroup for babies 0 - 12 months  
Every Tuesday 10.30am till 12pm



Milla Milla Playgroup  
Every Thursday and Friday  
11am till 1pm



Lunch provided and transport available for Milla Milla Playgroup



### Why come to Playgroup:

Children learn and develop through  
play and social interaction.

Playgroup also provide an opportunity for  
children to interact with other children and families  
in the community.



Playgroup provides a culturally safe space where  
children have the opportunity to  
strengthen their identity through play  
and other cultural activities.



Playgroup is a great way for adults to  
meet other families in the community.



For more information on our Playgroup Sessions  
please call or e-mail **Kristi Watts**

52770372 - 0419698264

[Kristi.Watts@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Kristi.Watts@wathaurong.org.au)





## Koorie Preschool Assistant (KPSA)



KPSA is here to support families in community who have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are or soon to be in kindergarten. We can support with enrolment, late enrolment, kinder suggestions and kinder tours.

KPSA also supports kinders with providing a culturally safe and inclusive space for our families with community. Contact Hayley for any kinder support!

### SAVE THE DATE!

Wathaurong's Kindergarten 2024 Registration Day

Date: 08.05.2023 Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: Wathaurong Childrens Centre

Wathaurong will be hosting a day for families and kindergarten staff to come together to build relationships and register children for kindergarten 2024. Keep your eye out on our social media as there will be more details to come!



### Kinder facts

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are entitled to 2 years of 15 hours a week
- It is ideal to start the enrolment process the year your child turns 2

Koorie Preschool Assistant

Hayley Boehm

Mob: Yorta Yorta

Phone: 0427820750

Email: [hayley.boehm@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:hayley.boehm@wathaurong.org.au)



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## READY FOR LEARNING DAY

### WHAT A DEADLY DAY WITH OUR COMMUNITY!

We had over 35 kids attend and participate in fun activities on the day. So many activities the children participated in, from AFL, to health promotions and assessments, to playdough fun and a scavenger hunt. We hope all our families who attended had such a deadly time.

- 21 Eye assessments
- 8 Hearing assessments + 16 hearing referrals
- 45 lunchboxes handed out
- 7 HIPPY program sign ups
- Around 330 different resources handed out!



We wish our kindergarteners and preps in community good luck as they begin their new educational journeys this year!  
Gobata (Take care)



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## KOORIE FAMILIES AS FIRST EDUCATORS

### MEET THE TEAM



SHANNON

GINA

JACKIE

The KFFE Team celebrated with 6 Koorie Families on 14th November, 2022 - coming together in the Playgroup Space. Our families were given Certificates to recognise them successfully completing the 8 weeks of The Indigenous Triple P program in a group setting. All parents really enjoyed learning together about new Parenting Strategies to help support them raising their families.





# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## KOORIE FAMILIES AS FIRST EDUCATORS



0-5yrs

Smalltalk is an 8 week supportive program for parents and caregivers of children aged birth - 5 years. The program aims to:

- Increase parents' confidence to do the things we know can have a positive impact on their child's learning
- Help parents understand how activities we already do in the home enhances our children's learning and development
- Give ideas on how parents can look after themselves and help build links with their community and local services



### Indigenous Triple P

0 - 5yrs

Indigenous Triple P program is an 8 week program for parents and caregivers of children aged birth - 5 years. This program aims to:

- Help parents/caregivers manage behaviour confidently and encourage behaviour you like.
- Assist parents/caregivers with becoming more confident and managing self-care for yourselves
- Further develop and strengthen family relationships



### Circle of Security Parenting

0 - 5yrs

Circle of Security is an 8 week supportive program for parents and caregivers of children aged birth - 5 years. The program aims to:

- Help parents/caregivers understand how to build feelings of security for children in their early years.
- Assist parents/caregivers with skills to build on the positive relationship with their child
- Develop confidence in parents/caregivers to respond to their children in a way which builds a secure foundation.



### Do you think any of these programs might interest you?

Group sessions are held once a week. You'll meet other community members, share stories and enjoy some refreshments. Scan the QR code to register your interest!

One-on-one sessions are also available in the comfort of your own home or at a location of your choice at a pace you're comfortable with!

For more information, give us a call on 5292 9800 and ask to speak with someone in the KFFE team or request a call back on our expression of interest form. Just scan the QR code above on your device

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES



**HELLO, I'M**  
**GABRIELLE**  
**MIDDLETON**

## **ABOUT ME :**

Hello, my name is Gabby Middleton. I am 23 years old and grew up on Wathaurong Country. I am a non-Indigenous woman; however, I love discovering more about Aboriginal culture and learning from community members experiences and stories.

I have now been at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative for 18 months, firstly starting as a family services case manager. I am very excited to start my new position as the Best Start Facilitator.

A little bit about me.... I am currently completing my last year in Bachelor of Primary Education. For the past year I have also worked as a family services case manager, advocating for Aboriginal families. My passions are providing trauma-informed support for vulnerable children transitioning to school to have equal opportunities. I think it's crucial to offer a holistic approach in supporting children and their families to feel safe, develop a strong sense of belonging, improve wellbeing, and develop resilience.

As the Best Start Facilitator, I am excited to strengthen cross-sector partnerships across all early childhood services, empower communities and families, and enhance outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families. I'm eager to engage with partners in new and interesting ways to find solutions to the challenges that families in the community experience.

## **CONTACT :**

**GABRIELLE.MIDDLETON@WATHAURONG.ORG.AU**  
**0417 158 086**





# HEALTH SERVICES

## MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

Did you know Wathaurong's Maternal Child Health (MCH) service is now based at Albert street, Geelong West? Our MCH team see parents/carers and their children for their maternal and child health "Growing up Strong & Healthy Boorai" visits. "The Growing Up Strong & Healthy Boorai visits gives you a chance to yarn with the Nurse about a range of things such as how your boorai is growing and developing ,their feeding, sleeping routines, immunisations and any other concern you may have.



To make an appointment please call 5277 0044 and ask to speak to someone about an MCH appointment.

## KOORI MATERNITY SERVICES (KMS)



*Piper Knox*



*Debbie*

We are very excited to announce Debbie as the new KMS Midwife who joined the KMS team in January and has settled in very quickly. Deb works Monday to Thursday and is working alongside Erin (KMS Midwife) and our own Community member Piper Knox (Aboriginal Health Worker) who will commence in her new role in KMS, 3 days a week from early March.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW DOCTORS!

A big welcome to our newest GP Registrars who have joined the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Health Team! Dr. Tom Dilks, and Dr. Edward Carson (aka "Dr. Eddie", to avoid confusion with our "Dr. Ed" Poliness!). Dr. Tom and Dr. Eddie started with us earlier this year and have already been a great addition to the team.



*Pictured: Dr Edward Carson (Left) Dr Tom Dilks (Right)*

# HEALTH SERVICES

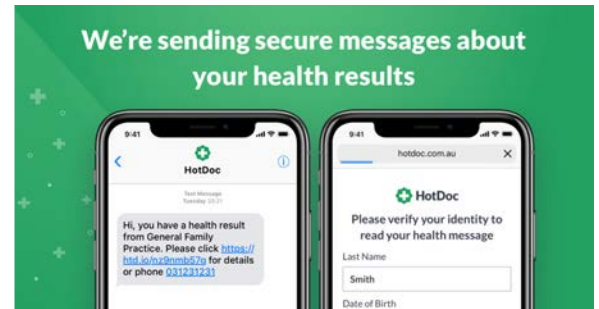
Do you have a health appointment coming up?

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Health Service is transitioning from our current SMS reminder system to HOTDOC - starting from Friday 3rd March. This will provide a more streamlined reminder system for our Community.

You will be receiving SMS messages that may include a HotDoc link. HotDoc links will always include one of these domains: htd.io, hotdoc.com and hotdoc.com.au

If you believe you have received a scam message (i.e. it doesn't match any of the HotDoc links listed), you can report the SMS on iOS or Android.

For more information on phishing and scam messages, please check this Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) Guide <https://www.cyber.gov.au/learn/threats/phishing>



**Wathaurong Community** are now a proud part of Lifeblood Teams, the group blood donation program from Australian Red Cross Lifeblood!

Lifeblood Teams is a way for friends, colleagues, teammates and communities to band together and give blood.

Donated blood can be used to help people in all sorts of life-giving ways. The need is constant and the person receiving it could be fighting cancer or going through a difficult pregnancy, or they could be someone who relies on regular transfusions to stay healthy — or even, stay alive. Now that's something worth uniting for!

You can join our **Wathaurong Community Lifeblood Team**, either;

- On your online Lifeblood donor account by following the link at the top right-hand corner once you've signed in.
- On the Donate Blood app, under 'preferences'
- Or just let the Lifeblood staff know at the time of your donation when you are in the donor centre.

To book a blood or plasma donation:

- Call 13 14 95
- Visit [www.lifeblood.com.au](http://www.lifeblood.com.au)
- Or, download the free 'Donate Blood' app.

The Geelong Blood Donor Centre is located at 237 Ryrie Street, and it is open 7 days a week. For more information on eligibility and or other donor centre locations, visit [www.lifeblood.com.au](http://www.lifeblood.com.au).

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the Wathaurong Community Lifeblood Champion, Emily McDonald – [Emily.mcdonald@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:Emily.mcdonald@wathaurong.org.au)



# HEALTH SERVICES



## COLAC OTWAY YOUR HEALTH IS IN YOUR HANDS

KEEP YOUR MIND AND BODY HEALTHY AND STRONG WITH A  
VISIT TO WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OP'S  
MONDAY COLAC OUTREACH CLINIC

### BULK BILLING GP & FREE ANNUAL 715 HEALTH CHECK!

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible for an annual health check. It's a good way to look after your health and wellbeing to keep your mind and body healthy and strong. 715 health checks are free at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op's Colac Outreach Clinic at Headspace Colac (the old Youth Health Hub).

CALL 52770044 TO MAKE A BOOKING FOR THE MONDAY CLINICS IN COLAC.

Find out more:

Visit [www.health.gov.au/715-health-check](http://www.health.gov.au/715-health-check)



Australian Government  
Department of Health



# BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS

"NDIS has  
helped my  
development  
grow, now I can  
do more!"

- Amelia

*Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative NDIS client*

<https://www.ndis.gov.au>

**Contact us today to find  
out how the NDIS could  
help support you.**

**[bcc@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:bcc@wathaurong.org.au)**

**Wathaurong Balert Care Connections: 52929800**  
**NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission: 1800 035 544**  
**NDIS: 1800 800 110**  
**Rights, Information & Advocacy Centre: 5222 5499**  
**Complaints and feedback: 1800 800 110**

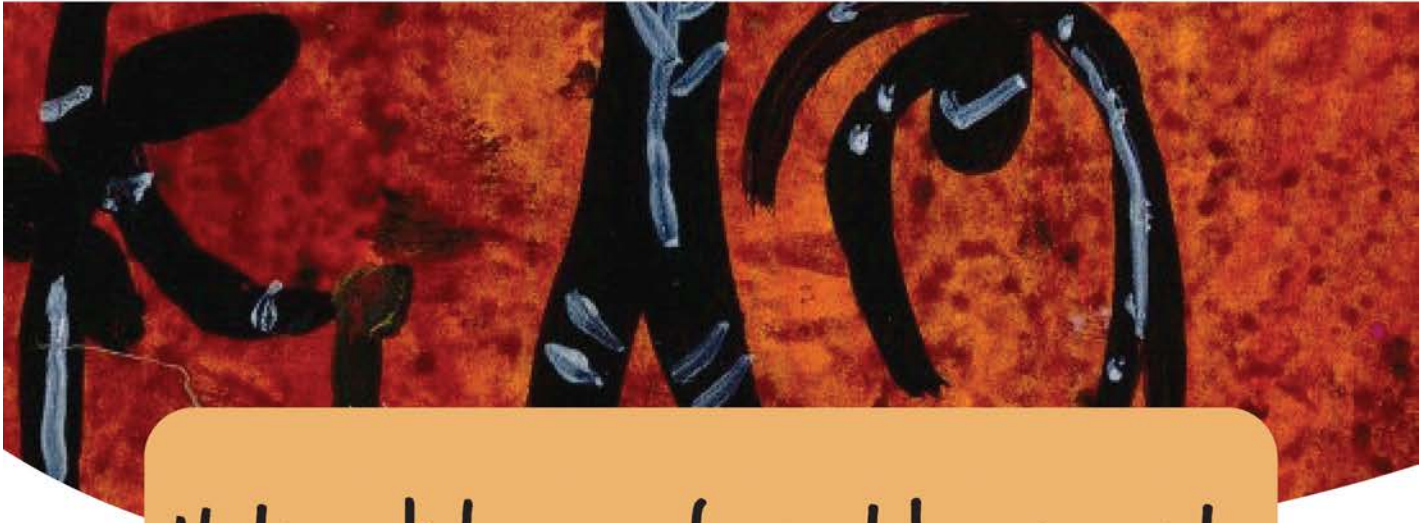


**YEARS**  
BALERTTABAYL BALERTNGITJ  
STRONG COUNTRY STRONG COMMUNITY





# BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS



Help at home for older people



"My Aged Care helps with  
me living independently."

-Gavin

*Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative My Aged Care client*

**Contact us today to find out how My Aged Care can help support you**

**[bcc@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:bcc@wathaurong.org.au)**

**Wathaurong Balert Care Connections: 52929800**

**My Aged Care Quality and Safeguard Commission: 1800 951 822**

**My Aged Care: 1800 200 422**

**Elder Abuse Number: 4324 5611**

**OPAN Advocacy: 1800 700 600 or [www.opan.org.au](http://www.opan.org.au)**





# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS NIGHT

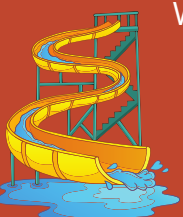
On Tuesday 20th December we held our Community Christmas night. It was a deadly event for our community, and the last time we have such a big event at Forster st, before it gets revamped! We had a special guest all the way from the North Pole visit and give our community kids a gift. It was such a special night full of activities for everyone.



## ADVENTURE PARK



We had a deadly day down at Adventure Park, with 900 community attending it was an amazing day accompanied by beautiful weather. Full of fun, waterslides, a BBQ lunch and some rides. We hope our community had an amazing day, what a way to end the year!





# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## JANUARY 2023 SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

A big thank you to all involved in our summer school holidays sessions. We were thrilled to see our community getting together and making such positive connections over the summer. Stand up paddle boarding and Surfing were both great events with Surfing Vic.

Amazing to see so many smiling faces and mob getting outside of their comfort zones. We had a movie day, art therapy program, boomerang throwing, skateboarding and an awesome family day and BBQ at Serendip sanctuary.

We're thankful for funding from Geelong Community Foundation and VicHealth that we could run these activities.

We plan to have more activities and family days in the school holidays through out the year, if you're keen to get involved contact the Community Strengthening Team  
[CSTeam@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:CSTeam@wathaurong.org.au)



# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## NATIONAL APOLOGY DAY

We held a reflection morning on February 13th to mark the 15th anniversary of the apology issued in 2008 by then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in parliament to our Stolen Generation mob.

Fifteen years later, we acknowledge that there is still healing, action and change that is needed. Today and every day we remember the strength and resilience of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who through ongoing colonial policies have been separated from their families and practicing their culture.



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Sunday 26th February 2023, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the 2021/2022 financial year out at Wurdi Youang. Thank you to everyone who came out and joined us on country and shared their voices – as a Community Controlled Organisation, our Community's voice is the most important.

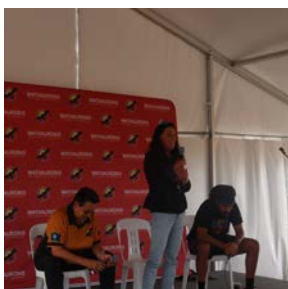
At this AGM, an in-person election was held, with five board positions available and eight nominations received.

Congratulations to the five Community members who were voted onto the Board through the election process:

- Aunty Wendy Brabham (returning Board member)
- Aunty Judy Dalton-Walsh (returning Board member)
- Ammie Howell (returning Board member)
- Uncle Glenn Shea (new Board member)
- David Tournier Jnr (new Board member)

A big thank you to David Flagg, Shane Clarke and Craig Edwards, who have served on the Board recently and completed their service.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank those Community members who put their hand up to be nominated for the Board this year, including Shane Clarke, Brian McKinnon and Joleen Ryan. It was dead to see so much passion and enthusiasm from people wanting to be a part of our Board and help shape the direction of our organisation. We hope to see you putting your hand up again when positions become available.



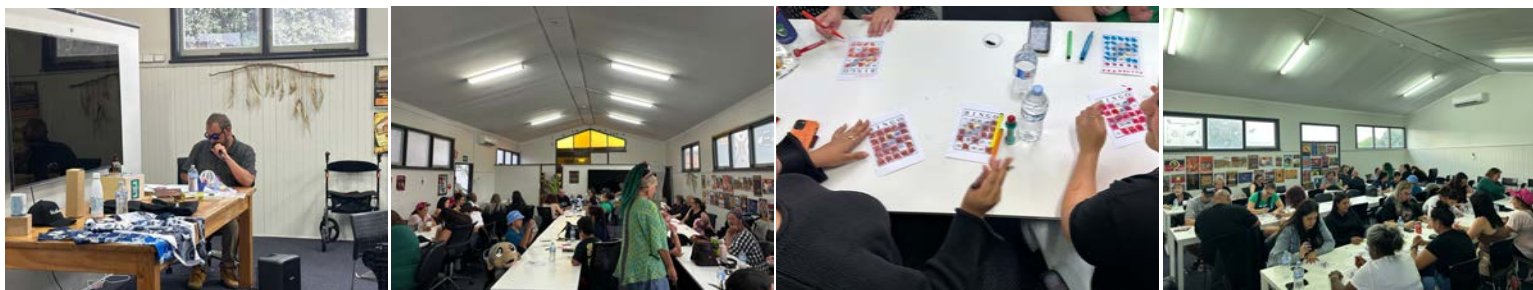


# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## BINGO NIGHT

Bingo night out at Forster St in February was a deadly night! We had amazing prizes for our winners (including some Wathaurong merch coming soon!) We loved seeing community get together, have a yarn, feed and some friendly competition. Shout out to James one of our Community Strengthening Facilitators for running and being the MC of the Bingo night!

We are having more of these community dinner nights with activities/ themes each month, so keep your eyes peeled on our website and social media pages for more information each month!



## WATHAURONG DEADLY GAMES

Want to get fit and healthy?

Learn some Traditional Games?

Get together with Community and have some fun?

Join us for the **WATHAURONG DEADLY GAMES!**

Over the month of May, we will be running the Deadly Games every Monday and Wednesday out at the Leisuretime Centre, on Anakie Road, Norlane. There will be some cool activities, and the chance of winning an amazing trophy, while getting fitter and healthier at the same time!

If you're keen to get involved, register your interest using the QR code below, and make sure you come along to the information session on Monday 17th April at the Leisuretime Centre from 5:30pm.



### WHAT ARE THE DEADLY GAMES?

It's an opportunity to get together, have some fun, get a little fitter and healthier through some traditional games and current day exercises. On your first training session you will receive your welcome pack (T-shirt, gym towel & water bottle)

### TIMES DATES AND VENUE:

**Venue:** Corio Leisure Time Centre

**Days:** Mondays 5:30-6:30pm, Wednesdays 5-6pm

**Starts:** Monday, May 1st 2023

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

1. Register your interest
2. Attend the information session.
3. If you would like to join us, you are in.
4. Join us Every Monday and Wednesday from May 1st at the Corio Leisure Time Centre

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

benjamin.silva@wathaurong.org.au  
0487 253 073

### INFORMATION SESSION

**Monday 17th April, from 5:30pm**

**Corio Leisure time Centre, 282-282 Anakie Road, Norlane**



# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## PAKO FESTA

The Pako Festa Parade returned to its full glory in 2023, and it was deadly to see our Wathaurong Community Dancers and our little ones on the float leading off the parade. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who assisted with the float, especially our Women's Group - thanks to their efforts, the Wathaurong float took out the parade prize for "Most Innovative use of theme, Sharing and Connecting Cultures"! They did an amazing job with the decorations and the giant Bunjil watching over us.

As well as the parade, our Bush Tucker BBQ food stall was back, with roo burgers, sausages and some lemon myrtle treats like slice and iced tea. Another big thank you goes out to everyone who helped out at our food stall, from cooking, to selling, to helping with set up and pack down. This big events take a lot of people working together and we are so grateful for all of your help!





# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## VACSAL STATEWIDE BASKETBALL CARNIVAL

After being postponed last year due to the flooding in Shepparton, in March 2023 we were finally able to head up to Yorta Yorta country to participate in the VACSAL Statewide Basketball Carnival.

With two senior men's teams, an Under 14 Boys team, an Under 14 Girls team and an Under 10 Mixed team participating, we had plenty of families joining us for the weekend and having some fun playing basketball. A big thank you to all of our parent and community volunteers, coaches and team managers, and a HUGE congratulations to our deadly Under 14 Boys team who took out the championship! Malakai Walker also took out the grand final MVP for the Under 14 Boys as well.



The VACSAL Statwide Basketball Carnival is not just about playing the sport - it's about coming together with mob from all over the state, and connecting through Community and Culture. Scan this QR code and check out the video from some of our Wathaurong participants talking about what the weekend means to them!



# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## MEN'S GROUP

Our Men's Group continues to meet on a regular basis, with events and activities happening every Friday.

Uncle Alfie Oram coordinates the Men's Group activities, if you are keen to get involved reach out to Uncle Alfie on 0409 624 110.

Here our Men's Group are pictured at one of their BBQs at Rippleside Park back in January.



## WOMEN'S GROUP

This year has seen Women's group start very positive.

So far this year we have done, artwork for the Pako festa float, which won a prize on the day for the Most Innovative use of theme, Sharing and Connecting Culture.

We have done weaving and dilly bag making, had an outing to Rippleside and played Bingo!!

We will also be doing many outings for the rest of the year along with cultural cooking, cultural arts and crafts which is very exciting.

We have also many new women come and join us regularly and it is always great to see new faces along with our regular women.

Shannon Secombe and I cannot thank the women of our community enough, embracing group each Wednesday and for their ongoing support.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself on 0428 619 284 or Shannon 0460 974 170 with any questions regarding Women's Group.

We look forward to seeing what the rest of the year holds for Women's Group.

-Michelle Gray



# COMMUNITY EVENTS



**WATHAURONG WOMEN'S GROUP**

 Balert Bagoork (Strong Women)

*Balert Bagoork ~ Strong Women*

All Women  
16+ are welcome  
to join anytime

**Wednesday's from 12:30pm - 2:00pm**  
**20A Forster St Norlane**

The group is a supportive space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and Non-Indigenous Mother's and Carer's who are apart of an Indigenous Family, to connect with other Women and Culture

- Arts & Crafts
- Cultural Cooking
- Outings
- Guest Speakers
- Bingo/Games
- And More...

*Lunch is provided ~ Tea & Coffee available*

- ~ Relaxed and informal with supportive Staff
- ~ Come and have a cuppa and a yarn
- ~ Improve your wellbeing and enjoy a safe place to hang out

If you want to come along or have a referral please contact  
**Michelle on 0428 619 284 / Shannon on 0460 974 170**  
**womensgroup@wathaurong.org.au**



## BABA RRANG TANDOP NGITJ

AUNTIES AND UNCLES TOGETHER

**Our Aunties and Uncles group catch up  
regularly each month!**

*Contact Aunty Sandy Manning for more  
information and to register for activities:*

*0488 991 388 or*

*sandra.manning@wathaurong.org.au*

*from 9am-2pm, Mon - Thurs.*

# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND YARNS TO DESIGN OUR NEW JOURNEY WALKING SERVICE

On Friday 10 February, we held two community workshops to hear from community about how they wanted the Journey Walking Service to look for our mob.

We got funding from the Victorian Government to design and deliver a Journey Walking Service. The aim is to provide a service for people who are having a tough time in their relationships or families, or maybe worried about their behaviour or that of someone that they love. This service will help them to get the support they need, and ensure that they have someone to walk with, advocate alongside and support them when engaging with other services and dealing with what might be happening at home.



We had a number of Wathaurong community come along to tell us what they think the service should look like, how it should work and what is important to ensure that our mob can feel safe engaging and trust the service. We heard about the importance of ensuring that the service is staffed by Aboriginal staff who are known to community, and that the service has the flexibility to meet the person where they are and help them in practical ways in what can be challenging times.

We are planning for the Journey Walking Service will be operational by 1 July 2023. We will be recruiting for Journey Walkers, who will be people who have the skill to work with our mob, navigate complex services and systems, and listen to what is going on. We will be sure to put the job ads in the newsletter and promote to Wathaurong community when the job ads go live.

A big thanks to community who came and shared their views and experiences – including our pictured doggie friend who joined (and patiently waited outside for some pats in the lunch break!)





# ONLINE STORE

The secret is out.....

Our brand new **ONLINE STORE** is now **OPEN FOR BUSINESS!**

Looking for some deadly merch to rock? We have a range of exclusive items for sale at our online store.

The artwork on our coffee mugs, drink bottles and keep ups was designed by the deadly Bri Apma-Hayes from Ntulye Art . You can read the story of the artwork on the product pages.

All items for sale in our store are mob and ally friendly, and all profits from sales of our merchandise go directly back into providing programs, events, activities and cultural connections for our Community.

Check it out today, let us know what you think, and thank you in advance for supporting Wathaurong!



[www.wathaurong.org.au/shop](http://www.wathaurong.org.au/shop)

## APRIL SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Looking for something for the kids to do this upcoming April school holidays? We are planning a range of events and activities suitable for all ages! Some of the planned activities are listed below - please note that at the time of printing this newsletter, not all of these dates and activities have been confirmed. Make sure you keep an eye on our website, our social media, or email our Community Strengthening Team at [CSTeam@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:CSTeam@wathaurong.org.au) for the most up to date information about our April school holiday program.

**ART SESSION** Tue 11th April

**SILENT DISCO** Thu 13th April

**FOOTY FOR FUN** Wed 12th April

**SKATEBOARD DAY** Thu 20th April

**FAMILY DAY -  
YOUYANGS** Sat 15th April

**TRADITIONAL GAMES/  
DAMPER MAKING** Fri 21st April

COMMUNITY DINNER

NIGHT 3RD WEEK OF EVERY MONTH

## APRIL - KOORI-OKE

ALL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES  
STRAIT ISLANDER MOB WELCOME

WEDNESDAY APRIL 19TH  
6PM-8PM

**\*\*LOCATION TBC\*\***

*CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS*





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## SISTA'S SELF-CARE DAY

- Sunday May 7th
- 10am-2pm
- Geelong West Town Hall

\*\*This day is open for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander mob and/or parents or caregivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people\*\*

REGISTER HERE:



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Births, Deaths and Marriages is coming to visit your mob**

**Tuesday 16 May 2023**

**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative**

**11am-3pm, 62 Morgan St, North Geelong**

Birth certificates can help you to access important services. You can ask us how to register a birth, apply for a birth certificate, or access our other services. Help with fees is also available.

**Do I need to bring anything?**

- If possible, please bring along proof of identity (e.g. your licence, medicare card or health care card).
- Don't have any ID? Our team can still assist you, so please come along!

**For more information**

- Visit [bdm.vic.gov.au/koori](https://bdm.vic.gov.au/koori)
- Contact our Marguk-bulok koolin-ik Team (Aboriginal Outreach) at [bdm.koori@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:bdm.koori@justice.vic.gov.au)

# Reconciliation in the Park

***'Be a Voice for Generations'***



**FREE** family friendly event for everyone

**Johnstone Park**  
**10am to 3pm**  
**Sunday May 28th 2023**

**with Market @ Rec in the Park – local First Nations artists**

See: <https://www.facebook.com/recinthepark/>

[www.geelongonefire.org.au](http://www.geelongonefire.org.au)



## Geelong Indigenous Women's Hub



Managed by proud Palawa woman  
Kylie from The Killara Foundation, it  
is a one stop Hub to assist Indigenous  
women of Djilang/Geelong.

**Contact Kylie for more info**  
**0499 286 221**

A safe space to have a  
cuppa, a yarn and put  
yourself first!



Level 1, Suite 14  
Corio Village Shopping  
Centre

## Monthly Yarning Circle & Cultural Workshops!

- Service Linking
- Wellbeing Focussed
- Computer Access
- Interview Skills
- Employment Pathways
- Resume Writing
- Career Planning
- Education Pathways
- Document Support
- Quiet Study Space
- Printing Facilities
- & MUCH MORE!!!!

# COMMUNITY NOTICES

## BREAST SCREENING SHAWL ART COMPETITION

BreastScreen Victoria and Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative invite you to submit your art in our competition.

The artwork will feature on the breast screen shawl that wraps around our women when having their breast screened.

Open to all female Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists, all ages living in the Wathaurong region.

Artwork must be provided by **11:59pm Friday 28th April**  
No entries will be accepted after this date.

Artworks can either be submitted via email to [comms@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:comms@wathaurong.org.au) or dropped off to our Geelong West Office, located at 10-12 Albert St.

**\$1,500 PRIZE**

MORE INFORMATION CAN BE VIEWED BY SCANNING THE QR CODE:



BreastScreen  
Victoria





## CALL OUT TO ARTISTS

### NAIDOC WEEK T-SHIRT DESIGN "FOR OUR ELDERS"

We are looking for First Nations artist living in the Wadda Wurrung region to design a Wathaurong branded t-shirt for NAIDOC week representing the theme 'For our Elders'.

**\$500 will be given to the recipient of the artwork chosen.**

*READ THE FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS HERE:*



**FOR OUR ELDERS**

2-9 JULY 2023







## Need help with a legal issue

**We can help you with free and confidential information about the law.**

Drop in for a yarn with an Aboriginal Lawyer and our Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer at Wathaurong.

Alternatively, you can book an appointment to speak with us.

For more information or to book an appointment call:

**John Cattanach or Belinda Foley**  
0457 450 437


**Victoria Legal Aid Geelong**  
5226 5666

**Address:** Wathaurong, West 2, 35 Mackey St,  
North Geelong

**Time:** 10am – 3pm, appointments available

**When:** Wednesdays, every fortnight



 **Victoria Legal Aid**

[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)





# CHILD SAFE POLICY

Over the past eight years there have been a number of enquiries into the historical abuse of children whilst in the care of institutions. What these enquiries found was that the abuse of children was widespread throughout different types of institutions and all across the country. This abuse was particularly the case for vulnerable children, including Aboriginal children - who may have been separated from family and kin.

In order to stop abuse occurring, it is now an obligation for most agency's across Victoria to become Child SAFE, including Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. This means having a more diligent approach in recruitment and management practices, reporting and investigating incidences of child abuse perpetrated by the agency's staff or volunteers, listening to clients and community more if they have a concern about their safety when receiving a service, and having a strong culture of zero tolerance of abuse of children and young people. Each and every Wathaurong staff member or volunteer, including Foster Carers, is expected to manage themselves in a way that is consistent with keeping children safe from harm. See below Wathaurong's formal Statement of Commitment and how community members or clients can express concerns for children's safety.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative is committed to providing a safe and friendly environment for children and young people, and Wathaurong has zero tolerance for any form of abuse of children and young people, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, cultural abuse, and neglect.

Wathaurong is committed to ensuring all children engaged with its services are culturally safe, including children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities. Wathaurong believes in the right of a child to safety in their physical and online environments.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative understands its obligations under the Commission for Children and Young People's Child Safe and Reportable Conduct schemes, as well as Victorian laws such as the Failure to Disclose offence and mandatory reporting obligations under the Children Youth and Families Act. Wathaurong will uphold these obligations in the best interest of Aboriginal children.

Wathaurong will make sure we include children and families in the decisions that affect them, and we understand how children's active participation in their care arrangements helps to prevent abuse – we will listen to children and young people and take their concerns seriously.

For more information about Wathaurong's obligations to keep children safe:

- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>
- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>
- <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-disclose-offence>
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 ([legislation.vic.gov.au](http://legislation.vic.gov.au))

All Wathaurong staff, office holders, contractors and volunteers are required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a Child Safe organisation, and failure to uphold these obligations may result in disciplinary action.

To make a confidential complaint, please contact Wathaurong's Complaints Officer at 52770044 or [feedback@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:feedback@wathaurong.org.au).

# CHILD SAFE POLICY



*We are a safe organisation for children and young people. All children and young people have a right to be safe and feel safe all of the time.*

*If you don't feel safe, speak up, by talking to someone you trust, or making a complaint to us at [feedback@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:feedback@wathaurong.org.au)*

**Wathaurong  
Aboriginal  
Co-operative is  
committed to  
providing a**

**CHILD  
SAFE  
environment.**

We have zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children. We are committed to ensuring children and young people are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We understand our legal and moral obligations to treat any child safety concerns seriously. We report any allegations and wellbeing concerns to authorities.



Visit [www.wathaurong.org.au/child-safety-commitment/](http://www.wathaurong.org.au/child-safety-commitment/) to learn more, or lodge a complaint by emailing [feedback@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:feedback@wathaurong.org.au)



# ASSISTANCE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

SERVICE	CONTACT
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative is open from Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm for support with a range of services.	(03) 5277 0044
If you need help in an emergency, contact <b>Ambulance, Police, Fire Brigade</b>	000
The <b>After Hours National Home Doctor Service</b> provides non-emergency medical assistance.	13 SICK (13 7425)
If you need legal advice or support, get in touch with the <b>Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service</b> .	1800 064 865
<b>The Orange Door</b> can provide family violence support from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours, contact <b>Safe Steps</b> for support, referrals and refuge 24/7.	1800 312 820 1800 015 188
For Drug & Alcohol advice, call the <b>DirectLine</b> 24 Hour referral service.	1800 888 236
For situations requiring police support or advice, call <b>Geelong Police</b> .	(03) 5225 3100
Are you seeking emergency accommodation? Call <b>Salvo Connect</b> (Homeless support provider for over 25s) for advice on housing and welfare support.	(03) 5223 9220
<b>Barwon Youth</b> (Homeless support provider for 24 and under) can help young people with accommodation and welfare support	(03) 5246 7500
<b>Feed Me Geelong/Bellarine</b> can provide support with free essential grocery deliveries.	0422 798 791
<b>Uniting Care</b> and <b>Salvo Connect</b> can help with providing food vouchers.	(03) 4210 1110 (03) 5223 5400
<b>Yarning Safe N Strong</b> is a culturally safe 24/7 confidential crisis line managed by VAHS.	1800 959 563
<b>Brother to Brother</b> is a 24/7 confidential support service specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men run by <b>Dardi Munwarro</b> .	1800 435 799
<b>Lifeline</b> is a 24/7 crisis support service. Calls to Lifeline from a mobile phone (whether pre-paid or plan) are free. Calls from a landline or home phone are charged as a local call	13 11 14
The <b>Suicide Call Back Line</b> is a 24/7 service that provides free telephone, video and online counselling for anyone 15 years and older affected by suicide	1300 659 467
<b>Beyond Blue</b> offers a 24/7 service providing mental health advice and support via phone,web chat or email.	1300 094 187
<b>Kids Helpline</b> offers 24/7 mental health support for young people aged 5-25.	1800 55 1800
<b>Barwon Health Mental Health Triage</b> offers 24/7 support for phone advice, referrals and intake.	1300 094 187