



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

Community Newsletter

In This Issue

- CEO Update** pages 2-3
- Staff Updates** page 4
- Awards & Achievements** page 5
- Cultural Corner** page 6
- Children's Services** pages 7-10
- Karroong Kanyool** page 11
- Colac Update** page 12-13
- Balart Care Connections** pages 14-15
- Wurdi Youang** page 16
- Community Updates** pages 17
- Community Events** pages 18-21
- Upcoming Events** pages 22-23
- Community Notices** page 24-25
- Child Safe Policy** pages 26-27



our Deadly Wathaurong mob leading the Pako Festa Parade 2024.

Calendar of upcoming events

APRIL 2024

- 1st** - Easter Monday (Co-op Closed)
- 2nd** - Deadly Funny school holiday program (see page 22)
- 3rd** - Deadly Funny school holiday program (see page 22)
- 4th** - Treaty Easter Egg Hunt (see page 22)
- 5th-7th** - Camp Jungai Community Camp (see page 23)
- 8th** - Karroong Kanyool Drop in (see page 22)
- 10th** - Karroong Kanyool 3x3 basketball session (see page 22)
- 11th-12th** - Deadly Coders school holiday program (see page 22)
- 25th** - Anzac Day (Co-op Closed)

MAY 2024

- 4th-5th** - Seaweed Hands On Workshop (registrations open soon)
- 12th** - Kindergarten Registration Day (see page 10)
- 12th** - Mother's Day
- 26th** - Sorry Day
- 27th-3rd June** - Reconciliation Week

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
 62 Morgan Street, North Geelong
 PO Box 402, North Geelong, 3215
 Phone: 03 5277 0044
 Fax: 03 5278 4123
 Email: admin@wathaurong.org.au
 www.wathaurong.org.au



Join our socials!
@wathaurong



CEO UPDATE

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong) provides supports to our Community living on Wadda Wurrung, Boonwurrung, Gulidjan and Gadubanud Countries. We acknowledge and pay our respects to their Elders and Community past, present and to all Aboriginal people living on Country who have contributed to the diverse Aboriginal Cultural Society we have today.

At our 2022/2023 Annual General Meeting, which was held on Sunday 3rd March 2024 at Wurdi Youang, we confirmed two Board members through the nomination process – Aunty Wendy Brabham will continue on with the Board for an additional 2-year term, and we welcomed Jordan Edwards to the Board for the first time on a 2-year term. On behalf of the Board and Community, I would also like to say a big thank you to David Tournier Jr, who recently stepped down from the Board and taken up an employment position with Wathaurong.

It was great to see David passing on his Director's possum skin cloak to Jordan as a new Board Member, with the cloak



now etched with David's story as a Board Member and passed on through a cultural smoking ceremony.

Following the AGM, a Special General Meeting was held for Members to approve changes to the Wathaurong Rulebook. This was a process started back in October 2022, where we held a number of community consultations about changes to the rulebook, which had not been updated since 1996. The changes approved at the Special General Meeting brought the rulebook up to date with the latest legislation, as well as updating the overall purpose of the organisation. The boundaries of service delivery and places of residence for eligible membership to Wathaurong were also updated to include all of the Wyndham local government area. A map of the updated service delivery and membership eligibility for Wathaurong is shown on the next page:

CEO UPDATE

“The boundary of the Co-operative”

operates on the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung, Boonwurrung, Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples.

Our support focuses on the local government areas of Geelong, Wyndham, Golden Plains, Colac Otway, Surf Coast and Queenscliff. Requests for support outside of our area’s boundaries will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



On Friday 15th March, we officially launched Karroong Kanyool, “Home of the Young” – our new space for our Youth at Forster Street. The space was designed in consultation with the youth of the Community and includes dedicated consulting suites for young people to access health and wellbeing specialists, a sensory space, access to computers and technology, a TV room, access to a laundry and a deadly outdoor basketball halfcourt in the colours of the Aboriginal flag.

The outdoor space also includes gathering space for men’s and women’s business and a central firepit for yarning circles, as well as a deck connected to the indoor function space for indoor/outdoor activities.

We have listened to what our youth wanted, and we are so happy to deliver on a space developed by and for our young mob. Our youth are our future, our Elders of tomorrow, and we want them to grow and become our leaders through the programs and services that we offer here.

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:

- Tracey Watts - Receptionist
- Christine Onesmo - Kinship/OOHC Case Worker
- Orisi Qaranivalu - Pharmacist
- Nikki Carroll - Infrastructure Manager
- Duane Whitlock - Senior Project Manager, IT
- Darcie Scarlett - Community Strengthening Facilitator
- David Tournier Jr - Project Officer
- Julie Briggs - Project Officer
- Noel Hodges - Lawns and Gardens Team Member
- Kaela Schlenso - Aboriginal Cultural Support, MCH
- Judy Rosson - Counsellor, SEWB
- Danielle Faumuina - Kinship/OOHC Caseworker
- Chantelle Chant - Best Start Facilitator
- Eddie Plant - GP Registrar
- Ebony Carmagnola - Family Services Caseworker
- Alex Webster - GP Registrar
- Judith Lee - GP Registrar
- April Angus - Homelessness Initial Assessment and Planning Worker
- Teagan Fraley - Homelessness Initial Assessment and Planning Worker
- Carolyn Bean - Housing First Worker
- Jonathan Alphonse - Deakin Medical Student Placement
- Shelly Ferrari - Colac Cleaner
- Benjamin Atkinson - APRAP Broker
- Aimee Scott - Case Worker, Family Services
- Rachael Carter - Disability Support Worker
- Leon Acquilina - Apprentice Builder
- Isaiah Harrison - Better Futures/Kinship Case Worker
- Holly Ellis - Business Partner, People & Performance
- Shikara Yeaman - Youth Project Officer
- Richard Reeve - Disability Support Worker
- Megan Verhoeven - Foster Care Recruitment

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:

- Seth Clay - Cultural Support Planner
- Brooke Williams - SEWB Head to Health Worker
- Merrin Kelly - Women & Children's Program Coordinator
- Rachael Topp - Foster Care Recruitment & OOHC Case Worker
- Matthew Barnes - Landcare Officer
- Mohana Priya Govardhanan - GP
- Sally Laver - Case Support Worker
- Melissa Attard - Receptionist
- Thomas Dilks - GP Registrar
- Michael Sinclair - Lawns & Gardens
- Charles Matete - Disability Support Worker
- Misty Collins - Alcohol & Other Drugs Worker
- Sharon Linsdell - Alcohol & Other Drugs Worker
- Shurooq Al Barhi - Aboriginal Hub Practitioner, The Orange Door

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



Nikki Stanley

WOMEN IN COMMUNITY LIFE AWARDS

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative would like to congratulate Nikki Stanley on receiving the award 'Women in Community Life Award for a First Nations Woman'

Nikki's impact on the Geelong community extends far beyond her role as a proud Wadawurrung woman. Nikki's deep commitment to preserving and sharing the rich traditions of the Wadawurrung people has made her a cornerstone of cultural education and awareness in the region. Her dedication to fostering a sense of belonging for all community has cultivated an environment where everyone feels connected and respected, breaking down barriers and building bridges between different cultural backgrounds.

Wathaurong would also like to acknowledge, Kiralee Hogema who was nominated for 'Women in Community Life Award for a First Nations Woman' and Jasmine Kildea who was nominated in 'Women in Community Life Award for Education'.

We are surrounded by such deadly and staunch women in our community, it is amazing seeing them be recognised for their work.

THREE MAGPIES TO BE PART OF VICTORIAN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The play written by Uncle Glenn Shea, *Three Magpies Perched in a Tree*, will be part of the Victorian School Curriculum in 2024, with VCE Theatre Studies students to see the performance at La Mama Theatre and study the themes of the play. *Three Magpies* is written and performed by Uncle Glenn and in 2023 won a Green Room Award for best new writing. The new season of the play will be performed at La Mama Theatre from 12 August - 25 August - Wathaurong will be providing some tickets for community to go along and watch the play, keep an eye on our socials later in the year for your chance to go along and see this deadly performance!



Uncle Glenn Shea

CULTURAL CORNER

FIRST NATIONS AUSTRALIANS

First Nations Australians through oral history, ceremony and arts have always claimed to be the first people to inhabit Australia. Since colonisation, these claims were/are widely disputed. Scientific and Anthroponic evidence has however proven their assertions.

Through Carbon Dating, scientists have proven the presence of First Nations people some 65,000+ years in Australia. Mungo Man and Lady (which have been previously discussed) were the vehicle by which this information was obtained.

Prior to discovery of Mungo Man and Lady, scientists in the field of Archaeology had utilised found ancient artifacts (including stone axes, cutting tools, ochres, grinding stones) and rock art as a means to date First Nations Australians existence. Geneticists, in their efforts to track the origins of the world's populations, have provided further evidence to support the claims of First Nations people.



The Mystery of Mungo Man and Mungo Lady
Youtube link

YOUTUBE LINKS FOR REFERENCE:



Aboriginal genome study
rewrites history



The genetic history of
Aboriginal Australians



Aboriginal DNA provides
human migration clues

As scientific technology improves, so does the accuracy of scientific estimations of First Nations occupation.

Something to ponder....

The Seekers in 1987 released the song "I am Australian". The first Verse of the song is:

I came from the dream-time
From the dusty red-soil plains [Supports the premise of stereotypical Aboriginality]
I am the ancient heart
The keeper of the flame
I stood upon the rocky shores
I watched the tall ships come
For forty thousand years I've been [Current timeline is 65,000 years]
The first Australian

-Aunty Gwenda Black

CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Yaama! I'm Chantelle Chant



Yaama, Yuwin Ngadhi Chantelle Chant (Hello my name is in Wiradjuri language). I am a very proud 28-year-old Wiradjuri woman from Albury Wodonga. I grew up in Qld and moved here to Victoria about 10 years ago alone with no family to have a fresh start.

I have been connected with Wathaurong for about a year during and after having my daughter. I am new to the Best Start role and very excited to start in this position as the Aboriginal Best Start Facilitator.

A little about me...! I have completed my Cert IV in community service which prompted me to be able to work in my dream job. For the past 5 years I have been an astute Prison officer. I adapt at managing dangerous and unruly offenders/prisoners without losing sight of the overarching goal of maintaining safety and promoting rehabilitation for the Prisoners/offender. Positive rapport in interacting with prisoners/offenders promoting mentorship whilst I was in the field. Also providing safe supervision over prisoner/offender free and restricted time.

My passions are making a difference and effecting positive change in Aboriginal communities and to assist vulnerable Indigenous and non-Indigenous Victorians and those who need extra help. My passion is to make a huge difference in many lives young and old. As the new Aboriginal Best Start Facilitator, I am very excited to be able to empower communities and families and develop broad cross-sectoral partnerships across all early years services to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families. I'm very eager to be able to engage with partners in new and interesting ways to be able to find solutions to the challenges that disadvantaged families within the community experience.

Mandaang Guwu (Thank you).



Contact: 0428 592 946

Email: Chantelle.Chant@wathaurong.org.au

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Wathaurong Playgroups



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

Kitjarra Booboop Baby 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 a Parent Support 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





Parenting Group

For all Parents and Carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children prebirth-5 years

Children are welcome!
Lunch Provided!

Encourage behaviour you like!
Manage misbehaviour confidently.
Become confident as a parent.
Further develop family relationships.

Scan here to Sign Up



Parenting Facilitators



Gabby



Gina



Jackie

Every Tuesday for 7 weeks

Start Date: Tuesday 9th April

Time: 1pm - 2:30pm

Location: Milla Milla Playgroup space



Bupup balak wayipungang (helping/supporting the young kids)



Ready for Learning Day



Early in January we had another successful Ready for Learning Day, with 35 children in attendance. We had health, education and community workers who shared resources and information with families to help best support their children in getting ready to embark on their new educational journeys.



Save the Date:

Kindergarten Registration Day

Have a child turning 3 this year? It's time to start the kindergarten enrolment process! Kindergartens all around the region will be attending to answer any questions parents and carers may have about kindergarten, and provide information about their kinders.



Scan here to sign up



Date: 8/5/24

Time: 11am-1pm

Location: TBC

Lunch Provided!

KARROONG KANYOOL



YOUNG ABORIGINAL MENTORING (YAM)

PROGRAM



TERM 2
EVERY MONDAY
4.00PM-5.30PM

ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES
STRAIT
ISLANDER
PRIMARY
SCHOOL AGE
CHILDREN

TRANSPORT
AVAILABLE

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
HOMEWORK HELP
SNACKS AND DINNER
LIFE SKILLS
FUN & GAMES

KARROONG KANYOOL
YOUTH HUB
20A FORSTER ST NORLANE



REGISTER NOW FOR TERM 1:

YOUTH@WATHAURONG.ORG.AU

0460 778 308

COLAC UPDATE



Caracaramigen House The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place Colac Catch Up

The tail end of last year was bumper to bumper, we were able to take the Aboriginal Youth Chip Chats group out on Country and also separately support various cultural strengthening and understandings with a deep dive into reflective practice training taking place including 7 nights of on Country camp, platypi scouting - glow worm hunting weaving, painting workshops and some time for a quiet reflection in Otways, we are truly blessed to be able to work and practice in this community and in this landscape.

Early in December we held an end of year get together, complete with jumping castle, a big feed and the Bulla Ice Cream Van. A bustling arts table with Ange where young ones painted your own Australian plaster animals. We had a surprise visit from Santa who flew in from Top of the Otways in a Forest Fire Management Truck with gifts for all!

Bounding back from a few years in hiatus pang- ngooteekeeya weeng malangeepa - ngeeye was back in January, held on the 26th. Our gathering was not a political rally nor a protest of sorts. However an Aboriginal community focused and hosted event that was open for all people to attend, share a meal and enjoy the afternoon together. The Angus duo pumping out tunes, a special performance by good friend Mike, a bustling weaving table with Ange. Remembering our future - together. We had fierce competition once again in Trakka's Quiz. The Edwards Family flew in the lead taking the win for 2024!



COLAC UPDATE



Caracaramigen House
The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place
Colac Catch Up



We really are blessed to have such great support here at the Gathering Place in Colac for all these events, opportunities and programs to take place. Special thanks to our deadly community members that go above and beyond and to Wathaurong Co-operative, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, The Koorie Education Team Barwon, Barwon South West Dhekl Dja, Torn from DECCA Barwon South West, Top of the Otways, Ted and the team at Bulla Family Dairy, Kiddie Bounce, Yeowarra Hill, Element Skateboards, Bri from First Peoples Assembly, Helen from Transport Accident Commission (TAC), Colac Otway and Surfcoast Shire Councils.

Many of you would have heard us say that if we could get Reconciliation Action Plans to walk - they'd look like Anna at In The Skies, not many spaces hand keys over to Aboriginal organisations yet Anna and her family trust naturally in the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place and it is with the saddest heart that our dear friends at In The Skies Art & Music have had to close their doors - we'd like to sincerely thank them for all they've been able to facilitate for us over the last 4 years. It's spaces like In The Skies that really inspire greatness in education, inclusion, and equity, it will be sorely missed that's for sure, but just like us, they are on the hunt for a permanent location and we wish them nothing but the best in what's to come!

If you'd like to keep up with whats on in Colac - follow us on the socials!



Eb Hickey & Tanisha Clarke
Community Development Colac

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

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



40 YEARS
BALERTTABAYL BALERT NGITJ
STRONG COUNTRY STRONG COMMUNITY



BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS

"NDIS has
changed my
life."
- Josh

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

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



40 YEARS
BALERT TABAYL BALERT NGITJ
STRONG COUNTRY STRONG COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY UPDATES

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM - LIVED EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

Aunty Naomi and Robyn Del Rio ran a workshop on trauma informed and based on a cultural activity.

We were able to engage community members impacted by Family Violence and bring them together in a safe and supportive space to create a beautiful piece of art. This space was led by Auntie Naomi who taught all involved the art of weaving. The idea behind the artwork for Wathaurong was to create one piece that community members and support staff added to the explanations from our artists are as follows:

COMMUNITY, STRENGTH, UNITY & CHALLENGE:

"Bunjil – represents the spirit of Wathaurong land – I felt like he took care of me and my family and supported me through the strength I found in my community."

"Without my community, Wathaurong, we would not be able to achieve what we have."

"Wathaurong wraps around us and are a holistic support (physical, emotional, and spiritual) – this has made me and my family strong today."

"Weaving of wounds."

"The support was invaluable – I was able to realise that it wasn't my fault, and I was not alone or judged."

"Family violence can happen to anyone – there is no judgement, only support."

"The Circle – representing arms around the people who need it - this is a symbol of support without judgement, for family, friends and community."

"We're all here to embrace and support one another."



"I find it a challenge to have a different more positive mindset, a challenge to find my boundaries, a challenge to accept what I have been through - it doesn't mean it's a negative thing but its more that I am proud of myself to keep challenging myself to find my peace."

The exhibition was opened on the 29th of November in the Project Space Gallery at Deakin on the waterfront and was in situ from November to 24th January and has now been moved to the Colac library and is on display from the 24th January 2024 until March 2024.

Aunty Naomi Surtees and Robyn Del Roi

WURDI YOUANG UPDATE

Hey there, nature enthusiasts!

Last month was a seed harvesting extravaganza at Wathaurong's Wurdi Youang property in Little River, as we hosted two fantastic groups to help us with the harvest. Firstly was some of our dedicated staff and Community members, followed by the passionate folks from the Grassy Plains Network and friends.

Together, we hoped to harvest the native grass *Whalwallila Proluta*, a tiny seed packed with an abundance of nutrients. However, as luck would have it, the weather had other plans for us, but despite Mother Nature throwing us a curveball, we turned this setback into an opportunity for learning and bonding. And what's a gathering without some good food and company – so we fired up the BBQ, had a yarn, and forged new connections.

While we may not have filled our baskets with *Whalwallila* seeds, our time on Wathaurong Country was nothing short of magical. It reminded us of the importance of resilience, adaptability, and coming together. So here's to more adventures, more learning, and more moments of connection in the great outdoors!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY

What a deadly day! The Community Christmas party was so much fun and a great way to celebrate the end of the year! We had a Welcome to Country by Aunty Judy and a cultural dance performance by our Wathaurong community, activities for all the family to enjoy, and of course Santa made an appearance (arriving in style on a motorbike!) to give out gifts to our Wathaurong community kids!



SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Over the January school holidays we had a few programs running - Deakin university held a workshop over two days, the kids learnt about seaweed and the traditional practices of seaweed in Aboriginal culture, and then went to working on some craft using seaweed and natural materials. It was a deadly two days with the Deakin staff.

We also put on an outdoor movie night, we had a big screen out at Morgan St for community to come together, have a feed and enjoy a movie on the big screen. Along with this we headed out to the You Yangs for a family day out, we had cultural activities including boomerang throwing, spear throwing and some story-time with Kristi, it was an awesome day!

Wathaurong also held some days out at Outdoor Skirmish Laser tag and Museum of Art and play. We hope the kids had a deadly time!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

PAKO FESTA

Wathaurong once again led the parade at the 2024 Pako Festa - Festival of Culture.

Pako Festa is always a highlight of the year, with Wathaurong leading the parade with our dancers and children in the float. Our dancers also performed on the stage and Wathaurong hosted a food stall selling kangaroo sausages, burgers, lemon myrtle slice and lemon myrtle iced tea. Overall the day was such a special one to share and stand proud in our culture with the wider community.



WATHAURONG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our 2022/2023 Annual General Meeting was held on country at Wurdi Youang on Sunday 3rd March, 2024. At the AGM, Jordan Edwards was brought on to the Board for the first time, with Aunty Wendy also being confirmed as continuing on the Board as part of the nomination process. As part of cultural ceremony, former Board Member David Tournier passed on his Director's possum skin cloak to Jordan Edwards as the incoming Board Member, It was great to see so many people at our AGM and special to conduct this business on country.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

VACSAL BASKETBALL CARNIVAL

The 2024 VACSAL Basketball Carnival in Shepparton was a deadly weekend. We had four teams play for Wathaurong including 2 Senior mens team, an U/14 girls team and a mixed u/10s team. Our teams did such an amazing job, with one of Senior mens teams making the semi finals! The VACSAL carnival is always such an amazing experience being with mob and community from around the state. Congratulations to all the teams that played!



INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY AT WATHAURONG

On Friday 8th of March Wathaurong held a brunch to celebrate International Women's day and the deadly women in our community. The morning began with a smoking ceremony held by Aunty Naomi Surtees and Kristi Watts. We also had some deadly women speak about their life and how they have come to be the strong and proud women they are. Thankyou to Aunty Nellie Flagg, Lisa Conway and Hayley Boehm for sharing your stories. This day was to celebrate all the strong and deadly women in our community and we thank everyone who came along.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

KARRONG KANYOOL YOUTH HUB LAUNCH

Friday 15th March was the day we finally launched our Karroong Kanyool. "Home of the Young", space at Forster Street. We had so many community members come along to see the space, and the best feedback that we heard from everyone was that it still feels like home. Forster Street has been a special place for our community for a long time, and we are so excited that it now has a new purpose for our young mob and can't wait to see all the youth in there taking part in the services and activities on offer.

The space on Forster Street in Norlane was originally opened in 1984 and was one of the first homes for Wathaurong which was formed in 1980, before moving to its current community hub on Morgan Street, North Geelong in 1996.

Since then, Forster Street has operated as an additional community space for ad-hoc events and programs, but a \$1.6m grant from the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program in 2022 along with a contribution from the Victorian Health Building Authority enabled Wathaurong to re-imagine the space as a healing space for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the region.

The space was designed in consultation with the youth of the community and includes dedicated consulting suites for young people to access health and wellbeing specialists, a sensory space, access to computers and technology, a TV room, access to a laundry and a deadly outdoor basketball halfcourt in the colours of the Aboriginal flag.

The Aboriginal flag was officially raised by Jordan Edwards, Lachlan Edwards and Shantelle Baillie, who led the initial youth consultation process starting in 2020 to bring the ideas of what the youth hub could look like.

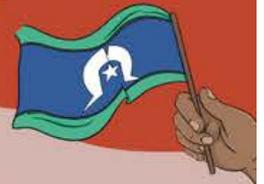


UPCOMING EVENTS

WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

SCHOOL HOLIDAY

PROGRAM APRIL 2024

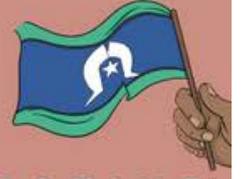


- TUESDAY APRIL 2ND** Deadly Funny Kids | 5 - 8 year olds
10am - 11:30am | Geelong Arts Centre
- WEDNESDAY APRIL 3RD** Deadly Funny Kids | 9 - 12 year olds
10am - 11:30am | Geelong Arts Centre
- THURSDAY APRIL 4TH** Treaty Easter Egg Hunt
11:30am - 1pm | 20A Forster St, Norlane
- MONDAY APRIL 8TH** Youth Hub Drop in
10am - 6pm | 20A Forster St, Norlane
- WEDNESDAY APRIL 10TH** Karroong Kanyool Basketball 3X3 Tournament
4pm - 7pm | 20A Forster St, Norlane
- THURSDAY APRIL 11TH** Deadly Coders program | 6 - 10 Year olds
8:30am - 4:30pm | 20A Forster St, Norlane
AND
FRIDAY APRIL 12TH Deadly Coders Program | 6 - 10 Year olds
8:30am - 4:30pm | 20A Forster St, Norlane

Head to our website for more details or to register:
www.wathaurong.org.au/events/



UPCOMING EVENTS



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

COMMUNITY CAMP CAMP JUNGAI



**APRIL
5-7**

A family camp for all
Wathaurong community.

Taungurung Country

REGISTER AT: WWW.WATHAURONG.ORG.AU/EVENTS/

**REGISTER BY
MARCH 29TH
OR UNTIL
SPOTS LAST!**



COMMUNITY NOTICES

FIRST NATIONS HUB

The launch ceremony of Murrán - a dynamic hub for First Nations business, retail, and arts, took place on Friday 15th of December 2023, on Wadawurrung Country in the heart of the Geelong CBD, marking a significant milestone in empowering the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Come down and check it out - open Monday - Saturday at 143-157 Malop St, Geelong (right across from Officeworks).

Key Features of Murrán:

- **Retail Store and Gallery:** Murrán features a vibrant retail store showcasing authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products alongside a dynamic gallery space, providing a platform for Indigenous artists to showcase their work.
- **Co-Working Space:** The hub includes a state-of-the-art co-working space, fostering collaboration, creativity, and innovation among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs and professionals.
- **Meeting and Conference Rooms:** Murrán offers dedicated meeting and conference rooms, providing a professional environment for business activities, workshops, and community gatherings.
- **Education and Training Opportunities:** Committed to empowerment through knowledge, Murrán will host educational programs and training sessions, contributing to the skill development and capacity building of the local Indigenous community.
- **Business Start-Up Support and Development:** Murrán aims to be a launchpad for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, providing essential support, mentorship, and resources for entrepreneurs to thrive.



MURRAN HUB WEBSITE:



Killara Geelong Indigenous Women's Hub



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

For
**FIRST NATION'S
WOMEN**

**Please complete the Google form to express
your interest in participating**

- + Culturally Safe Space**
- + Geelong location**
- + Free of charge**
- + CPR & Level 2 Certification**



**For more info contact
Kylie 0499 286 221
Killara Foundation**



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.

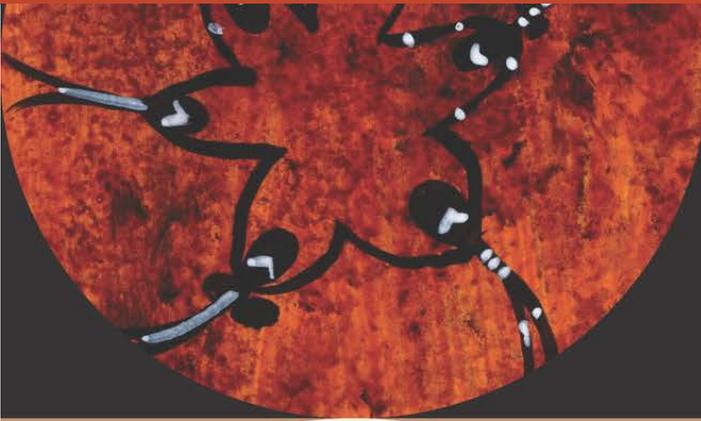
For more information about Wathaurong's obligations to keep children safe:

- <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)

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.

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

**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/ to learn more, or lodge a complaint by emailing 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 Ambulance, Police, Fire Brigade	000
The After Hours National Home Doctor Service provides non-emergency medical assistance.	13 SICK (13 7425)
If you need legal advice or support, get in touch with the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service .	1800 064 865
The Orange Door can provide family violence support from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours, contact Safe Steps for support, referrals and refuge 24/7.	1800 312 820 1800 015 188
For Drug & Alcohol advice, call the DirectLine 24 Hour referral service.	1800 888 236
For situations requiring police support or advice, call Geelong Police .	(03) 5225 3100
Are you seeking emergency accommodation? Call Salvo Connect (Homeless support provider for over 25s) for advice on housing and welfare support.	(03) 5223 9220
Barwon Youth (Homeless support provider for 24 and under) can help young people with accommodation and welfare support	(03) 5246 7500
Feed Me Geelong/Bellarine can provide support with free essential grocery deliveries.	0422 798 791
Uniting Care and Salvo Connect can help with providing food vouchers.	(03) 4210 1110 (03) 5223 5400
Yarning Safe N Strong is a culturally safe 24/7 confidential crisis line managed by VAHS.	1800 959 563
Brother to Brother is a 24/7 confidential support service specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men run by Dardi Munwarro .	1800 435 799
Lifeline 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 Suicide Call Back Line 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
Beyond Blue offers a 24/7 service providing mental health advice and support via phone,web chat or email.	1300 094 187
Kids Helpline offers 24/7 mental health support for young people aged 5-25.	1800 55 1800
Barwon Health Mental Health Triage offers 24/7 support for phone advice, referrals and intake.	1300 094 187