

# Children and Families Strategy

## Action Plan 2021/22 and 2022/23





# Children and Families Strategy Action Plan 2021/22 and 2022/23

This Action Plan supplements the Maroondah City Council *Children and Families Strategy*, adopted on 17 August 2020. It outlines the actions that Council will undertake to deliver the Strategy across 2021/22 and 2022/23.

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## Acknowledgment of Country

We, in the spirit of Reconciliation, acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as traditional custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah, where Indigenous Australians have performed age-old ceremonies. We acknowledge and respect their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.



# Strategic Outcome 1

## Transformed Service Systems and Spaces

Maroondah's service systems and spaces will be optimised for the benefit of all children and their families.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 1.1

**Establish Maroondah as a Child Friendly City and Community, where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of public policies, programs and decisions**

- 1.1.1 Develop an implementation plan to establish Maroondah as a Child Friendly City and Community, where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children and young people are an integral part of public policies, programs and decisions
- 1.1.2 As part of Council's commitment to the Victorian Child Safe Standards, ensure there is a clear process in place to meet all legislative requirements

#### Key Direction 1.2

**Strengthen and support the children and family services sector in Maroondah**

- 1.2.1 Explore opportunities to enhance the coordination, collaboration and integration of services across all segments of the children and family service and education sectors in Maroondah

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services	Maternal & Child Health Communications & Engagement Council & Community Planning		Develop
Workplace, People & Culture Community Services	Risk Management		Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health		Community agencies Education services and schools	Develop

## Action Title

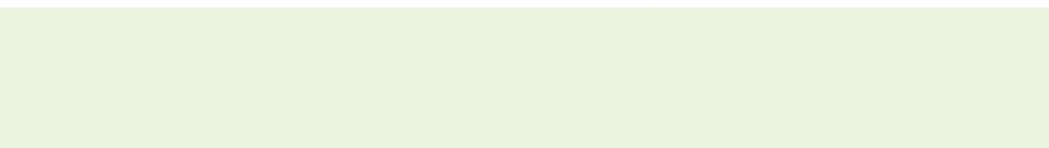
- 1.2.2 Provide local leadership and advocacy in response to sector reforms and initiatives in Maroondah that support the wellbeing and safety of children and their families
- 1.2.3 Support Maroondah’s children and family services sector to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery by undertaking impact assessment, sharing relevant information, and facilitating opportunities to collaborate and coordinate response and recovery activities
- 1.2.4 Work with key stakeholders to explore and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children throughout key childhood transitions, including transitions from Maternal and Child Health to kindergarten; from kindergarten to primary school; and from primary school to secondary school

### Key Direction 1.3

#### **Ensure that Council’s infrastructure and open spaces are well planned and placed to meet the changing needs of Maroondah’s children, their families and service providers**

- 1.3.1 Ensure Council’s community infrastructure and open space strategic documents incorporate the service needs of children, young people and their families in Maroondah
- 1.3.2 Undertake a needs analysis for a range of Council-owned open spaces used for formal and informal BMX, skate and parkour by engaging with both users and non-users of the spaces
- 1.3.3 Provide and develop places and spaces for children aged 0 to 12 years and their families in Maroondah that are child-friendly, safe, accessible, inclusive, fit for purpose and well maintained

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health		Community agencies Education services and schools	Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health Emergency Management		Community agencies Education services and schools	Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health		Community agencies Education services and schools	Facilitate



Assets Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health			Develop
Leisure	Assets Youth & Children's Services Communications & Engagement		Facilitate
Assets Operations	Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health		Deliver

**Action Title**

1.3.4 Work in partnership with stakeholders to plan for the new Children and Families Hub in the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct, as a welcoming space where children and families can come for information, support and referrals to appropriate services

1.3.5 Identify the best locations in Maroondah for adding vegetation to support nature play and bush kinder opportunities, including opportunities to involve children and young people in the process

1.3.6 Conduct walkability assessments to identify opportunities to enhance walking and bike routes to early years facilities, schools and education venues within 20-Minute Neighbourhoods

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Assets Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Communications & Engagement	Community agencies Education services and schools	Facilitate
Strategic Planning & Sustainability Bushland Management Youth & Children's Services		Education services and schools	Develop
Strategic Planning & Sustainability	Youth & Children's Services	Education services and schools	Develop

# 2

## Strategic Outcome 2 Health and Wellbeing

The health, wellbeing and development of all children and their families in Maroondah will be supported and fostered.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 2.1

**Provide accessible local services and opportunities that foster the health, wellbeing and development of children and their families**

2.1.1 Provide universal access to safe, high quality Maternal and Child Health services for all Maroondah children from birth to school age, to support parent and carer capacity to nurture and achieve optimal health, development and wellbeing

2.1.2 Enhance access to support for parents and carers of children in Maroondah

2.1.3 Deliver the Peaceful Kids and Peaceful Parents programs in Maroondah to increase the knowledge and capabilities of children, young people and their families in managing their wellbeing

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Maternal & Child Health		Victorian Government Department Health & Human Services	Deliver
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Customer Service		Develop
Youth & Children's Services		Schools	Deliver

**Action Title**

- 2.1.4 Deliver a suite of workshops and programs in schools and other settings to children aged 10+ that build their knowledge and capabilities regarding health and wellbeing in the target areas of:
- mental health
  - building wellbeing
  - mindfulness
  - stress
  - inclusion
  - relationships
  - leadership
- 2.1.5 Implement the Healthy Achievement Program in relevant Council early education and care services to further develop the services as healthy places for working, learning and living
- 2.1.6 Implement the Be You national mental health initiative to promote and protect positive mental health and wellbeing in children and educators in relevant Council education and care services
- 2.1.7 Provide a range of accessible services and activities that develop the physical health and wellbeing of children and their families in Maroondah
- 2.1.8 Explore methods to increase uptake of vaccinations for children, especially vulnerable groups
- 2.1.9 Explore the expansion of playgroups in Council facilities, including supported playgroups for vulnerable families and nature play playgroups
- 2.1.10 Work in partnership with the Victorian Government to explore funding opportunities to expand and ensure ongoing viability of Maternal and Child Health services for children and families in Maroondah

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services		Schools	Deliver
Youth & Children's Services			Deliver
Youth & Children's Services			Deliver
Leisure	Youth & Children's Services		Deliver
Community Health	Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services		Develop
Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services	Assets	Victorian Government Department Health & Human Services	Develop
Maternal & Child Health		Victorian Government Municipal Association of Victoria	Develop

## Action Title

- 2.1.11 Work in partnership with a broad range of service providers and agencies to develop and deliver services and cultural experiences for children and their families in the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct
- 2.1.12 Continue to deliver school and early years focused active travel programs
- 2.1.13 Develop and deliver arts and cultural experiences for children and their families at sites across Maroondah

## Key Direction 2.2

### **Expand opportunities to support the health, wellbeing and development of children and families in Maroondah experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage**

- 2.2.1 Identify opportunities to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families through greater service integration, collaboration, service innovation and capacity building
- 2.2.2 Continue to provide the Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Service to support infants, children and their parents and carers who are experiencing a period of increased need and could benefit from targeted actions and interventions

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Community Services		Community agencies Education services and schools Arts and cultural groups	Facilitate
Strategic Planning & Sustainability	Local Laws Youth & Children's Services	Education services and schools	Deliver
Arts & Cultural Development Youth & Children's Services		Artists and creatives Arts and cultural groups	Develop Deliver



Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health		Community agencies Education services and schools Maroondah Integrated Kindergartens Association	Develop
Maternal & Child Health		Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services	Deliver

## Action Title

2.2.3 Provide Supported Playgroups for vulnerable children and families, where parents and carers can develop their skills and confidence to support their child's wellbeing and development with the support of a qualified facilitator

2.2.4 Subject to external funding, provide the School Focused Youth Service to support students in upper primary school in Maroondah that are vulnerable to disengagement from education to re-engage in education, training or career pathways

## Key Direction 2.3

### **Increase community capacity to build the health, wellbeing and development of children and their families**

2.3.1 Facilitate learning and development opportunities for professionals that work with children and their families, to further develop their skills and knowledge base and build their capacity to deliver quality services

2.3.2 Work in partnership with the Victorian Government to deliver the Maroondah Positive Education Network, which aims to raise student, staff and community wellbeing, engagement and achievement

2.3.3 Promote the value of nature play and key local places suitable for fostering nature play

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Maternal & Child Health		Community agencies Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services	Deliver
Youth & Children's Services		Victorian Government Department of Education & Training Schools	Deliver

Youth & Children's Services		Education services and schools Community agencies	Deliver
Youth & Children's Services	Council & Community Planning	Victorian Government Department of Education & Training Schools	Support
Youth & Children's Services	Communications & Engagement	Education services and schools	Deliver



# Strategic Outcome 3

## Respect and Inclusion

All children and their families in Maroondah will be respected, safe and actively included.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 3.1

#### **Respect, value and celebrate the diversity of children and their families in Maroondah**

- 3.1.1 Proactively acknowledge and celebrate the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah
- 3.1.2 Work in partnership with culturally and linguistically diverse children, their families and key stakeholders to identify, develop and deliver targeted initiatives that build their sense of belonging, inclusion and connection in Maroondah
- 3.1.3 Commemorate IDAHOBIT Day (International Day Against Homophobia, Biophobia, Interphobia & Transphobia), which both celebrates the LGBTIQ+ people around the world and acknowledges the work that still needs to be done to ensure true inclusion and acceptance within the community
- 3.1.4 Expand Council's digital image library to capture and celebrate the diversity of children, young people and families in Maroondah

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services	Council & Community Planning		Advocate
Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services	Council & Community Planning		Develop Deliver
Council & Community Planning Community Services	Communications & Engagement		Advocate
Communications & Engagement			Deliver

## Action Title

### Key Direction 3.2

#### Enhance accessibility and inclusion for all children and their families in Maroondah

- 3.2.1 Review the inclusivity and accessibility of Council in-person and online services for children aged 0 to 12 years and their families and implement strategies to improve this, particularly for those who identify as LGBTIQ+; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; culturally and linguistically diverse; or who are living with a disability or experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage
- 3.2.2 Provide key information on Council services for children and their families in a range of languages other than English
- 3.2.3 Develop LGBTIQ+ inclusive education opportunities for parents and carers engaged with Maroondah's Maternal and Child Health service around breaking down gender stereotypes and talking to children about gender and rainbow families.

### Key Direction 3.3

#### Support children and their families to develop and maintain safe, healthy and respectful relationships

- 3.3.1 In partnership with Eastern Community Legal Centre and partners, provide opportunities for early intervention for people with children experiencing family violence
- 3.3.2 Work in partnership with key stakeholders to explore and respond to the findings of the *Royal Commission into Family Violence* at a local level
- 3.3.3 Work with partners of the *Together for Equality and Respect Strategy - Preventing Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East (2017-2021)* to prevent violence against women in Maroondah, including participation in the '16 days of activism' campaign and the #TogetherForRespectAtHome campaign

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Customer Service Communications & Engagement		Develop
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health Community Health	Communications & Engagement		Deliver
Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services			Develop

Maternal & Child Health		Eastern Community Legal Centre	Deliver
Maternal & Child Health Youth & Children's Services		Community agencies	Facilitate
Council & Community Planning	Communications & Engagement Youth & Children's Services		Facilitate



# Strategic Outcome 4

## Informed and Connected Communities

All children, their families and the professionals who work with them will be informed and connected.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 4.1

**Effectively promote and provide accessible information about the range of services and opportunities available to children and their families in Maroondah**

- 4.1.1 Develop an annual communication plan for promoting Council's services for children, young people and families and sharing relevant information with the community and sector
- 4.1.2 Enhance the content on Council's website to support families to more easily access information about services, activities and key topics of interest for children and families in Maroondah

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Communications & Engagement Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Community Health Leisure Customer Service	Community agencies Education services and schools	Develop
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health Communications & Engagement	Community Health Leisure Council & Community Planning Customer Service	Community agencies Education services and schools	Develop

## Action Title

### Key Direction 4.2

#### **Promote opportunities to build community connection and a sense of belonging for children and their families in Maroondah**

4.2.1 Facilitate the delivery of events and activities for children and their families that promote community connection and a sense of belonging, including intergenerational and intercultural initiatives

4.2.2 Integrate public art into Council infrastructure across Maroondah as a method of promoting belonging and connection for children and their families

### Key Direction 4.3

#### **Facilitate coordination, networking and information sharing opportunities for professionals who work with children and their families in Maroondah**

4.3.1 Explore the expansion of networking and information sharing opportunities that support professionals across the Maroondah child and family sector to connect and share knowledge, skills and experience

4.3.2 Establish a Middle Years Working Group for schools and services in the Maroondah child and youth sectors, to explore how they can work together to support children and young people in the middle years (8 to 12 years old)

4.3.3 Support the facilitation of a HOPE (Head of Positive Education) Leader Community of Practice across local schools to enable staff to support one another and share ideas regarding the implementation of a common language of wellbeing in Maroondah schools

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Arts & Cultural Development Aged & Disability Services Leisure	Eastern Regional Libraries	Facilitate
Arts & Cultural Development	Youth & Children's Services		Deliver

Youth & Children's Services	Maternal & Child Health	Community agencies Education services and schools	Develop
Youth & Children's Services		Community agencies Schools	Develop
Youth & Children's Services		Victorian Government Department of Education & Training Schools	Support

# 5

## Strategic Outcome 5 Valuing the Voices of Children

All children and their families are equal citizens of Maroondah who are valued and respected.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 5.1

**Advocate for children to be treated as equal stakeholders in the community, whose knowledge, experience and views are valued and respected**

5.1.1 Explore new initiatives and opportunities to actively increase the profile of children aged 0 to 12 years as valued and equal members of the Maroondah community

5.1.2 Deliver a range of opportunities to develop, promote and showcase the creative work of children and young people

5.1.3 Deliver the Junior SWAT (Student Wellbeing Action Teams) program tailored for students in upper primary school, to upskill and empower children to create meaningful change and increase the wellbeing of other children in Maroondah

5.1.4 Continue to be a member of the Eastern Alliance for Sustainable Learning to boost education about sustainability, environment and indigenous culture in our early years and schools and foster leadership and citizenship by children

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health			Develop
Youth & Children's Services Arts & Cultural Development Karralyka			Deliver
Youth & Children's Services			Develop Deliver
Strategic Planning & Sustainability			Facilitate

## Action Title

### Key Direction 5.2

#### **Actively and effectively engage and consult with children and their families on matters that affect them and their communities**

- 5.2.1 Explore and implement innovative strategies and programs that promote meaningful engagement between Council and children of all ages, abilities and backgrounds
- 5.2.2 Proactively and effectively engage a diverse range of children and their families in the development and implementation of Council services, facilities, spaces, projects, strategies and plans that affect them and their communities
- 5.2.3 Build the capacity of employees to provide best practice engagement methodology and strategies to engage with children and their families
- 5.2.4 Support children and their families to represent themselves and their communities on a range of relevant committees, panels, groups or networks in Maroondah

### Key Direction 5.3

#### **Advocate for the needs and aspirations of all children in Maroondah**

- 5.3.1 Ensure the needs and aspirations of children aged 0 to 12 years and their families are addressed in the development and implementation of Council services, facilities, spaces, projects, strategies and plans that affect them and their communities

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services	Communications & Engagement Maternal & Child Health		Develop
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health All relevant service areas	Communications & Engagement		Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Communications & Engagement	Workplace, People & Culture		Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Council & Community Planning Communications & Engagement			Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health All relevant service areas			Facilitate

# 6

## Strategic Outcome 6 Education and Learning for Life

All children and their families in Maroondah will have opportunities for high-quality education and learning throughout life.

### Action Title

#### Key Direction 6.1

**Equip children and their families with the knowledge and capabilities to successfully navigate life's opportunities and challenges**

- 6.1.1 Provide a range of high quality, innovative education programs and sessions for parents and carers that meet local community need
- 6.1.2 Support children and their families to develop healthy coping skills that help them to be resilient through difficult times, including the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Key Direction 6.2

**Enhance opportunities for children in Maroondah to access high-quality local education and care services that meet community needs**

- 6.2.1 Provide high quality and inclusive early childhood education and care services that address the identified needs of the Maroondah community in an affordable and flexible way

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Community Health Aged & Disability Services		Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Maternal & Child Health	Council & Community Planning		Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services Leisure		Victorian Government Department of Education & Training	Deliver

**Action Title**

6.2.2 Support the Maroondah Integrated Kindergartens Association central enrolment system for sessional kindergartens in Maroondah

6.2.3 Undertake municipal-level kindergarten planning to help ensure that all children in Maroondah can access high quality local early years education

6.2.4 Work in partnership with the Victorian Government to plan for and support the rollout of funded three-year-old kindergarten in Maroondah

Responsible service area	Supporting service areas	External partners	Council's role
Youth & Children's Services		Maroondah Integrated Kindergartens Association	Support
Youth & Children's Services	Assets	Victorian Government Department of Education & Training	Facilitate
Youth & Children's Services	Assets	Victorian Government Department of Education & Training	Facilitate





Spot Says Goodnight

### **To contact Council**

- phone 1300 88 22 33 or (03) 9298 4598
- SMS: 0480 020 200
- visit our website at [www.maroondah.vic.gov.au](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au)
- email [maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au](mailto:maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au)

### **Translating and Interpreter Service**

13 14 50

### **National Relay Service (NRS)**

13 36 77

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