

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Information and Resource Guide for families

Southern Melbourne Area

Dear families,

The Department of Education recognises and pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their ancestors and the Elders past, present and future from the different First Nations across this country.

We acknowledge the importance of connection to land, culture, spirituality, ancestry, family and community for the wellbeing of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

This Information and resource guide has been created in partnership by the Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch and Koorie Engagement Support Officer Team, to provide local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families with an understanding of the various services and supports available within the local community.

We hope you find the information within this guide useful. You are welcome and encouraged to make contact with one of our Koorie Engagement Support Officers if you require further information or assistance.

Koorie Engagement Support Officers

The role of the Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) is to engage and support Aboriginal students, their families, teachers & school staff. KESOs are members of the Aboriginal community with an understanding of Aboriginal culture and history.

Supports Available

The KESOs provide a range of supports and services available to early childhood service providers, schools and Koorie families including –

- Aboriginal Community Understanding and Safety Training
- Resources and advice to incorporate Koorie Perspectives into the Education Curriculum
- Resources and advice to create culturally inclusive learning environments
- Support to improve child/student wellbeing, attendance, and engagement

To access KESO support, please contact your local KESO directly, or email the Southern Melbourne Koorie Education team at sevr.koorie.sm@education.vic.gov.au.

Southern Melbourne Area KESO Contact Details



Sharina Ladharam

Area – City of Greater Dandenong and Casey North

Phone – 0439 678 373

Email – sharina.ladharam@education.vic.gov.au



Peter Dye

Area – Cardinia and Doveton College

Phone – 0439 957 714

Email – peter.dye@education.vic.gov.au



Travis Gardner

Area – Casey Central and Casey North

Phone – 0457 527 206

Email – travis.gardner@education.vic.gov.au



Narelle Walker

Acting Koorie Education Coordinator

Area – Casey South

Phone – 0457 190 945

Email – narelle.walker@education.vic.gov.au



Southern Melbourne Area
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Information and Resources Guide



Education
and Training

Kindergarten Funding Support

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) is Department of Education and Training funding subsidy program which provides three-year-old eligible children, with access to 15 hours a week of free or low-cost kindergarten.

ESK Eligibility Criteria

ESK is available to children who are at least **three years old by 30 April** in the year they are enrolled to attend the kindergarten program and either -

- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Are known to Child Protection
- Are from a refugee or asylum seeker background

How to access ESK

ESK can be accessed by families in sessional kindergartens and within long day care services offering a kindergarten program.

Sessional Kindergarten Program

In most cases, accessing ESK in a sessional kindergarten will be **free**. Children will be enrolled to attend the service for **15 hours per week** according to a set timetable. Kindergarten enrolments are made by contacting the relevant local government central kindergarten enrolment service.

Local Government	Website	Email
City of Casey	https://www.casey.vic.gov.au	kinderenrolment@casey.vic.gov.au
City of Greater Dandenong	https://www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au	childrenservadminsUPPORT@cgd.vic.gov.au
Cardinia Shire	https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au	mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au

Long Day Care Kindergarten Program

In most cases, accessing ESK in a Long Day Care service will not be fully subsidised by the Department of Education. Depending on how many days the child is enrolled to attend the service, families may incur a cost. Services can be contacted directly for enrolment and service tours.

Services offering a kindergarten program can be found by using the Departments [Find A Kinder webpage](#).

For more information about the Early Start Kindergarten program, refer to the [Department of Education website](#).



Local Community Organisations and Services

The Southern Melbourne Area has a range of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and mainstream services that are tailored specifically to meet the needs of Koorie youth and families. These services are led by Aboriginal people and have strong cultural and community connections. Families accessing culturally secure services will be supported to participate in services and to link in with community connections to increase engagement in Aboriginal culture.

Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd (DDACL)

The Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd (DDACL) is a community-controlled organisation with programs that promote wellbeing and social engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Services Available

- Family Support Services
- Aged Care and Disability Services
- Aboriginal Best Start

Contact Details

Address: 62 Stud Road Dandenong

Phone: (03) 8902 9700

Website: www.ddacl.org.au

Email: info@ddacl.org.au



DANDENONG & DISTRICT
ABORIGINES CO-OPERATIVE LTD.

Bunurong Health Service

In partnership with Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd (DDACL), Bunurong Health provide a wide range of health care services tailored for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Services Available

- Medical appointments
- Aboriginal Health Checks
- Mental Health Care Plans
- Koorie Maternity Services
- Social & Emotional Wellbeing Outreach Supports
- Partnership referrals to medical specialists including Paediatrics, Dental Services, Optometry Services and Physiotherapy

Contact Details

Address: 3 Carroll

Avenue, Dandenong

Phone: (03) 8902 9700



Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place – Doveton

The Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place is a dedicated space for the local Aboriginal community to drop in, engage in programs and activities and connect with services and their community.

Services Available

- Yan-yan Yaruk 10+ Youth Group
- Deadly Futures Homework Group
- Yirram Barring Youth Morning Program
- Family Playgroup
- School Holiday Programs
- Bunurong Sports Club
- Elders Arts & Yarning, and Gardening Group
- Youth Mentoring and Youth Case Management

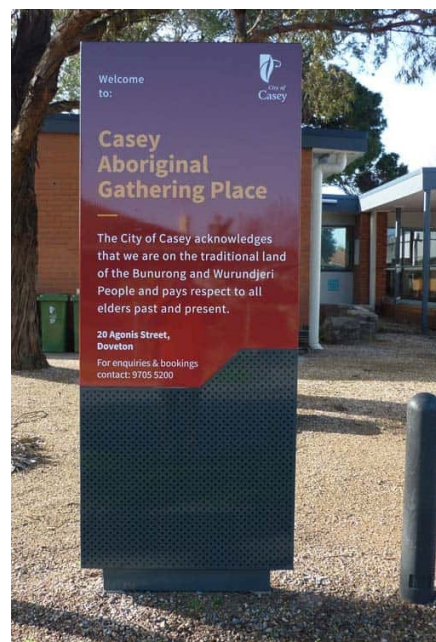
Contact Details

Aboriginal Programs & Partnership Officer: Kiah Mills

Address: 20 Agonis Street, Doveton

Phone: (03) 9705 5200

Email: kimills@casey.vic.gov.au



Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne

The Royal Botanic Gardens (RBGV), Cranbourne offers a natural bushland featuring the plants and ecosystems of south-east Australia. The gardens run an early year's playgroup program specially developed for Aboriginal children and their parents/carers, as well as a range of Indigenous programs tailored for early childhood excursions.

Programs Available

Balee Koolin Bubup Playgroup - an early year's learning program specially developed for Aboriginal children and their parents/carers set in the bushland at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. Each week, bush playgroup participants engage in a series of play and nature-based activities involving Aboriginal storytelling, bush exploration, song, traditional dance and music, and the learning of the local Aboriginal language and culture. [Click here](#), to learn more.

Early Childhood Excursion Programs - a range of early childhood tailored excursion programs, some of which are designed to explore Aboriginal culture and provide opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of traditional owners and ways. [Click here](#), to learn more.

Contact Details

Address: Ballarto Road and Botanic Drive, Cranbourne

Phone: (03) 5990 2200

Email: rbgc@rbg.vic.gov.au

Website: www.rbg.vic.gov.au



Royal
Botanic
Gardens
Victoria



Southern Melbourne Area
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Information and Resources Guide



Education
and Training

Monash Health's Aboriginal Health Services

The Monash Health Aboriginal Health Service provides a free health support and care service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in hospital and at home.

Their service provides cultural, emotional, and spiritual support to ensure Koorie clients stay connected, healthy and well. Additionally, they provide transport assistance to clients for appointments and assistance getting home from hospital.

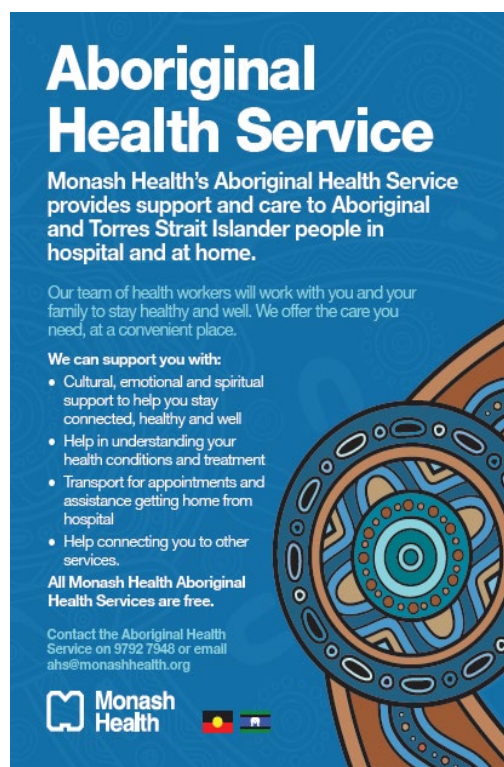
Services Available

- Access and Support Health Care Worker
- Hospital Aboriginal Liaison Officer
- Dental Care
- Transport Assistance
- Healthy Koorie Kids Program (for children in Out of Home Care)

Contact Details

Email: ahs@monashhealth.org

Website: www.monashhealth.org



Aboriginal Health Service

Monash Health's Aboriginal Health Service provides support and care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in hospital and at home.

Our team of health workers will work with you and your family to stay healthy and well. We offer the care you need, at a convenient place.



We can support you with:

- Cultural, emotional and spiritual support to help you stay connected, healthy and well
- Help in understanding your health conditions and treatment
- Transport for appointments and assistance getting home from hospital
- Help connecting you to other services.

All Monash Health Aboriginal Health Services are free.

Contact the Aboriginal Health Service on 9792 7948 or email ahs@monashhealth.org

Monash Health

Family Violence and Healing Supports

Djirra

Djirra provides practical support to all Aboriginal women and particularly to Aboriginal women who are currently experiencing family violence or have in the past.

Phone: 1800 105 303

Website: <https://djirra.org.au/>

Dardi Munwurro

Dardi Munwurro (Strong Spirit) is a specialist Aboriginal family violence service. Dardi run Men's Healing and Behaviour Change programs, and Youth programs.

Phone: (03) 8456 3044

Website: <https://www.dardimunwurro.com.au/>

Crisis and Counselling 24 Hours Support

Yarning SafeNStrong

Free and confidential support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who need to have a yarn with someone about their wellbeing.

24 Hour Freecall: 1800 959 563

Dardi Munwurro - Brother to Brother 24 Hour Crisis Line

For Aboriginal men who need someone to talk to about relationship issues, family violence, parenting, drug and alcohol issues or who are struggling to cope for other reasons.

24 Hour Freecall: 1800 435 799.



Other Aboriginal Community Organisations & Services

Organisation	Services Available	Contact Details
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinship and Foster Carers Support • Koorie Cultural Support Program • Family Coaching and Restorations • Aboriginal family decision making • Playgroups (Various Locations) • Windook Dad's Group (Dandenong) • Family Violence Therapeutic Counselling 	Southern VACCA – Dandenong Office: Level 2, 1-7 Langhorne Street, Dandenong VIC 3175 Phone: (03) 9108 3500 Website: www.vacca.org
Victorian Aboriginal Health Services (VAHS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical clinic • Dental • Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic • Speech Therapy • Paediatric Clinic • Family Counselling • Men's Health and Wellbeing 	Address: 186 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy Phone: (03) 9419 3000 Email: info@vahs.org.au Website: www.vahs.org.au
Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI)	VAEAI is the peak Koorie community organisation for education and training in Victoria. They represent the Koorie Community in relation to education policy development and strategic programming at the local, state and national levels.	Phone: (03) 9481 0800 Email: vaeai@vaeai.org.au Website: www.vaeai.org.au
Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)	The LAECGs support development of teaching and learning to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and bring expertise to Koorie education issues across all sectors. Membership to the LAECG is open to all members of the Koorie Community who have an interest and commitment to Koorie education. Southern Melbourne Chair: Kylie Bell Co-Chair: Jamone Maynard	Email: vaeai@vaeai.org.au Website: www.vaeai.org.au
Koorie Heritage Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koorie art and culture collection • Oral History Program and a Reference Library • Guided walking tours • School cultural competency training and programs • Koorie Family History Service 	Address: Federation Square, Cnr Swanston & Flinders Streets Melbourne Phone: (03) 8662 6300 Email: info@korieheritagetrust.com Website: www.korieheritagetrust.com.au

