

Children and Young People First Project



Central Goldfields Shire Council
Gemma Simpson, David Leathem

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Our most significant achievement this year has been in two parts: the first has been in capturing an in-depth picture of the concerns and strengths of children and young people in the community with regards to their health and wellbeing through consultation; and the second has been in building solid partnerships with stakeholder organisations, enabling us to foster a whole-of-community approach to ownership of the change process. Our community's strength is in its willingness to work collaboratively, which has really shone through.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

Kicked off implementation:

- Held our first food forum with community stakeholders, laying groundwork for an ongoing food network
 - Ran our first promotion of This Girl Can and programs to promote diversity of informal sport options
 - Recruited staff member and began planning for Everyday Creativity module co-design workshops
 - Fostered a strong, collaborative approach with partner organisations – a collective community mindset
- Developed a solid and achievable action plan for implementation in 2023
- Next steps: resourcing partners and beginning implementation

Our involvement of children and young people

- Comprehensive consultation completed in March through Foundation modules, involving approximate 300 children and young people. Outcomes from consultation directly incorporated into project and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2021 – 2025).
- Established the Central Goldfields Youth Council as mechanism for youth voice in project governance, and more broadly to foster young leaders in the community.
- Ongoing work to close loop with children and youth involved in consultation, as well as building Youth Council capacity to take an active role in the project.



Co-designing with young people for better community wellbeing

Greater Dandenong City Council

Sarah Fowler (Project Coordinator), Aishling Fagan (Team Leader Youth & Community Development) Catherine Maine (Youth Development & Community Engagement Officer), Venushi Dewundege (Youth Development Officer)



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Through a complement of structured activities and small group discussions, participants had the chance to shed some light on the needs and challenges experienced by young people in Greater Dandenong, and identify opportunities and solutions to help address these issues and promote the health and wellbeing of young people. The Youth Summit was held on the 26th of July with roughly 100 young people from year 9/10 in attendance.

The Mental Health Week Event was held on the 13th of Oct with roughly 180 people from year 7/8 in attendance. See photos and interviews from the day.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

Due to the overwhelmingly positive response from both students and staff at local schools about the two mental health events, Greater Dandenong City Council will continue to run these events into the future.

Evaluation responses from students at each of the events highlighted that mental health, stress, and physical health are the most pressing issues for young people. This feedback from young people will assist with the development of the Youth and Family Strategy Year 3 Action Plan, and the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan by highlighting key focus areas and actions to address the priority needs.

Our involvement of children and young people

The system thinking workshops (completed by April 2022) highlighted a focus to improve mental health in young people aged 12 to 18. Due to these results, Council staff from Youth & Family Services co-designed with the local 'Young Leadership Group', to deliver a program to educate young people about mental health issues. The leadership group is made up of 16 young people aged (16 to 25). CGD was successful in receiving \$25,000 VicHealth Local Government Partnership funding (Community Implementation Action funding) to deliver two mental health events in 2022. These events focused on explored topics related to resilience, health and wellbeing, with a focus on supporting young people to 'bounce back' from the impacts of COVID-19.



Colac Otway Youth Arts Group

Colac Otway Shire
Youth Engagement



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

On the 13/10/2022 Three facilitators from Council and The Anthony Costa Foundation, with a 12-seat Hi-Ace from Great Ocean Road Health, along with 9 young transgender people and their allies from across the shire traveled to Melbourne to join the March from the state library to the steps of parliament house.

The march was peaceful and successful, some highlights of the day were:

- A young person from our crew took the megaphone and led thousands of people in a chant.
- A young person from our crew stood on the steps of parliament house and shared his journey as a young transgender man in regional Victoria, to cheers and applause from the crowd.
- Three of our crew were interviewed for "Youth Talk" a youth-based podcast. They spoke honestly and candidly about their experiences as LGBTQIA+ young people living regionally.
- We finished the day with Pizza and Gelato at the original La-Porchetta in North Carlton before a long ride home with happy chatter, debriefing, and planning for next year.

I am immensely proud of these young people who lobbied for the opportunity and stood tall in the streets of Melbourne for what turned out to be a 14-hour day, to fight for their rights. It was a truly humbling experience.

Our involvement of children and young people

It was all the young people's idea, by standing beside them and supporting them without steering them. These young world changers made it happen. Visibility is the only way forward. Sometimes it's hard, sometimes it hurts, but it's the only way.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

As we have seen through building connections for our remote LGBTQIA+ young people to the Colac Youth Arts Group, finding friends, safe adults, and community can have profoundly positive impacts on the physical and mental health of our regional teens. Witnessing some of our young marginalized people stand for the first time amongst thousands of their peers and in a safe and supportive environment, be themselves and speak their minds as loud as they could, was truly remarkable. We will attend again next year and will seek to attend as many LGBTQIA+ events as possible with a view to hosting our own in Colac asap.



Indigo LGBTIQA+ Action Plan



Indigo Shire Council
Youth Officer – Luciana Sansone

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Youth led participation in IDAHOBIT day and Beechworth's Dragg'd Out Festival .

Wonderful inclusive events which involved youth participation in the planning and event coordination

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- Celebratory event which included a diverse mix of staff, local students and youth committee members.
- Learnings: such a positive celebration of diversity and messaging from CEO and Mayor regarding the importance of inclusion across all council function.

Our involvement of children and young people

Youth Led committee to oversee youth participation in both events / celebrations.



Ready for Life

Northern Grampians Shire
Marcy Britten



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

The VLGP has assisted Council to build a very strong partnership with key stakeholders in our community. This commenced initially with the Connecting the Dots workshops and then further goal-focussed sessions. A Reference Group comprised of key service providers currently meets on a monthly basis to monitor progress and be champions of our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

Further engagement with young people is our next step. We want to hear more about their ideas, priorities and concerns, with a focus on what decision makers in our shire can do to support them with building connection to community and loving where they live.



Our involvement of children and young people

At the Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre our shire's fantastic HKA has been engaging with local children to revamp the snacks on offer and provide more healthy options. Young people have also attained qualifications to deliver a non-traditional exercise program 'Boogie Bounce' within our community, aimed at increasing physical activity levels.



1000 Play Street Campaign

Greater Dandenong City Council

Sarah Fowler (Project Coordinator), Kate Beveridge (Children's Services Development Officer) and Martin Halden (Coordinator Strategic Transport)



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

The most exciting story of change for the 1000 Play Street Campaign is that it has created much interest across multiple teams at Council, with staff members seeing the benefits to support this work and offering assistance with promotion.

Significant achievement to partner with the Springvale Services for Children Toy Library to gain an insight into children under 5 and how they play within public spaces to support this program.

Our involvement of children and young people

Greater Dandenong City Council have been successful in receiving funding from Play Australia, in 2022 to deliver the '1000 Play Streets Campaign'. This campaign is to encourage neighbours to get to know each other by closing off a street and supporting active recreational play. 1000 Play Streets supports social connection, increases physical health(outdoors) and supports good mental health.

Website, resources and application form have been uploaded to Council's website

<https://www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/1000-play-streets>

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

A soft launch was held in winter 2022 with a larger campaign to promote this program to be launched in Spring/Summer 2022. This will be accompanied by using a local promotional video that has been designed and created at Greater Dandenong City Council in partnership with the Springvale Service for Children – Toy Library. Children from the service were filmed during a mock up play street to showcase the program.



Young Creators Mentorship Program

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
Bridey Ellis

our
arts & culture



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

We have developed the Young Creators Mentorship Program which seeks to connect four young creatives aged between 18 to 25 years with established creatives in the field of their choice.

Our involvement of children and young people

- Youth Advisory Council approached re program
- Young people are the centre of this program
- Coordinator of the program is a young person

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- Program launching for EOI in December
- Mentoring to commence in April and take place over one day for two months

Stroll & Roll – Active Travel to School

Latrobe City Council
Alisha Brooks



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

As part of the Stroll & Roll program, we created a 'My Active Travel Passport' to encourage individual behaviour change. Each time a child walks, rides, scoots or skates to school, they receive a stamp in their passport. Children receive an incentive when they reach 10, 20, 30 and 40 milestones. Our pilot school, Yinnar Primary School, have done an amazing job promoting and taking part in the program. Many of their students reached the final milestone before the end of the school year. The passport goes up to 60 milestones so they made the decision that any students that complete their 'My Active Travel Passport' will go into the draw to win 1 of 3 prizes at the end of the year. They are going above and beyond to keep their students motivated! It has also led to a 30% increase in active travel rates from the start of the year to Term 3.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- Success: Seeing a 30% increase in active travel rates has been a great success and we anticipate that rate increasing further in Term 4 now that children are using their 'My Active Travel Passport'.
- Learnings: The biggest barriers to active travel reported by Latrobe families are time poor parents who need to drop children off and go to work, and living too far away from the school to actively travel to school. This is where the installation of Park & Walk zones has helped more families actively travel even part of the way to school.
- Next steps: We will be delivering the Stroll & Roll program in 3-4 schools next year. We will continue to ensure the program is meeting each schools needs.

Our involvement of children and young people

- Children and families were surveyed during Walk to School month in 2021. Their feedback around what they most enjoy about active travel and what the barriers to active travel are, informed the development of the Stroll & Roll program
- Children are also included in the schools Active Travel committee so that their voices are being heard throughout the implementation of the program at their school
- Children are also the beneficiaries of road safety education, bike ed training, and individual incentives that reward students for actively travelling to school



Active travel project



Greater Dandenong City Council

Sarah Fowler (Project Coordinator), Kate Beveridge (Children's Services Development Officer) and Martin Halden (Coordinator Strategic Transport)

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

The most exciting story of change to come out of the 'active travel' project, is children have shown a keen interest in supporting this work and have been excited to create a local campaign to increase active living in Greater Dandenong City Council. Looking forward to working with the children next year to increase active travel!!

Our involvement of children and young people

An 'Active Travel' campaign will be launched across the month of March of 2023.

This campaign has been codesigned with children from the SRC leadership group at Keysborough Gardens PS (pilot school) and students from the Children's Advisory Committee in the Greater Dandenong City Council.

Council has been working closely with students and staff from Keysborough Gardens Primary School throughout 2022, with this school developing strategies to encourage 'Active Travel'.

Workshops were also delivered at the Children's Forum 2022 (Oct) to design a local logo and slogan to be used for the March 2023 'Active Travel' campaign. A local graphic designer was hired for the Children's Forum to help turn the beautiful drawings and artwork from the children into a meaningful local logo. Please see local logo below.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

This local logo and slogan will be used in social media, interviews, videos and animations for the 'Active Travel' campaign in March 2023. Interviews with students from the 2022 Children's Advisory Committee and Keysborough Gardens Primary School will be created to launch during the March campaign.



Kids Co-design – Creating a safe and healthy Greater Bendigo community

City of Greater Bendigo

Kristy Bennett & Jo Connellan



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

- The project was really valuable for the students who participated with the opportunity to collaborate with students from various schools sharing thoughts, learnings and ideas, gaining an insight to Council planning procedures, and informing future planning of our city.
- The opportunity to engage with our youth team was a highlight of the day and provided a safe, comforting environment for the students to share ideas. It was also an opportunity to learn about COGB youth council with our youth Mayor assisting with the delivery of the forum, potentially inspiring future leaders.

Many of the students participated in reflection interviews that were filmed post event. They spoke very positively about the day, in particular how much they learnt from each other, how special they felt arriving to a red carpet entrance and receiving gifts for their participation in the day.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

The kids co-design forum provided the opportunity to further educate the students to identify different factors that affect their health and wellbeing in particular their physical activity, healthy eating and social connection. Educating and empowering children to share their opinions and ideas in a safe environment has created a positive relationship for children to feel comfortable and excited to participate in future engagement opportunities. Hearing the voices of children and listening to their thoughts and ideas has created a valuable resource in identifying children's priorities to influence future planning. To illustrate this, children's priorities were considered as part of our systems thinking workshops, they also informed part of the Healthy Greater Bendigo annual action plan and were the basis of the 2022 LGP funding grant application.

Our involvement of children and young people

- Children within Greater Bendigo were invited to audit their local neighbourhoods identifying positive and negative influences on their health and wellbeing. Audit submissions were received by over 50 children, consisting of bright colourful posters capturing photos and drawings on children's thoughts and ideas of how their health and wellbeing is impacted in their local neighbourhood.
- These submissions were explored more deeply in the delivery of a children's co-design forum which involved 30 children from 3 different schools ranging from grade 4-6.
- Responses identified from the audit submissions were themed and used as a tool to align with the systems thinking approach, connecting factors that influence their health and wellbeing



Heywood Community Basketball



Glenelg Shire Council
Project officer: Currently vacant

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

The Heywood Community once had a thriving local basketball association and league, where teams came from across the district, even travelling up from Portland to play. However, over time, with the introduction of greater governance processes and increased child safe requirements volunteers began to dwindle, and aging infrastructure began to take its toll. The competition and inevitably the association sadly folded pre covid. Fast forward to the VLGP and Heywood now has a fully reinvigorated volunteer ran Basketball Association, with all the required governance structures and child safety standards met, with the support of both Basketball Victoria and the Glenelg Shire Council.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- Fully established Basketball Association – first AGM held and all positions filled.
- Over 60, 5–12-year-olds signed up and attending the weekly Heywood Junior Hoops Skills Sessions. Such high participation in the Hoops Program speaks to the immense need for a program locally in Heywood, that removes the identified barriers such as travel and cost, enabling these children to participate easily in local sport options.
- 3 young people under 25 employed as Junior Coaches.
- Outside of the VLGP support the Heywood Basketball Association has started a Senior Men's and Women's competition, with multiple teams registered and playing in each competition. These senior competitions will help to maintain the financial viability of the localised league and also supports a community to remain active together, modelling positive healthy behaviours for the young people and children.

Our involvement of children and young people

Through the VicHealth project, early on in the GMB process it became evident from both children, young people and community members that the reinvigoration of the basketball association and competition was one of the top asks of the community.

At the in school session as part of GMB, basketball was a common recurring theme, from all ages right across the town. The children and young people also spoke to their lack of experience in playing basketball, but their desire to learn. This is how we developed the Heywood Junior Hoops Program. A 10 week after school program for kids aged 5–12 to learn the basic ball handling skills required to play basketball.

Three young people from the area have been employed through the Association to coach and run the Junior Hoops Program, teaching over 60 kids a night how to dribble, pass and shoot hoops.

Through the VLGP we will also be training some young people up as basketball referees, so that they can earn money and upskill themselves.



Strong Young People, Strong Communities

Buloke Shire Council
Rory White and Torri Tillig



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

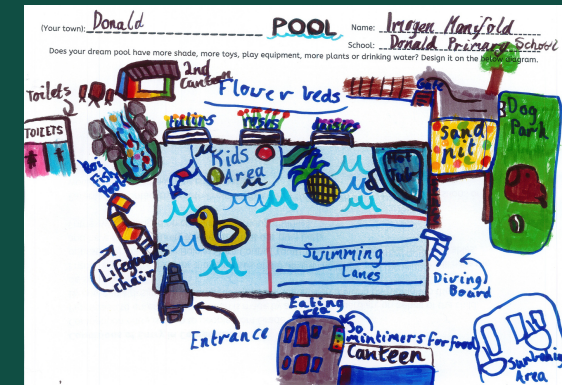
Our most significant achievement was our Inflating Buloke project. Buloke was successful in the CDIAF grants, and we were able to activate our swimming pool spaces. We worked with children Prep to Grade 6 across Buloke to design their 'Dream Buloke Pool'. We had 47 entrants to the competition, and the winner got to assist us in selecting the inflatable pieces. They were judged on creativity and thoughtfulness. The designs were judged by staff and Councillors in the August Council meeting. On December 17th we will be having an end of year pool party as the 'Grand Opening' of these pieces, with mini events occurring at each of the other Buloke Pools throughout Summer.

Our involvement of children and young people

Our approach to getting the best out of our children and young people is working with schools. This has worked the best for us so far. We plan on working with Young people early next year to improve councils approach.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- We have worked on improving connections with key stakeholders that work with and support Youth in the Buloke Shire.
- Some of our best outcomes have come from 'Connecting the Dots' the Charlton College and Stakeholders worked collaboratively to show and tell council what they needed/wanted in their community.
- Some big learnings for us have been working out the best ways to interact with the Youth in our community. Buloke is a smaller council, meaning majority of the Youth are already heavily involved in their towns.
- Our next step is building a brighter future for Children and Young People in Buloke.



Empowered Art Therapy

Bayside City Council

Elena Ricciuti and Alisha McLaughlin



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Empowered Art Therapy involves series of creative expressive and therapeutic processes and was facilitated in both indoor and outdoor settings. This program was offered to Beaumaris Primary and Secondary School. Primary school teachers reported they saw incredible changes in their young people especially, those who were experiencing behavioural challenges or trouble with making social connections.

The program was able to help the young people to re-frame their stories, express and work through their emotions to positively effect their mindset in both the classroom and playground.

The program was able to address wellbeing through the practices of mindfulness using art and expression. It also addressed connection on two levels – one being connection to self, and the other connection to peers.

Our involmnet of children and young people

Young People's feedback directly shaped the development of the program for it's continued delivery. From this, the location changed to a space outside the school, as the students felt more comfortable to be open and expressive. A smaller room was also selected, as suggested by a young person to help make the space feel more cosy.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

The Empowered Art Therapy processes aim to support self-awareness and increased mental health and wellbeing. Art Therapy believes that arts-based processes can be a vehicle for:

- Helping young people identify their helpful and harmful mental health supports
- Provide tools for self-regulation
- Foster social connection to build circles of support
- Build self-esteem, resilience and a positive outlook

These skills have been developed over the course of the program, and will continue to aid young people to build on their wellbeing resilience.

"I really liked how we got to create things that could kind of represent us.

Also that it very much calms me down and makes me a happier and better person" – Empowered Art Therapy Participant

"It was very fun and it helped me calming down. I also have made tons of friends." – Empowered Art Therapy Participant



Including children and young people in planning – Kids Co-designing Healthy Places Toolkit



Greater Dandenong City Council
Sarah Fowler (Project Coordinator) and Ann Ly (Social Planning Officer)

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

The most exciting story of change that was identified from the Kids Co-design project at Greater Dandenong City Council was, children and families perceive rubbish in public parks as an unhealthy and unsafe place to spend time. Therefore children are spending less time in parks due to this perception of unsafety. This data has informed Council to focus budgets on priority sites across the municipality and to also improve education towards public park usage and encourage litter pick up, to increase people's activity at local parks.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

As a result of the surveys and audits, Council is now working on delivering a large local campaign to educate the community about waste and litter, to be launched in 2023. Council has been granted funding from the CEO to create this large scale campaign, which involves media, contracts and the waste team. The primary message will focus on dumped rubbish and litter, with the messaging to specifically target parks and children.

Our involvement of children and young people

- In August/Sept 2021 Greater Dandenong City Council worked in partnership with Monash University to adapt the current Kids Co-designing Healthy Places Toolkit.
- Primary aged children 5 to 12 years old were the target.
- Emails to all primary schools were sent, including to various internal and external networks
- A large social media campaign was launched from Dec 2021 to the end of Jan 2022 in CGD. This included Face to Face consultation at Council's school summer program and other local activities.
- 60 surveys were completed by children and 27 audits (in the form of drawings and paintings) were submitted. The audits have been displayed on Council's website since March 2022.
- The data from the surveys and audits were delivered to the CGD Children's Advisory Committee on the 18th of May 2022, to children aged grade 4 to 6. The children reiterated that rubbish in public places was a priority and they perceived a dirty public park as an unsafe environment for children to play.



Young Creatives on Show 2022

YOUTH
SERVICES

City of Ballarat

Ballarat Youth Services, Susan Larmer – Youth Development Officer

Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

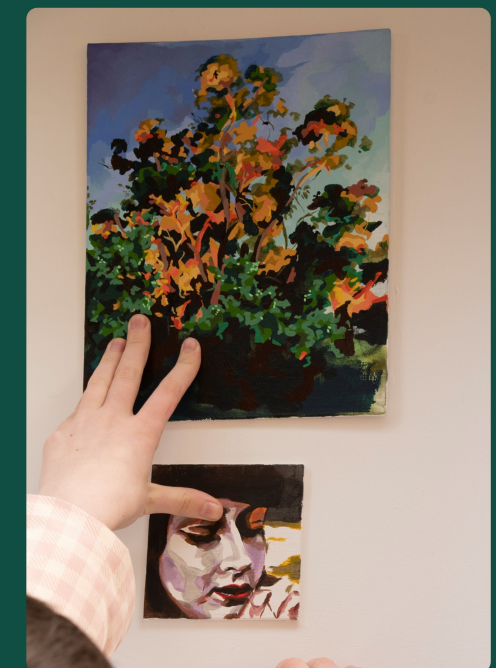
The hard work of the five paid youth facilitators, who developed, planned and delivered the weekly workshops, was reflected in the excellent calibre of works produced and exhibited in the public space of Unicorn Lane, Ballarat Central. This was the first time four of the youth facilitators had designed and delivered a workshop of this type with the investment in time, skills and resources of this level. It was also the first paid opportunity for these young artists to work in their area of expertise within a artist setting. As a result of being a youth facilitator for the Young Creatives project funded by VicHealth, Eva has gone on to do multiple paid roles with Ballarat Youth Services – both in the context arts and community events. Most strikingly, from this established, positive relationship with Ballarat Youth Services, Eva was given the opportunity to publicly exhibit her artworks in a space down from the Art Gallery of Ballarat through our Creative City team at Council. This was a free opportunity for Eva to gain public expire as a young local artist who is an extremely talented artist, not sure if they want to pursue a full time art due to the challenging nature of the arts and culture sector in being able to confidently rely on it as a sole income source.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- The project offered an income stream for local artists to work in their field of preference
- Young participants were taught new art and creative skills by other young artist they had not previously experienced
- All of the young artists and youth facilitators had their art works on public exhibition for 6 weeks in the centrally location of Unicorn Lane in Ballarat Central

Our involmnet of children and young people

- The program was developed and delivered by 5 young people
- The discussion to choose the theme for the groups artworks and exhibition was facilitated by the youth facilitators and selected by the young artists participating in the program



Access Rainbow Readiness (LGBTIQA+)

Nillumbik Shire Council
Youth Development Team



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Established a new monthly youth rainbow social group

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

A background paper and Rainbow Ready Roadmap Audit were undertaken to understand and better support the needs of Nillumbik's LGBTIQA+ community, including:

- Review of available local, state and national data
- Benchmarking with Victorian Council's
- Review of Council's current delivery and gaps
- Recommendations for how Council can improve inclusive and equitable practices within an LGBTIQA+ context including immediate and long term objectives

The following activities and actions have already started to take place across Council to support LGBTIQA+ young people as a result of the project:

- Access, Equity & Inclusion Policy adopted by Council
- Fourth flagpole installed to raise the progress rainbow flag
- Flag raising event for IDAHOBIT 2022
- Internal working group to support the delivery of events and activities for IDAHOBIT and Wear irPurple day
- Launched new Youth 'Rainbow Social Group'
- Pronouns added to email signatures for staff at Council
- Rainbow lanyards and pronoun badges rolled out to all Council staff
- Gender diversity training for L2P volunteers

Our involvement of children and young people

- 25% young people completing our Youth survey (2021) identified as LGBTIQA+
- LGBTIQA+ inclusion highlighted as a focus area in Nillumbik Youth Strategy 2022-2026
- Nillumbik Youth Council advocating for LGBTIQA+ inclusion
- LGBTIQA+ inclusion discussed at Youth Summit - "LGBTIQA+ young people face stigma and bullying. We want Nillumbik to be a more inclusive space for the LGBTIQA+ community"
- Youth Rainbow Social Group established out of recommendation from Youth Summit



HEALTHY MOVES PROJECT: Walk to School

Warrnambool City Council

Nicole Wood



Our most exciting story of change and most significant achievement

Completing a planning meeting in May with local school children to determine how they can inspire other children to think about Walking and Cycling as transport. We have been doing this process for the past 10 years and in 2022 we were able to implement a Wombat Crossing on a Safe Routes to School in Gateway Road. This was completed in Partnership with Our Ladies Help of Christians Primary School and the local Aged Care facility so we were able to create safer streets for our most vulnerable- the oldest and youngest community members.

<https://www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au/gateway-road-crossings-made-safer>

Our involvement of children and young people

- Using students voices- giving them a chance to have input on how to promote walk to school
- Working with students to identify barriers and enablers to walking/riding to school
- Collaborating between engineering and schools to provide infrastructure which overcomes the barriers
- Providing opportunities for students to partner, plan and show leadership in the promotion of Active Transport
- Evaluating- not only the infrastructure but how people use it, is it fit for purpose, using qualitative and quantitative metrics. This has assisted in the number of students walking to school as well as the wider community.

Our outcomes, learnings and next steps

- Will take this approach on other Routes to School
- Partnering with local schools then spreading wider into the community, this aided in gaining further support and demonstrated flexibility and open attitude to new ideas
- Ensuring that the communications follows values based messaging

