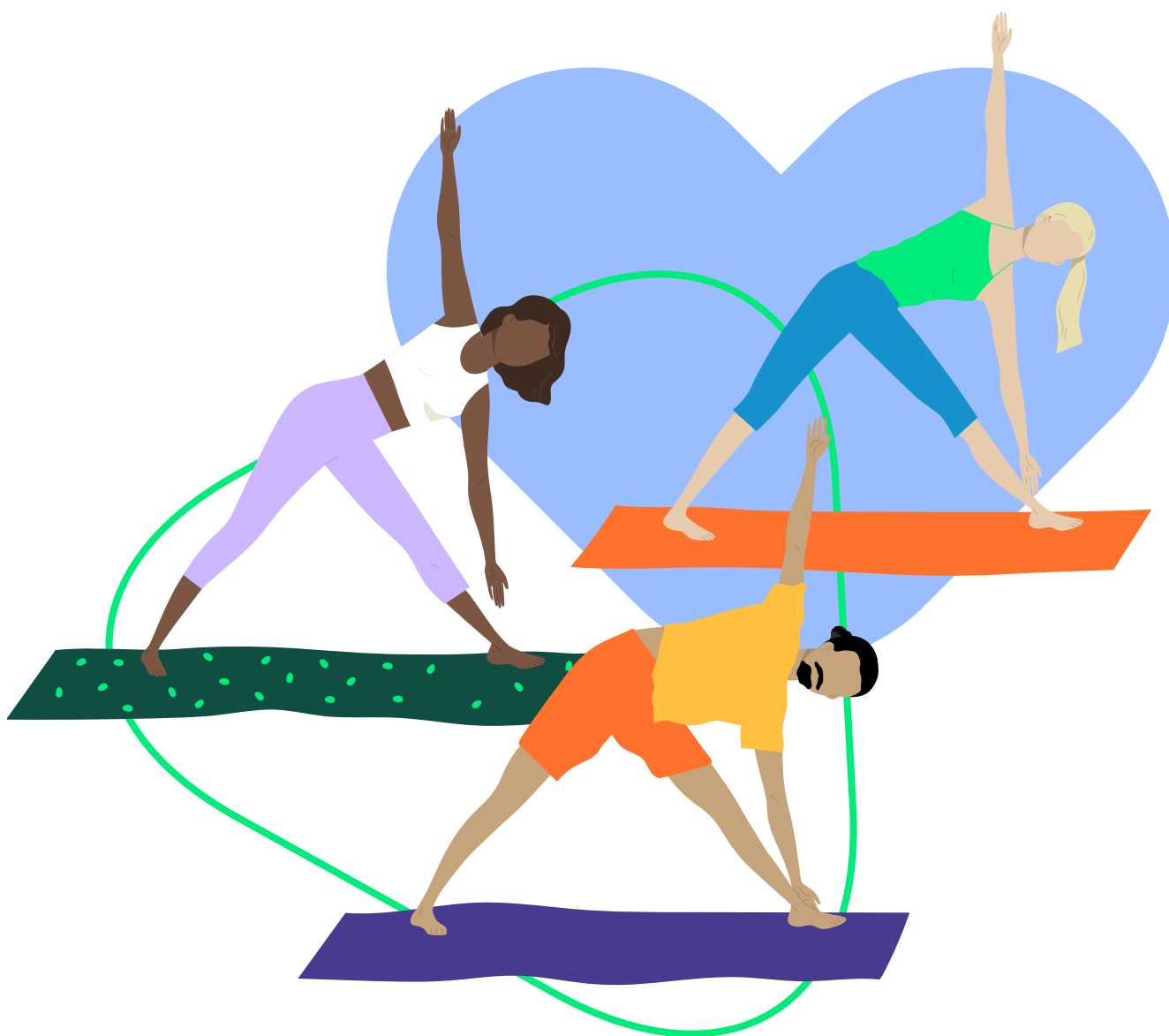




Building active communities

VicHealth Local Government Partnership



This module covers:

Impact streams

- Increasing active travel for children and young people
- Including walking and bike riding in council strategies
- Creating opportunities for all Victorians to be active
- Including gender equity in council sport and recreation policy
- Empowering and enabling women to get active through local promotion of This Girl Can – Victoria

Partners

We would like to thank our development partners for co-authoring this module:



We would like to thank our development partners for contributing to this module:



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Overview



The Building active communities module outlines a range of activities, processes and changes that councils can make to increase children and young people’s physical activity in the community.

Councils play an important role in designing, managing and improving paths around neighbourhoods for walking and bike riding, and in supporting a wide range of sport and recreation opportunities. They have a responsibility to ensure all children and young people can be active in their local community by providing safe and appealing options for them to walk, ride and play. To ensure that children experience active communities from an early age, councils should provide spaces where families can participate in active transport or active play together and where children can be welcomed in family-friendly sport and recreation.

Because children and young people interact with a wide range of council spaces, councils have a unique opportunity to use these spaces to shape active behaviours from an early age. Families with young children are the primary users of playgrounds, parks and nature corridors and other public spaces. Here, children can develop core sensory, fine and gross motor skills, as well as interact with other people in the community, animals and nature.

With increasing rates of sedentary activities and screen time in early life, providing access to community spaces that support children’s physical and social skill development at every age and stage is becoming even more important. The Building active communities module incorporates equity principles throughout, provides guidance for councils to invite perspectives, ideas and solutions from children and young people, and ensures activities provided are suitable for a wide range of needs.

In essence, councils should ensure that their planning prioritises walking and bike riding routes that are safe and appropriate for children and young people. They should also seek diverse community engagement and embed local partnerships in the planning and delivery of policies relating to children and young people’s opportunities to be active. They should offer innovative and varied sport and active recreation opportunities with a focus on inclusion.

Partnering with community health – health promotion

Health promotion teams in Victorian Community Health Services undertake health promotion and prevention activities addressing the key focus areas of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023, including increasing active living. Funding guidelines encourage them to collaborate with local partners, including local government, to develop and implement place-based policy, programs and initiatives that promote active living.

What are the benefits for councils?

This module will support your council to:

- meet obligations under the [Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008](#) (Vic), the [Climate Change Act 2013](#) (Vic), [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) (Vic) and your Council Plan
- help children and young people meet the recommendations for daily physical activity
- provide a diverse range of options for active living that meet the needs of everyone within your community, particularly those who face greater barriers
- enhance community cohesion by providing more inclusive and welcoming environments.

Daily physical activity requirements

The physical activity and exercise guidelines provide recommendations on the amount and type of daily physical activity children, young people and adults need to keep healthy, as well as limits on sedentary time.

Some activities in this module are focused on young children aged 3–5, who require:

- at least 3 hours of active play throughout the day
- at least 1 hour of energetic play, such as running, kicking, throwing, jumping, dancing, or skipping
- a range of active play that is fun and which encourages exploration and discovery

Some activities in this module are focused on school-aged children aged 5–17, who require:

- at least 1 hour of moderate to vigorous activity a day
- at least 3 days a week that include vigorous and strength-focused activity
- several hours of light activity each day.

Some activities in this module also include young people aged 18–25, who require:

- activity on most or all days, achieving around 2.5–5 hours of moderate physical activity or 1.25–2.5 hours of vigorous activity each week
- strength-focused activity on at least 2 days a week.

You can find details about recommendations for other age groups and pregnant women, along with sleep guidelines and sedentary behaviour limits in [Physical activity and exercise guidelines for all Australians](#).

Impact stream:

Increasing active travel opportunities for children and young people

Implementation actions

To complete this impact stream, councils will select from:

- Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program
- Quick win: Run a walk to Kinder Day campaign
- Step up: Deliver a year-round walking and bike riding to school program
- Step up: Apply an equity approach to walking and bike riding to school
- Step up: Create a plan to make walking fun for young children
- Ambitious: Deliver school neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects
 - Option A: Open streets
 - Option B: Drop-off zones
- Ambitious: Support young children to develop bike skills

This impact stream requires councils to promote and increase access to safe and active ways for children and young people to get around their community.

These actions include initiatives that promote active travel to and from schools, early childhood services and key settings and destinations that young children and their families visit. This list of destinations includes local shops, community centres and facilities, such as libraries, art and cultural centres, playgrounds and parks. This impact stream provides guidance on planning and delivering longer-term programs to promote and increase active travel. This will support children and young people to develop the necessary skills to travel in a safe and active way, whether walking or riding bikes, scooters or skateboards.

Councils have a responsibility to provide a walking and bike riding environment that allows all children and young people to travel safely around the community. This impact stream demonstrates how to deliver campaigns and programs that generate awareness and excitement about walking and bike

riding with the aim of engaging children, young people, families, schools and the surrounding community in creating behaviour change together.

Young children are typically dependent on their parents for mobility and participation in public life. Gradually, usually through late primary school and into early secondary school, children obtain the consent of their parents or carers to travel independently. In car-oriented environments, however, they may remain somewhat dependent on relatives and friends to drive them, before they are able to drive themselves. Young people (aged roughly 12–25) are therefore often reliant on a combination of walking, public transport or bike riding for independent mobility.

Councils should seek to understand barriers that prevent children, young people and families from walking, bike riding, skating and scooting. Identifying these problems is part of a process which seeks to work collaboratively with community members to remove these barriers. Active travel does not only provide important physical and mental health benefits for young children. It also benefits parents and carers who may have trouble finding time to participate in physical activity because of their caring responsibilities. When designed effectively,

active travel to childhood services should be compatible with their onward journeys to work or other commitments.

Councils should design programs and campaigns relevant for their local communities and foster a culture that prioritises young children who walk and bike ride.

A note on little movers

Young children are enthusiastic walkers, scooters, skaters and riders. Depending on community needs, councils could adapt the walking and bike riding programs and infrastructure implementation actions described in this impact stream to focus on kindergarten and early childhood education services.

If making these adaptations, consider:

- accommodating the safety, physical and cognitive development needs of the younger age group
- working with early childhood specialists to co-design activities for young children
- including a strong focus on physical and cognitive skill development through council programs, such as incorporating scooter and bike paths or traffic education features into council's play spaces.

Parents with babies and young children can take active pram walks instead of short car trips. As they grow, young children can progress to standing alongside the pram and walking part way to promote their physical development.

Active travel strategies should be inclusive and designed to meet the needs of all young children and families, including children with disability or additional needs, and children and families who live a long distance from early childhood services and do not have easy walking or riding access. Councils should consult and co-design active travel strategies with children, families, and relevant experts and stakeholders to ensure they meet these needs.

Recommended resource

[Framing walking and bike riding message guide](#) – VicHealth has worked with Common Cause Australia to develop values-based messaging frames that build strong public support for walking and bike riding. The guide provides tips and example messages to help council staff and health promotion practitioners tell our story – that the 'streets are for everyone'.

Intended outcomes

Councils undertaking this impact stream can expect to:

- contribute to the goals of their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans including priority areas such as increasing active living and addressing climate change
- increase active travel rates by having more children and young people walk, ride, scoot and skate for all or part of the journey to and from local destinations such as early childhood education services, primary and secondary school
- increase independent mobility of children and young people
- increase confidence and capability of children and young people to walk, ride and travel safely on local streets
- provide environments around schools that better support children commuting actively as well as walking and bike riding for recreation in local neighbourhoods. This may include improved access to and availability of safe walking and bike riding infrastructure and where possible including space for riding two abreast
- increase social connection opportunities for children who walk, ride, scoot and skate.

Minimum deliverables

To complete the impact stream 'Increasing active travel opportunities for children and young people', councils will have:

- documented the goals of the identified implementation action, including a priority focus on locations and key population cohorts
- demonstrated an increase in active travel opportunities to and from key locations for children and young people
- demonstrated evidence of how they have worked directly with children and young people to increase active travel opportunities
- demonstrated succession planning which outlines how the activity will contribute to the outcomes of their current and future Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.

Quick Note

Active modes

In this module, active modes can include any modes of travelling that are predominantly active. These might include walking, running, bike riding, scooting or skating. Travelling by public or school transport may provide some additional opportunities to travel part of the journey actively.

In this module we most frequently talk about walking and bike riding, but your activities should the range of active ways people like to get around your community.



Quick win:

Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program

For this quick win, councils should partner with local schools to deliver a program which encourages children and young people to walk and ride bikes to and from school over a period of a month.

The program should:

- promote and plan for all active modes; including walking, riding, scooting and skating
- aim to increase active travel rates by children and young people to and from school, in periods when the program is not running
- include an achievable participation target, aiming to grow the program year on year.

Running a month-long program will suit councils who want to raise awareness and generate excitement in the community about walking and bike riding to school. Councils can tailor their program and campaign to feature components that will resonate best with children, young people and families in their local community. This activity

is also a great step for councils wanting to expand relationships with schools in their community.

Some schools will be involved in the Department of Education and Training's [Active Schools](#) Program and completion of this module is consistent with the [Active Schools framework](#). An active school encourages physical activity through a whole-school approach that goes beyond traditional physical education and sport to promote physical activity at every opportunity. There is an [Active Schools Toolkit](#) with an [Active Travel](#) section explaining active travel and some useful strategies and approaches.



How-to guide to:

Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program

Involve people

Key people and groups to involve in this action include schools in the municipality and their leaders, staff, students and communities.

Internally, councils should consider which teams could support the planning and promotion of the walking and bike riding month, such as health planning and promotion, family and youth services, school-crossing supervisors, traffic and transport, and communications. A walking and bike riding to school month also provides a great opportunity to involve councillors to demonstrate council commitment to children and young people's health and wellbeing and connect with members of the community.

Externally, councils could also partner with local community or health organisations to drive and promote this program.



Involving schools

Contact schools in the local area to encourage them to participate in the walking and bike riding to school program. Consider:

- attending regional School Principal Network meetings to gain interest
- holding an active travel workshop for schools to promote the benefits and opportunities, provide ideas from previous iterations, and identify barriers to participation with opportunities for discussion on ways to address these barriers
- creating opportunities to include the voices, experiences and solutions of local children and young people relating to bike riding, such as those gathered through foundation work in the Leading the Way module

- asking participating schools to nominate a program champion, such as principal, staff member, parent or carer, senior or past student to be the main contact and to help plan or promote the program or to assist with mapping and implementation.

By asking schools to pledge to be part of the program, councils are providing schools with an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to active travel. Their pledge will give families a direct connection to the initiative and the confidence to participate.



Case Study

Learn how Greater Shepparton City Council implemented their month-long walking and bike riding to school program as part of the VicHealth Local Government Partnership in this ['Quick Win case study' video](#).

Crossover opportunity

The [Leading the Way – Engaging young voices for change foundation module](#) provides resources to engage, audit and co-design solutions for healthy places with and for children and young people in your community.



Plan

Planning your program

Review the **Walk to School Resource Guide** '[Strategies to encourage active travel to school: Walk to School and beyond](#)' and refer to [Ride2School resources](#) to help you decide if your program will focus on primary or secondary schools.

Set a target for the number of schools to work with in this program with an aim to grow this number year on year.

Decide on a month of the year that suits the local community. Consider:

- aligning with the school year and term dates, allowing time for planning and promotion in the lead up, or time to allow good habits to become embedded
- consulting with participating schools to find dates to avoid, such as periods busy with school camps or other school specific events
- avoiding periods of the year that are likely to be affected by inclement weather
- connecting to related campaigns, such as Ride2School in March, Walk Safely to School Day in May or Walktober events in October.

Prepare a communication plan

A communication plan is an essential component of this short program. The communication plan should cover how council will promote the program to the community in the lead up to the event. Refer to the [Walk to School webpage](#) for resources and communications materials, such as posters and parent information provided by VicHealth.

Some ideas to include in the communication plan:

- Plan for opportunities to involve children and young people in your promotion. Work with them on key promotional messages, seek young ambassadors who can promote the program on local radio, news and other publicity opportunities.
 - Refer to the variety of ways to actively get to and from school – walking, scooting, skating and riding to school – across all your communications.
 - Refer to the 'Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide to prepare key messages as part of your program that suit a range of needs, for example, ground your promotional story in students' desire to walk and ride bikes. Showcase the attitudes and behaviours council would like, not those you don't want. For example: 'Many schools are encouraging kids to get to school in ways they want to', or 'Kids tells us they want to walk, scoot or ride bikes, especially with their friends'.
 - Promote messaging like 'part way is ok' where parents or carers drive part of journey to or from school, parking the car a few blocks from school and allowing the children to walk the rest by themselves or arrange for them to walk with friends or neighbours.
- Use a wide range of channels in the lead up and throughout the key delivery month for the program to ensure the best possible reach. Consider:
 - publishing news items on council's communication channels, including the council website and social media
 - displaying posters in local community centres and facilities
 - promoting at other community events
 - sharing promotional materials and communication templates, such as those available from the Walk to School and Ride to School programs, with your school community and parents or carers
 - encouraging schools to ask shops and community facilities along routes surrounding the school to display the posters and materials
 - promoting National Ride2School Day, National Walk Safely to School Day and similar events.
 - Asking council's traffic and transport team and school-crossing supervisors to identify opportunities for them to support the walking and bike riding month.



Assess

Collect information to inform the program design

Ask participating schools to collect and share baseline data about the ways students travel to school before the program begins. [HandsUp! counts](#) is a tool that can help schools easily collect this information and upload straight away via an app.

Review this data and consider any specific targets or problem areas to address with the program. For example, look to see if there are particular schools in the area that have much lower rates of walking and bike riding and talk to those schools about their goals for the program.

Involve schools in design

Offer to support schools to create their own active travel plan; a document that captures their goals for the program and sets out the actions they want to undertake to encourage students and their families to choose healthy, safe and environmentally friendly ways of travelling to and from school.

Encourage schools to sign up to the Ride2School program for expert guidance and support to promote bike riding.

Involve children and young people in design

Depending on the available time and capacity to plan the program, council or schools can include students designing the program for their school.

One option to include children and young people at this step is to carry out an audit on how they see their route while walking, bike riding, scooting and skating to or from school.

Crossover opportunity

The [Leading the Way – Engaging young voices for change](#) foundation module provides resources to engage, audit and co-design solutions for healthy places with and for children and young people in your community.

In particular, the [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) web resource provides tools that can be adapted for a walking and bike riding audit and co-design process.

The audit could also involve students taking photos to capture any hazards like overhanging tree branches or areas of the footpath that prevent people to walk or who are scooting, skating, using prams, wheelchairs or have mobility issues to safely use the pathway. This information can be shared with the council teams identified in the Involving people step.

Another option is to work with students at participating schools to create Walking Maps that show different routes, identify safe crossing points, highlight fun features along the way and help increase the number of families using the same route. See [City of Greater Shepparton's example](#) for ideas.



Hot tip!

When school is too far for walking and bike riding

In many communities, students live too far or don't have safe options for walking and bike riding.

Students at schools in and near rural communities often travel long distances and many arrive by school bus.

Opportunities to walk or bike ride to school in these locations are limited but here are some ideas:

- **Active travel to bus stops** which uses similar incentives as Walk to School.
- **Walking events within school grounds** before or during school, which could involve parents and families. The appeal of these may wear off quickly unless they are linked to other incentives, like gaining house points for active travel.
- **School bus park and walk** following the schools in the Southern Grampians with a school-contracted charter bus who worked to identify a safe drop-off point for students to walk the last distance to school while the bus delivers their bags.
- **Active travel in other parts of the day** which look beyond school to other activities for children to build activity into their day, such as when commuting between school and after-school activities.

Deliver

Deliver the program

During the dedicated walk and bike ride to school month, support schools to deliver the program by fielding questions and continuing to promote (encourage community participation) through council and community channels.

Activate with route information and markers

Prepare and disseminate walking route maps and footpath decal maps to schools to make families more confident about active travel. Detailed information is available in the [Walk to School Resource Guide](#).

Identify walking routes

- For more information go to Victoria Walks guide to walking routes and decals. Work with families and students to identify and audit routes. Include 'park and walk' zones away from school.

Use footpath decals to mark walking routes

- These can be designed by students or you can utilise ready-to-go decals.

Create maps of walking routes

- These can be developed in collaboration with students and families. Share them with new school families as part of their orientation using the Victoria Walks [Walking Maps](#) online tool.

Use signage

- These help to promote 'park and walk' locations or 'kiss and drop' zones.

Activate with incentives

Depending on the available program budget and capacity, it may be possible to offer additional incentives to encourage school and community participation in the walk and bike ride to school month. For example:

- Provide bike education sessions for schools through the [VicRoads Bike Ed program](#) and utilise resources.
- Work with students to use [Safe Routes to School](#) approaches to improve road safety around pick-up and drop-off times, creating safe walking, bike riding, scooting and skating routes to school to encourage active travel.
- Support schools to use 'tactical urbanism' strategies which includes low cost, temporary changes to the built environment, intended to improve local neighbourhoods and urban spaces, or art pieces to enhance streetscapes and stimulate children's interest in the neighbourhoods. This could be done through a co-design process with students generating the ideas. Councils could work with other young people through council networks (youth services, art networks) who can design public artwork. Here is an example of chalk art from [Living Streets in the UK](#).
- Create competitions within the school or between schools, with incentives to encourage participation. Competitions could be about active travel rates or a competition for the best story, meme or photo. Any prizes or awards should reinforce council's commitment to providing healthy options for children and young people.

Celebrate!

Support schools to celebrate achievements through the month. Consider:

- rewarding the students with certificates
- providing a healthy breakfast at the schools for students who take part
- providing incentives for parents and carers for helping get kids involved, such as coffee vouchers for local cafes
- creating a promotional video that could be used to advertise the program next year
- encouraging kids to create artwork to reflect on their experience.

Review and embed

Evaluate the program

Ask schools to collect and share data about students' ways of getting to and from school during the month. Bicycle Network's Ride2School app provides an easy way to conduct [HandsUp! counts](#) which can be uploaded straight away via the app. When evaluating the program, consider:

- indicators that compare walking, bike riding or use of other active modes with baseline data collected in the Assess stage
- questions that demonstrate changes in students and parent awareness, attitudes and behaviours about walking and bike riding to school
- questions that capture school staff perceptions of the program
- indicators that evidence any changes to council processes, services and facilities as a result of the program.

Share the results

Publish any key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for your audience. Consider:

- using language, facts or styles that are interesting to children and young people
- using images of students having fun in their neighbourhoods – a picture paints a thousand words
- aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change; for example, requesting an ongoing budget from council leaders, highlighting changes the council could make that could support walking and bike riding over the long-term.

Embed the walking and bike riding to school program at council

Consider options to embed a month-long walking and bike riding to school program in council's annual program delivery:

- seek a commitment from council leaders to continue the program each year, aiming to improve participation targets, knowledge and awareness, to sustain active behaviours
- use evaluative processes to identify opportunities to improve elements of the program
- work with council's budget processes to secure annual allocation of resources.





Quick win: *Run a Walk to Kinder Day campaign*

This quick win involves councils partnering with council-run and private early childhood education services to establish and promote a Walk to Kinder Day.

This is a fun way for councils to raise awareness of the benefits of active travel for young children and their families and encourage them to try active travel for a day. Councils can work with early childhood education services to promote the health, social and environmental benefits of active travel to young children and their families, and the different forms of active travel that can be used by this age group, which include pram walking, walking, walking using mobility aids, scooting and bike riding.

A Walk to Kinder Day is also an opportunity for councils to form relationships with local early childhood education services to encourage them to promote and support active travel by families, including by providing end-of-trip facilities for storing prams, bikes and scooters.

Councils undertaking this action should:

- promote the many benefits of active travel, including:
 - increasing physical activity for young children and their families
 - establishing healthy physical activity habits early in life
 - fun and enjoyment
 - social and community connectedness
 - environmental and sustainability benefits.
- promote the different forms of active travel that are suitable for young children including where are the safe walking routes
- include an achievable target for participation in the Walk to Kinder Day and aim to improve this year on year.



How-to guide to:

Establishing and promoting a Walk to Kinder Day

Involving young children and families

Key people to involve in a Walk to Kinder Day are children and families who travel to kindergartens and preschools. As well as participating on the day, children and families can be involved in planning, promoting, coordinating and supporting the day as well as learning about active travel benefits and options and safe travel routes to the services in the lead-up.

Involving early childhood education services

Planning and delivering a Walk to Kinder Day and encouraging participation of children and their families, requires the commitment and involvement of key people from early childhood education services, including management, staff and parents. Councils should contact and engaged early childhood education services early in the planning phase, to ask them to participate in the day to show support for active travel and promote the benefits to children and families. Consider asking services to nominate a champion for the Walk to Kinder Day, such as a staff member or parent or carer, who can act as the main contact and coordinator.

Involving council and the community

Councils will play an important role in supporting services and families to plan, promote and run the Walk to Kinder Day by providing information about active travel, promotional materials and walking maps or travel routes. Teams and staff across council, including those from health planning and promotion teams, traffic and travel teams,

communications, family and youth services, as well as school crossing supervisors can be involved in all aspects of the Walk to Kinder Day. Schools and other non-council partners can also support the promotion and implementation of the Walk to Kinder Day across the community.



Plan

Planning your program

Set a target number of local early childhood education services to participate in the Walk to Kinder Day and aim to increase the number of participating services year on year. For council-managed services and facilities other than childcare or kindergarten, such as libraries, sport and recreation centres and maternal and child health services, the Walk to Kinder Day could be focused on active travel to activities or sessions offered to young children and families, such as story time, parents and bubs exercise classes, and parents group meetings.

Aim to build and strengthen council's relationships with early childhood education services to create trusted and valuable partnerships that will help sustain the initiative and create opportunities for council to work with early childhood education services to implement future active travel strategies and programs.

Set a date for the day, taking into consideration factors such as:

- the time needed for planning and promotion
- school terms and holidays when families may be away
- the timing of related campaigns, such as Ride2School
- typical weather at the time of year.

Plan how you will advertise and promote the Walk to Kinder Day to services, families and the community to generate awareness and encourage participation. See the how-to guide to making it fun and easy to walk to early childhood education services for promotional and communications activities and guidance.

These activities should involve councils promoting 'Part Way is OK', to encourage parents or carers to drive some of the way to the early childhood education service, park and walk with children the rest of the way.

Refer to VicHealth's ['Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare values-based key messages to promote the day. Some tips include:

- Ground your promotional story in the desire of young children and their families to be active, and the physical and mental health benefits of being active.
- Showcase the attitudes and behaviours that the Walk to Kinder Day is aiming to encourage, for example:
 - 'Many early childhood education services are encouraging young kids and their families to walk, scoot or bike ride'
 - 'Young kids and their parents tell us they want to be able to walk, scoot or bike ride, especially with other families'
 - 'Active travel provides opportunities for children and families to meet people in the local area and form social connections on their journeys.'



Assess

Collect information that can be used to inform planning and assess the success of the Walk to Kinder Day.

Ask participating early childhood education services to collect and share baseline data about the way children and families currently travel to and from the services. [HandsUp! counts](#) is a tool that can help services easily collect this information and upload it straight away via an app.

Review this data and identify services with lower rates of active travel. Talk to these services about specific actions they can take and what support they might need to encourage families to participate in the initiative.

Design

Involve early childhood education services and the council's traffic department (to support infrastructure needs) in the design of the Walk to Kinder Day. Consider setting up a working group with nominated champions from participating services.

Encourage services to design local [Walking Maps](#) for children and families, and to plan activities on the day and in the lead-up to generate excitement and maximise participation.

Encourage early childhood services to involve young children and parents in learning about active travel and planning and coordinating the day. This might include:

- engaging children in learning opportunities about active travel (e.g. book reading, discussions, artwork, stories or simple activity sheets)
- encouraging families to plan meet up points and travel routes on the day with other families

- encouraging children to create artwork or decorations that can be displayed on travel routes, such as in the windows of local businesses, giving children and families fun things to look for on their journeys within the natural environment
- involving families in organising an event or activity on the day, such as a healthy breakfast.

Deliver

Support early childhood education services to participate

Support early childhood education services to participate by answering questions and providing information in the lead-up and continuing to promote the day through different council and community channels.

Celebrate!

Support services to celebrate children's and families' participation in the Walk to Kinder Day. This could include providing:

- stickers or certificates for children who have participated
- a healthy breakfast at early childhood education services for families who take part
- incentives to families for participating, such as coffee or healthy food vouchers for local cafes
- opportunities for children to create artwork which reflects their experiences.



Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate reach and success of the Walk to Kinder Day

Ask early childhood education services to collect data on the number of children and families who participated in the Walk to Kinder Day and the different forms of active travel they used. Services can use the [HandsUp! counts](#) tool to help collect the data.

Compare children and their families' walking, bike riding or use of other active travel modes with baseline data collected in the Assess stage and use the data to track and compare participation in the day year on year.

Design a survey of services and parents and carers to evaluate the initiative. Survey questions might seek to identify:

- changes in parent and carer awareness, attitudes and behaviours about active travel
- staff perceptions of the initiative.

Use evaluation to identify opportunities to improve the initiative.

Publish any key results using the same channels used to promote the day. Present results in a way that is appropriate and engaging for young children and families, for example, using interesting and positive language, styles and images, such as images of children and families having fun participating in active travel on the day.

Quick note

National Quality Standard

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's National Quality Standard sets national benchmarks for early childhood and outside school hours care services.

Supporting early childhood services to increase children's participation in active travel will help them meet their obligations under the National Quality Standard. [Quality Area 2](#) of the National Quality Standard aims to promote children's health, and Standard 2.1 is focused on ensuring each child's health and physical activity is promoted and supported.

Embed the Walk to Kinder Day at council

Consider options to embed the Walk to Kinder Day in council's annual program delivery. This could be linked or an add-on to any existing walk or ride to school programs.

Seek a commitment from council leaders to continue the Walk to Kinder Day each year, aiming to improve participation targets, knowledge and awareness, and encourage and sustain active travel to and from services. Work with council's budget processes to secure annual allocation of resources to support the initiative.

Recommended resources

See the University of Technology Sydney's [Active travel childcare report](#) for a range of helpful strategies and ideas for working with early childhood education services to encourage active travel by children.

There are many walk and ride to school resources with helpful ideas and advice that can be adapted to young children by considering what is appropriate for this age group. See for example, the Walk to School Resource Guide Strategies to encourage active travel to school: Walk to School and beyond and refer to Ride2School resources. If making these adaptations, consider how to accommodate the safety, physical and cognitive development needs of young children, including young children with disability or additional needs.



Step up:

Deliver a year-round walking and bike riding to school program

For this action, council will partner with local schools to deliver a walk and bike ride to and from school program that runs at regular times across the whole school year.

Many of the steps outlined in '[Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program](#)' can be considered and incorporated in this activity.

The year-round program requires greater involvement from schools and more cross-departmental council planning when compared to a month-long campaign.

The program should:

- promote and plan for all active transport modes including walking, riding, scooting and skating
- increase active travel rates by children and young people to and from school
- include an achievable participation target which aims to grow the program year on year.

The year-round program aims to create a community environment where walking, bike riding and other active transport modes are considered the usual way that children and young people get to and from school. This activity will suit councils who are ready to build on existing relationships and community experience of short-term walking and bike riding initiatives to create sustained change.



How-to guide to:

Deliver a year-round walking and bike riding to school program

Involving people

Key people and groups to involve in this action include schools in the municipality and their leaders, staff, students and communities.

Consider which council teams will be required to support sustained walking and bike riding to and from school, such as health planning and promotion teams, traffic and transport teams, urban planners and parks and recreation. School-crossing supervisors, family and youth services and communication teams can also support the promotional and delivery aspects of the program. Other non-council partners could include community health and community groups to support planning and promotion across the community.

Involving schools

Follow the Involving schools steps outlined in '[Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program](#)'. These processes can be used in the year-round program, provided you highlight the goal of sustaining walking and bike riding habits.



Plan

Planning your program

In a year-round approach it is important to integrate planning and delivery for the program across the responsible departments. Consider how planning committees, governance advisors or leaders will be needed to support timely and relevant decision-making for the project.

Councils should seek to include schools, children and young people as regular or occasional members of any planning committees to sure the project aligns with their goals and needs.

Plan a promotion and delivery timeline that suits schools, children and young people, and council. Some different formats for year-round delivery include walking and bike riding:

- 1 day a week (e.g. Walk and Ride Fridays)
- 2 weeks of each school term
- 1 week of each month.



Assess

Follow the Assess steps outlined in 'Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program'. Gather information that can inform year-round walking and bike riding to school, such as times when walking and bike riding 'slumps', which is when extra promotion might be needed.

Work with the planning committee to look for any key events, budget process, council projects or grant opportunities that could support your walking and bike riding project. This could include arts or travel infrastructure projects that council wants to promote.



Design

Collaboratively develop terms of reference

Review the Design steps and materials outlined in ['Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program'](#).

Identify the key times of year to promote the year-round program which align with the delivery timeline that your council chooses, with promotional periods peaking ahead of key delivery periods.

Consider how you'll refresh key messages throughout the year, such as having different themes, focuses or goals for each phase.



Deliver

Review the Deliver steps and materials outlined in ['Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program'](#).

Stage the recommended activations and incentives across the delivery period to ensure energy for walking and bike riding is maintained and reflects specific opportunities or barriers throughout the year.

Review and embed

See the Review and Embed steps and materials outlined in [‘Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program’](#).

The evaluation should assess the intended outcome of sustaining walking and bike riding to school initiatives. The evaluation plan should include questions and indicators that identify what factors support or prevent children and young people from walking and bike riding to school during and outside of the main delivery periods for this program.

Work with the planning committee to determine if the year-round program has resulted in sustained changes to walking and bike riding.

Recommended resources

- Bicycle Network’s [Ride2School](#) HandsUp! counts and programs
- Safe Walking Maps – see City of Greater Shepparton example [‘Dookie Primary School Get Mooving!’](#)
- Walk to School Resource Guide [‘Strategies to encourage active travel to school: Walk to School and Beyond’](#)
- [Walk to School webpage](#) – resources and communications materials





Step up: *Apply an equity approach to walking and bike riding to school*

This action focuses on using an equity approach to identify children and young people who may be less likely to walk or ride bikes to school, and trial campaign strategies and activities to involve them in solutions.

Councils should use consultation and co-design strategies to ensure the style, messaging and purpose of the campaign or activities suit the diverse needs of children and young people in the community.

Councils undertaking this action should also engage with appropriate 'equity partners', such as organisations who can share expertise on appropriate cultural approaches.

The how-to guide describes the process to build on or adapt the broad walk and bike riding to school process outlined in '[Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program](#)'.

Through the delivery of this action, council should:

- seek the view of children, young people and their families about council's walking and bike riding to school program, particularly their level of interest, likes and dislikes, likelihood to participate, preferred messages and activities
- seek information from children, young people and their families about the barriers and challenges that prevent their participation and what would inspire or encourage children and parents to walk and bike ride to and from school more frequently
- work collaboratively to identify feasible changes at a local level to the program that will facilitate increased engagement and participation of the target audience
- make these changes and pilot them with the children before they are embedded in the ongoing program delivery each year.



How-to guide to:

Apply an equity approach to walking and bike riding to school

Involving people

Involving people who will be the focus of the program

Council should involve people from the community who are the focus of this action in a meaningful and respectful way.

Include children, young people and their families which represent communities that council has identified as experiencing barriers to walking and bike riding, as well as local organisations or partners who have specific knowledge about working with these groups. Every community is different, and each family will face different obstacles which impact their ability to walk and ride bikes to school.

Evaluations of some previous walk and bike riding to school programs have shown that children and young people who are First Nations, from culturally and linguistically diverse communities or from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have lower participation in council-run walk and bike ride to school programs.

Involving people who will be the focus of the program cont.

Some of the reasons children and young people from these groups might have lower walking and bike riding participation can include:

- unavailability of older family members to walk with younger children due to work or caring commitments
- fewer social connections with other families in the school community to share walking responsibilities
- lack of bike ownership or riding skills
- promotional materials and key messages not being culturally appropriate or available in languages other than English
- lack of confidence to allow children to walk or ride bikes independently around the area
- insufficient infrastructure to support walking and bike riding to school, such as in greenfield development areas
- physical distance between home and school.

Involving equity partners

In some instances, working with a partner organisation is essential for ensuring community engagement and co-design is undertaken in a respectful and empowering manner. Partner organisations may already have information, approaches or frameworks that can provide a helpful starting point in unpacking the causes and solutions for barriers to walking and bike riding uptake.

Local or community-led organisations are usually well-placed to provide insight into specific communities in the council area. If a council isn't aware of local providers, they should seek support from state-based organisations and peak bodies or local community health services to assist with the identification of equity partners.

Equally, representatives from existing youth advisory panels can help facilitate engagement with less active children and young people.



Plan

Prepare a project plan to guide the development and delivery of the activity. Continue to add detail to the project plan through the Assess and Design steps. The project plan should include:

- the outcomes you are hoping to achieve
- necessary considerations to ensure collaborative, respectful and meaningful engagement with your target population
- timelines
- details about program and partner roles with partner organisation/s, including duration of the partnership, responsibilities, ways of engagement and school supports required.



Assess

Identify groups with lower participation in walking and bike riding

Gather information that will help to identify if there are groups of children and young people in the community who are less likely to walk or ride to school or who may face additional barriers to active travel.

Information from the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, previous program evaluations, demographic data, anecdotal evidence from participating schools or the [Health Equity Impact assessment](#) may help inform these decisions.

Consider which council departments and local partners can best support the identified target group/s and can support the types of additional resources that the program will require. Establish a working committee or invite relevant representatives to join an existing committee that focuses on your walking and bike riding program.

Engage equity partners

Use the results of the needs assessment to identify potential equity partner groups and organisations that may be able to work with council to plan, involve community and deliver the program.

Create a Memorandum of Understanding with the schools and partner organisation/s to agree on project objectives, roles and responsibilities.



Design

Collaboratively develop terms of reference

Work with the committee and partners to design the scope for the project, such as improving communication and promotional material or making changes to the walking and bike riding environments.

Focus on a small number of schools initially, ideally identifying those that are attended by children and young people who experience the barriers to walking and bike riding. This provides an opportunity for council to support families and schools to amplify the voices of children and young people in the co-designing for more inclusive participation, and allows piloting and testing of the recommended changes.

Use co-design methods that include rapport-building considerations, for example:

- hold engagement and co-design activities at the school or another place that suits the group, rather than at the council offices
- run a games event for families prior to the co-design session that includes traditional games from the cultures represented in the school community to provide a welcoming and fun environment
- include interpreters in the session if it will aide communication
- make space in your agenda to listen to experiences, concerns and ideas.

Conduct co-design sessions with children, young people and their families in each school to:

- gain valuable insight into enablers and barriers behind target audience participation in active transport that would guide feasible changes to the program
- seek ideas that would increase walking and bike riding program participation and decide which ones should be prioritised.

Crossover opportunity

The [Leading the Way – Engaging young voices for change](#) foundation module provides resources to engage, audit and co-design solutions for healthy places with and for children and young people in your community.

In particular, the [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) web resource provides tools that can be adapted for a walking and bike riding audit and co-design process.

Some enhancements to the walking and bike riding program could be to:

- add culturally inclusive elements and diverse imagery to promotional material to celebrate and reflect the school community
- include an Acknowledgement of Country or information on the First Nations custodianship of the land that the school and walking and bike riding routes are on
- design new resources such as badges or footpath decals with the children and young people to promote the use of the walking and bike riding paths

- refer to the Walk to School [Aboriginal Tip Sheet](#) to see an example of how to support First Nations young people and their families in walking and bike riding.

Agree on the final design of the program together with the committee, partners and school communities.

Deliver

Prepare to deliver a pilot program. This will require utilising all existing resources, including that which has come from consultation, from research and which is available from other iterations of active transport initiatives.

Deliver the walking and bike riding program. This can be done just with the schools and communities who designed them initially but aim to deliver it in conjunction with any broader walking and bike riding programs over the long term.

Celebrate the achievements from the program with the children and young people. Some general ideas are provided in the [‘Quick win: Deliver a month-long walking and bike riding to school program’](#).

Review and embed

Evaluate the effectiveness of the activities and changes through discussions with children, young people and families as well as representatives from schools and members of your working group. When evaluating the program, consider:

- indicators that compare walking, bike riding or use of other active modes of transport with baseline data collected in the Assess stage
- key areas where council/school staff can improve their knowledge and capacity to reduce barriers to walking and bike riding for the community, such as cultural competency
- questions that demonstrate changes in student and parent awareness as well as attitudes and behaviours about walking and bike riding to school
- questions that capture the perceptions, reflections or recommendations from community partners about the program or other areas of council work

- questions that capture school staff perceptions of the program and feasibility of the activities
- indicators that show any changes that have happened to council processes, services and facilities as a result of the program.

If the activities and changes you piloted were successful, share these with other schools or other areas of council to increase walking and bike riding by other people. Prepare a case study about the project, the key successes and challenges.

Plan how to embed the process of co-designing with children, young people and community partners in future walking and bike riding to school programs.

Plan to embed revised resources into future programming to help schools to become more inclusive.

Recommended resources

- Audit tools in [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) – to identify what children like/dislike about their route to school
- [Safe Routes to School \(USA\)](#) – how to address inequities that put some people in specific communities at higher risk of injury and death while walking and riding to places they need to go, including youth
- [The economic case for investment in walking](#) – illustrates why improving walkable environments improves social inclusion (page 15)
- VicHealth’s [Equity focused health impact assessment: Walk to School program](#) – recommendations that aim to improve accessibility for rural and regional communities
- Walk to School [Aboriginal Tip Sheet](#)
- [Walk to School webpage](#) – resources to support happy, healthy, connected inclusive communities





Step up

Create a plan to make walking fun for young children

Making it fun and easier for children and families to walk to early childhood services is a step up action.

This action requires councils to work closely with early childhood services to develop a long-term early childhood active travel plan with a range of programs, strategies and actions to increase and sustain the participation of children and families in active travel.

These actions may include establishing an annual Walk to Kinder week or month, promoting safe walking routes to and from early childhood services, and encouraging services to provide end-of-trip facilities, such as pram, bike and scooter storage.

The active travel plan should include ongoing actions and initiatives to:

- encourage and support active travel
- make active travel fun for children and families
- educate children and families about the benefits of active travel
- reduce or remove barriers to active travel that exist.



How-to guide to:

Making it fun and easier to walk to early childhood services

Involving young children and families

Young children themselves need to feel excited, enthused and empowered to participate in active travel. Councils can support and encourage early childhood services to involve children in active travel learning opportunities, and in contributing ideas and co-designing actions and initiatives, such as helping to design active travel routes and Walking Maps to services. Learning opportunities for children should aim to generate excitement and enthusiasm around active travel and help them understand the benefits and different modes of active travel.

Young children rely on their parents or carers to participate in active travel to and from early childhood services. Parents also play a crucial role in role modelling and instilling active travel habits in their children. Active travel has important health benefits not only for young children, but also for their parents and carers, who may face barriers to participating in physical activity, such as lack of time and adequate childcare services, so travel to early childhood services must be compatible with their journey to work.

Councils and early childhood services can consult and involve parents and carers of young children on the design and delivery of an active travel plan and initiatives, including by finding out the reasons for their current travel arrangements and the challenges or enablers in using active travel (through surveys or by consulting directly with them). Consultation should aim to include the perspectives of families with diverse needs and experiences, such as families of children with disability. This can help inform an effective and strategic plan with initiatives and programs that respond to families' needs, that are effective for overcoming barriers and that empower families to participate.

Early childhood services can also encourage families to develop their own informal active travel initiatives, such as a local 'walking bus'. See [VicHealth's resource on walking school buses](#) for more information.

Involving early childhood services

Build partnerships and establish working relationships with management and key staff from early childhood services. This is crucial to developing an effective active travel plan and key initiatives, such as Walk to Kinder weeks or months, and encouraging services to provide end-of-trip storage facilities. Service directors and staff play a vital role in supporting and encouraging children and families to use active travel, by planning and coordinating active travel initiatives locally, providing necessary storage infrastructure and establishing active travel as part of the culture of the services.

Engage early childhood services in consultation on the development of an early years active travel plan, and on strategies, programs and actions delivered under the plan. An effective way to do this may be to ask services to nominate one or more staff or parent and carers to be active travel champions, who can promote and coordinate active travel actions within the service and be the main points of contact on active travel for council.

Organise meetings between council and early childhood services to find out more about the challenges and barriers to increasing active travel participation, and to brainstorm and share ideas about promoting and supporting active travel. Work with both parties to identify and assess the safety and walkability of active travel routes to the services.

Consider establishing an active travel working group or committee, including key council project officers and staff, along with active travel champions or key representatives from early childhood services and families.

Hot tip!

Work with your local community health service to identify and engage early childhood services that are registered for the [Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program](#). Implementing active travel initiatives may support these services to work towards benchmarks to achieve Victorian Government recognition in the 'Physical Activity and Movement' health priority area.

Involving council and the community

Councils play an important role in supporting early childhood services to develop plans and deliver initiatives to increase active travel participation. Many services or facilities, particularly those that are smaller with limited funding, will not have the resources to plan and coordinate successful and sustainable strategies, such as Walk to Kinder weeks or months, and will need the support of councils.

Teams across council can be involved in the planning delivery and promotion of active travel strategies. Council should draw on different teams and staff to provide relevant expertise in areas such as health planning and promotion, traffic and travel, communications, and road safety. Programs like a Walk to Kinder week or month also provide a great opportunity to involve councillors and demonstrate council commitment to children's and families' health and wellbeing and connect with members of the community.

Councils can partner with local community or health organisations to drive and promote active travel strategies and initiatives, such as local neighbourhood houses and local community health services. In addition, councils could encourage early childhood education services and local primary schools to partner and work together on active travel strategies and initiatives.



Plan

Identify early childhood services to work with on this action. If council has already delivered a Walk to Kinder Day, build on the planning for this initiative, and on partnerships already developed with services. Reflect on and consider any lessons learned, and review any data collected on participation in active travel at each service.

Prepare an early years active travel plan

Collaboratively develop an early years active travel plan in consultation with key council staff and stakeholders, early childhood services and local families.

The plan should set out:

- clear objectives and targets, including the number of services council aims to work with and targets for participation at each service
- strategies, programs and actions to be delivered to achieve the objectives and targets
- clear timeframes for delivering strategies, programs and actions and achieving targets
- roles and responsibilities of council project officers, and other staff and stakeholders, in relation to each strategy, program or action.

Plan key programs and strategies

Develop detailed plans for key programs and actions to be delivered under the plan. These may include:

- establishing an annual Walk to Kinder week or month
- developing and promoting safe walking routes or 'walking maps' to services
- developing and disseminating other active travel resources to services. This could include developing or supporting services to develop Transport Access Guides, with public transport route maps and timetable information, recommended walking and bike riding routes, and available pram, bike and scooter storage at the service
- encouraging services to provide end-of-trip facilities, such as secure pram, bike and scooter storage and racks
- supporting and encouraging services to promote a pedometer program with a realistic daily target (such as 7,500–10,000 steps) to encourage children and families to walk more
- promoting and providing resources to services, children and families about active travel, road safety and sun safety. This could include offering talks or seminars on health, physical activity, active travel and road safety
- encouraging and supporting services to educate and engage children in learning opportunities about active travel and road safety as walkers, scooters and bike riders. [Starting out Safely](#) has a range of resources to support early childhood educators and families to teach children about road safety
- supporting services to develop their own active travel plans, policies and strategies. This should involve gathering data on existing travel behaviour of families and developing tailored strategies and initiatives in consultation with staff, families and children.



Plan the Walk to Kinder week or month

Set a target for the number of services to participate in the Walk to Kinder week or month. Plan to grow the number of services that participate in the program year on year, and to continue building and strengthening relationships with the services.

Decide on dates for the Walk to Kinder week or month, and plan for this. Considerations when selecting dates may include:

- the time needed for planning and promotion
- the dates of school terms and holidays when families may be away

- the timing of related campaigns that may act as a useful support to the initiative, such as Walk to School and Ride2School days
- factors impacting motivation to participate, such as the weather.

Councils might like to consider connecting early childhood centres with nearby primary schools to align with or support their own campaigns and initiatives. Developing relationships between early childhood centres and local schools can also provide opportunities for them to share resources, ideas and tools to plan, implement and evaluate active travel initiatives.

Prepare a communications plan

Prepare a communications plan for the Walk to Kinder week or month or any other initiatives delivered under the early years active travel plan. If council has delivered a Walk to Kinder Day, build on promotional activities undertaken to promote this. The communication plan should cover how council will promote the program to the community in the lead up to the event to generate awareness and excitement. Refer to the [Walk to School webpage](#) for resources and communications materials that can be adapted for young children walking to early childhood centres, such as posters and information for families.

Some ideas to include in the communication plan:

- find ways to involve young children and families in your promotion. Work with them on key promotional messages and seek children and families who can promote the program on local radio, news and other publicity opportunities.
- refer to the variety of ways to actively get to and from early childhood services – walking, pram walking, scooting, and riding – across all your communications.
- refer to the [‘Framing walking and bike riding’ values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare key messages as part of your program that suit a range of needs. For example, ground your promotional story in children’s desire to walk and ride. Showcase the attitudes and behaviours council would like, not those you don’t want. For example:
 - ‘Many early childhood services are encouraging young kids and their families to travel to and from the service in active ways.’

- ‘Young children and their parents tell us they want to walk, scoot or bike ride, especially with other families and their friends.’
- ‘Active travel provides opportunities for children and families to meet people in the local area and form social connections on their journeys.’
- promote ‘Part Way is OK’ where parents and carers drive part of the journey and walk with children the rest of the way.
- use a wide range of channels in the lead up and throughout the key delivery week or month for the program to ensure the best possible reach. Consider:
 - publishing news items on council’s communication channels, including the council website and social media
 - displaying posters in local services and facilities
 - promoting at other community events
 - sharing promotional materials and communication templates with early childhood services and families (these can be adapted for young children and early childhood services from the Walk to School and Ride to School program)
 - asking shops and community facilities along routes surrounding the services to display the posters and materials, along with artwork or decorations created by children.
- ask council’s traffic and travel team and crossing supervisors to identify opportunities for them to support the Walk to Kinder week or month.

Plan to increase end-of-trip facilities at early childhood services

Make a list of early childhood services in the local area. Contact each service to find out which have end-of-trip facilities and what facilities they have (such as pram, bike and scooter storage). Identify which services need new, additional or upgraded end-of-trip facilities.

Consider and plan actions council could carry out to encourage services to provide new or additional end-of-trip facilities. This might include supporting services with fundraising ideas and activities or working with council's budget processes to secure funding for end-of-trip facilities for council managed services. If there are challenges to developing end-

of-trip facilities at particular early childhood services, councils could identify nearby organisations or spaces to provide a suitable and alternative area.

Set a target for the number of early childhood services to support to build new end-of-trip storage facilities and a timeframe.

Assess

Ask early childhood services to collect and share baseline data about the ways children travel to and from the services using the [HandsUp! counts](#) tool.

Review this data and consider any specific targets or problem areas to address with the active travel plan and accompanying programs and actions. For example, look to see if there are early childhood services in the area that have much lower rates of active travel and talk to those services about their goals for active travel, any challenges or barriers they face and what support they might need.

Identify and assess the safety and walkability of active travel routes to early childhood services. See the [Including walking and bike riding in council strategies impact stream](#) for more information on auditing active travel routes.

Design

Involve young children and families in co-design

Councils can involve families of young children in consultation on an early years active travel plan and in co-design of a Walk to Kinder week or month, by encouraging early childhood services to nominate parent and carer representatives or by consulting directly with families in the community. Councils can reach families through newsletters, social media, emails, or by using other council or community communication channels identified in the communications plan. Efforts should be made to engage families with a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences as well as those who may experience additional barriers to being active. Families can also be involved in helping to organise and coordinate Walk to Kinder programs and associated events (such as a healthy breakfast or active travel excursion or event).

Depending on the age of young children, councils and early childhood services can involve them in identifying active travel routes, and co-designing Walking Maps and footpath decal maps to early

childhood education services. They can also encourage them to create artworks and decorations to display along the routes, such as in the windows of local businesses or services.

Another way to include children and families in co-design is to ask them to carry out an audit of their route while walking, bike riding or scooting to or from early childhood services. This could involve young children and families spotting any hazards on their routes like areas of the footpath that are unsafe or that impede walking, prams, bikes, scooters or wheelchairs and capturing these with photos to share with early childhood services and council.

See the [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) web resource for ideas and tools for involving children in co-design of healthy places, which can be adapted for involving young children in identifying active travel routes and co-designing active walking maps and footpath decal maps.

Walk to Kinder week or month

Support early childhood services to deliver the Walk to Kinder week or month by providing information and resources, being available to answer questions during the week or month and in the lead-up to the program and continuing to promote the program through council and community channels.

Offer talks, seminars or workshops for staff and families who attend early childhood services on the benefits of active travel, and ideas and guidance on running a Walk to Kinder week or month.

Map and audit walking routes and develop walking maps

Work with early childhood services, children and families to map and audit walking routes to early childhood services, and design walking maps and footpath decal maps.

Consider disseminating walking maps of other routes in the local area to early childhood services and families, such as parks, walking trails, or routes to local destinations, to promote other active travel and physical activity opportunities to families.

Prepare and disseminate walking maps and footpath decal maps to early childhood services to help make families more confident about active travel. Share walking maps with families new to early childhood services as part of their orientation using the [Victoria Walks Walking Maps online tool](#). Detailed information that can be adapted for early childhood services is available in the [Walk to School Resource Guide](#).

Activate with route information and markers

Use footpath decals to mark walking routes. These can be co-designed with early childhood services and children, or use designed and ready-to-go decals.

Route information can be incorporated in the following ways, by:

- preparing and disseminating walking route maps and footpath decal maps to early childhood services to help families feel more confident about active travel

- encouraging children and families to 'chalk the walk' – by writing or drawing with chalk on their walking route. [See Living Streets UK chalk the walk](#) for ideas
- use signage to promote 'park and walk' locations.

Go to Victoria Walks Nudges for Active Travel to School for more information about footpath decals to promote walking routes.

See also the Walk to School Resource Guide for ideas for schools that can be adapted for early childhood services with adjustments for the needs of young children.

Active travel plans, policies and learning

Support early childhood services to develop their own active travel plans, policies and strategies in consultation with their staff and families by providing information, resources, ideas and guidance. Encourage management and staff of early childhood services to role model active travel themselves. The aim should be to start or increase participation in active travel, including by creating a culture at the service that promotes and supports

equitable opportunities for active travel and helping to overcome or remove any barriers to active travel that exist. Policies and education strategies should also aim to inform children about road safety as walkers and bike riders.

Activate with incentives

Create competitions within or between early childhood services, potentially with incentives to encourage participation. Competitions could be about active travel participation or pictures or artwork about active travel. Any prizes should reinforce council's commitment to providing healthy options for children.

Examples of healthy, non-food prizes include certificates, ribbons, stickers, books or seed packs. See this [resource](#) for more information and healthy reward ideas.

Celebrate!

Celebrate participation in the Walk to Kinder week or month, using similar ideas as for the Walk to Kinder Day, such as certificates, stickers, vouchers, or a healthy breakfast at the early childhood services. Ensure any prizes, rewards or incentives are healthy options for children (e.g. certificates, ribbons, stickers, books or seed packs). See [this resource](#) for more information and healthy reward ideas.

Plan an event to celebrate commencing or concluding the week or month, such as a walking, scooting and bike riding excursion or weekend event. This could be held at a park, bike track or a children's traffic school. See the [Melbourne Playgrounds website](#) for information about bike tracks and children's traffic schools across Victoria.

Prepare a promotional video capturing children's active travel experiences, which can be used to promote the program in subsequent years.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate reach and success of the action

Ask early childhood services to collect and share data about children's and families' ways of getting to and from the service or facility during the Walk to Kinder week or month. The [HandsUp! counts](#) tool is an easy way to collect this data.

Compare this with baseline data collected during the Assess stage.

Consider asking services to continue collecting data on children using active modes to travel to and from the services at regular intervals (e.g. every 12 months) to monitor changes in active travel participation.

Design a survey for staff and families who attend early childhood services. Evaluate the active travel plan, programs and strategies, using survey questions and indicators that:

- show changes in staff and parent/carer awareness, attitudes and behaviours about active travel
- measure whether participation targets were reached
- compare walking, scooter and bike riding or use of other active travel modes with baseline data collected in the Assess stage
- show any changes to the number of services with end-of-trip facilities, and the adequacy of those facilities
- measure the number of services that have developed active travel plans or policies.

Share the results

Publish any key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for your audience. Consider:

- using language, facts or styles that are interesting to young children and their parents and carers
- using images of children and families having fun using active travel in their neighbourhoods
- highlighting aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change, for example, requesting an ongoing budget from council leaders, and highlighting changes the council could make that could support early years active travel over the long-term, including funding for end-of-trip facilities at early childhood services.

Embed

Aim to embed early years active travel strategies in council strategies and policies, and active travel programs, including the Walk to Kinder week or month, in council's annual program delivery.

Actions to achieve this could include:

- seeking endorsement from council leaders for integration of active travel strategies, such as the early years active travel plan, into existing council plans or strategies
- seeking support for ongoing delivery of programs, strategies and actions
- seeking a commitment from council leaders to continue the Walk to Kinder week or month each year, aiming to improve participation targets along with knowledge and awareness, and to sustain active behaviours
- using evaluation to identify opportunities to improve elements of the Walk to Kinder Walk program, including possible improvements to infrastructure to support safety and walkability
- working with council's budget processes to secure annual allocation of resources for the Walk to Kinder initiative, provision of end-of-trip facilities at council-managed services and other early years active travel initiatives.

Recommended resources

There are a range of resources for active travel to schools that can be adapted for early years active travel initiatives, by considering what is appropriate for young children, allowing for their different supervision, safety, physical and cognitive needs.

Some of these resources include:

- [Get Mooving primary school walking maps](#)
- [Kids Co-Designing Healthy Places website](#)
- [Living Streets UK chalk the walk](#)
- Victoria Walks [Nudges for Active Travel to School](#)
- [Victoria Walks Walking Maps online tool](#)
- [Walk to School Resource Guide](#)
- [Walk to School webpage](#)

Other useful resources include:

- [Melbourne Playgrounds website](#)
- [Starting out Safely – Victoria's early childhood road safety education program](#)
- [The HandsUp! counts tool](#) – this is a great, easy-to-use tool for collecting data on children's participation in active travel from early childhood services.

VicHealth has worked with Common Cause Australia to produce this ['Framing walking and bike riding'](#) values-based messaging guide. The guide represents research into values-based messaging frames that are most effective in building strong public support for walking and bike riding. It provides tips and example messages to help council staff and health promotion practitioners tell our story – that 'streets are for everyone'. Your council can [sign up here](#) to stay up to date with this work and access other values-based messaging resources.



Ambitious:

Deliver school neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects

In this action, councils will prioritise walking and bike riding by children, young people and their families on the streets and roads around schools.

Streets around schools at drop-off and pick-up times are often dominated by cars. Through this action, councils will make streets around schools safer for children, less congested and more suitable for active travel. This action includes different options for council to consider depending on existing design of the school neighbourhoods.

Option A: Open streets

Conduct trials of open streets around identified schools within the council area. Open streets are programs that temporarily open streets immediately around the school to children and families by closing them to cars at drop-off and pick-up times. This needs to be done in close consultation with the surrounding community. It promotes the use of public streets for recreation, mobility and leisure-time activities with the aim of creating more vibrant, healthy and equitable communities.

Option B: Drop-off zones

This can be done in 2 ways:

- implementing designated drop-off zones where children walk, ride bikes, scoot or skate part way (the last portion of the journey) to school in all schools across the council that don't have these already
- assisting schools that have existing drop-off zones to improve their usage.

A preferred option for the council may already be clearly identified in existing plans or strategies, for example in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan or walking and bike riding strategies. Further considerations to determine the preferred option may include the:

- goals the council is trying to achieve or issues to resolve
- location and formation of streets and roads surrounding the school
- available resourcing and infrastructure
- level of interest of the school communities.

Involving people

Involving council leaders and teams

Gaining buy-in from relevant council leaders and teams is essential for the success of the open streets and drop-off zones activities and should be the first consideration. Council teams to involve include traffic and transport, local laws and their leaders. Health planning and promotion, recreation, family services and communication teams can contribute to the delivery and promotion of the activity.



How-to guide to:

Deliver school neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects – Option A: Open streets

Under this option, the council will open streets in a school neighbourhood to give students and their families space to enjoy a fun and safe environment at drop-off and pick-up times. Councils can utilise signs and pop-up infrastructure to indicate that streets are open for children and families to walk and cycle on and temporarily prevent car traffic through the area. During temporary closure periods, traffic will need to be managed by an appropriate council officer or suitably trained person in the community to ensure safety and residents' access to their street.



Plan

Prepare a project brief and communication plan that outlines the purpose, outcomes and benefits of open streets, and what this means for schools, the council and the community. Adapt and complete the communication plan through the Assess and Design phases of the project. The communication plan should also state when and how you can incorporate children and young people's voices through this project.

Refer to the ['Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare the key messages for the type of community the changes can create, such as:

- 'there's plenty our organisation can do to create streets that are accessible to all of us, to give children and families more options to move around safely on local streets'
- 'all kids and families should be able to enjoy getting where they need to go safely – with good footpaths and bike paths, plenty of crossings and calm streets'
- 'children and young people in <area> need better footpaths, crossings and calmer streets so they can build independence, self-confidence and connection by walking to and from school themselves'.

Using the project brief, seek in-principle agreement from the leaders and decision-makers of the relevant council teams. Council may have already adopted a strategy that identifies this activity as a priority for council, such as inclusion in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan or walking and bike riding strategies.

If this work hasn't yet taken place, you may need to do some preparatory work. Refer to the section that provides advice for gaining leader support for some steps you may need to consider.

Establish a working group or committee, or work with an established one, with representatives from each key stakeholder group. Outline the governance and decision-making processes for the group to ensure there is a suitable authorising environment to progress the activity.

Connect any existing council transport plans and strategies into this action to ensure its inclusion in council budgets and planning.



Assess

Collect information to inform the design of your program. Audit existing council policies to determine any relevant policy considerations, such as compliance with or requirement for a traffic management policy.

Council traffic and transport teams should advise on parameters that need to be considered, such as ideal and non-ideal schools to work with based on their location and surrounding street networks. Schools located on main roads may not be ideal candidates for this action. Equally, this consultation can help identify priority schools to target, such as schools with lower rates of active travel.

Involving schools

Invite expressions of interest from schools in eligible locations. Promote why council is conducting the trial to improve the local community's understanding of the benefits of encouraging active travel to school.

Conducting the pilot with 2 schools allows comparison of results of 2 different locations and allows schools to learn from each other during and

The working group should identify and complete required road closure permits, local laws requirements and identify other key actions required for the project's delivery.

Determine the scope of the project, including the number of schools to work with and the types of temporary infrastructure changes the council is prepared to make. Consider piloting the open streets with only a few schools in the first instance and identify how the effectiveness of the pilot will be measured.

post-delivery. Plan for an 8-week or longer pilot program to get the community comfortable with the concept before looking to embed this project in other locations and for longer periods in the future.

Design

Plan the methods for implementing open streets in the council area such as infrastructure, engagement activities and communication.

Communicate and collaborate with children and young people, local residents, businesses and schools before, during and after implementation to inform them of changes as they are confirmed. This collaboration provides an opportunity to hear their feedback throughout the process and make relevant adjustments.

Work with key stakeholders to identify whether the location for an open street is suitable, avoiding busy and main roads and minimising traffic displacement.

Refer to or create a council traffic management policy to support trialling open streets and prepare your departments to enforce the policy after educating stakeholders who are most impacted. Prepare a safety plan in consultation with the working group.

Consider potential or expressed concerns and prepare strategies to manage these during the open streets delivery phase. Include key messages outlining these strategies in the communication plan.

Some common concerns you may need to manage include moving the congestion area from the school gate to somewhere else or local residents being affected as they exit the area. Include communication strategies to inform non-local drivers.

Consider if conducting a school route audit would assist in preparing a business case, highlighting the lack of available active travel routes and reasons why walking and bike riding prioritised streets has value. Engage the schools to create a bespoke school or area active travel map showing walking distances and elements that support active travel.

Deliver

Temporary street closures should be supervised and managed on the dates of closure by an appropriate council officer or suitably trained person in the community. Investigate digital signage options or updating GPS maps so cars know where to detour.

Enact the communication plan with a focus on the school and their surrounding community. Leverage council and local media channels to promote the project.

Look for opportunities to amplify the project by connecting to existing behaviour change programs, engagement opportunities or [adding art installations into the program](#) like that which took place in Merri-bek City Council's open streets trial with Brunswick East Primary School.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate reach and success of the action

Evaluate the effectiveness of the activities and changes of the pilot utilising surveys, forums and observing participation rates. When evaluating the program, consider questions and indicators which demonstrate:

- changes in active travel rates of the school community compared to baseline
- attitudes, experiences and ideas from local residents

- participation, likes and dislikes of children, young people and their families
- implementation feasibility of open streets for the school and council.

Share your results

Develop case studies or materials that can promote open streets and what was learned from the pilot to council staff, leaders and other schools, and which can be shared through council channels.

Consider how to use the evaluation findings to get more people involved and keep the momentum for potential long-term changes.

Embed in council practice

Learn from the evaluation process with the working group to identify how to transform the pilot into an embedded council program. Identify opportunities in council's policy cycle, budget process or grants programs that would assist in repeating or expanding open streets initiatives.



How-to guide to:

Deliver school neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects – Option B: Drop-off zones

In this option council will support schools to create and activate designated drop-off zones located away from the school so that children and young people walk, ride bikes, scoot or skate the distance between the zone and the school gate.

Drop-off zones improve safety during school drop-off and pick-up times and lessen local congestion.

Drop-off zones also provide an option for children and young people who live a long distance from school.

In some cases, schools have previously designated drop-off zones but have had difficulty sustaining them or encouraging their use. The how-to guide outlines suggestions to support the re-activation of the drop-off zones in these cases.



Plan

As with the open streets option, first seek in-principle agreement from the leaders and decision makers of the relevant council teams, referring to the advice for gaining leader support.

Council may have already adopted a strategy that identifies this activity as a priority for council, such as inclusion in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan or walking and bike riding strategies.



Assess

Conduct a brief survey to audit the current use and management of drop-off zones by schools which do and do not currently have designated drop-off zones.

Follow up with schools who have under-utilised drop-off zones to gather further feedback about the barriers to using them. Include the views of children and young people, their families and school staff on any:

- lack of awareness or continued promotion of the zone
- lack of incentives to encourage ongoing participation
- issues with built infrastructure at the drop-off zone or along the connecting route, such as signs not visible or damaged pathways
- lack of monitoring efforts to understand use
- perception that the zone or route is unsafe.

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this activity include family services, parking, traffic and transport, parks and asset management, school crossing and urban planning.

Traders associations or economic development could contribute if the drop-off zones are in or near key activity centres.

Establish a working group or committee, or work with an established one, with representatives from each key stakeholder group. Outline the governance and decision-making processes for the group to ensure there is a suitable authorising environment to progress the activity.

Integrate the work with council transport plans and strategies to ensure the project is prioritised.

Review existing resources and models for using drop-off zones and gather information on strategies that could work to address the barriers identified or would suit the schools adopting drop-off zones for the first time.

The working group may need to review or adapt existing council policies or create a drop-off zone policy around schools to be implemented by council. This could sit within a broader council traffic management framework. Determine the current policy environment for the policy project and create a plan for what this initiative should address.

Case Study

Check out these drop-off zone case studies:

- [City of Greater Geelong](#)
- [Glen Katherine Primary School](#)
- [Hands Up Mallee Drop and Stride example](#)

Design

The working group should consider the impacts of infrastructure, design, communication and local laws on how children, families and others in the community will use drop-off zones.

Some considerations may include:

- ensuring the drop-off zone is safely designed for children to exit the vehicles, to congregate while waiting to be picked up and for parent drivers to easily enter, move through and exit the zone in busy periods
- ensuring the route to and from the drop-off zone is well-marked and protects the safe passage of children between the zone and the school
- ensuring that the zone is clearly marked
- ensuring local parking and traffic laws are amended to facilitate the drop-off zone and traffic in surrounding areas
- developing a visually consistent brand or marketing campaign to help members of the community identify the drop-off zones
- integrating any unique features around the drop-off zone to encourage support, such as, featuring landmarks or acknowledging features of Country, engaging with shop owners or school neighbours to support child safety through passive surveillance, installing markers or footpath features to help with wayfinding.

Co-design with children and young people

Work with the schools to design and plan to promote the changes to their students, families and members of the surrounding community.

Utilise the [Safe Routes to School](#) resource to ensure connected drop-off zones and routes. Use the information gained through consultation and assessment to ensure co-design solutions align to the problems they have identified.

Crossover opportunity

The [Leading the Way - Engaging young voices for change foundation module](#) includes Kids Co-Designing Healthy Places resources to run co-design and prioritisation processes with children and young people.

Co-design with children and young people cont.

Co-design key messages with students and their families to promote the drop-off zones. Work with them to select the channels they think will have the most impact such as newsletters, local print media or social media. Additionally, consider the types of media the students may want to be involved in, whether this might be visual art, writing or another form of creative expression.

Use a values-based messaging approach to promote the drop-off zones, framing the values that will elicit community support and awareness for the project, such as:

- 'streets are for everyone to move around'
- 'it's important that we create safe and active ways for our kids to get to school'
- 'all kids and families should be able to enjoy getting active and building their walking and bike riding skills while they do it – we're using drop-off zones to create options to families who live further from school'

- 'kids feel calmer and learn better with an active day – drop-off zones take away the drop-off stress and lets kids start their school day on the right foot!'
- 'using the drop-off zone keeps me away from the front-gate frenzy and I feel better knowing
- '<child's name> can walk to the school gate with friends'.

Resource: [Framing walking and bike riding message guide](#)

Prepare information for council and school communication channels about the drop-off zones.

Deliver

Activate the drop-off zone and route to school

Install signage and other changes to clearly highlight the drop-off zone and the route to school as determined in the Design step.

Look for opportunities to connect to existing walk and ride to school programs, engagement opportunities or adding art installations to make the areas more fun and welcoming.

Celebrate!

Celebrate the use of the zones through promotion and events. Reward children and families. Share changes and achievements with the school community.

Review and embed

Survey the school community to capture feedback on the positives and negatives of the initiative, implementation and whether it achieved the desired outcomes. Consider questions and indicators such as:

- Did the program result in greater active travel rates of the school community (compared to baseline)?
- Why did families use or not use the drop-off zone?
- Were the drop-off zones well organised and in suitable locations? Were the times suitable? What could be improved?

- Were the interventions feasible for the school and council to implement?
- Can the learnings be shared with other schools (by developing a case study)?

Promote the outcomes and get more people involved to keep the momentum going. By promoting the project through case studies, partnerships and on digital channels, there is more chance the initiative will become long lasting.

Embed the drop-off zones

Learn from the evaluation and improve year on year. Include all required components – such as maintenance, upkeep and promotion – in the council budget. Commit to supporting the drop-off zones in all schools and for any schools that may be built in the future.

Recommended resources

- Example of a council in partnership with a primary school opening streets for children and families: [Brunswick East Primary School – Open Streets Trial with Merri-bek City Council](#)
- Living Streets (UK) provides steps and resources for opening up streets: [Safer Routes to School](#) and [Living Streets](#)
- [Play Streets](#) includes information on how to make play spaces for children and young people; includes a step-by-step guide and a toolkit for local government
- [Way2Go](#), South Australia's safer, greener and more active travel program for schools and local governments, provides inspiration and case studies, including from regional, outer-metropolitan communities





Ambitious:

Support young children to develop bike skills

Learning to ride scooters and bikes is an important step in any young child's development and can increase their opportunities and enthusiasm for active travel to and from early childhood services and other local destinations.

It is also important for young children to start to learn about road safety and road rules – as scooter and bike riders and walkers – to help them build confidence for active travel and prepare them to eventually become independent road users.

This 'ambitious' action requires council to promote and support young children and their families to learn scooter and bike skills, to increase their confidence to ride scooters and bikes as active travel, and to ensure young children and families learn about road safety when riding scooters, bikes or walking. This can involve working with early

childhood services to provide scooter and bike riding skills and road safety education lessons for young children and their families.

It can also include working within council to secure funding for scooter and bike riding lessons and road safety education at early childhood services, council-run lessons, or traffic schools for young children in local areas.

This action is focused on children aged 3–5 years who are at appropriate ages and developmental stages to begin learning to ride scooters and bikes.

Quick Note

Some notes on little riders

- Children usually learn to ride a bike between the ages of 3 and 8 years. Many developmental factors affect when a child is ready to learn to ride a bike on their own, including mental and physical development, gross motor skills, coordination, motivation and confidence.
- Children may begin riding tricycles, balance bikes and bikes with training wheels before they progress to unsupported two-wheel bikes. Likewise, children may begin riding three- or four-wheeled scooters before moving to two-wheeled scooters.
- Children learning to ride a bike need to develop the skills to ride in a straight line, and brake and turn corners safely.
- Children should always wear an approved Australian Standards helmet when riding a scooter or bike. Helmets should be the right size and fitted properly and positioned correctly on children's heads. Ideally, young children riding scooters should also wear wrist, elbow and knee guards to help protect them against injury.
- It's important for children to have scooters or bikes that are the right size. Bikes that are too big can be dangerous. Scooters should be the appropriate size and design for a child's weight, motor skills and physical development.
- Scooters and bikes should have reliable brakes and bells or horns.
- Children should wear brightly coloured or reflective clothing when riding scooters or bikes.
- Young children should ride in safe places away from the road, including the footpath or a bike path, under adult supervision. Children younger than 13 and supervising adults are legally allowed to ride on the footpath.

See the Better Health guide to bicycle safety and children, the [VicRoads learning to ride a bike guide](#) and the [Raising Children website](#) for more information.



How-to guide to:

Supporting young children to develop active travel skills and road safety awareness

Involving young children and families

Scooter and bike riding is important for children's learning and development. It helps to build their gross motor skills and is a great way for them to participate in active travel. It is important for children to learn and build road safety skills and awareness. However, young children will display different levels of ability and confidence when learning to ride scooters and bikes. They will also be at different stages of development and have different learning styles.

Parents and carers of young children also have different levels of ability and confidence with respect to scooter and bike riding and teaching their children to ride. Not all families and communities have access to scooters, bikes, helmets or local bike riding infrastructure, such as bike tracks.

Councils can involve children and families in determining the types of scooter and bike skills and road safety lessons that meet their abilities and needs, and to find out whether children have access to scooters, bikes and helmets in good, safe condition. Councils can also involve and consult with children, families and early childhood services to generate other ideas to develop scooter and bike riding skills and confidence, such as scooter and bike riding days or excursions.

Involving early childhood services

Councils will need to work with early childhood services to assess the need and demand for supporting children and families to develop scooter and bike skills. This may also include an assessment of children's access to suitable scooters, bikes and helmets to help inform and co-design scooter and bike riding skills and road safety lessons.



Plan

Review any data collected to identify children's scooter and bike riding abilities and needs at different early childhood services, and any services or areas encountering barriers or challenges to children learning and participating in scooter and bike riding, such as lack of access to scooters, bikes and helmets.

Consider and plan strategies to ensure all children have access to safe and appropriately sized scooters, bikes and helmets. For example, some council-managed toy libraries lend scooters and bikes for young children. Investigate partnering with [Ride Nation](#) to develop libraries of donated bikes for children attending early childhood services. Consider and plan how safe helmets for children who don't have them could be funded and provided.

Review [VicRoads' Bike Ed for Schools program](#), designed to help build bike riding and safety skills in school age children. The program contains a range of strategies and resources that can be adapted for young children.

Review data and work with early childhood services to determine the most suitable time, location, structure and format for scooter and bike riding skills and road safety lessons, including whether it is feasible to visit a children's traffic school or for scooter and bike and road safety education providers to provide lessons at early childhood services or local bike tracks or parks.

Research and shortlist existing scooter and bike riding and road safety education providers for young children and adults. Boroondara Council's [Kew Traffic School](#), [Swan Hill Rural City Council's Pedal Park](#), and City of Moonee Valley's [Essendon Traffic School](#) provide low-cost bike riding and road safety education and skills programs for early childhood services.

There are also privately run children's traffic schools across Victoria that offer education sessions. See the [Melbourne Playgrounds website](#) for information.

Plan cont.

Ensure traffic schools, along with scooter and bike riding education providers, have appropriate credentials and insurance and all children participating have safe scooters, bikes and helmets. Work with the providers to determine ages, requirements and cost for children to participate in lessons.

Calculate the costs of lessons per child and per early childhood service to help determine the total costs of funding the initiative. Work within council to secure funding for all services, or those most at need.

If there is no suitable local traffic school offering scooter and bike riding, identify appropriate local bike tracks, parks or other sites near early childhood services where scooter and bike riding lessons by an education provider could be held, and audit them for safety.

Consider whether there is need and opportunity for council to deliver its own active travel skills and road safety education programs for early childhood services and young children, or to establish and fund a local children's traffic school. Identify teams and stakeholders within council that would need to be engaged in this project, including from health planning and promotion, traffic and travel, and family and youth services. Plan the expertise, actions, responsibilities, resources, equipment, infrastructure and budget that would be required.

Identify learning to cycle programs for adults that council and early childhood services can promote to parents and carers. For example, [Darebin City Council Bike Programs](#) offers low-cost bike riding skills and confidence training and workshops for adults. [Ride Nation](#) and [Cycling Safe](#) are private

cycle training providers that offer bike rider training to adults.

Work with early childhood services to plan other scooter and bike riding initiatives, such as scooter and bike riding days or excursions, and developing ActivePaths scooter and bike routes. See [Ride2School](#) for ideas that can be adapted for young children.

Consider and plan other ways to support early childhood services and parents and carers to teach young children scooter and bike riding skills and provide road safety education. This may include delivering talks or information sessions, or disseminating resources.

The [VicRoads Bike Ed for Schools website](#) contains a range of resources that could be used or adapted.

Plan promotional and communication activities to promote active travel skills and road safety lessons to early childhood services and families. Activities might include:

- disseminating email or newsletter templates or information early childhood services can use to inform families about the lessons
- preparing promotional resources, such as posters and brochures, and sharing these with early childhood services and schools
- promoting the lessons on the council website, social media channels and in newsletters or newspapers
- displaying posters or leaving brochures in libraries, maternal and child health services and other local community centres and facilities used by young children and families.



Assess

Consider asking early childhood services to collect data from families on measures such as:

- the number of children and families that ride scooters and bikes
 - the number of children and families that ride scooters and bikes to and from early childhood services or part of the way, or to travel to other destinations
 - whether children and families own or have access to safe and suitable scooters and bikes and helmets
 - the relative scooter and bike riding abilities and confidence of children – including whether they can ride two-, three- or four-wheeled scooters, balance bikes, or bikes with or without training wheels
- the intentions of parents and carers in relation to riding bikes and scooters with children to and from early childhood services and other local destinations
 - the bike riding abilities and confidence of parents and carers
 - the available time, ability and confidence parents and carers have to teach their children to scooter or bike ride
 - whether and how often parents and carers currently practice scooter and bike riding with children.

Encourage services to use the [Ride2School HandsUp! counts](#) tool to collect data.

Also see the [Road Safety Education Victoria website](#) for relevant research and data on road safety for young children.

Design

Engage with early childhood services and parent and carer representatives to inform and co-design the active travel skills and road safety program, and delivery of lessons. Seek their views on the most suitable timing, location, structure, format and length of scooter and bike riding skills and road safety lessons that would best respond to children's needs. Seek children's views and feelings about scooter and bike riding lessons to help assess enthusiasm, confidence and suitability for different ages.

See the [National Practices for early childhood Road Safety Education](#) to help inform road safety lessons.

Engage early childhood services and children in co-design of ActiveMaps and ActivePaths for scooter and bike riding marked with decals. See the [Ride2School website](#) for ideas that can be adapted for young children and early childhood services.

Deliver

Promote the availability of active travel skills and road safety lessons to early childhood services and families in the local community using promotional activities and communication channels identified at the Plan stage.

Disseminate all necessary information about the active travel skills and road safety lessons to participating early childhood services, including requirements for safe and suitable scooters, bikes, helmets (along with wrist, elbow and knee guards for scooters) for all participating children.

Ensure parents complete permission forms for children to participate. (The [VicRoads Bike Ed for Schools website](#) has a permission form template that could be adapted.)

Support early childhood services to enable children to participate in active travel skills and road safety lessons by:

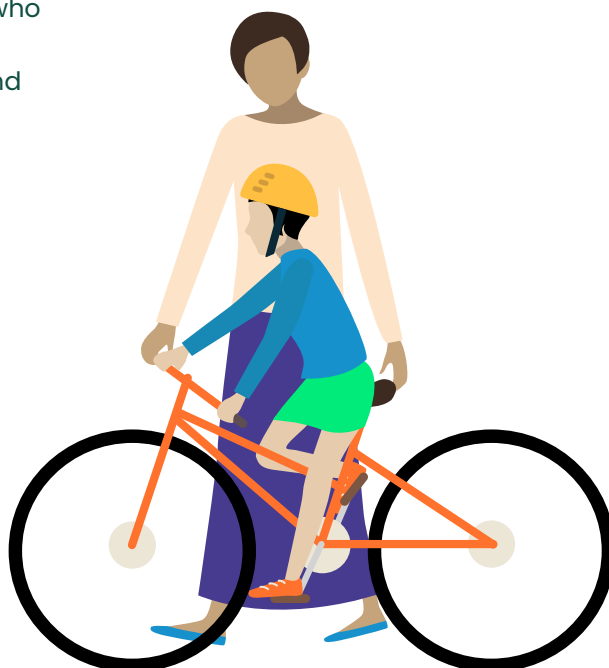
- finding suitable locations and spaces for the lessons close to the services
- finding ways of providing safe and suitable scooters, bikes and helmets for children who don't have them
- being available to provide information and answer questions about the lessons.

Work with early childhood services, children and families to map and audit scooter and bike routes, and design ActiveMaps with decals.

Support and encourage early childhood services to engage children in learning activities related to active travel and road safety, such as book reading, artwork and discussions.

Celebrate!

Award certificates, stickers, prizes or other rewards to children and families who complete active travel skills and road safety education lessons. This could include giving children a 'scooter licence', 'bike licence' or 'road safety licence'. See the [VicRoads Bike Ed for Schools website](#) for a bike licence template. Ensure any prizes are consistent with council's commitment to healthy options for children. See this [resource](#) for more information and healthy reward ideas.



Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the program

Following delivery of the program, consider asking early childhood services to collect data from families on the same measures as any data collected at the Assess stage. Compare the data and review the extent to which there have been improvements in:

- the number of children and families riding scooters and bikes
- the number of children and families using scooter and bike riding as active travel
- confidence levels and abilities of children or their parents and carers in riding scooters or bikes as active transport.

Design a survey for early childhood services and families on their perceptions of the active travel skills and road safety lessons and program. Collect and review feedback on how the lessons and program could be improved.

Use evaluation to identify opportunities to improve elements of the program and lessons.

Aim to embed the active travel skills and road safety program in council's annual program delivery. Work with council's budget processes to secure annual allocation of funding and resources to support the program.

Recommended resources

- [Better Health guide to bicycle safety and children](#)
- [Melbourne Playgrounds website](#)
- [National Practices for early childhood Road Safety Education](#)
- [Raising Children website](#)
- [Ride2School HandsUp! counts tool](#)
- [Ride2School website](#)
- [Starting out Safely – Victoria's early childhood road safety education program](#)
- [VicRoads learning to ride a bike guide](#)
- [VicRoads Bike Ed school program resources](#)



Impact stream:

Including walking and bike riding in council strategies

Implementation actions

To complete this impact stream, councils will select from:

- Quick win: Promote walking and bike riding in your community
- Quick win: Create local pram walking groups
- Step up: Assess neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure needs
- Step up: Create a council walking and bike riding priority investment plan
- Step up: Audit and promote walking and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families
- Ambitious: Deliver neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects
- Ambitious: Create early childhood-friendly active travel infrastructure

Councils are responsible for strategic planning and management of services and infrastructure that relate to walking and bike riding including open space, urban planning, traffic and transport, parks and active recreation.

Many councils use strategic plans and policies to manage competing community priorities under these domains; however, these policies may not give adequate priority to walking and bike riding. This impact stream requires councils to strategically implement policies that prioritise walking and bike riding through council's planning framework. Councils should separately consider and address both walking and bike riding in policy, planning, investment and the provision of infrastructure to support safe, connected and inviting active transport by members of the community.

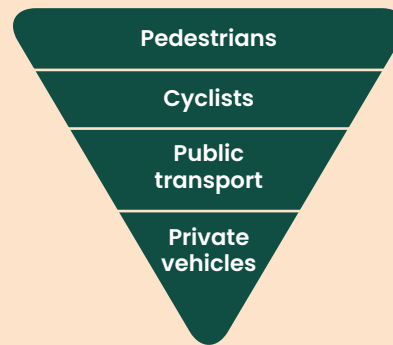
Councils should also consider their role in planning and providing program and infrastructure opportunities to support young children and families to walk, scoot and bike ride in the local community. Mode hierarchy, local area traffic calming and bicycle road rules are useful concepts for councils to consider in this impact stream.

Mode hierarchy

Mode hierarchy is the priority given to different forms (modes) of transport.

Positive mode hierarchy is when area and urban planning, design, infrastructure and traffic management places priority on active modes of transport that allow the greatest number of users.

Walking and bike riding are the primary modes for prioritisation in positive mode hierarchy.



Local area traffic calming

Local area traffic calming is the use of physical treatments in the road space to reduce traffic speed across an area, usually a defined residential neighbourhood. It involves a package of different treatments to produce a traffic calming effect across the whole area.

The most commonly used treatment is speed humps, but it might also include things like changes to the configuration of intersections, pedestrian refuges or landscaping to create chicanes.

Bicycle road rules

In Victoria, a person can ride on a footpath if they:

- are a child under the age of 13
- are a person aged 13 and over who is accompanying a child under the age of 13
- are an adult aged 18 or over who is bike riding with a child in an attached child seat or pedalling on a bike attachment.

In many cases, dedicated off-road bike paths are likely to provide the safest bike riding option for young riders. Traffic calmed streets can also offer a safe on-street bike riding option. See further information about [bicycle road rules](#) from VicRoads.

Quick Note

First moves

Children are important users of neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure. Council plays a critical role in ensuring they have safe opportunities to move around their community in ways that support the development of their skills for walking, scooting and bike riding throughout life.

Special planning and consideration should be applied to how children's active living is supported even before they take their first steps. Neighbourhood design should accommodate:

- pram use
- toddler scooters, balance bikes and other training bikes
- the physical and cognitive development stages of young children, such as their eye-level, peripheral vision, ability to interpret safety and danger
- children and families with disabilities and mobility aids
- the different needs of families with children at different developmental stages
- the prioritisation of child-friendly destinations, such as parks and playgrounds, early childhood services and activity centres
- safety when transitioning between modes, such as car parks, public transport stops.

Intended outcomes

Councils undertaking this impact stream can expect to:

- contribute to the goals of their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, especially in consideration of increasing active living and [Victoria's Climate Change Strategy](#)
- increase active travel rates of children, young people and families within local neighbourhoods and residential areas
- increase confidence, capability and independent mobility of children and young people to walk, ride and travel actively and safely on local streets
- provide environments that improve access and availability of safe walking and bike riding infrastructure in residential areas, around schools, early childhood services, shopping strips and parks
- increase social connection opportunities for people who walk and ride bikes in their neighbourhoods.

Minimum deliverables

To complete the impact stream 'Including walking and bike riding in council strategies', councils will have:

- identified walking and bike riding priority locations or routes, projects, activations or infrastructure changes and targets to address these priorities
- demonstrated support from council and local leadership to work towards the goals of the impact stream by allocating resources, endorsing strategies or policies, or both
- documented implemented changes that increased opportunities for walking and bike riding around the community
- demonstrated succession planning outlining how the activity will contribute to the outcomes of their current and future Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans.



Quick win:

Promote walking and bike riding in your community

This action requires the council to promote local and safe opportunities for children, young people and their families to walk and ride bikes in the community.

Council should use existing options to encourage walking and bike riding for enjoyment, travel and exercise. Promoting existing walking and bike riding routes provides an opportunity for children and young people to practice skills and be active, but also to demonstrate support from the local community and council to prioritise safe active transport and recreation.



How-to guide to:

Promote walking and bike riding in your community

Involve people

Some of the council teams to involve in this action may include parks and open space management, communications, economic development, traffic and transport, health promotion and family services.

This activity provides an opportunity to involve children, young people and their families in utilising existing routes, while also working with them to identify what they need to support their participation in walking and bike riding more generally.

Council should focus on routes that are suitable or can be easily adapted to suit children, young people and their families walking and bike riding along routes that are able to be usefully integrated into their active transport or recreation.



Plan

Prepare a communication plan that includes the goals for the project, communication channels that will suit the identified audiences and a timeline that aligns to key activation dates and events for promotion. The plan should also identify opportunities to promote the use of routes to start a conversation with children, young people and their families about their needs and priorities for walking and bike riding in the community.

Refer to the [‘Framing walking and bike riding’ values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare the key messages for the type of community the changes can create.



Assess

Work across council departments to identify appropriate recreational walking routes or paths in the municipality. Aim to identify around 5 to 10 options that suit a range of needs or service different locations. The routes can vary in style, difficulty and length.

Try to accommodate as many of the following elements:

- a variety of recreational walking routes that take between 30 to 90 minutes to help people achieve physical activity recommendations
- options that incorporate largely natural or high-quality park settings
- loop walks with access to streams, lakes, reservoirs or the coast, if available
- routes that suit a range of fitness abilities and mobility requirements
- routes that connect important destinations for people in the community, including schools and shops
- routes that include safety features, access to toilets, shelter, play spaces, speciality bike loops, infrastructure for prams and natural features
- visibility, path quality, signage and separation of modes or protection from cars where appropriate
- routes that avoid main road crossings if possible.

Suitable walks may already be described in council promotions, Parks Victoria or other information sources such as walkingmaps.com.au. For bike riding, use the resources available through [Bicycle Network Planning](#), existing [council examples](#), or information about the Principal Bicycle Network and Bicycle Priority Routes and Strategic Cycling Corridors.

Design

Prepare maps that highlight the routes identified for promotion. For walking routes, tools are available on walkingmaps.com.au.

Prepare communication messages consistent with the goals and strategies of your communication plan and appropriate paths.

Involving children and young people

Consider working with children and young people to develop promotional and activation strategies. Some promotional activities children and young people could contribute to include:

- advising on the design of the promotional campaign, activations and communication channels that they and their families would use
- creating a 'spotto' or treasure hunt challenge to complete on the route
- designing maps or artwork to highlight features of the route
- testing and giving reviews of the paths.

Deliver

Promote key walking and bike riding routes

Ensure the maps are hosted on council's website and promote them through council and community communications and on social media.

Activate the routes

To best activate the routes once they have been designed and mapped:

- encourage children and families to use [Victoria Walks activity sheets](#) on their walks
- hold pram walking groups on the routes
- hold guided family walk events where staff or volunteers provide information on animals, nature or other features encountered on the way
- offer bicycle education events for children to practice skills.

Review and embed

Use activation events, surveys or voting activities displayed on the routes to ask people about how council can continue to meet their walking and bike riding needs.



Quick win:

Create local pram walking groups

Creating local pram walking groups is a 'quick win' that supports parents and carers of babies and young children aged 0–18 months to be active, as well as helping them to connect with other parents, carers and children in the local community.

This provides important co-benefits, whereby encouraging physical activity and facilitating social connections in the community and can help to overcome feelings of isolation that parents and carers of young children can experience.

This 'quick win' requires councils to establish and promote one or more new local pram walking groups for parents and carers of babies and children aged 0–18 months. Councils should set achievable targets for the number of new pram walking groups they will establish and the number of participants in each group and aim to improve on these measures year on year.



How-to guide to:

Create local pram walking groups

Involving young children and families

Councils can consult with parents and carers of young children in the local community, as well as participants in any existing local pram walking groups or early childhood services, to seek their views on the most suitable meeting times, locations and walking routes for local pram walking groups. Councils can reach parents and carers through channels, such as Maternal and Child Health Services, early childhood services, playgroups and libraries.

Consider recruiting local parent and carer champions or representatives for each pram walking group who they could work with to plan, co-design, promote and deliver the program.

Use Maternal and Child Health Services, early childhood services, libraries, playgroups and other community centres to support and promote the pram walking group to local families.





Plan

Determine how many pram walking groups already exist in the local community to inform your planning from this baseline. You can use this information to identify whether there may be gaps or duplications in particular geographic areas, the types and models of the groups or the demographics of families that already attend. Consider how many new pram walking groups should be established, considering the different local communities and suburbs in the local government area as well as the number of parents and carers of children aged 0–18 months.

Work with parent and carer champions or representatives, or local settings or services, to identify suitable meeting times, locations and walking routes for the pram walking groups in each local community.

When planning meeting locations, consider factors such as proximity to local community hubs or centres and established local meeting points for parents and carers, such as playgrounds, libraries and schools.

Consider starting times and destinations that are linked with other activities, such as storytime at the local library, a playground, or a local café where parents and carers can begin or end their walk with a coffee.

Identify established local walking tracks or routes, such as in parks. Suitable walks may already be described in council promotions, Parks Victoria or other information sources such as the [Victoria Walks website](#).

Audit and assess walking routes to ensure easy pram access and walkability. Consider features, such as access to toilets, change facilities and shelter. See the [Pram Walks website](#) for route ideas.

Develop a plan to publicise and promote the pram walking groups, including meeting times and locations, to local parents and carers. Identify communication channels and strategies and plan promotional resources required. This might include:

- disseminating information to early childhood services, local playgroups, parent groups and carer networks
- encouraging parents and carers to share with other local parents and carers
- promoting pram walking groups via local parent Facebook groups
- displaying posters and flyers in maternal child health services, early childhood services, libraries, local recreation centres and other community centres or facilities
- asking parent and carer champions to promote the groups via their groups and local networks.

Consider translating promotional materials according to the needs of local communities.



Assess

Design an online survey to assess participation in walking and other physical activity by local parents and carers of children aged 0–18 months, including in pram walking groups, and to identify any barriers they experience. Use communication channels identified in the plan stage to reach local parents and carers. See this [Moonee Valley City Council's Walking Participation Survey](#) for survey question ideas that could be adapted for parents and carers of young children.

Audit and assess walking routes in the local area for pram accessibility and walkability working with parent and carer champions or volunteers. See the [Victoria Walks website](#) and the [Victoria Walks Walking Audit Resource](#) for information on how to audit and assess walkability.

Ask parent and carer champions or volunteers to record and track participation in the pram walking groups week-to-week.

Design

Engage local parents and carers in co-design of the program.

This could include engaging local parents and carers to nominate and review pram walking routes, such as via a local parents Facebook group, a council webpage, or by encouraging parents and carers to add their pram walking routes to the [Pram Walks website](#).

Work with local parent and carer champions or volunteers to map and design pram walking routes, audit and assess them for pram accessibility and walkability, and determine meeting times and locations.

Deliver

Kick off the program with an event, such as a healthy morning tea, at the end of the first pram walk. Consider organising maternal and child health nurses to attend to answer any general questions parents and carers might have about their health or their children's health and development.

Ensure each pram walking group has a parent and carer champion or representative who will regularly participate and can help to coordinate the group.

Continue to promote the pram walking groups via communication channels identified at the plan stage.

Continue to support parents and carers to coordinate the groups and be available to answer queries and provide information to other interested parents and carers.

Case Study

[Wyndham City Council pram walking groups](#)

Wyndham City Council offers free pram walking groups for local families with children younger than 18 months. The groups meet in four different locations in the municipality, each on a different day of the week. The groups walk for about 45–60 minutes and are facilitated by early childhood professionals.

The walking groups are a great opportunity for local families with young children to connect and socialise, while being physically active.

Activate with incentives

Encourage parents and carers to participate in pram walking groups through healthy incentives or prizes.

Offer prizes, such as vouchers for local businesses (e.g. a coffee voucher for a local café), for the local pram walking group with the highest number of participants. Any prizes should be consistent with council's commitment to providing healthy options.

Encourage parents and carers to use pedometers or an App to track and improve step counts, and to create step count competitions within their walking groups.



Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the program

Seek feedback from parent and carer champions or representatives and other participating parents and carers on pram walking group meeting times, locations, frequency and routes. This could be via parent and carer champions or representatives, or through communication channels identified at the plan stage. Review parent and carer feedback and amend the program as required.

Review data collected on participation in the pram walking groups and assess whether targets have been reached. Consider whether there is need and

demand for establishing new pram walking groups in additional areas.

Conduct further regular surveys of local parents and carers of young children aged 0–18 months on the same measures as at the Assess stage. Compare and track levels of walking participation. Identify whether the program has contributed to improvements and consider further initiatives that may support this.

Recommended resources

- <https://pramwalks.com.au>
- [Victoria Walks website](#)
- [Victoria Walks Walking Audit Resource](#)
- [Victoria Walks Walking Participation Survey](#)
- walkingmaps.com.au



Step up:

Assess neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure needs

This action focuses on improving walking and bike riding options in local neighbourhoods with a detailed assessment of destinations that are important for children and young people.

Councils will undertake identification and high-level needs analysis of key transport walking and bike riding routes, with a view to prioritising children and young people's needs in planning policy.

Councils considering schools as the core destination of focus for this 'step up' could work in tandem with activities in the '[Increasing active opportunities to and from school](#)' impact stream. By ensuring council officers are engaged in this collaboration

with schools, any infrastructure or audit assessments completed by students, or changes delivered through this activity could be promoted in walking and bike riding to school campaigns.

The activity can also be utilised to focus on routes to other neighbourhood locations such as major sports facilities or youth services.



How-to guide to:

Assess neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure needs

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include traffic and transport, urban planning, placemaking, and family and youth services. Staff, children, young people and families who use the facilities at the identified destinations are equally important stakeholders in this initiative.



Plan

Plan how many neighbourhoods or locations will be included in this project, accounting for council's available resources and budget, demonstrated need or desire in the area or alignment to existing plans and strategies.

An ideal starting point would be to work with between 2 and 4 locations over the project period. Include locations relevant to different ages, such as primary and secondary schools.



Assess

Audit neighbourhood walking and bike riding environments

Determine if there are safe routes for children and young people to walk or ride bikes independently to key locations in your community. Consider how the safety needs, travel modes and laws impact children and young people of different ages.

Involving children, young people and families

Conduct surveys of children, young people and their families to identify:

- their current or desired walking and bike riding participation
- their perceptions of safety for walking or bike riding on the available routes to the identified locations
- their confidence to travel independently or parents' confidence to allow their children to travel independently to the identified locations
- the changes required to improve walking and bike riding safety and confidence.

Design

Together with the working group, review the consultation data, the information gathered from relevant policies and strategies and the list of actions outlined below.

Identify priority projects that will contribute to council goals and can be delivered within available budget and resources. To complete the action, it is recommended that councils undertake at least 2 of the following options:

- Identify key walking routes or locations to prioritise future infrastructure or program investment or both. Destinations should include primary and secondary schools, main shopping areas, parks, tertiary institutions and key public transport stops and interchanges (where applicable). Consider connectivity in the walking network and identify missing links and safe crossing points. Routes of high demand can be identified using the [Principal Pedestrian Network methodology](#).
- Undertake an initial assessment of priority bike riding routes and consider whether a further review is required, especially to facilitate bike riding to secondary schools. Consider connectivity in the bike riding network and identify missing links.
- Scope existing transport and recreational policy. Identify the gaps, strengths and weaknesses of current strategies and policies as they relate to walking and bike riding. Identify what they are trying to achieve. Start internal dialogue with other council departments to determine potential changes and processes, as required.
- Identify whether desired attributes such as mode hierarchy and local area traffic calming are stated in council transport policy. Look for opportunities to amend or revise the existing policy, or if required, build the case to develop new council policy.
- Assess the Council Planning Scheme and other key land use planning documents for support for walking and bike riding. Consider questions such as:
 - Are areas within 800m of activity centres, tertiary institutions and railway stations made available for higher density development?
 - Are there reduced car parking requirements for businesses in activity centres?
 - Are there adequate requirements for bike infrastructure in new developments?
 - Do new developments include bike paths or protected lanes?
 - Does council promote end of trip facilities, including bike parking and showers in commercial developments and directional signage to safe routes and facilities?
 - Is there bike parking provided at suitable locations (such as, close to entrance ways, are they well lit, are they secure)?
 - Is there adequate infrastructure to connect trips?
 - Is there any priority travel signage for people walking and bike riding?

Deliver

Work through council's planning process to have the priority projects adopted within relevant strategies, policies or action plans. The goal is to direct council action towards upgrades on the identified routes.

Communicate the changes

Promote changes to the children and young people who participated in the consultation. Acknowledge their role and highlight the action that council is taking to create safer and more accessible routes.

If the changes result in a new way of understanding the environment (newly installed shared paths, signage etc.) undertake community education

programs and campaigns that highlight these features so people know how to use them safely. Continue to involve children and young people in the design and promotion of these communication pieces.

Review and embed

Evaluate behaviour changes that occur as a result of the investment. Consider including indicators of:

- increased use of identified routes by walkers and bike riders and reduced car use or congestion
- improved safety or reduced incidents
- favourable feedback from users of the route or nearby residents.

Confirm and track council investment into walking and bike riding

Work with relevant council departments to identify existing investment in walking and bike riding. Identify investment required over a number of years. Establish a mechanism to publicly report on this investment (e.g. as part of annual council planning and reporting).

Commit

Commit to a certain level of investment to improve accessibility and amend any council planning schemes where needed to make it easier.





Step up:

Create a council walking and bike riding priority investment plan

This action includes a detailed audit of the safety and amenity of priority walking and riding transport routes to develop a pipeline of projects for future infrastructure investment.

This process ensures that upcoming council investment can be geared towards projects that reflect the goal of prioritising walking and bike riding as preferred modes of transport.

This action requires your council to review the current inclusion of and establish or reaffirm a priority focus on safe and connected walking and bike riding options through council strategies and policies. Council should identify the best strategy ideas and provide a clear case for change, investment and the promotion of key recreational walking and bike riding routes.

The audit should focus on increasing the priority placed on walking and bike riding by council staff, decision-makers and the community – keeping this in mind will inform how you go about involving people in this activity.

Through this action, it is recommended the council reports on investment in walking and bike riding separately. If new shared paths replace existing walking paths, identify this as bike riding investment.



How-to guide to:

Create a council walking and bike riding priority investment plan

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include traffic and transport, family and youth services, parks and open space management, and community planning.



Plan

Convene a working group of responsible council teams and develop a project plan, outlining the key groups and council leaders needed to be engaged through the process, the outcomes the project aims to achieve, and mechanisms to promote routes and publicly report on this priority and investment.

Determine a decision-making process for the group to ensure the identified priorities and projects are consistent with council plans and strategies, and will have the support of council leaders to advocate for budget bidding or inclusion in key action plans.

Review existing policies

The review component of this activity will provide a foundation for you to understand the will of decision-makers and community members to prioritise walking and bike riding infrastructure. Use this information to prepare and communicate about the opportunity to provide walking and bike riding infrastructure as well as identify opportunities to embed this work in council planning.

Scope council's existing strategies and policies that currently (or have the potential to) address walking and bike riding to:

- determine goals and priorities of these documents
- identify gaps, strengths and weaknesses as they relate to walking and bike riding
- identify whether they include supportive walking and bike riding attributes
- identify whose walking and bike riding has been considered, for example if consideration has been made for children and young people, women, people with mobility issues
- identify what community places and spaces are connected by any existing walking and bike riding projects, such as improved access to parks, playgrounds, schools, local shops, tertiary institutions (if applicable), shopping centres, sporting facilities and grounds, entertainment venues and other destinations important to children and young people.

Investigate council processes that enable the prioritisation of walking and bike riding through these lines of enquiry:

- which resources, such as budget, staff or specific strategies, are dedicated towards the prioritisation of walking and bike riding?
- how are decisions made about investing in and prioritising walking and bike riding?

Audit community walking and bike riding routes and locations

If required, identify or refine priority transport walking and riding routes. Audit the safety and amenity of priority transport walking routes and locations and identify potential solutions.

Audits should include consideration of personal safety and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in addition to road safety. For further information refer to the Western Australia Department of Transport's [Walkability Audit Tool](#). For example audits, see the Victoria Walks [20-Minute Neighbourhood reports](#).

Audit the safety and amenity of priority transport bike riding routes and identify potential solutions. For further information refer to [Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides](#) (particularly Appendix G and H).

Public consultation is recommended for this activity. Young people can and should also be involved in the process.

Design

Identify priorities for investment

Identify initial priorities for investment in walking and bike riding. In council planning processes, consider including and providing future funding for additional activities identified through this process.

Ensure relevant investment decision-making criteria includes strong consideration of access for children and young people. Incorporate public consultation or the voice of young people as required to demonstrate the need for the activities.

Consider funding opportunities that will help you deliver on your priorities. MAV's [walking and bike riding resource hub](#) lists relevant grant opportunities.

Deliver

Develop a pipeline of activities and commitment to funding

Complete the pipeline of activities and include in council planning documentation, including strategies and action plans.

Commit to a certain level of investment to improve accessibility and amend any council planning schemes that do not reflect this pipeline of activities and commitment to funding.

Review and embed

Monitor the investment in and delivery of walking and bike riding actions. Evaluate behaviour changes that occur because of the investment. Pursue evaluative questioning and information gathering which reveals:

- increased use of identified routes by walkers and bike riders
- reduced car use or congestion
- improved safety or reduced incidents
- favourable feedback from users of the route
- favourable feedback from nearby residents.

Promote the effective changes from the project and provide as a rationale to expand investment to adopting successful measures on other key routes.

Examples of supportive walking and bike riding attributes:

- mode hierarchy principles
- local area traffic calming measures.

Examples of direct investment:

- footpaths
- crossings
- bike paths.

Examples of indirect investment:

- local area traffic management
- speed limit reductions
- enhanced street tree coverage.



Step up:

Audit and promote walking and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families

This step up action requires the council to identify, audit and promote local and safe opportunities for parents and young children to walk and bike ride in the community.

It focuses on identifying and auditing walking and bike riding routes and spaces for young children and families in local neighbourhoods by assessing existing walking routes and riding paths and spaces as well as important walking destinations and needs.

Councils will undertake identification and high-level needs analysis of a select number of key walking and riding routes in the local area for young children and families.

Councils will identify some key destinations that are important for young children and families. They will then map and undertake a thorough audit and assessment of these local walking routes to identified key destinations, including auditing walking routes for safety and accessibility for parents and carers with prams and young children on scooters or bikes.

Councils will also undertake a needs assessment and identify bike paths and other spaces in the local community that can be used by children aged 3–5 to safely learn and practise scooter and bike riding.

Councils will promote walking routes and bike riding spaces to young children and families, to encourage them to be active, learn and practice scooter and bike riding skills, while also demonstrating the support from the local community and council to prioritise safe walking and bike riding for transport and recreation.

Crossover opportunity ↻

This implementation action should work in tandem with the [‘Increasing active travel opportunities for children and young people’](#) impact stream, by identifying and promoting safe active travel routes to early childhood services and other key local destinations, as well as safe paths and spaces for young children to learn to ride bikes.





How-to guide to:

Audit and promote local walking, scooting and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families

Involving young children and families

This activity provides an opportunity to involve young children and families in identifying key local walking routes, scooting and bike riding spaces, and the resources needed to support their participation and learning in walking, scooting and bike riding.

Council should focus on routes and spaces that are suitable for safe walking, scooting and bike riding by young children and families as part of a commute to, or located at places which are important to them.

Councils should promote safe walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces to families with young children in the local community through a range of channels.

Involving early childhood services

Councils should also engage early childhood services to obtain their views on the safety and accessibility of walking routes to the service, and any safety issues in the surrounding streets. Early childhood services can also be enlisted to help in promoting safe walking routes and scooter and bike riding spaces to local families.

Involving council and partners

Council teams to work with in this action include traffic and transport, urban planning, placemaking, family and youth services, maternal and child health services and communication.

Councils may need to involve council traffic engineers in auditing walking routes for road safety and may also need to engage with VicRoads.

Local partners, such as neighbourhood houses and schools, could help to promote safe walking routes and scooter and bike riding spaces to families in the local community.



Plan

Gather and review key resources to guide an assessment of needs, and audits of existing and potential walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces.

Review any [Principal Pedestrian Networks](#) in the local area to help identify patterns of movement and key routes. The [Victoria Walks website](#) has a range of walking audit resources, including audit forms and the [VicRoads Safe Routes to Schools webpage](#) also has useful resources that can be adapted to audit and assess routes to early childhood services and other destinations for this project.

Work across council departments to identify walking routes and potential learning-to-ride spaces in the municipality. Consider routes that:

- connect important destinations for families, including services and shops
- include safety features, access to toilets, shelter, play spaces, and infrastructure for prams

- exhibit visibility, path quality, signage and separation of modes or protection from cars where appropriate
- avoid main road crossings if possible.

Identify whether council has already undertaken any relevant studies, mapping, analysis or audits, and whether there are [Principal Pedestrian Networks](#) in place.

Identify and consider alignment of plans or actions to promote safer and more accessible walking and riding routes with relevant council plans, strategies and policies, including existing transport and recreational policies.

Engaging key early childhood services to consult in identifying and auditing active travel routes.

Plan cont.

Develop a communications plan to promote and disseminate safe walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces to families with young children in the local community. The plan should include communication channels for reaching parents and a timeline with any key dates or events for promotion.

This might include:

- disseminating walking maps and information about scooter and bike learning spaces to maternal child health services, early childhood services, schools, local playgroups, libraries and other community centres and facilities
- promoting walking maps and learning-to-ride spaces online, including on the council website and via local parent Facebook groups.

Assess

Conduct an online survey or focus group to assess key local destinations for families with young children, their current participation in walking, scooting and bike riding, and changes needed to support them to participate.

Design questions to assess:

- key local destinations that are most important for families with young children
- current walking, scooter and bike riding participation
- desired walking, scooter and bike riding participation
- current use of walking and riding routes and scooter and bike riding spaces
- current participation in active travel to early childhood services
- perceptions of accessibility and safety for pram walking and walking or riding with young children on scooters or bikes using available routes to key locations
- levels of confidence to walk and ride safely with young children to key locations
- perceptions of the availability of safe paths and spaces for young children to learn and practise scooter and bike riding
- changes they believe would improve their ability to walk, scooter and bike ride in the local area and to key locations
- changes or infrastructure they believe would help young children to safely learn and practise scooter and bike riding.

Refer to the [‘Framing walking and bike riding’ values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare key messages for promoting walking, scooter and bike riding in the local community using walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces.

See this [Victoria Walks Walking Participation Survey](#) for survey questions that could be adapted for families with young children.

Review survey data and conduct detailed assessments of key local destinations that are most important for families with young children, and their needs in relation to walking and riding routes. Destinations may include early childhood services, schools, main shopping areas, playgrounds and parks, and key public transport stations. Routes of high demand can be identified using the [Principal Pedestrian Network methodology](#).

Review survey data and assess local needs for bike paths and spaces for young children to learn and practice scooter and bike riding.

Assess audit information to identify whether changes are required to meet local needs and create safer and more accessible local walking routes and learning-to-ride paths and spaces.

Design

Review the consultation data, and information and resources gathered.

Prepare checklists of key aspects to observe and investigate to guide audits of walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces for bikes and scooters.

Review audit information. Use the information to design maps of safe walking routes to key destinations and early childhood services.

Involve young children and families in co-design of walking maps that show different options, safe crossing points, highlight fun features and things to look out for, and increase the number of

families using the same route. This could include, for example, asking parents and carers to provide feedback and mark observations on maps, and incorporating children's pictures of local landmarks and features.

See the Increasing active travel opportunities for young children impact stream for more ideas for involving children in co-design of walking maps.

Deliver

Audit walking routes and scooter and bike learning spaces

Conduct on-site audits of active travel routes to key local destinations and early childhood services in your local neighbourhood, as well as paths and spaces for learning to scooter and bike ride, considering the needs of young children and families.

Walking route audits will assess pram accessibility, walkability, road crossings, safety and amenity, including the presence of supportive facilities (such as, street furniture and shelter for breastfeeding or spoon feeding, toilets and change facilities, and signage). They should also consider the needs of families and children with disability.

See the Victoria Walks website for guidance on conducting audits of footpaths. This includes assessing whether footpaths are sufficiently smooth, continuous, even, wide and unobstructed. For pram accessibility, footpaths in busy areas should be at least 1.8 metres wide, while in other areas they should be 1.5 metres, or 2.5 metres for footpaths shared by people who walk and bike ride.

The [Victoria Walks website](#) also has information on assessing facilities on walking routes, including street furniture, shade and signage.

Safety audits should observe speed limits, traffic levels, speed and behaviour of cars and bike riders, the availability of safe road crossings and any obstructions in sight lines. Safety and access audits must be considered from young children's perspectives. This includes observing areas from a young child's height to assess their sight line.

See the Safe Routes to School guide for councils for information on auditing routes for safety, and the Victoria Walks website for information on assessing the availability of safe crossings. Also consider CPTED principles in auditing routes for safety.

The audit of bike tracks, paths and other spaces will identify potential paths and spaces in the local area and assess whether they are safe for young children to learn scoot and bike ride, away from vehicles and not shared with cyclists, and whether tracks, paths and spaces are smooth, even, wide and unobstructed.

Audits will identify existing safe walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces for bikes and scooters that can be promoted to young children and families.

Audits will also identify needs and potential responses by council to create safer and more accessible active travel routes, and safe spaces for young children to learn to ride scooters and bikes in the local area.

This should involve identifying key walking and riding routes or locations to prioritise in future infrastructure and program investment, considering existing Principal Pedestrian Networks.

It should also involve considering whether routes to early childhood services and key destinations require a traffic engineering response to improve road safety and encourage active travel. This could include responses to:

- reduce vehicle speeds
- reduce road crossing distance and improve sight lines
- discourage through traffic
- install signage and decals along routes to encourage active travel.

Deliver cont.

Activate with route information and markers

Use footpath decals to mark walking routes and scooter and bike riding spaces. See [Victoria Walks Nudges for Active Travel to School](#) for information about footpath decals to promote walking routes. Decals in learning to scooter and bike ride spaces could include arrows and lanes to direct little scooter and bike riders.

Promote walking routes and bike riding spaces

Promote safe routes to walk and spaces which are safe for learning-to-ride bikes and scooters and disseminate maps and information to families with young children in the community, following the communications plan developed at the Plan stage. Ensure the maps are hosted on council's website and promote them through council and community social media and other communication channels.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the project

Conduct further regular surveys of local parents of young children on the same measures at the Assess stage. Compare walking, scooting and bike riding participation with participation levels at the Assess stage and continue to track participation levels.

Compare and track data on use of walking, scooter and bike riding routes and bike riding spaces.

Identify the gaps, strengths and weaknesses of current council strategies and policies as they relate to walking, scooting and bike riding for young children and families. Start consulting with other council departments to determine potential changes and processes to embed creation and promotion of safe walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces for young children and families.

Recommended resources

- ['Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide](#)
- [Principal Pedestrian Networks](#)
- [VicRoads Safe Routes to Schools webpage](#)
- [Victoria Walks Walking Participation Survey](#)
- [Victoria Walks website](#)



Ambitious:

Deliver neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects

This action focuses on delivering infrastructure and programs that will support and enhance walking and bike riding, with a focus on children and young people.

Select infrastructure and programs that suit the needs and goals identified in the local community.

Recommended options include:

- **Provide safe bike riding infrastructure on priority routes** by exploring and prioritising options for protected bike lanes or low traffic volumes and speeds on priority bike routes.
- **Provide traffic calming on local streets by using infrastructure alone, or in combination with lower speed limits** to reduce traffic volume and speed to improve local amenity and protect walkers and bike riders. This option is particularly suitable for streets surrounding schools.
- **Provide infrastructure for safe and accessible walking on key routes** which could include formal and informal crossings, pedestrian refuges, kerb extensions, changes to traffic signals and constructing missing footpath links.
- **Deliver an 'open streets' initiative** by temporarily opening and activating identified streets for walking, riding and other community uses and close these streets to cars.
- **Activate routes** by using activation strategies such as pop-up art initiatives, wayfinding and connecting locations to create interesting and inviting walking and bike riding routes.
- **Use tactical urbanism to trial street design changes** incorporating temporary, low cost or pilot treatments to experiment with and engage the community in potential street design changes. The emphasis is on fast, reversible action and assessing the results rather than detailed planning of changes and conventional construction.
- **Deliver behaviour change programs to increase walking and bike riding** by focusing efforts on a particular group of people that you want to attract to walking and bike riding, such as young adults, or to encourage use of new infrastructure for walking or bike riding.

Hot tip!

Shared versus protected paths

Councils should be wary of constructing shared facilities such as shared walking and bike riding paths. Many walkers, especially older people and people with disability, find sharing paths with bike riders difficult.

For more information on circumstances when shared paths are and are not appropriate, see the Victoria Walks resources on [shared paths](#).



How-to guide to:

Deliver neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this activity include traffic and transport, placemaking, sport and recreation, open space and land use planning, and community planning.

Council leadership, including councillor support, plays a critical role in championing the increased prioritisation of walking and bike riding investment.

Preparing support material, such as business cases or project rationale and summaries, can help bring decision-makers on the journey and advocate investment.



Plan

Develop a project plan which outlines:

- goals and objectives
- priority locations
- available resourcing
- existing policy or strategy objectives that identify a need to improve walking and bike riding infrastructure or that identify a need to improve active options or access to locations, particularly for children and young people
- an assessment of risk and key stakeholders to consult and engage who may be impacted
- a timeline for when and how you will implement the changes.

Refer to the [‘Framing walking and bike riding’ values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare the key messages for the type of community the changes will create by prioritising walking and bike riding, such as:

- ‘streets belong to every person who walks, rides, plays and drives. We’re upgrading streets that currently only really work for one use so that everyone is welcome to enjoy them’
- ‘there’s plenty our organisation can do to create streets that are accessible to all of us, to give people more options to move around safely and enjoyably’
- ‘children, families, carers and teachers can walk, scoot, skate or ride on local streets’
- ‘all kids and families should be able to enjoy getting where they need to go safely – with good footpaths and bike paths, plenty of crossings and calm streets’
- ‘children and young people in <area> need better footpaths, crossings and calmer streets so they can build independence, self-confidence and connection by walking to and from school themselves’
- ‘people want to enjoy walking to their local business and ride their bikes in pleasant neighbourhoods. That’s what becomes possible with calmer car traffic, when we drive at safer speeds’.



The project plan could be standalone or incorporated in existing plans and strategies.

Assess

Review the proposed options in the introduction to this how-to guide, and the associated examples, case studies and resources provided in the [Topic in Focus](#) section.

Investigate council processes that enable the prioritisation of walking and bike riding through these strategies. Identify:

- what resources, such as budget, staff or specific strategies, are dedicated towards the prioritisation of walking and bike riding
- how decisions are made about investment and prioritisation of walking and bike riding.

Design

Select the change initiatives from the options listed. Depending on available council capacity and resources, aim to identify 3 changes per action plan cycle.

Ensure relevant investment decision-making criteria includes strong consideration of access for children and young people. Incorporate public consultation or the voice of young people as required to demonstrate the need for the activities.

Below, further resources and considerations are included to help inform decisions about which projects will suit the needs of the community.

Identify ways to link the infrastructure changes to other programs in the community, such as active festivals and events, focused walking and bike riding months and placemaking projects.

Change initiative options

Considerations

Provide safe bike riding infrastructure on priority routes

Further guidance on implementation is provided by [VicRoads](#) (Department of Transport).

- Infrastructure changes/interventions to allow 'open streets' in key locations around schools, shops, parks etc.
- Temporary or pilot interventions (lower speed, pop-up bike lanes) and tactical urbanism approaches.

Provide traffic calming on local streets

Specific direction on implementation is provided by Austroads in the Guide to [Local Street Management](#).

Evidence in support of lower speed limits and suggested approaches can be found in the Victoria Walks Position Statement [Safer Urban Speed Limits](#).

Provide infrastructure for safe and accessible walking on key routes

More information on treatment options and evidence on safety benefits is available through [Safer Road Design for Older Pedestrians](#). Ideally this option would be based on audits

(see '[Step up: Audit community walking and bike riding priorities](#)').

Deliver an 'open streets' initiative

This option is detailed in '[Ambitious: Deliver neighbourhood walking and bike riding infrastructure projects](#)'.

Under this intervention, open streets projects should:

- apply to at least an entire street block
- open up streets on a regular or continuous basis for an extended period (e.g. 8 week trial).

Activate routes	See more information from Bicycle Network and the City of Vincent's Open Streets Event Kit that enables the community to initiate their own open streets.
Use tactical urbanism to trial street design changes	See information on tactical urbanism approaches and in Tactical Urbanism 4 – Australia and NZ . Project examples can be found on the NZ Transport Agency website .
Deliver behaviour change programs to increase walking and bike riding	These can be used to encourage a cohort of people that you want to attract to walking and bike riding (e.g. young adults). It may be used specifically to encourage use of new infrastructure for walking or bike riding. For further information relating to walking, see Applying Nudge Theory to Walking .

Deliver

Implement the projects

Apply or deliver the changes consistent with the project plan.

Communicate the changes

Create a communication plan that supports the changes you are identifying. Elicit community support by appealing to shared values of fairness and equality by using the '[Framing walking and bike riding](#)' [values-based messaging guide](#) to prepare the key messages, such as:

- 'streets belong to every person who walks, rides, plays and drives. We're upgrading streets that currently only really work for one use so that everyone is welcome to enjoy them'
- 'there's plenty our organisation can do to create streets that are accessible to all of us to give people more options to move around safely and enjoyably'
- 'children, families, carers and teachers can walk, scoot, skate or ride on local streets'
- 'all kids and families should be able to enjoy getting where they need to go safely – with good footpaths and bike paths, plenty of crossings and calm streets'
- 'children and young people in <area> need better footpaths, crossings and calmer streets so they can build independence, self-confidence and connection by walking to and from school themselves'

- 'people want to enjoy walking to their local business and ride their bikes in pleasant neighbourhoods. That's what becomes possible with calmer car traffic, when we drive at safer speeds'.

Promote these changes, particularly to the people who participated in the consultation, local residents and business owners. Acknowledge their role and highlight the action that council is taking to create safer and more accessible routes in the community.

If the interventions result in a changed way of understanding the environment (newly installed shared paths, signage etc.) undertake community education programs and campaigns that highlight these features so people know how to use them safely. Continue to involve local residents in the design and promotion of these communication pieces.



Review and embed

Evaluate, embed and sustain changes

- Measure and evaluate the impact of the walking and bike riding interventions. For further information, refer to [Measuring Walking – A Guide for Councils](#).
- Seek opportunities to embed the work into practice and monitor in line with transport planning and other council plans.
- Commit to a certain level of investment to improve walking and bike riding infrastructure.

Recommended resources

[Framing walking and bike riding message guide](#) – VicHealth has worked with Common Cause Australia to research values-based messaging frames that are most effective in building strong public support for walking and bike riding.

The guide provides tips and example messages to help council staff and health promotion practitioners tell our story – that ‘streets are for everyone’.

Walking

- Austroads guidance on [pedestrian planning and design](#)
- Victoria Walks [A Guide for Councils on Developing a Walking Strategy](#)

Bike riding

- [Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides](#)
- Roads and Maritime Services in NSW provides a comprehensive guide on [How to Prepare a Bike Plan](#)
- The [Cycling Resource Centre](#) provides links to Australian and international information on providing for bike riding
- [Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–28](#)

Council strategy examples

- Banyule City Council [Walking Strategy 2018–2028](#)
- Bayside City Council [Bayside Walking Strategy](#) June 2015
- City of Darebin [Walking Strategy 2018–2028](#)
- City of Melbourne [transport strategies](#)
- City of Port Phillip [Move, Connect, Live](#) Integrated Transport Strategy 2018–2028
- Colac Otway Shire Active Transport Strategy 2013–2023 [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)
- Glen Eira City Council [Integrated Transport Strategy 2018–2031](#)
- [Maribyrnong City Council Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030](#)
- Warrnambool City Council [Active Warrnambool Strategy](#)

General resources

- Heart Foundation [Healthy Active by Design](#)
- Municipal Association of Victoria's [Walking and Bike Riding Resource Hub](#)
- [TAC Local Government Grant program](#)
- United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Active Communities Tool](#)
- [Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030](#)



Ambitious:

Create early childhood-friendly active travel infrastructure

This 'ambitious' action requires working within council to secure investment in and deliver infrastructure projects to create safer and more accessible walking routes for young children and families, end-of-trip facilities at early childhood services and safe spaces for children to learn to ride scooters and bikes in the local area.

The action requires identifying and scoping initial priority infrastructure projects, working within council to seek investment, or applying for external funding for the projects or both, and working to ensure delivery of the projects.

Council will also work internally to ensure prioritisation of walking and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families in future investment, through a combination of these two approaches:

- **Embed in council strategies, plans and policies** by identifying opportunities for investment in infrastructure projects to support walking and bike riding for young children and families.

- **Create a council walking and bike riding priority investment plan** which provides a clear case for change and investment in improving walking routes and bike spaces for young children and families, or end-of-trip facilities at early childhood services, or both. This could be a standalone plan, or a component of a broader walking and bike riding investment plan developed under the 'Including walking and bike riding in council strategies' impact stream of the Building Active Communities core module.

Crossover opportunity

If council is working on or has undertaken the ['Step up: Audit and promote local walking, scooting and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families'](#), they can review the results of the audit of walking routes and learning-to-ride spaces for bikes and scooters and work to address any identified gaps in meeting community needs.



How-to guide to:

Improve local walking and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families

Involving young children and families

This implementation action responds to the needs of young children and families by aiming to improve local walking routes, bike riding spaces and facilities, in order to support them to walk to destinations in their local communities and to learn and practise bike riding.

Council should focus on improving safe walking routes linked to key local destinations, based on their assessment of the needs of young children and families, as well as improving safe active travel routes to end-of-trip facilities at early childhood services, and adequate learning-to-ride spaces for bikes and scooters.

Involving council

Council teams to involve in this activity include traffic and transport, placemaking, sport and recreation, open space and land use planning, community planning, family and youth services, and maternal and child health services.

Engaging the support of council leadership, including councillors, is vital to seeking commitment and funding for initial projects to support walking and bike riding by young children and families, and to ensure future projects are embedded in council strategies, and prioritised in future investment.



Plan

Consider existing walking and bike riding infrastructure in the local area, alignment with the needs of families and young children in the community, and key walking and riding routes or locations that should be prioritised in seeking funding and investment.

Consider establishing a working group or committee that involves stakeholders from across council, as well as relevant non-council stakeholders, who will need to be engaged in the project.

Develop a project plan outlining:

- goals and objectives
- key groups and council leaders that need to be engaged
- initial priority locations and projects for investment
- existing policy or strategy objectives that identify a need to improve walking and bike riding infrastructure, particularly for young children and families
- an assessment of risk and key stakeholders to consult and engage who may be impacted
- resource and budget requirements for the projects
- a timeline that outlines when and how projects will be delivered.



Assess

Assess survey data

Assess survey data to identify key walking and riding routes or locations to prioritise in initial and future infrastructure investment.

Assess council strategies and policies

Identify and review council's relevant plans strategies and policies. Council may have already adopted a strategy that identifies walking, scooting and bike riding as a priority, such as in a transport or walking and bike riding strategy, or in their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Other relevant documents may include sustainability, children and families, physical activity, recreation and pedestrian strategies. When reviewing these documents, consider the extent to which they currently prioritise walking, scooting and bike riding objectives, and whether adequate attention has been paid to the needs of young children and parents. If required, build the case to amend existing or develop new strategies or policies.

Assess council funding and investment processes

Investigate council processes to seek funding and investment opportunities in walking and riding projects for young children and families. Use the following questions as guides for this investigation:

- Which resources, such as budget and staff, are currently dedicated towards walking and riding strategies and programs?
- How are decisions made about investing in and prioritising walking and riding?
- What resources and funding are currently available?
- What are the opportunities in council's budget process or grants programs to seek investment?

Start engaging with other council departments to identify existing investment in walking, scooting and bike riding, and to determine potential changes and processes, as required.

Assess cont.

Identify and deliver initial priority infrastructure projects

Identify and prioritise initial infrastructure projects. Seek commitment and funding and consider alignment to existing council plans and strategies. Recommended project options include:

- Deliver or improve infrastructure for safe and accessible walking routes: Infrastructure developed or improved under this option could include wide and smooth paths, safe crossings, pedestrian refuges, kerb extensions, changes to traffic signals and missing footpath links. Information on applicable and adaptable treatment options and evidence on safety benefits is available through [Safer Road Design for Older Pedestrians](#).
- Provide local area traffic calming and management: Deliver traffic management and engineering responses to provide traffic calming on local streets, improve road safety, and encourage active travel to key destinations, including early childhood services. This includes responses to:
 - reduce vehicle speeds (such as lowering speed limits and installing speed bumps)
 - reduce road crossing distance and improve sight lines
 - reduce traffic volume and discourage through traffic
 - install signage and decals along routes to encourage active travel
 - Specific direction on implementation is provided by Austroads in the [Guide to Local Street Management](#)
 - Evidence in support of lower speed limits and suggested approaches can be found in the Victoria Walks Position Statement [Safer Urban Speed Limits](#)

- Provide end-of-trip facilities at council-owned early childhood services, including pram storage and bike and scooter racks.

Work with the working group or relevant council teams to scope the budget and resources required for initial priority projects.

Consider funding opportunities that will help council deliver these projects. The Municipal Association of Victoria's [walking and bike riding resource hub](#) lists relevant grant opportunities.

Identify priority infrastructure projects for future investment

Identify priority locations and projects to direct future investment. Consider locations which currently lack safe and accessible infrastructure, or communities that experience higher levels of disadvantage. Work with relevant council departments to identify existing investment in walking and riding, and investment required over several years.



Deliver

Work through council's processes to have objectives and priority projects to improve walking and riding opportunities for young children and families adopted within relevant strategies, policies or action plans. Prepare material, such as business cases and project rationales, to convince decision-makers of the need to prioritise creating better walking and riding opportunities for young children and families.

Refer to the 'Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide to prepare key messages for the type of community the changes will create by prioritising walking and riding for young children and families, such as:

- 'there's plenty our organisation can do to create streets that are accessible to all of us, to give 'children, families, carers and teachers can walk, scoot or ride on local streets'
- 'all kids and families should be able to enjoy getting where they need to go safely – with good footpaths and bike paths, plenty of crossings and calm streets'.

Develop initial priority project plans and seek funding commitments and support of council to deliver the projects.

Develop a walking and riding priority investment plan (a standalone plan for young children and families, or part of a broader walking and riding priority investment plan). This should include a pipeline of future infrastructure projects to improve walking, scooting and bike riding opportunities for young children and families.

Secure commitment from council leadership to future investment and endorsement of strategies or policies with objectives of improving walking and riding opportunities and infrastructure for young children and families.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the project

Track council investment in and delivery of walking, scooting and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families.

Monitor and evaluate the impact of initial infrastructure projects delivered and longer-term infrastructure investment, including by evaluating any behaviour change that occurs. Survey local families with young children on indicators such as:

- use of walking routes by young children and families
- participation in active travel to early childhood services by young children and families
- perceptions of accessibility and safety for pram walking and walking, scooting or bike riding with young children on available routes to key locations
- confidence to walk and ride safely with young children to key locations
- perceptions of the availability of safe paths and spaces for young children to learn and practise scooter and bike riding.

Continue to regularly survey and track the impacts of infrastructure investment.

Consider how to use the evaluation findings to promote the positive impacts of initial infrastructure projects delivered to council leaders and use this as a rationale to expand investment to other key walking and riding infrastructure projects. This could include developing case studies or other materials that promote the benefits of the projects, using key messages developed with reference to the 'Framing walking and bike riding' values-based messaging guide.

Identify opportunities in council's budget process or grants programs that would be required to expand or seek ongoing investment. Seek ongoing commitment from council to a certain level of investment to improve walking, scooting and bike riding infrastructure for young children and families.

Recommended resources

- [Austroads Guide to Local Street Management](#)
- [‘Framing walking and bike riding’ values-based messaging guide](#)
- [Safer Road Design for Older Pedestrians](#)
- [The Municipal Association of Victoria’s walking and bike riding resource hub](#)
- [VicRoads Safe Routes to Schools webpage](#)
- [Victoria Walks Position Statement Safer Urban Speed Limits](#)
- [Victoria Walks website](#)



Impact stream:

Creating opportunities for all Victorians to be active

Implementation actions

To complete this impact stream, councils will select from:

- Quick win: Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities
 - Option A: Create a campaign to showcase local active options to young people
 - Option B: Create new informal and social sport opportunities for young people
 - Option C: Activate underused local spaces to create new community activity spaces
 - Option D: Include active options at council festivals and events
- Quick win: Develop a 'Things to Do Before You're 5' campaign
- Step up: Apply an equity approach to reduce barriers for young people's activity
- Step up: Increase local social sport options
- Step up: Promote the Play Today campaign
- Ambitious: Promote mental health and wellbeing in sport
- Ambitious: Create a nature play program

Physical activity helps children and young people to develop essential physical skills, social connection and mental wellbeing foundations for life.

Not only does physical activity and nature play help young children to develop essential physical skills, it is also instrumental in solidifying social connections and embedding a foundation of health and wellbeing for life. Children who are active in the first 2,000 days of life are more likely to stay active throughout their entire childhood and develop good habits to become healthier adolescents and adults.

Physically active children and young people are more socially active, have reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety, and have better academic performance. Despite these benefits, 4 in 5 Australian children don't get enough of physical activity in their daily lives.

Sport and active recreation are popular ways for children and young people to get the [recommended](#) daily activity: however, sport participation drops significantly around the age of 15 and women and girls participate in sport at half the rates of men and boys. Research also shows that certain population groups have lower rates of sport participation. Creating opportunities for all Victorians to be

active requires councils to rethink traditional sports structures. This involves retaining the benefits that exist within these structures while making adaptations that suit a wider range of interests, goals and trends to provide options to get everyone moving.

This impact stream focuses on providing and tailoring sport and active recreation options to suit the needs and interests of children and young people who have lower participation in existing sport opportunities. Additionally, the impact stream promotes active play programs and campaigns to suit the needs and interests of young children and their families.

With many opportunities for active play being increasingly diminished by our environments and lifestyles, it is vital for councils to promote active play and create programs that will allow young children to develop fundamental movement skills and have fun.

Intended outcomes

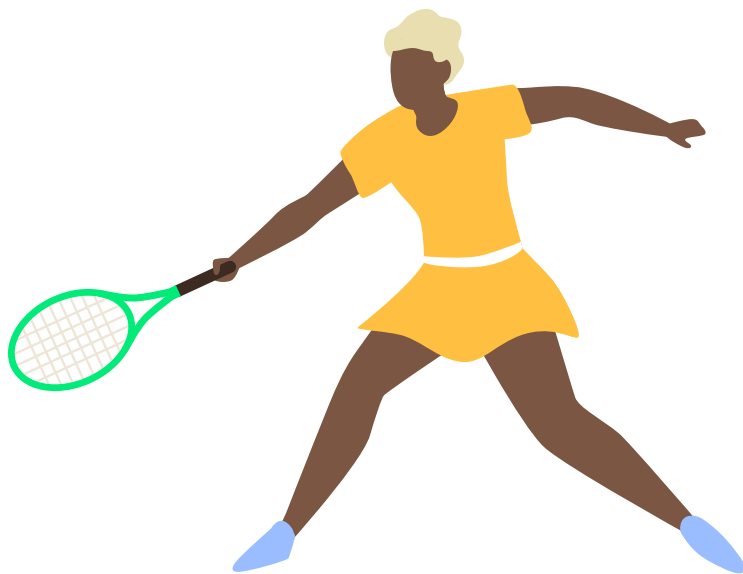
Councils undertaking this impact stream can expect to:

- contribute to the goals of their Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans including increasing active living and promoting mental wellbeing priorities
- increase physical activity rates of children and young people who face greater barriers to being active
- increase social connection of children and young people who face greater barriers to being active
- increase knowledge, capacity and capability of sport and physical activity providers to provide appropriate physical activity opportunities for children and young people.

Minimum deliverables

To complete the impact stream 'Creating opportunities for all Victorians to be active', councils will have:

- identified priority cohorts of children and young people who face barriers to being active
- demonstrated an increase in physical activity opportunities for identified priority cohorts of children and young people
- demonstrated activities which involve children and young people in working towards the goal of increasing active opportunities
- demonstrated succession planning which outlines how the activity will contribute to the outcomes of their current and future Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.





Quick win:

Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities

This action focuses on creating more opportunities and more effective promotion of existing sport and recreation opportunities.

Councils will review available activities to identify a range of new and innovative initiatives that inspire children and young people, especially those who face greater barriers to being active, may be new to sport or physical activity or who are returning from a break.

Councils undertaking this activity will select and deliver any of the following options:

Option A: Create a campaign to showcase local active options to young people

Option B: Create new informal and social sport opportunities for young people

Option C: Activate underused local spaces to create new community activity spaces

Option D: Include active options at council festivals and events.

Doing Sport Differently

VicHealth's [Doing Sport Differently](#) resource outlines guiding principles for designing and delivering sport-based activities for people who are less active. The principles are:

Principle 1

Engage young people in the design.

Principle 3

Cater for all levels of skill, ability and fitness.

Principle 2

Use a customer-focused approach and look at the whole customer experience including:

- developing the right marketing approach for the audience
- ensuring simple and easy registration processes
- welcoming new participants
- supporting people throughout the activity
- inviting people to come back.

Principle 4

Have the right person to deliver the activity.

Principle 5

Ensure you have considered pathways for progression.

Principle 6

Best-practice project management and delivery to enable scale and sustainability

Resources for active young people

For young people, life can be busy and filled with competing demands such as study, part-time work and spending time with friends and family.

Beyond that, there are many other barriers that prevent young people from participating in competitive or highly structured sport (even if they want to). These include:

- resource barriers such as transport, cost, lack of family support
- structural barriers such as their sport becoming too competitive,
- disinterest in sport which reflects changing priorities due to work, social life and study commitments or not feeling skilled or confident to continue through the pathway.

For young people aged 12–17 there are some great resources available to support councils working with clubs and providers:

- Sport Australia [Youth participation](#) resources
- VicHealth's [Teens and sport](#) research summary.

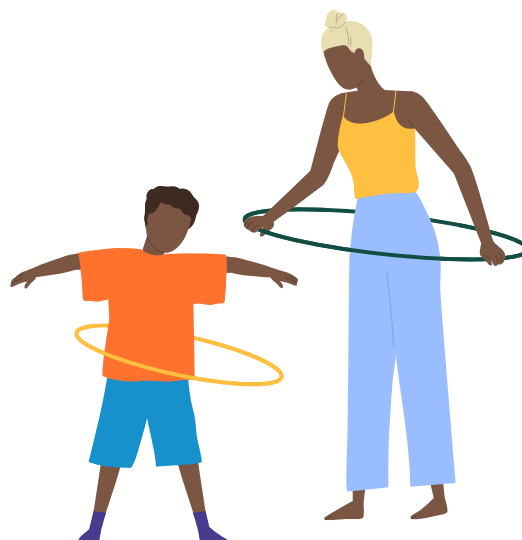
Hot tip!

Active family fun

Councils, clubs and providers have a great opportunity to offer a whole-of-family approach where everyone feels included and can get active.

Through Options A and B, sports clubs and providers could provide adapted activities that are geared towards:

- getting family members active while providing safe supervision or finding participation options for their infants or young children
- encouraging families learning skills and playing or participating together
- helping parents and carers learn to support children's skill development outside the facilitated session
- providing active options for family members alongside regular training time (e.g. walking group around the facility, making some fitness or play equipment available for use in a dedicated space).





How-to guide to:

Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities – Option A: Create a campaign to showcase local active options to young people

This activity requires councils to identify and strategically promote sport and active recreation activities. Council should work collaboratively with sport and recreation providers and young people to support, guide and co-design promotional strategies with support from council's communication team. Showcasing existing activities can take the pressure off time-poor or volunteer-run clubs, while amplifying young voices through the campaign design provides a fresh and contemporary approach.

Involving people

Council teams that could contribute to this action include sport and recreation, parks, youth services and communications. The activity also requires working with local sport and active recreation providers or Regional Sports Assemblies where relevant.

This activity requires the advice and guidance of young people – particularly the views of young people less likely to be involved in traditional or competitive sport or young people currently involved in the options you are trying to promote who could speak to their experiences.



Plan

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the activity. Include a basic communication plan that you will progress together with young people.



Assess

Work with the people and groups council has identified to review what types of suitable activities may be locally available and would benefit from more enhanced promotion. Look for either formal or informal options that would suit young people not interested in formal, competitive sport.

Consider:

- club training nights or come-and-try days
- leisure centre classes or sports-based fitness
- providers attending schools, universities or community venues
- informal meet-ups to play social sports, such as basketball, soccer or ultimate frisbee in local spaces.



Design

Co-design a promotional campaign with young people

Where possible, work with young people to think through and design promotions that suit the target audience, utilising channels and messages that meet the needs and interests of young people in the local community.

Ensure promotion is designed to make newcomers feel welcome. Consider including: who the activity is for, cost, time and place, what to wear or bring, online registration options, welcoming images, and statements like: 'no experience required' or 'social and friendly'.

Maintain a basic campaign webpage and activity list through council channels so there is a central location to drive digital traffic. Promote the campaign through council and community channels that the young people have identified. Consider filming some short video testimonials from current participants that will resonate with the young people in the target audience.

Ensure council staff are well-informed about the campaign so they can appropriately direct enquiries.

Design cont.

Work with providers to prepare

Ensure any providers of the activities being promoted have thought through and planned how they will welcome new participants. Encourage them to review the [Doing Sport Differently](#) resources.

Deliver

Seek support from a wide range of youth-friendly facilities to promote the campaign and activities. Through the promotional period, ensure enquiries or feedback are promptly responded to. Check in regularly with providers, young people and the communication plan to see if adjustments need to be made along the way.

Review and embed

Where possible, support providers to deliver feedback surveys or promote options to provide feedback at key locations, including feedback on the campaign to determine which channels were most effective and indicators to determine if young people have increased their levels of physical activity. Work with the young people and recreation providers to review survey results and determine if the project has contributed towards the goals set out in the project plan.

Consider strategies to refresh and repeat the showcase on an annual or biannual basis, such as writing it into council strategies.



How-to guide to:

Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities – Option B: Create new informal and social sport opportunities for young people

This option focuses on providing young people with alternatives to competitive and structured sport that can be tailored to fit into young people's busy lives and are more in line with what young people may want and need at this point in their lives. Many people choose activities that are less formal, less structured and more flexible. These types of activity can be characterised as social or informal sport.

Providing more informal or social sport options is a great way to provide alternate sporting options in a way that addresses barriers to participation, and has been successful in getting young people participating in sport.

Crossover opportunity

This option is focused on lower investment social sport activities, for example, those that utilise existing public and council infrastructure, or require minimal adaptations. A process to work with sport organisations to develop or bring more significant social sport programs to the community is described in '[Step up: Increase local social sport options](#)'.

Involving people

Council teams that could contribute to this activity include sport and recreation and youth services.

The activity also requires working with State Sporting Associations and local sport and active recreation providers or Regional Sports Assemblies where relevant.

Seek the advice and guidance of young people – particularly the views of young people less likely to be involved in traditional or competitive sport.

Engaging young people from a broad range of backgrounds, representative of the demographics of the local community, can help to identify some of the barriers that prevent participation in traditional sports. Consider seeking advice from young people through established mechanisms, such as youth advisory panels. Councils in regional Victoria may be able to tap into Regional Sport Victoria's Youth Advisory Committee.

Quick Note

What is social and informal sport?

Social sport is less structured than traditional sport. It has fewer rules and more flexibility but is more structured than active recreation activities. Social sport places a greater emphasis on fun, social interaction and enjoyment than on performance, results and competition. Social sport may be designed and delivered by an organisation, such as a State Sporting Association, sport club, council or other groups.

VicHealth's [Growing Participation in Sport Program](#) included examples of 17 social sport programs run by State Sporting Associations. Other programs include:

- Touch Football [Switch](#) program
- [Tennis for Teens](#)
- [Parkrun](#)

[Informal sport](#) refers to groups and/or individuals who organise their own participation in sport, outside of traditional structures (e.g. a group of young people going to a local park to play basketball).



Plan

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the activity. Include a basic communication plan that you will progress together with young people.



Assess

Listen to the range of ideas that young people have to identify the ways they might want to get active and how council can support more unstructured or informal activities.

Review examples of social and informal sport and look for any existing adapted programs that target young people who face greater barriers to sport and active recreation and would suit the needs identified by children and young people in your local community. Identify if any local sport and recreation providers are prepared to support the activities, such as adapting their own programs or offering facilities, equipment or resources when not using them.

In this action, focus on the opportunities available in the community that can be rapidly set up or delivered without significant investment or infrastructure. Use existing council-owned public facilities where possible and reiterate that the activities can be undertaken by young people in a schedule that suits them.

Design

Identify activities that suit the goals of the project plan and the supports required from council to deliver the activities.

Establish appropriate agreements or support mechanisms to bring together the State Sporting Associations, club managers and council teams.

Support local providers to ensure their existing social sport programs are designed to appeal to young people.

- Choose the right person to run the activity that will engage young people.
- Tailor the program in terms of the right length and timing, and include modified games.
- Limit the risk of failure or humiliation for young people who are new to the activity or have less skills or confidence.
- Where competition is involved, ensure it is inclusive and focused on personal achievements.

- Involve young people in the design where possible.
- Allow young people to have a role in the delivery of a program.
- Ensure activities are social and inclusive.
- Include lots of positive engagement and social interaction.
- Work with providers to provide 'tasters' and come-and-try events without the need to commit or join up as a member.
- Encourage bring-a-friend or come with your peer group – participating with friends is really important to young people.
- Promote grants for community organisations to run programs or initiatives with innovative ideas that engage young people in sport and physical activity.

Deliver

Encourage delivery of the social sport options in a way that is consistent with the principles and customer experience touchpoints outlined in the [Doing Sport Differently club guide](#).

Review and embed

Work with providers to evaluate the success of the new social sports programs. Ensure young people are included in this process through focus groups, surveys or conversations.

Success could be measured against the following indicators:

- more informal use of public sport and park spaces by young people for sporting and recreational activity

- number of clubs or providers running social sport programs
- number of new participants in sports programs
- good experience by participants.

Recommended resources

- Australian Sports Commission – [Strategies to engage youth in sport](#)
- VicHealth – [Growing participation in sport](#)



How-to guide to:

Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities – Option C: Activate underused local spaces to create new community activity spaces

This option requires councils to transform disused or underused spaces into vibrant, safe and accessible places that inspire people to meet up, get active and have fun. There is a great opportunity to bring young people together and offer a diverse range of sport and active recreation options such as dance, circus, fitness or walking.

Councils should look for spaces that can be transformed rapidly and at low cost and deliver these initiatives as temporary trials to determine if demand exists for permanent resourcing of the activity.

Involving people

Council teams to include in this activity include youth services, community planning and development, health promotion, facility management, open space planning and asset management. Depending on the spaces identified, staff representing teams that oversee those sites should be included. Communications teams can help with promotion strategies.

Hot tip!

Implement a local version of the VicHealth [community activation program](#) – physically and visually transform a public space or place within your community, then ‘activate’ it in a variety of ways that inspires and involves local people to get more physically active.



Plan

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the activity. The project plan should include:

- details about how to engage and seek leadership endorsement to trial, manage, review and resource the activities, with a view to embedding successful activities in longer-term council planning, such as the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- a risk management plan that refers to relevant council policies.

Assess

Work with council teams to identify the availability and suitability of indoor or outdoor spaces for the project, considering:

- disused or under-utilised park space, sport facilities, streets, buildings, community halls or vacant lots that could be temporarily and safely converted
- existing community spaces that are well-utilised predominantly for other purposes but could suit the purposes of the trials, such as libraries, council-owned car parks, public squares, streetscapes or shopping precincts
- community halls and other spaces during times and days they are vacant.

Consider what type of physical activity gaps the project could address:

- providing new spaces where there are too few active options or reducing pressure on spaces where there are competing priorities or over-use
- providing new spaces for families to be active together
- providing new spaces for activities that have high demand
- providing more spaces for popular sports or activities
- activating or creating greater social use in places you want to attract people to.

Design

Engage young people in space design

Involve children or young people in designing the activities and the look and feel of the new space so it is appealing and attractive for them to visit. Brief them on the goals of the project, introduce background resources that could guide their thinking, and encourage them to focus on simple, temporary, adaptable ideas.

Recommended resources

- Co Design Studio's [Placemaking guides](#)
- VicHealth's [Community Activation Program: Evaluation summary](#)
- VicHealth's [Community Activation Program](#) for examples of what councils could do

Options for space design:

- mark out play areas with paint or objects
- provide speakers for playing music
- use bunting, painted pallets, artificial/natural grass, tyres, plants in pots
- include moveable play equipment and yard games (e.g. giant Connect 4, bocce)
- create pop-up playgrounds and parklets.

Source items that can be upcycled from a council works department and engage local community groups who can contribute resources or skills to building the space.

Options for activations:

- create space for theme-based play and dance for young children; refer to VicHealth's MOTION program [The Alice Project](#)
- partner with arts-based movement providers such as circus, music or dance organisations; VicHealth's [MOTION program](#) has some great examples
- 'open streets' initiatives for safe street play and community connection at agreed times each week/month, and have mobile play kits available
- upgrade play spaces with features that stimulate children's interest and encourage play (e.g. artwork or cultural displays along access routes to parks; letter and picture stencils on pathways; natural treasure hunts, including signage highlighting local flora, fauna and landmarks of interest to children)
- have local clubs and providers run their activity in the space, such as Pilates, Zumba, outdoor carpet bowls or yoga
- offer programs such as [Reclink Australia's 'Streetgames'](#)
- create a mobile equipment library filled with sports and physical activity equipment that can be used at any location. The Create Crate at Golden Plains Shire Council is a great example of a mobile equipment and placemaking van that can be hired by community groups.

Deliver

The delivery processes will vary depending on the type of location and activities. Work with council departments and community partners to promote the space and link it to relevant council events and projects.

Review and embed

Monitor or provide ways to collect feedback at the space and from the people who are part of the target user groups. Include questions and indicators to determine if the project has contributed towards the goals set out in the project plan.

Use the successful elements of the project to highlight the demand and basis for resourcing options to sustain the increased physical activity achieved. Seek a long-term solution from council leaders through council strategic plans and budgeting.





How-to guide to:

Increase and promote local sport and recreation opportunities – Option D: Include active options at council festivals and events

This option outlines a process to ensure that council festivals and events can help meet the goals of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan by providing fun physical activity components.

This option can contribute to normalising active living by including travel to or around the event, showcasing local sport and active recreation providers within these events, and even adding physical activity and movement elements into any festival that council delivers.

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this activity include festivals and events, arts, culture, sport and recreation, and family and youth services.



Plan

Seek a commitment from the coordinators of council's festivals and events to support the physical activity goals outlined in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.



Assess

Prepare a list of local providers and suppliers who support physical activity.



Design

Work with the festival and events planning teams to identify options to increase active options, either through including active components in broad events or by providing sport and activity themed events. Some examples:

- progressive dining events to encourage walking between local venues
- treasure hunts or arts trail activities in annual trader precinct festivals
- active 'rides' such as jumping castles, climbing walls and obstacle courses (in favour of passive rides)
- a range of cultural and other dance activities consistent with the event theme and audience
- sports, games and competitions
- a kit of physical activity and sport items including frisbees, balls and outdoor games that can be taken to community events
- bike and pram parking or valets
- promotion of active routes to the event.

Here are some more great ideas:

- liaise with disability providers to identify accessible physical activity options that can be included to ensure that people of all abilities can participate
- highlight your local outdoor arts projects/ sculpture/silo trails and street art, rail trails and history walks, for example, Kaniva Sheep Art – ponder the past while admiring the sculptures designed by residents
- engage with local sport and physical activity partners to deliver 'taster' activities
- offer events that promote and maximise engagement in the range of physical activities your council already provides, for example:
 - family friendly group rides or walks to promote local trails
 - launching local play space upgrades and inviting neighbouring early childhood services, kindergartens and schools
- hold tree planting and litter clean-up days to get active for a cause, particularly appealing for young people who have an interest in climate and environment issues.

Hot tip!

Leveraging campaigns

Leverage statewide or national physical activity initiatives to amplify the impact of these messages and provide ready-made resources and materials.

Consider localised versions of the following campaigns to drive participation and promotion:

- [This Girl Can – Victoria](#); This Girl Can Week
- [Move It AUS](#)
- [Get Active Victoria](#)
- [Active Schools](#)

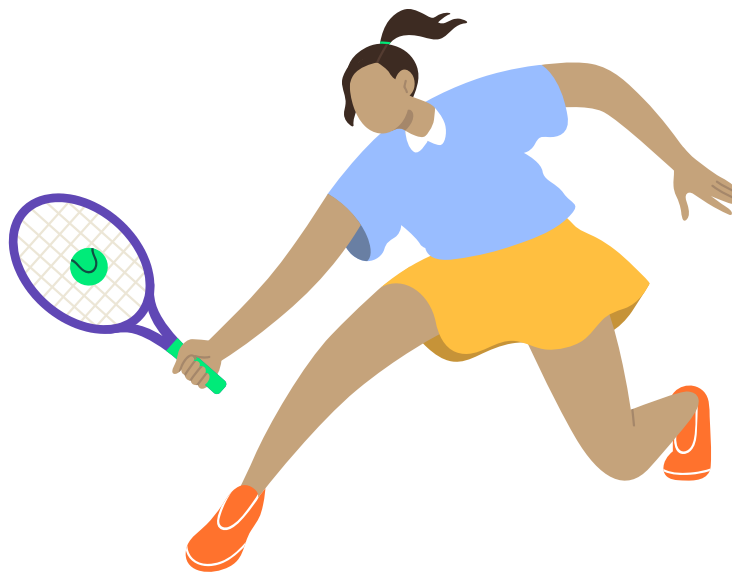
Promote the [Get Active Victoria – Kids Voucher Program](#) at the event to support local children and families to get active by reducing costs.

Deliver

Ensure providers are informed of the council's physical activity goals. Encourage them to bring any materials that would entice prospective members or participants to join their group.

Review and embed

Ensure physical activity activities are included in your council's event planning documents and checklists so that activities that promote physical activity are embedded every time an event is run by council.





Quick win:

Develop a 'Things to Do Before You're 5' campaign

By getting outside more often, young children and their families can experience the benefits of playing, learning and being physically active while building a life-long connection to nature.

Councils are an essential partner to local community in re-establishing playing outdoors as a regular part of childhood.

This quick win requires councils to develop a Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign based on the [51 Things to Do Before You're 12 Nature Play](#) resource. Councils should work collaboratively with relevant teams and experts to modify the list of suggested activities to focus on accomplishments that are achievable for young children, with limited requirements for parents and carers.

The campaign is also an opportunity for councils to weave in physical activity-focused interactions with landmarks in the local community, and leverage existing programs that councils support and facilitate.

By developing and promoting a Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign, councils can motivate young children and families to embark on a series of active outdoor adventures, and help to increase and promote opportunities for active outdoor play.

Example 'Things to do before you are 5!' list

1. Visit your local park
2. Play at your local playground
3. Touch the water at the beach
4. Play with sand in a sandpit or at the beach
5. Build a sandcastle
6. Make the shape of an alphabet letter with shells found on a beach
7. Chase bubbles in the backyard
8. Play the Red Light Green Light game with a parent or carer
9. Play catch with a ball
10. Learn to ride a bike or scooter
11. Visit a botanical or community garden
12. Kick a football or soccer ball
13. Race your friend to the finish line
14. Balance on a log
15. Jump in a puddle
16. Throw your hat in the air and catch it
17. Reapply sunscreen while outdoors
18. Play duck duck goose with some friends
19. Play tag with 5 friends
20. Make a hopscotch using chalk
21. Hold a yoga pose on one foot for 20 seconds



How-to guide to:

Develop and promote a Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign

Involving young children and families

Developing a local Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign is an ideal opportunity for a council to involve young children and families. This will allow council to get a sense of outdoor play activities that are appropriate, accessible and exciting, and help identify the barriers, and potential enabling factors that would translate to campaign engagement and success.

Involving council and community

The primary role of council will be to spread and amplify the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign message. It should work to increase access to play and nature resources, events and programs that will support young children and their families to check activities off the list.

Environmental sustainability, parks, youth and children services, health planning and promotion, recreation, family and communication teams can contribute to the delivery and promotion of the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign.

Councils should also work with maternal and child health services, and early childhood services and specialists to help inform, design and deliver the campaign.

The campaign should aim to reach young children, their families, early childhood services and playgroups in the local area.



Plan

Develop a campaign plan to support local Things to Do Before You're 5 resources, setting out:

- objectives
- audiences
- resources that will be developed
- communication channels that will be used
- timelines for delivery of the campaign.

Consult with parents and carers, maternal and child health nurses, and diversity and inclusion council staff or teams, to ensure all young children and families can access the campaign in a format and language that is appropriate for them.

Hot tip!

Consider planning a campaign launch event for local families in a park or playground and invite councillors to attend.

Invite local media to attend to report on the event and resources. Make sure council spokespeople are available to comment on the campaign and the benefits young children will enjoy when making their way through the list of suggested activities.

Assess

Review available resources on nature play and essential outdoor experiences in early childhood. Identify ways to incorporate suggestions from these resources for use in the local Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign.

Seek, assess and integrate feedback from children, parents and stakeholders on the suggested things to do as they are developed.

Assess any local landmarks for suitability and inclusion in the list, including whether increased visitation due to the campaign could have any unintended environmental impacts.

Design

Design campaign messages and materials aimed at getting young children, families and carers, and educators outside and into nature. Design campaign messages based on what young children say they would like to achieve and experience in the outside world.

Incorporate children's reflections, stories and artwork in campaign materials.

Consider a competition to foster collaboration with young community members to promote the campaign. Design this activity to support the creation of child-friendly campaign assets. For example,

encourage local early childhood services or sports and recreation facilities that young children frequent to run poster competitions to bring to life the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign.

See the [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) web resource for ideas and tools for involving children in co-design, which can be adapted for involving young children in the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign.

Deliver

Deliver communications and campaign activities according to the agreed plan.

Seek support from a wide range of facilities to promote the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign and activities, including early childhood services, maternal and child health services, playgroups, schools, libraries and other community centres and facilities.

Use council's communication channels, including council's website and social media. Maintain a basic campaign webpage and activity list through council channels so there is a central location to drive digital traffic.

Consider filming some short video testimonials about the Things to Do Before You're 5 campaign that will resonate with young children and their families.

Through the campaign period, ensure prompt responses to enquiries or feedback. Check in regularly with stakeholders, including early childhood services and families of young children, to see if the campaign plan needs adjusting to increase its reach and impact.

Ensure council staff are well-informed about the campaign so they can appropriately direct enquiries.

Quick Note

Engage with campaign champions

Local champions can add huge value to the campaign by providing content and lived experience. Identify key staff or volunteers, as well as local parents and carers from a diverse range of backgrounds, who can support the campaign as champions. Parent and carer champions should be available for any campaign promotion, and understand and support the objectives of the action.

Campaign champions may also be well-known local identities or child-friendly characters that can be used to drive excitement about the campaign. These champions may wish to record video content describing the active outdoor adventures they enjoyed as children, encouraging local children and their families to follow their example.



Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the campaign

Seek feedback from local parents, children and early childhood services about the campaign. Review and integrate feedback and update campaign messages and materials if required. Communicate results of the feedback and positive impacts of the campaign to council and the community.

Recommended resources

Nature Play – [51 Things to Do Before You're 12](#)



Step up:

Apply an equity approach to reduce barriers for young people's activity

This activity focuses on promoting equitable access and participation for children and young people in sport and active recreation, to improve their access to the social, physical and mental health benefits that sports participation can provide.

In partnership with children, young people and local sporting providers, councils will identify economic, cultural, structural and social levers that can be adjusted to create inclusive sport and active recreation options.

People with differing abilities or health conditions may experience discrimination and financial difficulties. The intention of this activity is to improve inclusiveness and reduce barriers to participating in sport and active recreation.

Councils undertaking this activity should engage with appropriate equity partners who can share expertise and provide guidance about the types of challenges faced by young people, support co-design processes with young people, and contribute to the development of solutions.

Recommended resources

[VicHealth's Health Equity Summary – Physical Activity](#) outlines data and evidence about inequitable participation and access to physical activity, sport and active recreation.



How-to guide to:

Apply an equity approach to reduce barriers for young people's activity

Involving people

In this activity, it is important to capture and respond to the needs and experiences of children and young people who experience barriers to participating in sport and active recreation.

Council teams to involve in this activity include family and youth services, community development and social planning, access and inclusion or disability services, and sport and recreation.



Involving equity partners

In some instances, working with a partner organisation is essential to ensure that community engagement and co-design is undertaken in a respectful and empowering manner. Partner organisations may already have information, approaches or frameworks that can provide a helpful starting point in unpacking the causes and solutions for barriers to walking and riding uptake.

Some organisations have expertise that is specific to engaging people in sport and active recreation, and others have expertise working with particular groups of young people. Some examples include:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

- Aboriginal co-operatives
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association

Disability organisations

- Disability Sport and Recreation
- Scope
- Blind Sports Australia
- Access for All Abilities (AAA Play)
- Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria

Organisations supporting communities experiencing disadvantage

- Reclink Australia

LGBTIQA+ organisations

- Proud2Play

Organisations supporting culturally and linguistically diverse people

- Centre for Multicultural Youth
-

It may also be valuable to seek support from representatives from existing youth advisory panels to help facilitate engagement with less-active children and young people.



Plan

Prepare a project plan to guide the development and delivery of the activity. Add detail to the project plan through the Assess and Design steps. The project plan should include:

- goals and outcomes of the project
- considerations to ensure collaborative, respectful and meaningful engagement with the target population, such as having the equity partner play a lead role in engagement
- timelines
- expected roles of partner organisations, including duration of work, responsibilities, ways of engagement and school supports required.

Assess

Council may have already identified specific groups that are underrepresented in local sport and active recreation, or that have overall lower rates of physical activity in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, sport and recreation strategies, or other plans and strategies with a specific population group focus.

If this information is not available, gather available data to develop an understanding of core demographics in the community, and identify groups who may be underrepresented in sport and active recreation.

While all communities are different, VicHealth research has shown that, compared to other Victorians, First Nations people, people with disability, people who experience mental health conditions, people from low incomes, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with gender and sexual diversity can experience greater inequities that impact their participation in sport and active recreation.

Review sport and recreation provision to identify the availability of existing options that have a focus on inclusion for underrepresented groups, such as:

- targeted participation programs run by clubs, or other sport and recreation providers, including social sport products, and beginner or entry-level programs

- targeted sport or recreation participation programs run by agencies that support the population groups above
- State Sporting Association activities that are targeted to a specific population group, such as the AFL Unity Cup, Cricket Harmony Cup, Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria.

Consider if the range and number of sport and recreation opportunities is sufficient for the size and diversity of the population groups in the community, to determine possible starting points for this work.

Progress the project plan to articulate the groups of children or young people whose participation will increase. Identify which council teams or equity partners' expertise could support engagement and project design with and for these groups.

Prepare suitable agreements with equity partners to state and agree on the arrangements for working together, opportunities for remuneration or in-kind benefits, and the types of activities the organisation will lead, such as support, advice, links to young people in the community, expertise and inclusion training.

Design

Work with equity partners to develop an engagement plan to capture feedback from children and young people who represent the less-active groups in the community.

The engagement should aim to determine:

- previous sport and active recreation participation
- feedback on sport and active recreation options they would like to have
- their preferred styles of participation (e.g. competitive, informal or social)
- what factors or experiences are a barrier to their own participation in sport and active recreation
- their ideas on how opportunities need to be run to welcome and engage young people.

Work with equity partners, sport and recreation providers and, if appropriate, the children and young people themselves, to design options focusing on removing or reducing the barriers identified.

Consider if the activities will best suit children and young people if they are delivered as a standalone activity separate from existing programs, or if the adaptations should be integrated into existing programs.

Some activities for people with disability may require significant rule or equipment adjustments, and may be best delivered as a standalone activity.

Some activities may be focused on welcoming and integrating underrepresented groups into the mainstream offering by delivering inclusion training, linking to community leaders, modifying messaging and promotional approaches to be welcoming of the target group, and running a welcome event and come-and-try day.

Consider sustainability early

Consider how councils will support the sustainability of the program. Councils that demonstrate a real and meaningful commitment can support the development of authentic partnerships with the community.

Factor in mechanisms that would support long-term sustainability of the program, including:

- identifying the skills and capacity of club coaches to run inclusive programs
- seeking opportunities to engage new participants in other aspects of club life and in leadership roles

- identifying pathways for continued participation through sponsorship of fees, uniforms, travel support or buddy systems
- identifying sources of sustainable funding through council or external sources to reduce financial barriers.



Deliver

Work with equity partners to prepare recreation providers to ensure the sport offering is inclusive and welcoming for children and young people. Share available resources and information, and ensure clubs and partners are aware of the goals of the projects. If available, provide inclusion training for club members and coaches.

Consider whether children and young people can play a key role in setting up and running the program, including organising, promoting or delivering the activity.

Suggested steps for clubs to create a welcoming environment include:

- having a friendly contact from the club contact participants before the first session to provide information and ask if they have any questions or require any extra support or adjustments in the program
- offering bring-a-friend options
- ensuring they are greeted and introduced when they arrive
- thanking them for coming along and giving them opportunities to ask questions or share how they felt it went periodically after the first session.

Recommended resources

- [Doing Sport Differently – Designing and delivering sport to engage people who are less active](#)
- [Tips for clubs and community programs seeking to increase migrant and refugee community participation in sport](#)
- [Welcoming Sport – Everyone Wins](#)

Review and embed

Evaluate the program

Seek feedback from participants throughout the program to understand their experiences and suggestions for modifications. Ensure feedback is sought in ways that make them feel comfortable to give honest views.

Recommended resources

- [Connecting people with disabilities to sport and recreation activities in Victoria](#)
- [Count Me In: Research Summary](#)
- [Indigenous Surfing Program](#)
- [Latrobe Street Games](#)
- [Power 2 Pedal – Geelong](#)
- [Tips for clubs and community programs seeking to increase migrant and refugee community participation in sport](#)





Step up: *Increase local social sport options*

In this action, councils will partner with local sports clubs and providers to provide social sport options that have an increased focus on inclusive, fun and active recreation, with less focus on competition or performance.

The activity seeks to build knowledge and capacity of sports providers to apply the Doing Sport Differently principles.

Social sport provides an opportunity for councils and clubs to capitalise on existing facilities and club social environments, while diversifying the types of activities provided to keep pace with trends, lifestyles and interests of young people in the local community.

Sports clubs will benefit from having additional support and resources from council to improve the likelihood of attracting new members and volunteers, and learn new skills to build a more diverse and welcoming club environment.

Greater provision of social sport options will help to attract, engage and retain young people, especially those who face greater barriers to being active and those who aren't confident they have the skills to participate in sport or don't feel welcome in a traditional sport setting.

For detailed support in applying the Doing Sport Differently principles and customer touchpoint concepts to this implementation action, refer to the Implementation template for [Doing Sport Differently – customer touchpoint considerations](#).

Hot tip!

Doing Sport Differently

VicHealth's [Doing Sport Differently](#) principles and resources are designed to help the sporting sector attract, engage and retain less active young people in sport. The 6 principles are designed to support organisations that are implementing a new social sport participation opportunity or adapting an existing one.

The Doing Sport Differently [Guide for sports clubs](#) will inform the development of the capacity building work to underpin this activity.

Five key customer experience touchpoints





How-to guide to:

Increase local social sport options

Involving people

Council departments that could contribute to this action include sport and recreation, and youth services. The activity also requires working with state sporting associations, local sport and active recreation providers, or Regional Sports Assemblies where relevant.

Council should seek to partner with sports clubs, associations or organisations that can demonstrate a will to adapt their work and commit the requisite time, space in their facilities and genuine interest to welcome new club members. In some instances, the social sport activity will not be part of an established

club. In these cases, seek to identify a leader or provider, and aim to offer additional support either directly through council or by connecting the person to relevant peak bodies.

This action requires consultation and co-design with young people in the community who have lower participation in competitive sport options.



Plan

Convene a working group or committee, including representatives from council teams and external partners required to deliver this project.

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the activity.

The project plan should include:

- an outline of the capacity building goals and processes required to involve local sports clubs and providers
- an engagement plan to seek and capture the views and contributions of young people who may not be interested in traditional or competitive sport options

- details about how to engage and seek leadership endorsement to trial, manage, review and resource the activities, with a view to embedding successful activities in longer-term council planning, such as the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan or sport and recreation strategies.

The project plan should be updated during the Design phase in partnership with sports providers.



Assess

Assess available social sport options

Council may have already identified particular age groups or areas in the community where young people are underrepresented in available sport and active recreation in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, sport and recreation strategies, or other plans and strategies with a specific population group focus.

If this information is not available, gather available data to develop an understanding of core demographics in the community, and identify groups who may be underrepresented in sport and active recreation. While [‘Step up: Apply an equity approach to reduce barriers for young people’s activity’](#) suits

an intensive focus on children and young people who face additional barriers such as cost or differing abilities, this activity is better suited to a broader group who may simply be disinterested in the active options currently available.

Work with the working group/committee to consider options to further incentivise or reward clubs who participate, such as through promotional support, fee subsidies or ground allocation preferences.

Assess cont.

Involving clubs and State Sporting Associations

Collect information from local sporting clubs and providers to understand current opportunities for young people, and to determine which ones are open to trying new social sport ideas. Engage State Sporting Associations to find out what existing proven social sport options are already available – some are listed [here](#).

Design

Use the information gathered to look for opportunities that would suit the groups you've identified, the types of activities they are interested in, and the clubs or providers willing to support the activity.

Plan and facilitate a design workshop with the identified sport providers, involving young people where appropriate to help guide the discussions.

The workshops should include:

- participation by a number of club representatives from each club who will play a role in the development and delivery of the social sport option
- background information about the benefits and appeal of social sport for young people, including local data where possible

Involving young people

Engage with young people to identify what types of social sport activities they might like. Ask them about their interests and priorities for getting active, as well as what they'd look for and what they'd try to avoid when getting started in a new activity. Present examples of alternate options to gain an understanding of their interest to participate. This is further detailed in Principles 1 and 2 of the [Doing Sport Differently club guide](#).

- discussion and activities on each of the 6 Doing Sport Differently principles
- the development of collaborative project plans that outline the roles of council, clubs and other project partners (such as State Sporting Associations if relevant)
- support for clubs to develop a member engagement plan based on the customer touchpoints.

Resources to support the workshops

- Case studies of successful examples of social or informal sport – see the [Sports Community Facebook page](#)
- Sport Australia's [Youth Participation Project](#)
- Support or advice from [Vicsport](#) (to develop the project)
- VicHealth's [Teens talk sport](#) video
- VicHealth's [research summary on teens and sport](#)

Deliver

Use council channels to support and amplify the promotion of the new activities. Consider how council channels could be used to recruit or refer prospective participants.

Support clubs to launch and implement the activities according to the collaborative project plan. Stay connected with informal self-organised groups and, if possible, collect participation rates data. Explain to them why they are providing data and how it will assist.

Review and embed

Use existing council mechanisms with sports clubs to collect data about new social sport programs, for example, as part of your ground allocation process. Monitor sport participation rates and your data over time to see if your activity is leading to an increased level of physical activity, sport offerings and participation for young people in your area.

Create and share local case studies publicly to continue support and promotion of the activity. Identify strategies to sustain the activities by embedding the project in council plans, strategies and budgets where available.





Step up: *Promote the Play Today campaign*

All Victorian children should be able to enjoy and reap the developmental benefits of playing every day.

Parents and carers have an essential role in providing freedom, time and space for children to get outside and engage in their own child-led play, in homes and communities.

For growth, learning, physical literacy, mental wellbeing and so much more, play is essential to drive holistic health development for our children and young people.

Importantly, our children's human right to access play every day is recognised by Article 31 from the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child. This step up requires council to promote Play Australia's national [Play Today campaign](#) to local communities with an emphasis on engaging with parents and carers, to ensure all young children have opportunities to play outside every day for their healthy development.

These promotional activities should focus on reminding parents and carers in the local community that outside play opportunities are everywhere, and can be enjoyed in a range of settings, including footpaths, beaches, waterways (such as lakes and rivers) farms and pocket parks.

Council's promotion of the Play Today campaign should outline that play doesn't need to be formal, structured or cost money, and play activities should get young children to move all of their bodies.

The promotion should reflect the aims of the campaign to connect with parents and carers to grow awareness of the value of child-led outdoor play and build understanding around the important role of adults to encourage child-led outdoor play.

To implement this action, councils should encourage local partners and providers to support a Play Today campaign and philosophy, to create a collective push to prioritise the importance of active play for young children, and to encourage families to get involved.

Quick Note

Outdoor free play

Outdoor free play has many important benefits for young children and is essential for their healthy development. It provides opportunities for them to participate in physical activity in outdoor environments, reducing the likelihood of them becoming overweight or obese. It also supports children's learning, allows them to take risks and build confidence and resilience, and helps connect them with their communities.



How-to guide to:

Promote the Play Today campaign

Involving young children and families

This action provides an opportunity to work closely with parents and carers of young children to inform Play Today promotional materials, ensuring they communicate practical actions that will best support them.

Council staff supporting Play Today promotion should talk with a diverse range of parents and carers in their local community to learn what they know and believe in relation to play and its benefits.

This consultation should also enable councils to discover the enablers and barriers to play, and use them to inform messaging.

Consider testing any promotional messages about Play Today with parents and carers to ensure they support positive changes and are informed about the importance of active play.

Involving council

Councils are well placed to promote the Play Today campaign through family and children's services, as well as linking with broader community partners that connect with parents and carers.

Council teams and staff to involve or consult in promoting Play Today include recreation and culture, health planning and promotion, family and youth services, and communication.

Consider seeking the input of relevant groups or advisory committees, particularly groups that are focused on encouraging active play in our youngest populations.

Hot tip!

Consider implementing the Play Today campaign with a gender equity focus, encouraging all children to play in a way that promotes gender equity and positive gender norms, and is not limited by gender stereotypes.

Council can play an important role in promoting gender equity in play for young children. This should involve promoting play that does not conform to gender stereotypes, such as climbing trees, playing in mud, playing with balls, and imaginary play in different roles irrespective of gender, supporting equal access to play equipment, and encouraging non-sexist behaviour in play.

Councils could consult with young children and families, via online parent surveys and interviews with parents and children. Design surveys and interviews to assess children's current level of participation in play, the types of play they participate in and enjoy, and the extent to which this conforms with gendered norms or stereotypes.

Seek children's and parents' and carers' views and ideas about the types of play the campaign can promote, and how to support and encourage children to be themselves in play and not be constrained by gender roles or stereotypes. Seek, assess and integrate feedback from children, parents and carers, and stakeholders on campaign resources as they are developed.

For more information and resources about gender equity in early childhood, access the [Level Playground website](#).



Plan

It is important the Play Today promotions reach young children and families wherever they are, and through a wide range of materials. To amplify any promotional material, it is vital that target audiences are seeing and hearing the key messages often.

Hot tip!

Consider becoming a Play Australia partner. By partnering with [Play Australia](#), you can access campaign expertise and further resources, all in support of promoting Play Today.

Consultation plan

Identify early childhood services and maternal and child health services to engage with local young children and families, and identify other stakeholders to work with to develop and deliver Play Today promotional materials.

Identify existing parent groups to consult with, such as local [INFANT programs](#) or parent groups connected with maternal and child health services.

Communications plan

Develop a communications plan to support Play Today promotion. This should include:

- goals for the project
- audiences (local young children, their families and early childhood services and playgroups)
- communication channels that will suit the identified audiences, such as:
 - early childhood services, maternal and child health services, playgroups, schools, libraries, and other community centres and facilities
 - social media, including parent and carer Facebook groups
 - council's website
- identified promotional resources that may be used or developed, such as videos, posters, flyers, fact sheets, seminars, communication templates and educational materials for children
- a timeline that aligns to key activation dates and events for promotion.

The plan should also identify opportunities to promote and open a conversation with young children and their families about their needs and priorities for active play.

Assess

Work with council departments to identify appropriate outdoor play experiences that are supported or can be accessed in the municipality. Aim to identify around 5 to 10 options that suit a range of needs or service different locations.

Things to consider include:

- short bushwalks or nature tracks
- using local playgrounds and play spaces as key settings for play experience
- activities supporting interaction with streams, lakes, reservoirs or the coast
- experiences that suit a range of abilities and mobility requirements
- highlighting important and familiar local destinations, including schools and shops.

Review available resources on outdoor free play in early childhood and children's play, and Play Australia's Play Today campaign. Identify ways you can modify these resources for use locally.

Check if there are any upcoming council or community events that could contribute to the promotion of the Play Today campaign.

Seek views and ideas from children, parents and carers about types of play the campaign can promote, and how to support and encourage children to play outside every day.

Seek, assess and integrate feedback from children, parents and stakeholders on campaign resources as they are developed.

Design

Design materials to promote the benefits of Play Today for young children, and inform parents, carers and educators about how they can facilitate and support outdoor free play for children.

Consider working with young children in the co-design of campaign messages, materials and resources.

Some promotional activities children could contribute to include:

- creating active challenges based on play experiences
- using children's artwork and stories about play in promotional materials.

See the [Kids Co-designing Healthy Places](#) web resource for ideas and tools for involving children in co-design, which can be adapted for involving young children in co-designing the Play Today campaign.

Create campaign resources

Play Australia has developed several simple ways to share the Play Today campaign – visit the [Play Professionals section of the Play Today website](#) to download the Play Today supporter kit, filled with marketing assets and ideas to connect with parents and carers in your communities.

Marketing assets and ideas include:

- social media icons with suggested copy for sharing
- newsletter copy with factsheets and video
- posters for printing and display
- web banners and signature blocks for digital communications.

Deliver

Follow the communications plan to deliver the promote Play Today. Ensure Play Today resources are hosted on council's website and promoted through council and community communications and social media.

Share Play Today materials across your council channels and on screens (if video content developed) across facilities that young children and their families visit, including council leisure centres, libraries and community hubs.

Councils can encourage people to download [Playground Finder](#) (a free website and app), to support the discovery of new play spaces for children to explore in your municipality. Council could also encourage community play streets hosted by local families.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the campaign

Council staff spearheading the promotion of Play Today should repeatedly evaluate messages to make sure they're reaching families, improving knowledge, and changing attitudes and actions in relation to active play. Use surveys to ask young children and families about how council can continue to support active play.

Ask local providers to keep track of interest in shared Play Today resources. This will help to gauge the local impact and can be done by investigating digital metrics, such as how many people engaged with or visited online Play Today materials.

Communicate results of the feedback and positive impacts of Play Today to council and the community using photographs, and children's stories and artwork.

Recommended resources

- [1000 Play Streets](#)
- [Play Australia's Play Today campaign website](#)
- [Playground Finder](#)
- [The Nature Bus: Outdoor play and nature inspired learning programs for kids and communities - Nurture in Nature](#)



Ambitious:

Promote mental health and wellbeing in sport

Significant opportunities exist within sport settings, including clubs, leagues and associations, to positively impact the mental health and wellbeing of their members.

This includes strengthening social connections, enhancing resilience, reducing stigma associated with mental illness and building stronger connections to resources. Despite this, research has indicated that sporting organisations could be doing more to promote and resource positive mental health and wellbeing.

This action is focused on supporting community sporting clubs, leagues and associations across your municipality to become health promotion settings that promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

This includes:

- prioritising mental health and wellbeing in sport internally and providing education for relevant staff
- supporting clubs, leagues and associations to engage young people in decision-making processes

- promoting the use of VicHealth and Monash University's resource for clubs, leagues and associations – [How to select mental health program providers for sports clubs](#)
- delivering a series of education sessions to support the use of the resource and assist clubs, leagues and associations to understand their role in promoting mental health and wellbeing in the community
- providing clubs, leagues and associations with additional resources and templates to sustain ongoing action.

Quick Note

In 2020, VicHealth commissioned researchers at Monash University to undertake a review of mental wellbeing provision in Victorian sport. [This research](#) underpins the recommendations in this intervention.



How-to guide to:

Promote mental health and wellbeing in sport

Involving people

Council teams to include in this action include sport and recreation, youth services, health promotion and community development, and access and inclusion.

Consider asking local sports organisations and mental health and wellbeing experts to support delivery and promotion. These could include Regional Sports Assemblies, mental health and wellbeing peak bodies, such as Headspace, Beyond Blue or Orygen, and your local health partners.

These organisations each have different experience, tools and resources to support mental health and wellbeing promotion, depending on topics chosen.

Encourage participating sports clubs to include members and committee members representing a range of ages and backgrounds in the capacity building and action planning sessions.



Plan

Develop a project plan that includes:

- goals of the project
- timelines
- available resources
- communication of key messages to ensure working team members are using appropriate, respectful and accurate language
- policy context, identifying where mental health and wellbeing in sport is included as a priority in relevant council policies and strategies, such as council plans, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, social inclusion, youth and sport, and recreation strategies.

Review the language and messaging that is used around mental health and wellbeing across council. A consistent approach across all areas, including sport, should be adopted.

Review resources about mental health and wellbeing that are available to sports clubs to understand how they could be used.

Recommended resources

- [Mental Wellbeing Provision in Victorian Sport Report](#) from Monash University commissioned by VicHealth
- Monash Health's [Healthy Sports Clubs](#)
- Orygen's [supporting mental wellbeing in community sport](#)
- VicHealth's [How to select mental health program providers for sports clubs](#)



Assess

Assess the current level of understanding about mental health and wellbeing in sport by relevant council teams.

If required, organise an education session for staff that covers the potential of community sporting clubs to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, understand the mental health and wellbeing and sport landscape, what work is currently taking place, and any potential issues.

Obtain feedback on the effectiveness of the training so you can refine and improve future sessions.

Design

Support clubs, leagues and associations to engage young people

Young people participate in organised sport in high numbers, meaning that clubs can provide an important context outside of schools, where positive messages, mental health and wellbeing education and guidance about support services can be provided.

Help clubs, leagues and associations to work with young people and engage youth voices. Young people should be involved in any decision-making or design process at the club.

Promote the use of the provider selection guide

Encourage clubs and leagues to use the [How to select mental health program providers for sports clubs](#) resource. Consider adding it to council websites, including in newsletters, promoting on social media or highlighting in club education sessions.

Deliver

Deliver education sessions for sports clubs, leagues and associations

Develop a series of mental health and wellbeing in sport education sessions for clubs, leagues and associations. These could be done as a standalone series of workshops or integrated into other education provided to clubs and leagues and associations. They may be face to face or online.

It may also be worth inviting locally based health or community organisations to attend, so they are aware of issues and can support initiatives that are aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing.

Topics to consider for the education sessions include:

- raising awareness about mental health and wellbeing and the importance of prevention
- the difference between prevention and early intervention
- gaining buy-in from senior leadership at the club or league
- why community sport offers an ideal space to support mental health and wellbeing
- the benefits to clubs, leagues and associations of providing mental health and wellbeing programs to members
- the importance of selecting a quality mental health and wellbeing provider when running programs, and using the VicHealth resource to help make an informed decision
- sharing case studies of clubs, leagues and associations that have successfully implemented mental health and wellbeing programs in sport and inviting a guest speaker from one of these organisations.

Review and embed

Seek feedback on the effectiveness of the training so you can refine and improve future sessions. It's worthwhile running these regularly as employees and volunteers at these organisations change often.

Provide additional resources and templates to support sustained action

Provide ongoing support to clubs, leagues and associations following the education series.

For example:

- encourage clubs, leagues and associations to communicate their commitment, plans and actions to all members, participants and stakeholders
- explain where to find more information, for example, Orygen's [supporting mental wellbeing in community sport](#) or Monash's [Healthy Sports Clubs](#)
- provide a template for a mental health and wellbeing policy and action plan – make it clear that progress takes time and needs a long-term commitment
- provide tips on how clubs, leagues and associations can work closely and [co-design solutions](#) with their members and participants, ensuring ideas remain supported by evidence

- ensure posters and social media messaging are focused on creating a supportive environment
- promote grant opportunities that are available to clubs and leagues to support the implementation of quality mental health and wellbeing programs
- develop a list of local mental health and wellbeing support services for clubs and leagues to promote to their members and participations. Here is an [example](#) from the AFL.

Ensure mental health and wellbeing in sport is included as a priority in relevant council policies and strategies, such as council plans, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans, and sports development or physical activity strategies.





Ambitious:

Create a nature play program

The emerging interest in and popularity of nature play and bush kinder programs in Australia reflects growing evidence that outdoor activity and time spent in nature is vital to the health and wellbeing of young children.

Many young children are losing contact with outdoor environments, despite the huge benefits associated with nature play. Spending time being active outdoors and exploring the natural environment supports better brain development, better bone and muscular development, better social and cognitive development, emotional wellbeing and less illness.

In this ambitious implementation action, councils will foster the important role of nature in young children's development by creating a nature play program for local young children and their families.

This program will build on already successful nature play programs, including bush kinder, and explore options for nature-based playgroups, holiday programs and the extensions of bush kinder programs that are currently delivered in council-managed early childhood services.

Quick Note

The importance of learning outdoors in the Early Years Framework

(from Park Victoria's [Bush Kinder Handbook](#))

Identity: Children develop a sense of security with familiarity. Regular sessions learning outdoors help children build and explore their identity.

Community: Through first-hand experience, children develop an awareness of their impact on the local environment and can get involved in caring for nature.

Wellbeing: Regular contact with nature relieves children's minds and ignites curiosity. Outdoor environments help children to develop and expand their physical and cognitive abilities.

Learning: Ever-changing outdoor environments invite hypothesising, imagination, interaction, problem solving and experimenting.

Communication: Children can share stories and use natural materials to create art, and interact with each other and their surroundings to create drama and music.



How-to guide to: *Creating a nature play program*

Involving young children and families

Creating a nature play program is a great opportunity for councils to involve young children and families in the local community by discovering how children currently participate in nature play and what they enjoy. These responses and insights will inform the nature play program.

By consulting and engaging with local parents, council will also identify the barriers and potential enablers to young children accessing nature play and developing curiosity about the natural world.

Involving council

Developing a nature play program will be a collaborative effort, relying on the expertise and buy-in from several parts of council.

Councils should also work with maternal and child health services, and early childhood services and specialists to help inform, design and deliver nature play programs. Council-managed early childhood services are the ideal setting to introduce and trial nature play programs. By regularly taking services outside, they can encourage nature play activity for young children.

Outdoor sessions help young children to connect with nature and provide them with active play opportunities that increase confidence and encourage children who prefer sedentary indoor play to challenge themselves with physical outdoor play.

Environmental sustainability, youth and children services, health planning and promotion, recreation, family and communication teams can contribute to the delivery and promotion of a nature play program.

Council park rangers can be an amazing source of knowledge on the local natural environment, due to the park education programs they deliver. They may have useful insights in designing and delivering nature play programs that support on-land and in-water environments. In developing a nature play program, council should consider leveraging any free park education programs already offered to the community by council park rangers, tailoring their content for young children and their families. Council may wish to include a playgroup as part of a nature play program. This would not only provide opportunities for active nature play, but would also create a welcoming environment for parents to meet and learn about the benefits of nature play and how it can be integrated into everyday life for young children. These sessions could be led by a Child and Family Resource Officer within council.

Council could approach this in several ways, depending on its current playgroup operations. Already existing playgroups could be expanded to include deliberate nature play, a playgroup could be integrated into an established nature play program, or a completely new playgroup could be set up and run specially with a nature play focus.



Plan

Before creating a nature play program, develop a project plan that outlines:

- goals and objectives
- priority locations
- available resourcing, and relevant existing programs elsewhere
- an assessment of risk and key stakeholders to consult and engage
- a timeline that outlines when and how the nature play program will be delivered.

Consider the elements of the Nature Play program you want to develop initially and concentrate on planning that component of the program.

If the first part of implementing this action is the creation of a nature playgroup, consider the benefits of facilitating a parent-led playgroup. The City of Port Phillip has a [useful guide](#) to setting up a nature playgroup, which could be adapted by other councils, particularly those in an urban environment.

Plan cont.

Bush kinder programs

Bush kinder programs can also offer a unique opportunity to foster the relationship between young children and Aboriginal culture. Consider consulting local Aboriginal organisations and elders, who may be able to advise on how bush kinder programs can reflect Aboriginal connection to nature and integrate values and cultures.

Bush kinder programs involve early childhood education sessions delivered in natural outdoor environments. They provide valuable opportunities for young children to explore the natural environment and extend their learning.

If council is considering developing a bush kinder program as part of the nature play offering to young children, consider the following key issues at the planning stage:

- Will the bush kinder be integrated into an existing early childhood education program with a small part of the program delivered at the bush kinder site?
- Are there suitable, safe and accessible bush kinder learning sites within council areas?
- What stakeholders need to be consulted to support the implementation of a bush kinder program?
- Does council or the relevant service have the necessary nature play and bush skills required to feel confident in delivering an outdoor nature play or education program?

- What are the policies and procedures that need to be developed to keep young children safe during nature play activities? These policies may cover:
 - enrolment and orientation
 - delivery and collection of children
 - weather conditions
 - emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Is there a sustainability plan in place that can be adapted for a bush kinder setting?

Make a list of council-operated and private early childhood education services in the community that may be appropriate to deliver a bush kinder program, then set a target number of services to participate in a bush kinder program. Aim to increase the number of participating services year on year.

Consult and communicate with families during the planning stage.



Assess

To develop effective nature play opportunities, whether for playgroups, holiday programs or a more extensive bush kinder program, council should undertake an assessment of potential nature play sites available within council boundaries.

An ideal nature play site within a park or reserve will have characteristics that allow independent exploration, without compromising effective supervision of children. The site will also need to accommodate the vigorous play of young children without damaging the natural environment.

Assessment of nature play sites should also investigate:

- Can the site be easily reached by local families?
- Are there pick-up and drop-off areas?

- Is there a range of natural elements that can be integrated into nature play activities?
- Is there appropriate access for young children with disability or mobility needs?
- Is the site conducive to parkland management support?

Assessment of suitable sites may require multiple on-site scoping and induction sessions with a park ranger.

Risk evaluation

Nature play does involve risks, but the health and wellbeing benefits for young children make the creation of a nature play program worth pursuing. Nature play programs can help children learn to assess, manage and take 'safe' risks, and to confidently take on challenges. See Nature Play SA's resource [Learning Outdoors: Benefits/Risks](#) for more information.

To mitigate the risks of nature play, conduct an initial risk assessment of the proposed nature play site. This could include auditing trees for climbing safety and removing obstacles from beneath trees.

Work with services or individuals delivering the nature play program to conduct ongoing site safety audits

and develop strategies to address additional risks. These might include simple precautions like making sure there is adequate mobile phone coverage and access for emergency services, and identifying nearby facilities that may offer shelter in extreme weather conditions.

Assess the resources available to support the proposed program and ensure any facilitators are experienced with working with children, and hold first aid qualifications and Working with Children Checks. Ensure facilitators and educators have allergy action plans in place for all children with allergies that plan for additional risks posed by insects and plants.

Design

To design a nature play program, council may wish to partner with organisations or other councils that already have information, approaches or frameworks in place for nature play programs.

Hot tip!

[The Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Network](#), [the Department of Education and Training Victoria](#), [Eco Explorers](#) and [Parks Victoria](#) all have extensive advice, resources and programs to support the creation of a council-driven nature play program.

Design cont.

Involve young children and families in co-design

Councils can involve families with young children in consultation on an early services nature play program and in co-design of nature play holiday activities and playgroups, by encouraging early childhood services to nominate parent and carer representatives and/or by seeking input from families in the community. Efforts should be made to engage with local families that may experience additional barriers to participating in nature play programs or initiatives (e.g. social, cultural, structural, geographical and financial).

Councils can reach families with young children through early childhood services newsletters or emails, or by using other council or community communication channels.

Deliver

Follow the project plan to deliver the nature play program within council.

Work closely with relevant council services to promote and support the nature play program, and to inform and upskill services and staff about providing opportunities for nature play.

Develop a handbook for families of young children outlining all aspects of the nature play program. Home Road Kindergarten in Hobsons Bay City

Council has an [excellent handbook](#) for families interested in bush kinder programs. The City of Stonnington has a practical and [easy-to-use guide](#) for educators and families that provides resources and ideas about how to integrate nature play into early childhood education.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the program

Evaluate the nature play programs in an ongoing way. Design review methods to ensure participating families are actively involved in this process, and are encouraged to provide feedback and highlight any areas for improvement.

Consider working with experts to develop evaluation methods that involve listening to children's views about their experiences. This might include child-led interviews during nature play, small focus group discussions and the completion of questionnaires by facilitators, educators and families to record their experiences in the nature play programs.

To help embed support and funding for nature play programs in council, share results of evaluations and communicate positive impacts of nature play to broader council and the community.

Case Study

Bush kinder at Yarralea Children's Centre

The Yarralea Children's Centre is a not-for-profit community children's centre in Alphington, managed by a volunteer parent committee and supported by Yarra City Council. Yarralea's bush kinder was piloted in 2013–14 and fully established in 2015 at a Darebin Parklands site.

The decision to establish a bush kinder as an extension of Yarralea's preschool was motivated by research indicating children's decreasing opportunity for unstructured play in natural settings and the documented detrimental effects this has on health and wellbeing.

In the bush kinder program, children can play in the rain, roll down the grassy hill, balance along fallen logs, get involved in dramatic play, find insects, draw with sticks in the ground and make mud pies.

Reflecting on the program in a media article, Stephanie Willey, Director, Yarralea Children's Centre, Victoria, observed that with no screens to stare at or toys to play with, the children became each other's resource.

'A stick they find on the ground can become a sword or wand. It encourages children to be creative and builds resilience.'

Case Study

Bush kinder at Moe Early Learning Centre

Children at Moe Early Learning Centre participate in bush kinder every Wednesday at the Edward Hunter Reserve in Moe.

The bush kinder program was established in response to research showing that playing in nature benefits children's wellbeing, social and emotional development, cognitive language and physical skill development.

At bush kinder, children learn about nature and the bush, search for insects, go on bear hunts and short bush walks, search for insects, climb trees and build stick huts. The program provides opportunities for children to take safe risks, explore their capabilities using natural materials, and develop resilience, strength and confidence.

Latrobe City Council Mayor, Councillor Sharon Gibson, noted that the program provides valuable outdoor play opportunities for Moe children.

'Mud, sand, water, leaves, sticks, pinecones and gum nuts can help to stimulate children's immune system as well as their imagination. Through the endless opportunities the natural environment provides, children can increase and expand their imaginations, creativity and storytelling using natural props.'

Recommended resources

- [Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Network](#)
- [Eco Explorers](#)
- [Kids in Nature Network](#)
- [Nature Play Australia](#)
- [The Department of Education and Training Victoria](#)
- [The Nature Bus by Nature in Nurture](#)

Impact stream:

Including gender equity in council sport and recreation policy

Implementation actions

To complete this impact stream, councils will select from:

- Quick win: Establish an active women and girls' network
- Step up: Improve club capacity to create a welcoming environment for women and girls
- Step up: Adopt an active women and girls' strategy
- Step up: Create a toolkit for welcoming participants with young children to sport and recreation clubs and facilities
- Step up: Meet Council requirements under the Fair Access Policy Roadmap

Councils have the opportunity to lead the provision of fairer, gender equitable sports facilities for their communities.

Councils have a range of levers they can use to address gender equity, including changes to the systems, policy, social, cultural and physical environments of community sports facilities. This impact stream includes policies and activities for council to build the capacity of local sports providers, and incentivise fair and genuinely welcoming access of sports facilities in the community.

Intended outcomes

Councils undertaking this impact stream can expect to:

- contribute to the goals of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, including Increasing Active Living, and their responsibilities under the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#)
- ensure women and girls have equitable access to sport facilities, grounds, pavilions and change facilities in line with the Victorian Government and VicHealth's Fair Access Policy Roadmap
- increase physical activity levels of women and girls in the community
- increase sport and recreation participation opportunities for women and girls in environments where they feel safe, welcome and included
- increase women in leadership roles in sporting community clubs and associations.

Minimum deliverables

To complete the impact stream, including gender equity in council sport and recreation policy, councils will have:

- established a network, reference group or governance structure, including women and girl members, to support gender equity in sport and recreation
- undertaken community engagement to include the ideas of women and girls in the development of all stages of the implementation actions
- demonstrated an increase in club capacity to provide participation opportunities for women and girls on and off the field
- demonstrated support from council and local leadership to include gender equity in sport and recreation by allocating resources and/or endorsing strategies or policies
- demonstrated succession planning outlining how the activity will contribute to the outcomes of their current and future Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.



Quick win: *Establish an Active Women and Girls' Network*

This action requires councils to develop an understanding of the involvement of women and girls in local sport and recreation, and to establish a local active women's and girls' network.

This activity is focused on creating a women and girls' voice about what is needed to support gender equality in sport.

In undertaking this work, councils will have the opportunity to hear from women and girls who are representative of the local community, and

empower them to advocate for fair and equitable opportunities to be physically active.

Undertaking this work provides a valuable platform for future strategy work, such as described in '[Step up: Adopt an Active Women and Girls' Strategy](#)'.



How-to guide to:

Establish an Active Women and Girls' Network

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation, community planning and youth services.

The Active Women and Girls' Network should include people with a wide range of experiences. It may be supported by expertise from different community groups and organisations that share council's goal to increase women and girls' active participation. These may include:

Individuals

- Interested community members
- Local sports participants who identify as women (grassroots, elite, etc.)
- Women and girls who represent the 16+ age group
- Women with communications and marketing skills who can promote the work of the network
- Women in leadership or board roles (e.g. club committee members)
- Other champions who are strong advocates for women and girls in sport

Community groups and organisations

- Council teams involved in sport or leisure strategy development
- Regional Sports Assemblies (if in a regional area)
- Women's health and support organisations
- Local hospital or community health centre
- Community groups representing women from diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal health or sport organisations
- Agencies working with women with disability
- Proud to Play or other groups representing the LGBTIQ+ community
- Sport and Recreation Victoria – Office for Women in Sport and Recreation
- Sport and Recreation Victoria regional office
- State Sporting Associations
- University or academic representatives who have a focus on sport and gender
- Local sport clubs, associations and active recreation groups
- Welcoming Cities



Plan

The Active Women and Girls' Network can have a key role in supporting councils to improve gender equity in sport. This network may be particularly valuable for councils with limited staffing in sport, recreation or leisure teams, to amplify and gain visibility and traction for their work.

Prepare a project plan outlining:

- the purpose and scope of the Active Women and Girls' Network

- recruitment and roles of members
- reporting to or governance by council
- key actions the network will undertake.

Update the project plan in collaboration with members once the network is established.



Assess

Councils may have already completed a gender impact assessment as part of the Fair Access Policy Roadmap implementation, and collated data that outlines local demographics, as well as women and girls' participation in sport and physical activity, through Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans or sport and recreation strategies.

Depending on the depth of the analysis, consider what further exploration of local women and girls' inclusion in sport would support the goals, design or engagement plan for this project.

Survey local sports facilities and clubs, as well as women and girls in the community, providing a clear explanation of how the information will contribute. Consider indicators including:

- demographics and participation in sport, active recreation and other physical activity by women and girls in the municipality
- experiences, interests and feedback of women and girls about their preferred ways to participate, and perceived barriers and enablers

- local sport offerings dedicated to women and girls, including participation pathway opportunities (e.g. from player to coach)
- current access and use of community sports infrastructure, including change rooms and grounds to women and girls, compared to access and use for men and boys
- any recent changes in women and girls' participation levels or investments to create clubs and facilities that are inclusive and accessible by women and girls
- the proportion of women and girls to men and boys at all tiers of the club, including participants, teams, volunteers, coaches, officials and committee members.

The assessment can guide the direction of the network, as well as highlight options for people or group representatives to be recruited to the network, including universities, health partners or other community groups.



Design

Outline any requirements for network membership, such as membership numbers, and how to ensure representation from a broad range of needs and interests. Include provision for a minimum number of young women or girls to ensure issues affecting young women are prioritised.

Consider women and girls who:

- are part of local sporting clubs
- are passionate about gender equity in sport
- represent a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds

- represent local community organisations
- are from government agencies who focus on women, sport and health
- are from local businesses or have knowledge and skills of value to the network.

Depending on the goals for the network, consider if and how to include male representatives who can be leaders and champions for positive change.

Hot tip!

The role of boys and men

VicHealth recognises that boys and men play an important role in achieving gender equity within sports clubs and the wider community. Finding examples of men in elite sports and local men in leadership positions who are actively promoting and advocating for gender equity, is a great way to further communicate the message and help to make it the norm.

Prepare the resources required to establish the network, including expressions of interest forms, terms of reference and council governance documents, in line with council policies and processes. Preparing a skills matrix can help to ensure the right range of skills is in the group.

Promote and invite expressions of interest for the network. Consider holding a brief introduction and information session to allow prospective members to ask questions. Seek council leadership support to assess expressions of interest and finalise and approve the member list.

Deliver

Work with members to agree on final terms of reference, outlining the function, role of the group, and roles and responsibilities of members, including decision-making, membership, frequency and length of meetings, appointment term and reporting (including agenda, minutes and any reporting lines).

Ensure all representatives have seen this before they finalise their involvement in the Active Women and Girls' Network, so they fully understand their role and time commitment required.

Once the network is established, develop an action plan for the upcoming year, including activities to be undertaken, timelines and who will lead the activities. Consider opportunities to co-opt actions that are written into existing council plans for delivery or support by the network if appropriate.

Potential activities of the network

Consider how the network can contribute to council goals for women and girls' participation in sport and what activities they will undertake to achieve them.

For example:

- highlight gaps in participation or inequities with access and inclusion
- contribute to the provision of equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure for women and girls, in line with the Fair Access Policy Roadmap
- advocate the importance of sport sector achievement
- share examples and case studies of gender equity, access and inclusion for women and girls in sport
- advocate and deliver greater participation opportunities for women and girls
- provide sporting environments that are welcoming and inclusive of women and girls
- support women being visible and active in leadership roles within clubs, associations and sports administration
- provide advice and input to inform the council's plans and strategies relating to the implementation of the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- support and promote council events to promote women and girls' participation in physical activity, including This Girl Can Victoria, International Women's Day and International Day of the Girl
- create specific opportunities or events that align with the role of the network
- create mentoring opportunities for women leaders in sport
- represent the network at local events and in local media.

Review and embed

Ensure there is a date to review the network to ensure it is achieving its aims. This will provide the opportunity to review and refine any elements or activities that are not working well, and modify the action plan and activities as needed.

Recommended resources

The [Ballarat Active Women's Network](#) was developed to support work around gender equity, equitable places and spaces for better participation, and the Active Women and Girls' Strategy. This community network is supported by the City of Ballarat and Sports Central.





Step up:

Improve club capacity to create a welcoming environment for women and girls

Providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive club environment is critical to support women and girls to participate, and to ensure they have a great experience.

Women and girls have told us that some sports club cultures feel unfriendly and unwelcoming.

In this action, councils will provide sports club representatives with gender equity and inclusive club training to support the creation of environments where women and girls feel welcome and valued.

Councils will undertake a brief needs assessment of the existing capacity of council staff to determine what internal skills should be developed to inform the project design or continued capacity building for staff to progress council's gender equity work.



How-to guide to:

Improve club capacity to create a welcoming environment for women and girls

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation, community planning and health promotion.

A community partner or expert should be involved if the council doesn't have the knowledge or skills to develop and deliver the training. Community and women's health, Vicsport or VicHealth may be able to assist in identifying suitable facilitators.

To effect change within the target sports clubs, it is recommended that at least 2 to 4 club leaders are engaged to set the tone for behaviour standards and actions to create an inclusive environment and support each other to deliver the changes.



Plan

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the activity. The project plan should include:

- an outline of the capacity building goals and processes required to involve council staff, local sports clubs and providers
- a communication and engagement plan that outlines how key messages about gender equity will be framed to support council staff and sports clubs to address backlash or seek community support for the initiative

- details about how to engage and seek leadership endorsement to trial, manage, review and resource the activities, with a view to embedding successful activities in longer-term council planning, such as the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and sport and recreation strategies
- a target for the number of clubs to work with.

The project plan should be updated during the Design phase.



Assess

Assess council capability to improve gender equity in sport

Complete a skills audit of relevant council team members, and identify gaps or areas they would like to improve in relation to gender equity. Include:

- knowledge of and ability to speak about gender equality
- public speaking or training facilitation experience
- community development skills
- active bystander training
- conflict management.

Identify options to address capacity requirements, whether by accessing funds to bring in external providers or by providing inhouse training to address skills gaps.

Consider establishing formal partnerships with organisations, such as Regional Sports Assemblies, to build council capacity or to support gender equity work more directly.

Quick Note

Who conducts the training?

Councils may consider engaging external support to deliver training to the community, or use internal staff with skills identified in the skills audit (or a combination). Ideally, clubs who demonstrate a desire to support women and girls' sport will be invited to attend training initially.

Upskilling current staff is a great way to increase capacity quickly and at low cost. Staff have the capacity to work one on one with clubs to provide greater support.

[Rec People](#) exists to support councils by providing services that will find permanent or temporary staff. Rec Education provides professional development opportunities for employees in sport, recreation and leisure roles.

[Vicsport's Everyone Wins](#) framework includes practical actions, resources (fact sheets, templates, guidelines, websites) and best-practice examples.

Review the budget to determine if activities to support women and girls in sport are included.

Design

Design the club capacity building sessions based on the available resources and outcomes identified in the project plan. While face-to-face training may generate more fruitful discussions and networking, online training may suit time-poor or distant clubs.

To create a training environment and strike a balance of having enough different clubs to enable supportive and fruitful discussions, while also allowing facilitators to support the specific learning goals or situations of each club, consider:

- By invitation or expressions of interest – run sessions that bring clubs together from different sports to share their experiences and to learn from each other. Clubs could be invited or they could express an interest in being involved, creating a dialogue about the rationale for their involvement.
- All clubs from same sport – delivering training for any club under one sport provides the opportunity to discuss similar issues and come up with solutions that benefit the sport as a whole. Involve State Sporting Associations or league representatives to increase impact and support.

- Facility user groups – gathering all the groups who use a single facility or reserve can help to address any issues specific to that facility. Clubs may already have a relationship with each other, and have a greater chance of working on actions collaboratively due to their regular proximity.

While a general council-wide session is less ideal for project outlines, it could provide a cost-effective option to raise initial awareness and gauge interest to participate going forward.

Prepare the topics the training will cover. The following are recommended, but should be refined to suit the specific needs and interests of the clubs you will work with.



Suggested gender equity training topics for sports clubs

Gender equity foundations

- Understanding equality and equity
- Key facts and principles
- Why we need to address the imbalance now
- The role of men and boys in gender equity
- Framing Gender Equality Messages Guide
- The role of sport in the prevention of violence against women

Facilities and access

- Assess female friendliness of facilities, changerooms, wall displays and lights
- Assess access to the grounds (timing and allocation)
- Determine potential support to upgrade facilities through grants

Participation

- Investigate women and girls' experiences and ideas
- Review current women and girls' participation at the club
- Review community demographic data to look for underrepresented groups
- Design and deliver opportunities tailored to women and girls
- Cater to different levels of skill, ability and fitness
- Emphasise the importance of instructors who encourage and support women

Keep it going

- Celebrate successes and share stories of women and girls participating (e.g. in local media, awards and case studies)
- Seek feedback from women and girls on a regular basis via surveys or by simply asking them
- Apply for grants and seek sponsors to support the work in gender equity
- Update the action plan

Promote benefits of inclusive clubs

- Increased membership and spectator numbers
- Potential for increased sponsorship or funding avenues
- Increased number of skilled and talented women and girl players, volunteers and administrators
- Future-proofing sport's success through increased participation by women and girls
- Updated decision-making, ideas and innovative leadership
- More respectful relationships and attitudes towards women and girls

Club leadership

- Importance of club leaders who champion gender equity in the club or association
- Representation of women in key leadership roles in the club or association
- Mentoring and training to support women to take on leadership roles

Promotion

- Use photos that show women and girls of all shapes, sizes, backgrounds and abilities
- Use encouraging and positive language in promotion
- Get the word out in the local community through word of mouth and social media
- Partner with organisations to reach new prospective participants

Further detail is available from Vicsport's [Welcoming Sport resource pages](#).

Deliver

Prior to the training, ask the clubs to complete the VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist as a baseline of how they are tracking in the areas of:

- participation
- leadership and equal opportunity
- profiling women and girls.

Conduct the training and acknowledge participation. This is a big achievement and promoting each club's attendance on social media is a great way to reward them for their efforts.

Check in with clubs

Following the training, provide tools and resources to assist clubs and associations to be more inclusive and welcoming of women:

- From the VicHealth [Quick Wins Checklist](#), ask the club to develop an action plan based on the areas they need to address.
- Ask the club to submit their action plan with the request for ground allocation.
- Consider how the council can support the club or association to deliver on their action plans.
- Review the checklist annually to see what has been completed or still needs to be done.

Review and embed

Share your results

Publish key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for your audience, including to:

- use language, facts or styles that are interesting to the participants
- identify aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change, for example, requesting an ongoing budget from council leaders and highlighting changes the council could make that could support clubs to be more inclusive and welcoming of women and girls.

Recommended resources

- [Change Our Game Women in Sport Communication and Marketing Strategies](#)
- [Change Our Game Women in Sport Recruitment and Retention Guidelines](#)
- [Creating a Place for Women in Sport Self-Assessment](#)
- [Doing Sport Differently – Designing and delivering sport to engage people who are less active](#)
- [Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure Guidelines](#)
- [Helping Women and Girls Get Active](#)
- [This Girl Can Vic Campaign](#)
- [This Girl Can Vic – Getting Women Active website](#)
- [Welcoming Sport – Everyone Wins](#)



Step up: *Adopt an Active Women and Girls' Strategy*

This action requires councils to develop and adopt a strategy focusing on women and girls' sport that provides a clear direction for action.

Councils use strategies to provide evidence for action or change to take place, or for budget to be attributed to support program delivery. A strategy should be integrated in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and council plan, and have input from external partners and the community.

Having a dedicated, locally relevant strategy highlights council's commitment and focus on opportunities for women and girls. It allows a deeper examination of the issues, barriers, inequities and strengths of council's sport and active recreation provision.

If council is newly approaching gender equity work, consider if it would be beneficial to seek the support and guidance of an organisation with relevant expertise, to ensure the process is transparent and delivered in a professional manner.

Council may already have an existing strategic planning process. Depending on the needs and priorities in the local area, the strategy could be designed to drive change in priority areas, including:

- **increased participation of women and girls**, such as aiming for gender balance in participation levels, removing barriers to participation through provision of free, low-cost, beginner-level programs, supportive pathways and social sport options

- **reduced inequality in access and use of community sports infrastructure**, such as actions focused on fair access for women and girls to suitable, safe, accessible and welcoming facilities
- **increased investment and improvements to local facilities and infrastructure** to support women and girls to participate and feel comfortable
- **fostering cultural change within sports clubs and facilities** to create sporting environments that are welcoming and inclusive for women and girls
- **increased recognition, promotion and celebration** of women and girls' achievements and championing gender-positive promotion and media
- **increased leadership representation** for women and girls, including representation on club committees, coaching and officiating
- **keeping teenage girls active** through proactive efforts to ensure sport and active recreation options are designed to encourage and retain girls aged 14 to 17.



How-to guide to: *Adopt an Active Women and Girls' Strategy*

Involving people

This action requires engagement with women and girls, and should include the voices of women and girls who are not often heard in community consultation.

Community partner organisations may also be useful contributors to the strategy development, such as:

- local clubs, leagues and associations
- youth groups

- State Sporting Associations
- Regional Sports Assemblies
- schools and student representatives
- community and women's health organisations and other community groups.

Council teams who should contribute to this action include sport and recreation, community development, open space, building maintenance, customer service, finance and communication.



Plan

Convene a working group (or work with an existing one) that includes relevant council departments and community and youth representatives, if relevant, to drive the strategy development.

Develop a project plan that outlines the goals, timelines and available resources for the strategy development. The project plan should include:

- details about governance, decision-making and alignment to existing plans and strategies, including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, responsibilities under the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#), and any sport and recreation strategies
- an engagement plan that outlines community members and groups who will be consulted and involved, and at what steps you'll involve them.

Consider if you'll need to seek in-principle endorsement from council leaders or councillors before the work commences. This endorsement may already be articulated in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, [Gender Equality Act 2020](#), or sport and recreation planning.

Hot tip!

Consider partnering with nearby councils so that you can create a strategy that will cover a greater region, share resources and deliver outcomes to a larger community. This strategy works well when there is alignment of priorities and mutual benefits.

A regional strategy can also increase the rationale for community partners who cover the entire region to support the strategy development, and can be useful for attracting funding.



Assess

Council may have already collated data that outlines local demographics, as well as women and girls' participation in sport and physical activity through Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, or sport and recreation strategies, or commenced actions to respond to the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#).

Depending on the depth of this analysis and the strategy scope, consider what further information is required to shape the strategy, such as:

- demographics and participation in sport, active recreation and other physical activity by women and girls in the municipality
- experiences, interests and feedback of women and girls about their preferred ways to participate, and perceived barriers and enablers
- local sport offerings dedicated to women and girls
- current allocation of grounds, facilities, change rooms and other club resources to women and girls' teams and members, compared to men and boys
- an analysis of council's previous, current or planned investment in sport and active recreation, and gendered breakdown of the beneficiaries (e.g. club members) of these investments
- any recent changes in women and girls' participation levels or investments to create female-friendly clubs and facilities, such as upgrades to sports pavilions. Include details about how and where this investment has come from (through council, state or other sources)
- proportion of women and girls to men and boys at all tiers of the club, including participants, teams, volunteers, coaches, officials and committee members

Assess cont.

- a desktop assessment or case study collection of media coverage of local women's sports, for example, reviewing the number of articles in local papers and on local TV
- a benchmarking, summary or case studies of other councils undertaking similar work
- comparison data to other municipalities or statewide and national averages and benchmarks
- a summary of key literature and evidence on women and girls' participation in sport.

State and government agency websites are a good place to gather information, including VicHealth, the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Sport Australia.



Design

Engage and consult with community members, groups and council teams to identify potential priorities and actions for the strategy. Consider options to address gaps and weaknesses, as well as to capitalise on strengths and assets. Include a range of consultation methods that suit different needs of people in your community.

Strategy consultation and design examples

- Conduct one-to-one interviews with women and girls.
- Deliver targeted focus groups to hear voices of people who are often not heard (e.g. migrant and new arrival communities, and women with disability).
- Meet with women and girls' teams and parents.
- Run an Active Women and Girls' community forum or workshop.
- Distribute a survey to clubs and community organisations to identify issues, challenges and enablers to participation in sport for women and girls.
- Engage the Active Women and Girls' Network as part of the consultation.
- Meet with State Sporting Associations.
- Consult with academics and experts who have a focus on sport and gender.
- Conduct a forum for school physical education teachers or meet with key school leaders.
- Consult local youth community advisory groups.

Draft the strategy and provide opportunities for review

Start drafting the strategy in line with council templates and processes. Include:

- an overview of integration into council's planning hierarchy, such as links to key council plans and strategies, and contribution to the goals of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- overall timeframe for the strategy
- vision, purpose, principles, priorities and intended outcomes
- a draft action plan to achieve the objectives
- how the strategy will be governed, responsible teams or community partners
- how the strategy will be measured, ideally consistent with council's broader evaluation and outcomes frameworks
- review dates and processes.

Progress the draft to adoption

Identify who will review the first draft. Recommended are the:

- Active Women and Girls' Network
- managers across council
- key stakeholders, including women and girls from the community.

Modify and adapt the draft based on agreed feedback

Finalise the strategy for sign-off internally (e.g. by managers, Executive and CEO).

Engage councillors

Provide a briefing to councillors to seek their formal support, endorsement and adoption of the strategy. Demonstrate that the Active Women and Girls' Strategy can be used to support opportunities to leverage funding from government and other agencies for infrastructure and programs. Seek councillor endorsement for the final strategy.

Deliver

Communicate the strategy

Launch the strategy publicly and continue promotion. Communicate the detail and actions as they are progressed – share council's prioritisation of gender equity and encourage community members and groups to become involved where possible.

Consider how your communication approaches will reach all of the community – particularly those women and girls who experience more barriers to participation.

Consider how the Active Women and Girls' Network and other key partners can support the public announcement and communication around the strategy.

Quick Note

With the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) now in place, if council is a defined entity, the Active Women and Girls' Strategy will demonstrate a commitment to the public promotion of gender equality.

Review and embed

Monitor and review the implementation of the strategy against the timelines and actions outlined.

Report on the progress within council and to the community, with a focus on achievements. Continue to review and modify the actions on a regular basis, based on progress and other feedback.

Consider how the benefits achieved through the action plan should best be sustained – whether through ongoing spotlighting or through adoption into core council practice, such as actions that can be embedded in contracts or pavilion agreements as they come up for review.



Step up:

Create a toolkit for welcoming participants with young children to sport and recreation clubs and facilities

This step up requires councils to create and promote a toolkit for sports clubs and sport and recreation facilities that is aimed at welcoming and supporting families with young children to come to the club or facility and participate in physical activity.

This action can build on or work in tandem with any work councils are doing or have already undertaken to promote gender equity in sport and physical activity, or more broadly in the community.

Parents and carers of young children are less likely to undertake sufficient physical activity for good health than other population groups. They often face a range of barriers to being physically active. A key challenge is the difficulty of fitting in exercise and sport around childcare responsibilities.

Parents and carers need to feel comfortable to bring young children to sports and recreation clubs and facilities. They need spaces to be welcoming, safe and appropriate for young children, with suitable facilities (such as access to shade, water, food and change spaces), activities and schedules and times for families. They also need children to be supervised, entertained or engaged in a way that enables parents and carers to participate in activities.

The toolkit should include guidance for sport and recreation clubs and facilities on:

- what facilities and support parents and carers need to be able to come and participate in physical activity with their babies or young children
- what activities the club or facility should provide
- how to create a welcoming and supportive environment for children, parents and carers and families.

It should also provide guidance on how to ensure sport and recreation clubs and facilities are gender equitable and inclusive spaces. This should include ensuring all parents and carers have equitable access to these spaces and sports and activities, and feel welcome, supported and enabled to participate.

It should also include guidance on ensuring clubs and facilities are welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for parents and carers of all genders, LGBTIQ+ parents, carers and families, and families with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, including First Nations peoples.





How-to guide to:

Creating and promoting a toolkit for welcoming families with young children to sport and recreation clubs and facilities

Involving young children and families

This action provides an opportunity to work closely with parents of young children to inform and co-design the toolkit, to ensure it contains practical actions that will best support them to attend sport and recreation clubs and facilities and participate in physical activity.

Councils should consult and engage with a diverse range of local parents and carers to find out about the barriers and potential enablers to them participating in local sport and recreation clubs and facilities with their young children, and what clubs and facilities can do to make them feel welcome and supported.

Once the toolkit is developed, councils will work with sport and recreation clubs and facilities to promote to local families the changes they are implementing to welcome and support them to participate.

Involving sport and recreation clubs and facilities

Councils should work closely with local sport and recreation clubs and facilities to help inform the toolkit.

Once developed, councils will promote the toolkit to sport and recreation clubs and facilities and support them to implement the actions set out in the toolkit.

Involving council

Council teams and staff to involve or consult in developing and promoting the toolkit may include recreation and culture, health planning and promotion, family and youth services and communication.



Plan

Decide on timelines for development and promotion of the toolkit.

Gather resources that can help inform the toolkit and identify council and non-council stakeholders that you will need to engage.

Set targets for the number of sport and recreation clubs and facilities that council will work with to promote and implement the toolkit.

Community engagement and consultation plan

Develop a plan for engaging and consulting with a diverse range of local families with young children to inform and co-design the toolkit. Identify channels to use to find local parents, such as maternal and child health services, local parents and playgroups, local parent Facebook groups, council website, libraries, local sport and recreation facilities, and other community centres.

Decide on a strategy for consulting with families. This could include developing surveys, establishing a working group, or running workshops or consultation sessions.

Make a list of local sport and recreation clubs and facilities. Develop a plan for engaging and consulting with them to inform development of the toolkit.

It's also important to support local clubs to engage and consult with communities.

Plan cont.

Communications plan

Develop a plan for disseminating and promoting the toolkit to sport and recreation clubs and facilities. This could include running workshops or seminars. Consider asking clubs and facilities to nominate a champion for the toolkit, who can act as the main contact for council and champion implementation of the toolkit in their club or facility.

Assess

Design a survey or another form of consultation with families to assess issues such as:

- What are the barriers and challenges to parents and carers attending and participating at sport and recreation clubs and facilities with their young children?
- How welcoming, inclusive and family-friendly do they perceive clubs and facilities to be?
- How many parents and carers currently attend clubs or facilities with their young children, and what experiences have they had?
- What family-friendly activities, programs, facilities or spaces do clubs or facilities currently provide?
- What would help support and enable them to come to clubs and facilities with their young children and participate (including activities, programs, facilities and spaces, flexible times or other support)?
- What activities should clubs or facilities provide, such as activities or classes they can participate in with young children?
- What supervision, childcare or other support do they need to participate?

Design consultation with sport and recreation clubs and facilities to assess issues such as:

- What are their current participation levels for parents with young children?
- What are their ideas or existing approaches for welcoming and supporting families?
- What are their existing policies on gender equity, inclusion and supporting participation by women and families?
- What family-friendly facilities and spaces do they currently have (e.g. change facilities, spaces for baby feeding and expressing milk), and what programs and activities do they currently offer for parents?
- Are there any practical considerations or constraints in implementing actions to welcome and support families with young children?

Consult and seek feedback from families and clubs/facilities on draft versions of the toolkit.

Design

Review and carefully consider the consultation responses of families, and sport and recreation clubs and facilities. Continue to engage and consult families, clubs and facilities in co-designing, developing and refining steps and actions under the toolkit.

Ensure the toolkit is written in clear, accessible language and contains practical guidance for clubs and facilities. Include a range of examples, case studies, tips and resources to help guide clubs and facilities in implementing toolkit actions. Refer to the [VicHealth Framing Gender Equality Message Guide](#) to use values-based messaging in describing the importance of welcoming and supporting families to clubs and recreation facilities.

Suggested steps and actions to include in the toolkit are to:

- provide welcome packs with explanations of activities and programs, and tours of facilities for families
- provide introductory or social sport and recreation opportunities for parents who are new participants, or returning after having a baby
- offer special events or days aimed at encouraging families to join and participate
- ensure clubs and facilities have family facilities, such as change facilities and private spaces for baby feeding and expressing milk
- create and promote a supporting breastfeeding policy at the club or facility and become a [Breastfeeding Welcome Here](#) venue

- offer activities such as classes that parents and carers can participate in with their young children (e.g. parents and bubs yoga, pilates or group circuit classes)
- provide spaces within the club/centre for families with young children that are child safe and secure
- provide facilities for children, such as play equipment or rooms/spaces designed for kids to have fun and connect with other kids
- provide supervision or activities for children for children while parents and carers are participating
- ensure clubs and facilities have family-friendly opening hours and flexible, family-friendly times for activities such as games, training sessions and classes
- ensure clubs and facilities are accessible for prams, and there is a secure storage area for prams, scooters and bikes
- promote the availability of family-friendly environments, facilities and activities to local parents, and encourage them to participate.

See the [Recommended resources](#) below for more ideas.

Deliver

Follow the communications plan to promote the toolkit to local sport and recreation clubs and facilities. Publish the toolkit on the council website and continue to promote it in the community.

Be available to support sport and recreation clubs and facilities to implement actions in the toolkit, and to promote the changes they have made to welcome and support local families to participate.

Seek investment and funding opportunities to support council-owned facilities to implement toolkit actions.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the toolkit

Review and track the number of local sport and recreation clubs facilities that have implemented toolkit actions.

Seek feedback from clubs and facilities on the toolkit, including how helpful they find the guidance provided, and any challenges or experiences they had in implementing actions.

Evaluate the impact of actions taken to welcome and support families with young children. Engage with families attending clubs or facilities that have taken these actions, and obtain their perspectives and feedback.

Repeat the survey of families undertaken at the Assess stage. Compare results and identify whether there have been improvements in parents' perceptions of whether local sport and recreation clubs and facilities provide welcoming and supportive environments, and their levels of participation.

Communicate any key survey results to sport and recreation clubs and facilities, and to the community more broadly.

Seek commitments from local sports clubs, and sport and recreation facilities to implement the toolkit and aim to expand on the number that implement toolkit actions year on year. Continue to work with clubs and facilities to build on and expand actions they have taken.

Update the toolkit as required, based on feedback from families, clubs and facilities, and as new ideas for welcoming and supporting families emerge.

Embed promotion of the toolkit to local clubs and facilities through workshops and seminars, as part of council's annual program delivery.

Recommended resources

The following resources provide helpful information and guidance that can be drawn on or adapted to develop the toolkit:

- [Breastfeeding Welcome Here](#) guide
- Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: A Resource for Local Government
- Hepburn Shire Council – [Active Women and Girls Strategy 2019–2029](#)
- Sport and Recreation Victoria's [Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure Guidelines](#)
- [VicHealth Framing Gender Equality Message Guide](#)
- VicHealth's [Quick wins checklist for sporting clubs](#) to increase promotion, participation and leadership opportunities for women and girls
- VicHealth's [This Girl Can Victoria](#) on the Getting more women active website
- [Vicsport guidance on facilities and access for women and girls](#)
- [Women's Participation in Sport and Active Recreation in Melbourne's West: Action Plan for Change 2020–2025](#)



Step up: *Meet Council requirements under the Fair Access Policy Roadmap*

This action is focused on incentivising the support of women and girls' sports teams and participation through council policy, relating to the management and allocation of sports infrastructure.

As the owner of community sports infrastructure and pavilion agreements, council is well placed to create policy that supports and prioritises club tenants who proactively seek to redress gender inequities in sport and active recreation.

While there are many opportunities to educate and support clubs to be more inclusive, the implementation of the policy provides the strongest lever to ensure that all clubs take significant steps towards the inclusion of women and girls or face consequences, which may include the loss of a ground and pavilion allocation.

The objective of the policy is to:

- maximise participation in sport and recreation on sporting facilities, grounds and pavilions
- ensure equitable access to council-owned sports grounds and facilities
- enable councils to address the needs of growth sports
- increase participation in sport by all members of the community.

The policy should be developed with local community context in mind, to determine the appropriate mechanisms to achieve the overarching goal through positive measures, such as:

- offering priority access to clubs who field women's teams and demonstrate equitable provision of club resources
- scheduling and prioritising facility updates based on clubs' inclusion of women and girls' teams.

The policy should include a staged rollout incorporating an appropriate schedule from policy adoption about the timelines for clubs to meet minimum gender equity deliverables, in order to comply with the policy.

Important Note

From 1 July 2024, all Victorian councils will need to have a gender equitable access and use policy in place for community sports infrastructure to remain eligible for Victorian Government infrastructure funding. In partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, the [Fair Access Policy Roadmap](#) is being delivered through the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, and aligns with Victoria's [Gender Equality Act 2020](#).

The Roadmap aims to develop a statewide foundation to improve the access to, and use of, community sports infrastructure for women and girls. This ambitious action has been developed to support local governments to implement the Roadmap.



How-to guide to:

Meet Council requirements under the Fair Access Policy Roadmap

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this activity include sport and recreation, open space management, community planning, facility or contract management, corporate planning and finance. Customer service, communications and community development teams can help promote the policy.

Council leadership, including councillor support, plays a critical role in the success of developing policies that require significant changes to the way councils do things. This is described in detail in the Design phase, but should be considered at all stages of developing and implementing the policy.

Quick Note

A note on facing resistance during consultation (and likely implementation).

Resistance is going to happen, so be prepared by having a few strategies ready to go.

Ask 3 questions about why there is resistance:

1. Is the person going to lose something?
2. Does the person not understand what it will mean for them?
3. Does the person think everything is fine as it currently is?

Having answers to these questions will help alleviate fear and direct the conversation away from dwelling on or arguing about why the change is needed.

Resource: [\(En\)countering resistance: strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives](#)

Ensure council staff have dedicated time and training to support the process and prepare for backlash, both internally and externally. This should not be feared, as the outcomes for the community (and women and girls) will be strongly supported with evidence gathered as part of the strategy and policy adoption.



Plan

Prepare a project plan that includes:

- a clear rationale and goal for the changes the policy should create
- a timeline for policy development and implementation
- a communication and engagement plan that outlines how councillors, council staff, facility managers and clubs will be involved in the policy development or implementation.

Policy considerations

Consider the type of policy most suited to the council:

- **Standalone or integrated** – create a standalone policy for women and girls in respect to equitable access to facilities and increasing opportunities, or embed the policy into a broader allocation.
- **Timeframes** – document timelines and stages for the policy to be adopted and implemented, including any transition periods or compliance timeframes, for example, implementation over 3 years, with compliance measure built in on an annual basis at allocation time.
- **Leadership support for gender equality** – do the CEO, directors and councillors support gender equality initiatives across council? Build a strong case with evidence to demonstrate why having a gender equity policy is the right thing to do.

Assess

Audit policy context

Review any existing policies the council may already have that relate to management of sporting reserves, facilities and grounds, their maintenance, usage, and the provision of safe and good quality facilities and affordable pricing structures.

Identify if the current policies include requirements to provide access and opportunities for women and girls.

Consider when and how you will review policies to implement and audit the delivery of gender equity work over time. Communicate the transition pathway for clubs to make the changes, when the policy will commence and when clubs will be expected to be fully compliant.

Gather data

Gather data that can inform current participation levels by women and girls in the community by undertaking a gender impact assessment (see [Step up: Adopt an Active Women and Girls' Strategy](#)). Establish a baseline dataset to determine how the use of council-owned facilities for sport and active recreation and physical activity levels of women and girls differs from those of men and boys in the community.

Identify key data that can form the basis of the policy, including target indicators to shift the dial on.

Work with leagues and associations to consider the timing of women's games, and ensure that participation opportunities are not just the leftover of when men and boys aren't playing.

Review existing ground allocation approach

Some questions to consider for the review include:

- How has ground allocation been conducted? Are decisions based on history, or a process or policy that is in place?
- What data or information drives the allocation to that particular facility? Do clubs submit their requests on an annual or seasonal basis?
- Does council request information from clubs on how they support inclusion and equity, such as participation data, inclusive policies or processes at club level?
- Is gender or inclusion considered part of the decision-making about facility allocation?
- Review what other councils do in terms of ground allocation, and look for examples that have been effective at supporting clubs that are more inclusive of women and girls.
- Can the process be improved to support staff to make better decisions about facility allocation to the community?



Consider policy inclusions

Consider how to develop a policy to best achieve your desired outcome, relevant to the local community context. It cannot be assumed that in the current environment, all club committees understand the need to include women and girls. Nor can it be assumed that a simple conversation can take place to change behaviour to make women and girls feel included at a sports facility.

Policy change is required to address the inequity in community sports facilities. A policy provides the opportunity to address the inequity that may currently be occurring.

To address this, there are some considerations for councils to include in their policy:

- Implement a system for clubs to 'apply' to use grounds on a seasonal or annual basis, which includes data collection, providing quick access to information on who and when is using council-owned assets.
- Prioritise access to facilities for clubs who field women's, girls' and junior teams.
- Prioritise infrastructure upgrades for clubs who field women's and girls' teams, with a focus on change rooms and umpires' rooms.
- Invest in facilities that need upgrades where women and girls currently play, not those that might benefit women and girls in the future.
- Where possible, ask clubs to create an action plan after completing the [VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist](#).
- Prioritise access to facilities for clubs to conduct social programs aimed at connecting women and girls, for example, [GO Soccer Mums](#).

There are actions that councils could expect of clubs to meet the policy:

- Be a compliant club by ensuring you have appropriate insurance coverage, are currently registered with consumer affairs with an up-to-date constitution, have current licences (liquor and food), are registered for GST, and have a current strategic plan with annual reports submitted to council annually.
- Submit anticipated participation data at the time of facility allocation, ensuring there is no 'land grabbing' and that council assets are being used appropriately.
- Complete the [VicHealth Quick Wins Checklist](#) and submit action plans to council with ground allocation application.
- Ensure that at least 2 leaders of each club (committee, coaches and senior playing leaders) have recently attended gender equity and inclusive club training.
- Offer opportunities for women and girls to play competitive sport.
- Demonstrate equitable access to facilities for women and girls, including access to the main ground on training nights, and training not clashing with broader club functions.
- Demonstrate opportunities for entry-level/beginner programs for women and girls (social sport).
- Demonstrate a commitment to women and girls becoming part of the club (e.g. budget for equipment, uniforms, coaches, administrators, and space for social functions) and ensure current policies and procedures show the club is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for women and girls to participate on and off the field).
- Demonstrate an understanding of LGBTIQ+ players and competitions.

Engage local leadership

Understanding the political landscape of a council is important, and while it may initially appear too challenging, influencing internally (including councillors) is part of the job. With evidence to back decisions, councillors can become the biggest advocates for change within the community.

Councils will have their own methods of working with councillors. Depending on council processes, consider providing a briefing to councillors to seek their formal support to progress a policy.

Build a strong case (with evidence) to demonstrate to councillors why having a ground and facility allocation policy is not only the right thing to do for women and girls in the community, but the right thing to do from an organisational perspective.

Consider the below influences:

- **The community imperative** – use evidence from the data and community consultations to show community need for the policy.
- **Operational and funding imperative** – demonstrate how a policy will support the delivery of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and other key strategies, including the [Gender Equality Act 2020](#).
- **Community and societal imperative** – demonstrate community need and appetite for change in line with changing community norms and societal expectations, and demonstrate the need for change, such as by using ambassadors, feedback from women and girls, media and recent examples.
- **Financial imperative** – demonstrate how the policy will be seen favourably by government and other funding agencies, in respect to infrastructure and program funding.
- **Reputational imperative** – demonstrate the importance of not falling behind other councils.

Consultation with the community

Ideally, the conversation on increasing participation of women and girls in sport will not be a new one for the local community. The goal of community consultation is to seek insights, thoughts and feelings from the community about the implementation of the policy and what it might mean, considering the steps above.

Refer to council's community engagement policy when consulting with the community. For a policy, it is suggested that the level of consultation sits at a minimum 'Involve' and at best, 'Collaborate'.

Each level has its own methods of consultation to consider. Those who could be involved in the process include:

- State Sporting Associations
- Regional Sports Assemblies (where relevant)
- schools

- the Active Women and Girls' Network
- women and girls in the community (including those whose voices are not often heard in community consultation)
- clubs, leagues and associations
- health organisations, community groups
- youth groups.



Adopt the policy

Once community and stakeholder feedback has been received and integrated, seek endorsement and adoption of the draft policy.

Follow council processes to adopt the policy, which in the first instance may be a draft, followed by more consultation and then adoption. The results should be communicated internally and externally.

Deliver cont.

Implement the policy

Depending on the timelines outlined in the policy, councils may implement the policy over multiple years and monitor compliance along the way when allocating facilities each season.

Consider the following actions to implement the policy:

- Upskill or employ staff to support clubs – this work will not happen with ‘women and girls’ tacked onto a current staff member’s title and workload. Ideally it will be integrated into a staff member or volunteer’s work plan with key performance indicators attached.
- Update all ground allocation procedures and documentation to reflect the policy.
- Ensure the new policy requirements are embedded into the allocation systems.
- Require new clubs to comply with the policy prior to gaining access to facilities.
- Consider running information sessions, workshops, club visits, etc. to ensure all stakeholders are aware of the policy and the expectations for clubs.
- Ensure all council staff are trained in the policy and are able to answer questions and work with clubs.
- Continue to manage ongoing risks through review and update of the risk matrix over the course of policy implementation.
- Develop and implement a communication plan that will not only include the initial launch of the policy publicly, but also the ongoing and regular opportunities to communicate the value of the policy to the public as it is implemented (e.g. case studies of how it has worked).
- Frame the communication and messaging about the policy in ways that are asset and value based. One resource is [VicHealth’s Framing gender equality message guide](#).
- Consider how the Active Women and Girls’ Network and other key partners can communicate their support publicly.

Reward and incentivise clubs

Councils should focus on incentivising clubs and associations to support women and girls’ sport. There are a number of methods that could be used to reward and support clubs that are proactively providing opportunities for women and girls to play, including:

- **maintaining access to facilities** – the reward for meeting the policy
- **relocating to a better facility** – access to a better-quality facility with female-friendly changerooms and a quality ground
- **fee reduction** – lower hire rates for clubs that are more inclusive of women and girls
- **prioritising facility upgrades** – prioritising work towards an upgrade of that facility. Greater support from council for infrastructure funding applications
- **grants** – providing funds for female-friendly opportunities. Highlight the club activities on social media
- **invitations** – host events at the club, such as breakfasts or guest-speaking opportunities
- **free training** – support from council to build inclusive policy or practices in the club (e.g. free training).

Approaches could be adopted, if required, for those clubs or associations that don’t take action. For example:

- reducing access to facilities and grounds, which may include removal from a facility, reduction in hours of access or relocation to a lesser-quality facility
- increased fees for lack of inclusive policy, practices or opportunities
- no opportunity or support to apply for infrastructure funding or upgrades.

Review and embed

Embed and monitor

Councils should work to embed the policy within the community. Over time, the policy will become normal practice.

Monitor and review progress under the policy. Consider indicators that align with the policy goals, such as:

- the number of clubs complying with or working towards compliance with the policy
- percentage changes in women and girl participants or teams playing sport
- rates of satisfaction with training and game-time scheduling by gender
- an increase of women and girls on committees in executive, leadership, coaching and officiating roles.

Clubs will adapt to the policy over time and on reviewing the policy, councils may 'raise the bar' to progress women and girls' sport.

Share your results

Collect and promote positive stories associated with the policy implementation, and highlight the changes to participation that are being made over time. Publish key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for your audience.

Consider:

- using language, facts or styles that are interesting to the participants
- aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change, such as opportunities to expand the policy to positively incentivise equity-focused efforts.

Recommended resources

- [Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation: A Five Year Game Plan for Victoria](#)
- [Integrated Management Systems](#)
- Merri-bek City Council is the first council to create a policy requiring clubs to field women and girls' teams to gain access to council-owned facilities. See: [Allocation and Use of Sporting Facilities, Grounds and Pavilions Policy](#)
- Merri-bek City Council partnered with The Office for Women in Sport and Recreation to conduct a forum explaining how they created the policy. [A short video outlines the process undertaken](#) to improve participation of women and girls
- [Office for Women in Sport and Recreation's Fair Access Policy Roadmap](#)
- [Sport Australia Clearing House for Sport: Women in Sport](#)
- [The value of community sport infrastructure](#)

Impact stream:

Empowering and enabling women to get active through local promotion of This Girl Can – Victoria

Implementation actions

To complete this impact stream, councils will select from:

- Quick win: Promote This Girl Can – Victoria in your community
- Step up: Amplify sport and active recreation opportunities through This Girl Can – Victoria
- Step up: Create a This Girl Can – Victoria incentive program for parents and babies
- Ambitious: Create a localised This Girl Can – Victoria campaign

This Girl Can – Victoria builds active families by empowering everyday women to be comfortable in their bodies and public spaces, leading active lives and being role models for young children.

Councils can encourage less-active women to get involved and join the movement through leveraging the popular and effective This Girl Can – Victoria campaign. Councils can play a lead role by supporting local organisations and clubs to align themselves with the campaign, providing new and inclusive opportunities for women to get active, and promoting This Girl Can – Victoria in the community. This impact stream also includes guidance to develop programs to extend This Girl Can – Victoria to social sport programs where parents can take their children, and to incentivise sports clubs, programs, and facilities to run more programs and sessions inclusive of women with babies.

Councils will benefit from being backed by VicHealth’s Victoria-wide advertising campaign and years of lessons from previous implementation. We know that the more often women see the campaign and its consistent messages, the more effective it is at inspiring them into action.

Quick Note

Engaging women with babies and young children

Local promotion and implementation of This Girl Can – Victoria can play a vital role in giving young children a strong foundation in the importance and benefits of physical activity, especially when considered in the context of parents and carers as role models.

Research demonstrates that active parents are more likely to have active children. By encouraging parents and carers, particularly women, to get active through leveraging the This Girl Can – Victoria campaign, councils can play a lead role in supporting active families and can have a positive influence on physical activity behaviours in early childhood.

Although 8 out of 10 parents (83 per cent) understand their influence on their children's activity levels and the importance of role modelling, fewer than 7 out of 10 (69 per cent) of parents try to set an example by exercising themselves. By working with local organisations and sporting clubs to deliver this impact stream, councils can inspire parents and carers, particularly women, to get active with their young children.

Intended outcomes

Councils undertaking this impact stream can expect to:

- increase physical activity levels of women and girls
- increase physical activity participation among women and girls in the local community
- encourage clubs, sporting organisations, gyms and other social and physical environments to be welcoming and inclusive of women and girls
- provide more physical activity participation opportunities tailored to women and girls
- increase the capability of sport and physical activity providers to provide welcoming, inclusive physical and social environments for women and girls.

Minimum deliverables

To complete the impact stream 'Empowering and enabling women to get active through local promotion of This Girl Can – Victoria', councils will have:

- demonstrated engagement of local sports and recreation providers to use This Girl Can – Victoria materials
- demonstrated awareness by staff and community members of the campaign and key messages
- documented promotion of and engagement with This Girl Can – Victoria through council communication channels
- demonstrated succession planning outlining how the activity will contribute to the outcomes of their current and future Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.



Quick win:

Promote This Girl Can – Victoria in your community

This action requires councils to promote This Girl Can – Victoria in their local community through relevant channels, including social media and via physical activity providers, with an aim to inspire women to get active, regardless of their background, ability, age or body shape.

By encouraging physical activity providers to share the campaign collateral, local welcoming and inclusive opportunities for women will be amplified.

This Girl Can – Victoria resources

The [Campaign Supporter Toolkit](#) is designed to for Victorian councils to spread the word and encourage more women and girls to get active, whatever their age, size, background or ability. Registration as a campaign supporter gives you access to promotional materials, including posters, social media posts and key messages you can share.



How-to guide to:

Promote This Girl Can – Victoria in your community

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation and communications.

Consider seeking the input of relevant groups or advisory committees, particularly groups that are focused on engaging women in physical activity opportunities.



Plan

Sign up and complete orientation

Sign up as a [Campaign Supporter](#) and complete the Campaign Supporter Orientation. All staff working on promotion of physical activity opportunities for women should complete the orientation. The orientation can be downloaded and shared.

Develop a brief communication plan outlining the goals, target audience and communication channels for the activity.

Assess

Consider how to use the tools

Download and review the Local Government Campaign Supporter Toolkit and identify ways you can use it locally. The toolkit includes examples of how councils have used the campaign in their local area previously.

Check if there are any upcoming council or community events that could contribute to the promotion of the campaign.

Design

Create campaign resources

A suite of materials is available from the This Girl Can – Victoria [Campaign Supporter Hub](#), including:

- a Local Government Campaign Supporter Toolkit, including key messages and brand guidelines
- ready-to-use and editable campaign posters to print and display
- ready-to-use digital banners to be displayed on websites and email newsletters
- social media, including ready-to-use posts that councils, clubs and providers can share

- design tool to create your own posters, banners and social media posts with local images – using a tool on VicHealth’s website
- videos of the TV ad and ambassador stories available to download and use on social media and screens
- a templated media release.

Licensing guidelines are provided to assist councils in incorporating their own logos and contact information.

Deliver

Share the campaign video

Share the video across your council channels and on screens across facilities that local women could visit, including council leisure centres, libraries and community hubs. By sharing the campaign video, council is promoting involvement and support for the campaign and amplifying its messages. The more often women see the campaign, the more likely they are to get active.

Use the materials on the Campaign Supporter Hub and create local This Girl Can – Victoria branded materials, following the licensing guidelines. Consider assisting local sport and physical activity providers to promote This Girl Can – Victoria messages.

Review and embed

Ask local providers to keep track of how many events or This Girl Can – Victoria sessions they hold, and how many participants take part. This will help to gauge the campaign’s local impact.

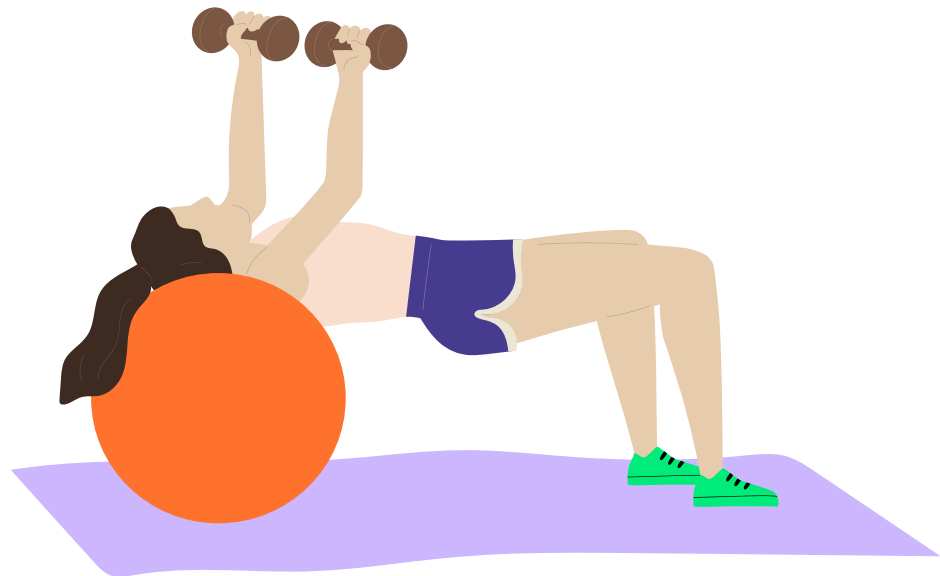
Review the strategies that did and did not work well to inform annual planning of the campaign.

Hot tip!

Engaging women with young children

Councils can promote the inclusion and participation of women with babies and young children in This Girl Can – Victoria campaigns and activities by:

- involving family and early childhood services and departments in your planning
- co-designing or consulting with a diverse range of local women or families around the campaign design or resources
- engaging local clubs and community groups which offer flexible, family-friendly or social sport opportunities
- considering the timing, location and accessibility of activities or programs for engaging women with babies and young children
- selecting promotional imagery that features women with babies and young children
- considering communication channels and networks that reach and target a diverse range of local women with babies and young children.





Step up:

Amplify sport and active recreation opportunities through This Girl Can – Victoria

Once they have been inspired to start getting active, women need to know how they can get involved in local activities that are welcoming, friendly and cater to different abilities.

VicHealth research shows that nearly half of Victorian women aged 25 and over believe that sporting clubs are intimidating, and one third believe that sporting clubs are not welcoming to people like them. Your council can leverage This Girl Can – Victoria to lessen the intimidation and promote welcoming activities.



How-to guide to:

Amplify sport and active recreation opportunities through This Girl Can – Victoria

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation, health promotion and communications. Family services may also be valuable to involve if the target audience includes mums. Consider seeking input from relevant groups or advisory committees, particularly groups that are focused on engaging women in physical activity.



Plan

Build capacity of local providers to get more women active

Review the [Getting more women active resources](#) to prepare professional development opportunities for local physical activity providers. This might be in the form of group education sessions or one-on-one support. Using the guide, they can identify and make changes where they need to.



Design

Create local This Girl Can – Victoria activities for women to get active

These opportunities should be beginner friendly, inclusive activities that focus on women with a range of fitness and skill levels. This connects with the campaign's core aim to celebrate women getting active, regardless of their ability, body shape or background. It doesn't matter if they don't know all the rules, all that matters is they are giving it a go.

Local opportunities might include women's only classes at a local fitness centre, pram-walking groups for new mums, a local women's football team or family-friendly personal training sessions. Include some online activities that can be done in a supportive group or on their own in their own time.

Instructors should present the classes in a friendly, non-judgemental manner.

Promote, coordinate and link people to local activities. This ideally would be done via a combination of promotional channels, including council website and newsletters, social media, local posters, word of mouth and the provider's own channels. People need one spot to find and connect to activities. Ensure promotion includes key information like who the activity is for, the time, location and what to bring.

As part of local promotions, activity providers can choose to offer incentives such as free or discounted trials for new participants, come-and-try sessions, special women's-only activities, or bring-a-friend activities. Consider integrating opportunities to socialise before and after the class.

Amplify the messages during This Girl Can Week

This Girl Can Week is a great opportunity to promote local opportunities for women to get active.

Our campaign supporters told us they wanted a consolidated week to be able to get involved in the campaign, linking them to supporters around Victoria and capitalising on a heightened awareness at a moment in time. Include #ThisGirlCanVIC on your social media posts.

[Social and flexible sports programs](#) also offer fantastic opportunities for women to get active. VicHealth has partnered with sporting organisations who have designed tailored participation opportunities for women and girls to get involved in sport and physical activity.

These programs are currently up and running, so we encourage you to get in touch with the sports to see if you can run one or all of these programs for women in your area. The list of programs supported by VicHealth can be found [here](#), including Soccer Mums and Escaping Your Comfort Zone.

Consider:

- looking at opportunities to create social and flexible sports programs with local sports providers in your area
- offering activities that will engage women from culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ and Indigenous communities, and those with disability
- partnering with local organisations and groups to strengthen your projects.





Review and embed

Ask providers to collect and share data about the implementation of the activities and events. When evaluating your program, consider questions and indicators such as:

- rates of participation and physical activity compared to usual levels
- questions that show changes in participants' attitudes and intentions to continue the activities
- questions that capture physical activity providers' perceptions of the program
- indicators that show any changes that have happened to council or providers' processes, services and facilities, as a result of the program.

Share your results

Publish any key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for the local audience.

Consider:

- using language, facts or styles that are interesting to the participants
- aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change, for example, requesting an ongoing budget from council leaders, highlighting changes the council could make to support This Girl Can – Victoria delivery over the long-term.



Step up:

Create a This Girl Can – Victoria incentive program for parents and babies

Councils can play an important role in supporting physical activity by local parents and carers and babies, by offering incentives for providing or participating in local parents and babies social sports and physical activity opportunities.

Incentives can be a useful way to get people to engage in a desired behaviour or stop an unhealthy one. However, to achieve the desired results, incentives must be designed so that the intended audience responds favourably to the reward on offer.

This step up requires councils to establish a This Girl Can – Parents and babies local incentives program. This program encourages local sports clubs and organisations, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities, to deliver sports programs and physical activity opportunities that are inclusive of parents and carers with babies, and to offer incentives for parents and carers to participate.

Councils will offer incentives to local sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities to provide activities and programs for parents and carers, such as financial incentives or discounts.

Councils may wish to develop an incentive program focusing on local sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities, but this work could extend to empower clubs and facilities to develop and deliver incentives, such as vouchers or discounts, to encourage local parents and carers to participate in social sports and activities with their babies.

The active habits of parents, carers and adults can have a strong influence on the habits of young children. Any program increasing access and participation in social sports and physical activity for parents and carers and babies will have health benefits for the wider community and future generations. It will also help promote important social connections for parents, carers and babies in the local community.



How-to guide to:

Developing a This Girl Can – Parents and babies local incentives program

Involving families

Key people to involve in the This Girl Can – Parents and babies local incentive program are a diverse range of local parents and carers of young children, who may be considering participating in social sport or physical activity programs. Councils can use online surveys and small focus groups to ascertain from these groups what incentives or prompts would be most likely to motivate participation in sport and activities.

Involving council and community

Implementing a council incentive program that encourages participation in parents and babies sport and activities requires the commitment and involvement of key people in sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sport and recreation facilities. Implementation of the program should result in sustained partnerships between council and the clubs, providers and facilities, to encourage participation by parents and carers in sports and activities.

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation, health promotion and communications. Family services may also be valuable to involve.



Plan

Identify priority settings

Identify and contact local sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities in the local area, prioritising those that cater for families and children, to ask them to be involved in the program, and to promote the benefits to parents and carers in the local community. Identify which clubs, providers and facilities already have specific programs designed for parents, carers and babies.

Identify which council settings, facilities or spaces cater for parents, carers and babies. Councils should prioritise council-owned, operated or managed

settings that already have programs involving families and children.

Build formal program partnerships across council departments, key clubs, providers and recreation facilities, and community groups to work towards the provision of accessible and appropriate sport and physical activity opportunities for parents and carers with babies.

Work within council's budget processes to identify funding available for the project.



Assess

Identify and assess existing council incentive schemes with local sports clubs or sports and recreation facilities, to see if these could be extended or modified to support increased participation in parents and carers sports programs.



Design

Create local This Girl Can – Victoria activities for women to get active

Design a program of incentives that will encourage sport clubs, service providers and recreation facilities to offer parents and carers sports and physical activity programs and activities, and that will encourage parents and carers with babies to participate.

Incentives for parents and carers, supported by council and delivered through sport clubs, service providers and recreation facilities, may include:

- free or discounted trials for new participants
- come-and-try sessions, with special parents, carers and babies only activities
- opportunities to socialise before and after the class, including free healthy refreshments or morning or afternoon teas for parents and carers with babies
- free or discounted access to a local pool or tennis court
- provision of stickers or certificates for young children who participate in social sports with their parent or carer
- coffee vouchers for local cafes.

Incentives for sport clubs, service providers and recreation facilities may include:

- discounts on applicable licences or leases for clubs, providers and facilities that deliver regular active sport and physical activity programs and sessions for parents and carers with babies
- specific sporting grants to ensure local sports and recreation opportunities are made available to parents and carers experiencing financial hardship
- free advertising and promotional opportunities in marketing and campaign collateral for local clubs, providers and facilities that provide sport and physical activity programs for parents and carers with babies. Social marketing can be integral to raising community awareness of local sporting clubs and recreation providers. This can include anything from flyers, articles and advertisements through the local media and newsletters, and billboards on council premises
- a financial incentive program rewarding clubs, providers and facilities that offer and embed sports and physical activity programs and sessions for parents and carers with babies
- discounted or free access to relevant council-run training and resources to support and help future-proof local sports clubs.

Deliver

Offer and clearly communicate available incentives to local sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities. Ensure they clearly understand the parameters and intent of incentives, and can successfully promote the incentives to encourage participation by parents and carers with babies.

Review and embed

Monitor and evaluate the reach and success of the program

Monitor the This Girl Can – Parents and babies local incentive program to ensure it is encouraging an increase in participation in social sport and physical activity programs and sessions for parents and carers with babies. Ask participating local sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities to complete a regular evaluation survey, and create avenues for receiving real-time feedback from local parents and carers.

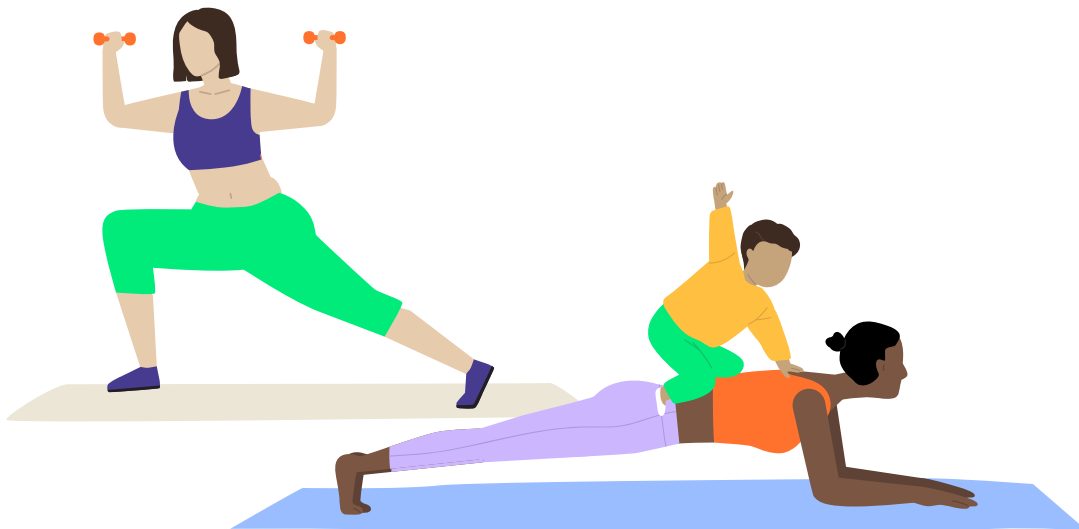
If subsidised vouchers or discount codes are among the incentives, ask clubs, providers and facilities to report how many of these are used. This data will demonstrate how effective these incentives are in encouraging participation in parents and carers social sports activities.

If councils are offering reduced licences and specific leasing arrangements to incentivise sports clubs, physical activity providers, and sports and recreation facilities to deliver parents, carers and babies activities, review the uptake of these incentives to provide insights into the success and ongoing feasibility of the program.

Share and publish key results or improvements in participation from the program via the council website and social media. Share key results with council leadership to encourage funding and support for sustained delivery of the parents and carers and babies incentive program.

Recommended resources

- VicHealth's [This Girl Can – Victoria](#) campaign





Ambitious:

Create a localised This Girl Can – Victoria campaign

For sustained impact, ongoing local opportunities for women and girls to get active are vital. This Girl Can – Victoria can be leveraged to create localised versions of the campaign.



How-to guide to:

Create a localised This Girl Can – Victoria campaign

Involving people

Council teams to involve in this action include sport and recreation, health promotion and communications. Family services may also be valuable to involve if the target audience includes mums.

It would be valuable to engage and include physical activity providers in the design and delivery of the localised campaign. Consider partnering with social and flexible sports, Regional Sports Assemblies and local community organisations to maximise local impact.

If council convenes a local [Active Women and Girls' Network](#) or a similar group that focuses on increasing women and girls' active participation, engage with the group to guide and direct your local campaign and bring it to life.



Plan

Create a local campaign name that links to your local area, such as Casey Girls Can (for City of Casey). Use the local campaign name as a hashtag: #CaseyGirlsCan.

Reach out to VicHealth to help identify and develop a local version of the campaign.

You must contact VicHealth to inform them of your plans to gain access to brand assets.

Quick Note

This Girl Can – Victoria campaign is licensed by VicHealth from Sport England until June 2023, so there are some branding limitations:

- Campaign supporters including local councils cannot create videos branded with the This Girl Can – Victoria logo and other branding.
- Localised versions of the ad cannot be created. Aside from branding restrictions, our research shows us that the more women who see the This Girl Can – Victoria ad, the more effective it is in inspiring women to get active.
- Local women cannot be called This Girl Can – Victoria ambassadors. Our ambassadors have gone through a rigorous selection and training program. Contact VicHealth if you would like to have a This Girl Can – Victoria ambassador speak at one of your events.

Assess

Identify local organisations, sporting groups and physical activity providers to partner with on the campaign.

Design

Work with them to develop beginner friendly and low-cost physical activity opportunities for women. You can view existing campaign supporters [here](#), or build links with providers in your own area and educate them on This Girl Can – Victoria.

Develop a local website highlighting the campaign activities, programs and partners in the area. Make sure to check the content with VicHealth before going live.

Ensure programs are inclusive and/or tailored to specific communities – for example, ensure the time your program will run suits the day-to-day responsibilities of your target participants (for example, don't run a program aimed at parents during school drop-off time).

Deliver

Work with partners to promote the campaign and local programs in a way that appeals to your target communities, and engage them in the activities.

Review and embed

Evaluate the campaign

When evaluating your program, consider questions and indicators such as:

- rates of participation and physical activity compared to usual levels
- questions that show changes in participants' attitudes and intentions to continue the activities
- questions that capture physical activity providers' perceptions of the program
- indicators that show any changes that have happened to council or providers' processes, services and facilities as a result of the program.

Share your results

Publish any key results or changes using the channels identified in the communication plan. Present results in a way that is appropriate for the local audience.

Consider:

- using language, facts or styles that are interesting to the participants
- aspects of the program that can contribute to long-term change, for example, requesting an ongoing budget from council leaders, highlighting changes the council could make to support This Girl Can – Victoria delivery over the long-term.

Topic in focus

How to create a welcoming club environment

Getting started in a new activity can be daunting for young and new participants. Suggest that providers offer a come-and-try session for people who are interested in the activity, but are not yet ready to commit to a full program or membership. Creating a welcoming first experience for new participants is essential.

There are a range of approaches that providers and sports clubs can follow to help people take their first step to getting active, including to:

- provide low-cost or free beginner friendly 'taster' sessions that introduce young people to the sport or activity, or reconnect them to activities following a break
- have a friendly contact person from your club or group give the participant a call, text or email before the first session. This is a great way to allay fears and increase the likelihood of the young person coming along. Information could include:
 - what to wear
 - where to go (exact location on Google Maps)
 - what time to turn up
 - who will meet you when you arrive
 - what the first session will include
- promote opportunities for people to bring a friend for free. Coming along with a friend can help people feel comfortable and less anxious about giving an activity a go. This is great for young people for whom peer groups are especially important
- make sure the new participant is welcomed when they arrive. The greeting needs to be authentic and friendly. Introduce the new person to others in the group and ensure they are not standing alone
- not pressure people to become a member or sign up for competition at their first session
- thank the participant for coming along and invite them to come back. A follow-up call, text or email can be a great way to see how their experience was, and to find out if there is anything you can do to make it even better.

Support new participants during the early months of their participation

Ensure new participants are asked why they are interested in the activity, what they hope to gain and any reasons they might have stopped activities in the past. This will help the provider to plan how they'll support the different social or active goals through the program.

Consider if the club or group already has some friendly members or participants who could become a 'buddy' to new members to offer some insights or pointers to help those getting started.

Ensure new participants are informed of and invited to any existing social events, or schedule some that are dedicated to welcoming new members.

Schedule a check-in or survey for new participants after the first few times they attend, and ask them what has been working well and about any ideas they have on how the experience can be improved for them and other new participants.

Provide some online activities that might be done in a supportive group or alone at home in their own time.

Extra implementation support resources

Bicycle Network – Ride2School



National Ride2School Day is Australia's biggest celebration of active travel and one of the best days on the school calendar.

The day has helped thousands of schools to empower and enable students to get physically active on their journey to school, giving them the opportunity to create healthy habits for their future.

For more information, go to www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/rides-and-events/ride2school/.

Centre for Multicultural Youth



With over 20 years of experience in facilitating youth participation in sport, the Centre for Multicultural Youth recognises that sport is an effective tool for engaging young people, especially newly-arrived young people. The Centre for Multicultural Youth runs sport programs for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, to increase participation, build a sense of belonging and help participants to develop new connections as they settle in Australia.

The Centre for Multicultural Youth also works closely with sports clubs and organisations, with the aim of creating a sector that is more accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of young people from diverse backgrounds.

For more information, go to www.cmy.net.au/young-people-community/sport/.

INFANT



INFANT is an evidence-based program that shows we can, through supportive education and skills development, positively influence healthy eating and active play behaviours in both parents and their children across the first 5 years of life.

INFANT consists of 4 face-to-face or online group sessions for first-time parents, with content reinforced via a mobile app for parents called My Baby Now. These 4 age-appropriate 90-minute sessions are run every 3 months until the infant is 12 months old. INFANT sessions aim to cover the 3 topic areas of nutrition/feeding, active play and limiting sedentary behaviour, and parents' own lifestyle behaviours (diet, physical activity and sedentary time).

Traditionally, maternal and child health nurses and dietitians facilitated the INFANT group sessions, individually or jointly. Both groups are well placed to facilitate INFANT, given their knowledge base and expertise. However, other staff may be relevant to deliver INFANT, such as health promotion officers, family support officers, midwives and welfare officers.

For more information, go to www.infantprogram.org, or to get started, visit www.infantprogram.org/getting-started/#firststeps.

Nature Play Australia

Nature Play Australia is a collaborative alliance working with partner groups to encourage Australian communities to value nature play and families to prioritise it in children's lives.

Nature Play Australia began as an initiative of the Western Australian Department of Sport and Recreation (now the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries). It was inspired by the ideas of American social commentator, Richard Louv, and the Children and Nature Network.

For more information, go to www.natureplay.org.au/.

Parks Victoria

Parks Victoria is a statutory authority managing an extensive network of parks, reserves and waterways. Parks Victoria works in partnership with state and local government to provide accessible, diverse and enjoyable destinations. It has developed resources to support people to be active in and connect with nature in their community.

Parks Victoria maintains, maps and promotes walks on the land, parks and reserves they oversee. Parks Victoria guides include information about the available facilities, and suitability for levels of fitness and accessibility. See www.parks.vic.gov.au/things-to-do/walking.

Parks Victoria has resources and a Bush Kindergarten handbook to help councils and other early childhood service providers develop programs that help children spend regular time in nature, and fall in love with and care for their local landscapes. See www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/learning-in-nature/plan-your-learning/early-learning-outdoors.

Play Australia

Play Australia's mission is to promote the value of play and support all Australians to play every day.

Play Australia is the peak national advocacy organisation for play. It is a not-for-profit charity that is membership based and has been supporting play for over 100 years. It supports outdoor play by way of inspiration, advice and access to information, provided by qualified people and professional services.

As the Australian branch of the International Play Association, Play Australia protects the human rights of all children to play, as recognised within Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For more information, go to www.playaustralia.org.au.

Vicsport

Vicsport is the peak body for sport and active recreation, aiming to engage as many Victorians in sport and physical activity as possible. Vicsport develops and provides resources and capacity building for State Sporting Associations and sport clubs. These resources can also inform how councils build active communities in the local area.

The Are You On Board? campaign is designed to start the conversation around diversity and inclusion within Victorian sport. This campaign aims to raise awareness and assist State Sporting Associations, clubs, leagues and associations to spread positive messages about the benefits of diversity and inclusion in sport. The resources will help State Sporting Associations CEOs, presidents and board members to understand the importance of creating a sporting environment that is welcoming for people with disability.

For more information, go to www.vicsport.com.au/are-you-on-board.

Victoria Walks is an evidence-based health promotion charity, leading the move for walkable communities in Australia since 2009. Victoria Walks offers leadership and independent expertise, and makes timely and evidence-based contributions to influence policy and practice. Victoria Walks seeks to demonstrate the critical role walking plays in Victorians' health, wellbeing and economic productivity.

For more information, go to www.victoriawalks.org.au/.

Community of Practice

A Community of Practice is provided to fast-track councils working through the health promotion modules, giving them the opportunity to share with, learn from and support each other through implementation.

Councils, together with expert partners and young people, will share experiences and insights about the suggested activities within the core modules. They will also look at topics related to the VicHealth Local Government Partnership more broadly, and the development and adoption of Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans 2021–25.

Council staff interested in finding out more about participating in the Communities of Practice and the VicHealth Local Government Partnership health promotion modules can email our team at lgp@vichealth.vic.gov.au.





Implementation template

Doing Sport Differently customer touchpoint considerations

Touchpoint	Points to consider
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about the images that you will use to promote your programs. The more closely these resonate, appeal and mirror young people's experiences, the better. Make the imagery authentic and relatable, so they can see themselves joining in.• Words are important, too. Young people are engaged by statements like 'social', 'designed for your fitness level', 'no experience required' and 'no judgement'.• Reach out to young people who have exited the sport. They may be open to a social sport program, particularly if they left because it became too competitive or too time consuming.• Strategies that are the most successful include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ word of mouth or bring-a-friend sessions◦ paid or shared social media posts, where friends are tagged◦ flyers in local cafes◦ partnerships with organisations that already engage with young people, such as schools, universities, Scouts Australia and workplaces.
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If a young person takes that important first step and wants to register for a program, it must be as simple, quick and easy as possible.• Offer a come-and-try session for people who are interested, but not yet ready to commit to a full program.• Provide all the information they need at registration, including clear instructions on what to wear, where to go, what time to turn up, and who will be there to meet them.• Allay any fears or anxieties by detailing what they will experience in their first session. For example, the first session will include some time getting to know each other and learning a few skills.
The welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The welcome really starts with the marketing and registration.• Even the most confident people feel nervous about doing something new for the first time.• Strategies that can be used to welcome young people include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ making sure there is a clear place marker at the session location so participants can easily find the session and don't have to roam about feeling lost◦ providing a friendly introduction and greeting from the facilitator as soon as a young person arrives. The greeting needs to be authentic and friendly, ensuring the new participant feels welcome and it's a friendly place to be◦ showing them around, introducing them to other participants and pointing out key things (such as where the toilets and fire exits are).

Touchpoint

Points to consider

Correcting mistakes

- Recognise that many young people will be learning new skills, which will inevitably lead to mistakes. Some 'technique focused' coaches may try to fix and highlight participant mistakes, but in social programs, mistakes need to be managed quite differently.
 - Ensure that the facilitator has soft skills like empathy, understanding and a supportive approach.
 - Set the tone at the start, by saying things like 'It's ok if you make a mistake, don't worry about it, just keep going – there is no judgement here'.
 - If a mistake is handled badly, any positive goodwill that has been built can be lost in an instant and the risk is that they won't come back.
-

The invitation to return

- The perception might be that once a young person has attended the first session, they will automatically come back again. This might not be the case.
 - The invitation back is sometimes a forgotten step, but one that can make a huge difference. The facilitator again has a key role to play here.
 - At the end of the first session, take the time to thank the young person for attending, reinforce that it was great to have them there, and offer a direct and genuine invitation to come back next session. This creates a sense of personal connection, builds rapport, and shows the participant that their presence was valued and they are now part of the group.
 - A follow-up phone call, text or email after the session can be useful to check in and hear any feedback.
-

Engage young people throughout the design process to reduce barriers and fulfil motivations **(Principle 1)**

Talking to young people and hearing their opinions and ideas is one of the most important things you can do. In practice, this can involve surveys, focus groups, advisory committees and partnerships with organisations that can help connect you with young people.

Some examples include:

- Survey young people within your community to understand:
 - how they feel about sport
 - what sport and recreation activities they have participated in
 - what has stopped them from participating
 - what sport and recreation activities they would like to see in their community
 - most importantly, what they don't want.
 - Help clubs, leagues and associations to work with young people and engage youth voices within their club and also outside their club.
 - Your council may already have a Youth Advisory Council or similar in place. Consider how you can use this group to be local champions and ambassadors, and to talk to young people from your chosen population group. If your council is in regional Victoria, you may be able to tap into the Youth Advisory Committee run by Regional Sport Victoria.
 - Young people should not just be stakeholders in the design processes at the club or with other providers – where possible, they should lead this work.
-

Think of young people as customers and consider their total experience **(Principle 2)**

The second principle is about seeing young people as customers and considering their total experience. It's about providing positive experiences from the first time they see your program marketing, through to the end of their involvement with the activity.

This principle includes the 5 key customer experience touchpoints. These are important as they are the moments when a young person will decide:

- if they want to get involved at all
 - how they feel about the program
 - if they will come back.
-

Participation should cater to different levels of skill, ability and fitness **(Principle 3)**

This principle is about ensuring the sport session for young people caters for the motivations behind why they decide to participate, and the varied levels of skills, ability and fitness.

VicHealth has identified the top 5 motivations for participation that are critical to factor into the design and delivery of your social sport program.

These are:

- having fun
- spending time with friends
- improving fitness levels
- learning new skills
- meeting new people.

Participation should cater to different levels of skill, ability and fitness (Principle 3) *cont.*

Also be aware that young people come to a program from different backgrounds and with varied abilities, confidence and skills. Some may have prior sport experience and some may have none. Think about young people who are completely new to an activity and are being asked to use sports equipment that they have never used. This can be a barrier to participation and stressful for some.

Social sport works best when young people can have fun and learn new skills through activities that can be adapted and modified for all participants in the

group, relative to their starting position. This allows participants to increase their level of confidence and ability over time.

Some examples of how to adapt include:

- playing modified cricket using a softer ball and lighter bat
- a golf program that can be done in pairs – this helps learning, but also enables the young person to do the activity with a friend, which can alleviate stress and create more fun.

The deliverer is the most important person to participants' experience and retention (Principle 4)

This principle is about having the right facilitator, coach or instructor who understands and connects with the young people in the group. This is the most important element of your program to get right. Creating a positive social environment is the most important aspect to engaging and retaining a young person in a social sport program. A great deliverer will make it much more likely that a social sport program will provide the positive experience that people are seeking.

While deliverers could be traditional coaches, the primary qualities and skills needed by deliverers for social sport may be different to those required for traditional sport. Look outside existing sport structures and networks to grow a pool with the right skills for a more social offering.

The best deliverer for social sport does not need to be an expert in technique, rules or drills.

They need:

- certain social skills, behaviours and personality traits
- the ability to establish and maintain a social and encouraging feel to the program
- the ability to be flexible and adaptable; and build rapport among the group.

In your design stage, think about whether the deliverer could be a young person. They may be more likely to resonate with other young people, and it can also be a good way for a young person to develop new skills and experiences.

The right person can be trained up on the program content. The key is finding the right person.

Young people need a clear pathway for retention or transition as their skill, fitness or interest changes (Principle 5)

This principle is about ensuring young people have options to continue participating if they want to – whether that is in the social sport program itself or something else.

This requires an acknowledgement that some participants may want to:

- do the program once
- continue participating in the program several times
- go onto other options.

It is important to consider 'What's next?' for young people who join in and participate.

While some people who come into social sport programs may continue to club membership or more traditional offerings, this cannot be assumed for everyone. In some cases, pushing a membership or a long-term commitment could have the opposite effect, particularly for young people looking for options with less commitment.

Young people need a clear pathway for retention or transition as their skill, fitness or interest changes (Principle 5) *cont.*

When there are multiple options available to participants, they can be informed and empowered to consider their options and transition to other offering if they choose. Successful transitions are often dependent on the quality and knowledge of the facilitator, and how well they encourage continuation and link to new opportunities.

An example of this is the Coasting for Teens program, where young people can join in a social fun paddleboard session to learn basic skills. At the end of the session, the options are discussed for what happens next.

For this program, they can join in another session to improve their skills and get more experience (either at the same location or a different one). If they feel confident enough, they can hire a stand-up paddleboard and go out on the water with family or friends.

Best-practice project management and delivery will enable scale and sustainability (Principle 6)

Principle 6 places value and importance on good project management and delivery. This is the work done – often behind the scenes – to help the program succeed and grow, and to be sustainable.

The longer-term sustainability of the program is important to consider at this point of the planning stage. Councils should demonstrate a real and meaningful commitment to partners and young people that this work is important, long term and in no way tokenistic. This will help build trust and is a good step to developing authentic partnerships with the community.

Some points to consider at this stage include:

- How will the activity continue into the future beyond a one-off event or program? For example, will you run a program every term or for the whole sport season?
- How can the activity be embedded into existing club or provider core business over the long term? For instance, council may run a targeted basketball program initially at the local council-owned basketball court and have a local club coach run the session. Over time, the plan will be to transition the program, so that the local club and coach incorporate it as part of their regular club activity.
- How can you upskill and build the capacity of club coaches or providers to run the activity in a way that is inclusive? Once key members of a club or an activity provider are trained, that knowledge, skill and expertise remains with them, and they are then able to run an inclusive program again and again.

- How can young people from the community take a key role in delivering the activity? For instance, fund young people from the local community to complete coaching courses, so they can run the activity for their community.
- What pathway is available for individuals who wish to continue to participate? Consider if that might be connecting them to a club or ongoing provider, or even connecting them into other types of sport or physical activity opportunities.
- What other grants or funding might be available to support the activity or the individual to continue beyond the initial program? Look at local grants, state and federal government grants and philanthropic organisations.

Always keep in mind the important role young people can play in becoming leaders within community sport. Think beyond participation on the field to roles in coaching, on committees and in other leadership roles within sport.

Underpin this work with a process of continuous quality improvement, to test and refine elements of the program, based on feedback from participants, providers and partners.



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VicHealth acknowledges the Traditional
Custodians of the land. We pay our respects
to all Elders past, present and future.



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