



Merri-bek
City Council

Children, Young People and Families Implementation Plan 2022-2025



Context

The Implementation Plan has been developed to ensure the effective delivery of Council's Children, Young People and Families Plan 2021-2025.

The Implementation Plan details the actions that will be undertaken to achieve the Children, Young People and Families Plan's vision of a community where children, young people and families are healthy, resilient, empowered, safe and belong.

The actions correspond to the three outcome areas in the Children, Young People and Families Plan:

1. Inclusive City and Communities
2. Improved Health and Wellbeing
3. Lifelong Learning and Participation.

Developing the actions

The actions have been developed through feedback from children, young people, families and community partners on what Council can do to improve health, wellbeing, educational and employment outcomes. Local evidence and data was also used to identify areas for focus.

Actions in practice

Completing the actions will require collaboration with community partners, children, young people and families. This will include children, young people and family's opinions being sought on matters that impact them, partnerships with community organisations and state government.

While most of the actions are resourced, state government funding and other grants may be needed to ensure all the actions can be completed.

Monitoring and reporting

The Implementation Plan will be reported on each year to measure progress on the actions. The annual report will highlight achievements and identify where additional efforts are required.

Implementation Plan key terms

Objective	High level goal of what Council aims to achieve.
Action	What Council will do.
Activities	How the action will be achieved.

Further information

Contact Council's Early Years and Youth Branch on 9240 1111 or visit www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community

Merri-bek will be an inclusive and accessible city and community where children, young people and families engage in activities, programs and services. There will be respect, acknowledgement and celebration of diverse cultures and identities, recognising the benefits diversity brings to the community. Places and spaces will be accessible and meet the needs of children, young people and families.



Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community			
Objective	Action	Activities	
1.1 Develop inclusive and accessible activities, programs and services.	1.1.1 Ensure programs are welcoming and accessible.	Build capability of early years services to provide inclusive services for diverse children and families.	
		Explore improvements to child care and kindergarten central registration system to ensure a streamlined registration process.	
		Expand kindergarten central enrolment to include three-year-old Kindergarten.	
	1.1.2 Collaborate with service providers through a collective impact approach to meet the needs of children, young people and families.	Identify and utilise suitable spaces for young people in Merri-bek with a focus on the northern suburbs.	
		Deliver Supported Playgroups with a focus on the northern suburbs.	
		Engage children and young people to inform program planning, development and delivery of core activities at Glenroy Community Hub, Fawkner Library and other settings as appropriate.	
1.1.3 Ensure that services, programs and policies comply with Council's requirements under the Gender Equality Act 2020.	Support staff to build capability to integrate gender impact assessments in their planning for review or development of services, programs and policies with a direct and significant impact on the public.		
1.2 Increase opportunities for social cohesion.	1.2.1 Increase opportunities for intergenerational activities and programs.	Explore, plan, design and deliver local intergenerational projects, place activations and activities.	
		1.2.2 Support Aboriginal community members to participate and feel included in services and programs.	Promote and provide 'Acknowledgement of Country' signs for all early years services and Council buildings.
			Deliver a pilot 'Welcome Baby to Country' event.
	1.2.3 Ensure children, young people and families have access to a flexible and accessible community grants program.	Embed indigenous perspectives in early years programs.	
		Engage children, young people and families in the Community Grants Review.	
		Promote and support uptake of the Merri-bek Youth Initiatives Grant and other funding opportunities.	

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community		
Objective	Action	Activities
1.3 Progress the child friendly cities and communities initiatives.	1.3.1 Improve the effectiveness of initiatives that support children to participate in civic life.	Promote and support Merri-bek organisations to adopt the Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter.
		Explore the use of Child Impact Assessments in Council decision making.
1.4 Develop and activate child, young people and family-friendly spaces.	1.4.1 Create opportunities for families to connect and strengthen communities.	Identify and secure suitable and affordable facilities for the delivery of community playgroups.
		Deliver an affordable, inclusive and safe school holiday program to primary school aged children and families.
		Deliver literacy programs that meet the needs of a culturally diverse community.
	1.4.2 Involve children, young people and families in place making projects.	Engage children, young people and families in pre-project Place Making consultation.
	1.4.3 Oxygen Youth Space will diversify community use.	Explore alternative use options including specialised private hire.
	1.4.4 Ensure spaces and places are child, young people and family-friendly.	Advocate for the creation of and access to new and existing youth spaces in Fawkner and Brunswick and other similar redevelopment projects.
		Include children and families in the design stage of early years infrastructure projects.
Activate the youth space and maker space at Glenroy Community Hub.		
1.5 Provide infrastructure which meets the needs of the growing population.	1.5.1 Invest in integrated facilities.	Explore opportunities for co-located hub models for integrated early years services, including child care, kindergarten, maternal and child health and playgroup programs and youth spaces and programs.
	1.5.2 Invest in early years infrastructure to support the implementation of three-year-old Kindergarten from 2022.	Explore co-investment opportunities with DET to support three-year-old Kindergarten and implement the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan (KISP).
	1.5.3 Provide quality early years facilities including maternal and child health, parent groups, playgroups, child care and kindergarten.	Develop and implement the Early Years Infrastructure Plan.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing

Merri-bek will have increased participation in health and wellbeing programs with a focus on early intervention and prevention. Children, young people and families will have increased knowledge of support services and how to access them. Partner organisations will be supported to strengthen referral pathways and collaborate to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families. Merri-bek remains committed to the safety of children and young people.



Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing		
Objective	Action	Activities
2.1 Increase knowledge of support services and referral pathways.	2.1.1 Improve service awareness and collaboration between local agencies.	Convene service provider networks and facilitate information sharing.
		Provide families with information about early years services.
	2.1.2 Establish Merri-bek Youth Services as the first point of contact for young people and community.	Develop and implement the 'first contact point' campaign across the community to raise and promote the profile of Youth Services and simplify access to information and support.
		Deliver the Data and Information Project through the collection, updating, maintaining and sharing of information on services, programs and opportunities available for young people.
2.1.3 Provide assertive outreach and case management support to young people experiencing vulnerability.	Invest in the ongoing provision and expansion of the 'YHOP' program in Merri-bek.	
	2.1.4 Increase knowledge of renting in Merri-bek and capacity of renters.	Promote the new Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 with young people and families to increase knowledge of rights and responsibilities.
2.2 Increase engagement and participation in preventative health and wellbeing programs.	2.2.1 Raise awareness and support wellbeing, positive social movements and campaigns which impact children, young people and families.	Produce an annual calendar of events and coordinate resources to promote and implement key events for children, young people and families.
	2.2.2 Increase immunisation rates above the Victorian State average.	Develop communications plan to deliver a Council awareness raising campaign on the importance of immunisations.
		Deliver outreach immunisation session.
	2.2.3 Develop pilot parenting groups for families with diverse needs.	Explore options to develop parenting groups for families with multiple children.
Explore the need for the establishment of a young parent's group.		
	2.2.4 Establish and deliver an Early Years Outreach bus model.	Explore funding opportunities to transform a bus to deliver outreach early years services.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing		
Objective	Action	Activities
	2.2.5 Provide support for families in prenatal stage of pregnancy.	Explore funding opportunities to provide pre-natal parenting and coaching programs for families.
	2.2.6 Support fathers in their parenting role.	Assist to recruit new dads to Dads Groups.
		Promote, collaborate and continue Dads Group partnership.
		Plan and deliver the 'Dads with a Pram' community event.
	2.2.7 Increase knowledge and participation of children and families in early years services.	Deliver a targeted outreach approach to increase access and participation in early years services such as maternal child health, child care, kindergarten and playgroups.
	2.2.8 Increase breastfeeding rates.	Expand the Infant Feeding Support program to Southern Merri-bek.
	2.2.9 Implement the INFANT nutrition program.	Deliver the INFANT program within MCH new parent groups.
	2.2.10 Implement the Sleep and Settling program.	Deliver 'sleep and settling' community sessions with families.
	2.2.11 Ensure data and research is accessible to partner organisations.	Refresh the Early Years and Youth Data Profile.
	2.2.12 Ensure data required for service planning is accurate and reflects local understanding.	Review data discrepancies between the reported number of births and fertility rate at local (council), state and federal Government levels, and their implications for population forecasts and service planning.
2.3 Advocate for increased services to support mental health and resilience.	2.3.1 Young people are connected with organisations that provide support.	Provide information and referral to young people.
	2.3.2 Identify and advocate for service gaps.	Respond to the emerging needs of children, young people and families with a focus on COVID-19 recovery.
	2.3.3 Continued growth in partnerships with community organisations.	Strengthen partnerships and promotion of specialised services, programs and activities and support co-location of services.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing		
Objective	Action	Activities
2.4 Provide opportunities for participation in physical and creative activities.	2.4.1 Children, young people and families will have access to accessible aquatic and leisure facilities and services.	Engage children, young people and families in the development of the new 'Leisure and Aquatics Strategy'.
	2.4.2 Improve access to inclusive sports and physical activity across Merri-bek and its facilities.	Engage children, young people and families in the review of the Sports Grounds Allocation Policy.
		Engage children, young people and families in Sports and Recreation pre-project infrastructure design and consultation.
		Develop and roll-out the Ride and Stride active transport program to primary school students.
	2.4.3 Engage children and young people in active travel and adopt sustainable transport modes.	Encourage primary and high schools to host event days such as Ride2School Day, Walk Safely to School Day and 'Walktober' to encourage students to regularly use physically active travel options to get to school.
2.4.4 Increase opportunities for children, young people and families to participate in arts and culture.	Engage children, young people and families in the development of a new Arts and Culture Strategy.	
	Deliver family-friendly exhibitions and public programs to increase the participation of families and children in arts and culture.	
2.5 Collaborate with partner organisations to increase safety in the community and home.	2.5.1 Advocate for the Kidsafe program to be funded for Merri-bek families.	Explore costing of the Kidsafe program and trial the program for 12 months free of charge to families.
	2.5.2 Collaborate with primary schools and kindergartens to increase road safety.	Deliver the road crossing safety program to primary schools.
		Pilot the road crossing safety program with kindergartens on school sites.
	2.5.3 Collaborate with early years services to increase gender equity.	Provide training in challenging and dispelling gender norms in the early years.
Promote and support programs which increase gender equity in the early years.		
2.5.4 Collaborate with family violence services to promote children's safety and wellbeing.	Continue to convene the Merri-bek Family Violence Network and share information about support programs for children, young people and families.	

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation

Merri-bek will have high quality learning opportunities from birth to adulthood. This will include children learning through play in the early years and progressing to formal schooling and beyond. Children, young people and families will be supported when transitioning between education settings such as starting primary school and moving to secondary school. There will be opportunities for young people to engage in further training and pathways to employment. Children and young people will be involved in decisions that impact them. They will be consulted in age-appropriate ways and their opinions will be valued.



Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation		
Objective	Action	Activities
3.1 Involve children, young people and families in decision making on matters that impact them.	3.1.1 Children and young people are engaged when decisions are made that affect them across Council and community.	Facilitate the Youth Ambassadors Program and support young people to participate in civic life and Council decision making.
		Develop an organisational framework that provides children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development and review of Council strategies, plans and projects.
		Create opportunities for children to be involved in decision making.
		Explore the delivery of a Merri-bek Children's Summit.
	3.1.2 Develop opportunities for children and young people to learn more about Council and civic participation.	Include information about Council in school engagement presentations.
		Include child-friendly information about Council on website which aligns with primary school curriculum on civics and citizenship.
	3.1.3 Empower children and young people to co-design and deliver projects that matter to them.	Explore and support opportunities for child and youth-led projects.
		Deliver the Merri-bek Freeza program.
	3.1.4 Empower Merri-bek's young people to take action on climate change.	Support and resource the Merri-bek Student Climate Network.
		Facilitate and support the implementation of an annual youth focused Climate Initiative.
Partner in the delivery of the North West Communities School Summit.		
3.2 Increase participation in learning and education from birth to adulthood.	3.2.1 Support the role of parents as educators and provide them with the tools, resources and information to raise their children.	Promote and deliver community Parent Information Sessions.
		Increase the delivery of evidence-based parenting group programs such as Circle of Security and Solihull.

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation		
Objective	Action	Activities
	3.2.2 Support children’s transition to primary and secondary school.	Promote and facilitate the Merri-bek Transition Network with early years services and primary schools.
		Develop and pilot activities to support the transition from primary school to secondary school.
	3.2.3 Support children and young people with homework programs.	Partner with organisations to deliver and expand community-based homework support programs.
	3.2.4 Support young people to remain engaged in learning.	Support the delivery of the Operation Newstart Program.
3.3 Collaborate with education providers to support quality settings.	3.3.1 Build stronger partnerships with primary and secondary schools across Merri-bek.	Deliver an annual Merri-bek Principals’ Forum with primary and secondary schools.
		Deliver in-school presentations and activities to build relationships with students and teachers to raise awareness of Council services.
	3.3.2 Build high quality early years education and care services.	Plan and deliver early years professional development training.
		Facilitate opportunities for information sharing and peer support through convening early years networks.
3.3.3 Enable teachers to meet, share and collaborate on sustainability initiatives.	Deliver a professional development and networking event with teachers and early years educators focused on sustainability.	
3.4 Increase opportunities for training and employment pathways.	3.4.1 Young people will be offered employment pathway programs in partnership with industry-based training providers.	Partner with organisations to deliver training and employment programs that explore career planning and lead to employment outcomes.
	3.4.2 Young people will have opportunities to gain work experience across Council.	Review Council’s current experience, volunteer and apprenticeship/ traineeship approach and identify opportunities for improvement. Develop a proposal to implement the opportunities identified as part of the review and implement agreed changes.
		Collaborate with local secondary schools and tertiary institutions to provide placement opportunities.

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation		
Objective	Action	Activities
	3.4.3 Support the New Graduates Program in Maternal and Child Health.	Provide mentoring and regular meetings to debrief and support new Maternal and Child Health graduates.
	3.4.4 Young people will be connected to local entry level employment opportunities.	Explore the development and implementation of a 'jobs fair' with partners.
	3.4.5 Provide suitably skilled young people one-off paid work opportunities where possible and appropriate.	Engage young people as contractors across Council and community.
	3.4.6 Youth Businesses will be targeted to register on Council's Local Supplier Database and promoted across Council to improve their procurement opportunities.	Engage youth businesses and educate Council staff in the 'Social and Local Procurement Project' or successor project.
	3.4.7 Collaborate with stakeholders across the region to improve employment outcomes for young people.	Participate and support the Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce and Jobs for Youth campaign.
	3.4.8 Deliver the Jobs Victoria Advocates program.	Support young people to assist them finding training and employment opportunities.