

Ballarat Community Health

# Community Health - Health Promotion Plan 2025-2029



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### Acknowledgement of Country

Ballarat Community Health acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands, air and waterways on which we live and work, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin nation, whose cultural practices have sustained this Country for thousands of years.

We recognise and value the continuation of the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of First Nations' Peoples and we pay our respects to Elders past and present, as well as all First Nations' peoples.

We are also committed to the national agreement to Closing the Gap, working together to overcome the inequality experienced by First Nations' Peoples and creating opportunities for Community to thrive.



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## Introducing our Health Promotion Plan 2025-2029

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) is one of 24 stand-alone community health services in Victoria. We deliver Community Health – Health Promotion (CH-HP) funded activities across the City of Ballarat and the northern region of the Golden Plains Shire. In addition, we collaborate with health organisations and other key stakeholders in the local government areas of Pyrenees, Moorabool and Hepburn to support initiatives that align with BCH's health promotion priorities.

Advancing the health and wellbeing of our community calls for a collaborative, evidence-based and equity-driven approach. Our 2025–2029 Plan reinforces our commitment to fostering healthy environments, reducing health inequities and empowering individuals and communities to thrive.

Grounded in our Practice Principles and informed by local, regional and state health priorities, this plan builds on strong key setting engagement and cross-sector partnerships. It reflects a shared vision for a healthier future and provides a framework for action through our Annual Action Plans.

By responding to community needs and leveraging partner strengths, we aim to deliver impactful and sustainable health promotion initiatives that make a real difference in people's lives.

Our priority areas, and subsequent Action Plan, have been shaped by the CH-HP Program Guidelines, local *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans*, the *Grampians Region Population Health Plan 2023–2029* and extensive community and stakeholder consultation.

We are proud to present our *Community Health – Health Promotion Plan 2025 - 2029*.



## Our Purpose

To create a thriving community where everyone can achieve and sustain optimal health and wellbeing. Through partnerships and collaborative action, we foster supportive environments, promote equity and deliver innovative initiatives that improve health outcomes and empower individuals and communities to live well.

## Our Practice Principles

Our work is informed by a set of practice principles which align with the CH-HP Program Guidelines and the 2025-2029 priorities of the Australian Health Promotion Association.

- **Equity-Driven**
  - We apply an intersectional approach to address health inequities that are socially produced, systemic and avoidable.
- **Evidence-Informed**
  - Our programs are grounded in evidence and practice experience to maximise community health outcomes. We continuously evaluate quality and impact and monitor progress through reliable measures.
- **Settings Based**
  - We deliver place-based health and wellbeing initiatives across diverse settings to maximise reach and impact, engaging communities where they live, learn, work, and play.
- **Systems Thinking**
  - We use systems thinking to understand complex public health issues and guide effective, informed interventions.
- **Collaborative Partnerships**
  - Partnerships are central to our approach, enabling us to expand our reach and impact through strategic alignment with state, regional and local priorities.

## Settings

Settings-based approaches use everyday environments, where we live, learn, work and play, as catalysts for collective action to improve health and wellbeing. These approaches target the determinants of health to drive system-level change. Our Annual Action Plans will focus on the following key settings:

<p><b>Early Childhood Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kindergartens</li><li>• Long Day Care Centres</li><li>• Early Years Services</li></ul> <p><b>Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Services</b></p>	<p><b>Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primary</li><li>• Secondary</li><li>• P-12</li><li>• Specialist</li><li>• Flexible Learning Options</li></ul>
<p><b>Sport and Recreation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport and recreation facilities</li><li>• Sporting clubs</li></ul>	<p><b>Community Places</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ballarat Community Health</li><li>• Community organisations</li></ul>

## Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships are a core element of our Practice Principles and are vital to our integrated efforts to improve health and wellbeing. Our current partners include:

- City of Ballarat and Golden Plains Shire
- Women's Health Grampians
- Grampians Health - Public Health Unit and Ballarat Dental Services
- Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)
- headspace Ballarat
- Youth Law Ballarat
- Victorian Department of Education – Respectful Relationships, Safe Schools and Secondary School Nurse Teams

- Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)
- Victoria Police
- Ambulance Victoria
- Monash University and Federation University
- Peak bodies - Oral Health Victoria, Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS), Cancer Council Victoria, Quit Victoria, Foodbank Victoria and Sexual Health Victoria

In addition to our partners listed above, we work also collaboratively with a range of other local service providers, community organisations and community groups.

## Alignment to State, Regional and Local Plans for Collective Impact

This Plan aligns with key prevention plans at the local, regional and state levels, including the:

- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027
- Wellbeing in Victoria: A Strategy to Promote Good Mental Health 2025-2035
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures
- CH-HP Program Guidelines 2023-2025
- Grampians Region Population Health Catchment Plan 2023-2029
- City of Ballarat Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2031
- Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2025-2029

Aligning with local, regional and state plans strengthens our collective impact on shared health priorities by maximising resources, fostering collaboration and ensuring our efforts contribute meaningfully to broader health and wellbeing outcomes.

BCH is also a proud member of ARRCH, the Alliance of Rural and Regional Community Health. Established in 2022, the focus of ARRCH is to reduce health inequity in rural and regional Victoria by addressing the social determinants of health. Currently overseen by our partners at Bendigo Community Health Services, BCH is an active participant in the ARRCH Health Promotion Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP provides health promotion leaders with peer support, networking and opportunities for advocacy and collaboration with a focus on CH-HP funded activities. As the CoP operates at an upstream level, no funding is shared between ARRCH partner organisations. However, the CoP offers a platform to advance health and wellbeing by learning together, aligning and integrating our collective health promotion actions to achieve population and systems level change.

## Strategic lenses

Applying climate, gender, mental health and size inclusive co-benefit lenses to health promotion is vital for developing strategies that are truly equitable and impactful. By intentionally considering environmental sustainability, gender equity, mental wellbeing, and the diverse needs of people of all body sizes, we ensure our initiatives address the full spectrum of community health. This holistic approach not only enhances immediate health outcomes but also builds more resilient, inclusive, and supportive environments for everyone.

<p><b>Climate</b> Climate change presents a significant threat to human health.<sup>i</sup> It impacts health and wellbeing in many ways: directly by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events and indirectly through worsening air quality, altering disease patterns, threatening food and water safety and impacting mental health.<sup>ii</sup> These effects are most severe for those already facing systemic barriers.</p>	<p><b>Gender</b> Gender is a key determinant of health and wellbeing, intersecting with factors like socioeconomic status, education, and ethnicity to deepen health disparities. Societal expectations and gender norms can perpetuate prejudice, discrimination and stigma—impacts that are often intensified for the LGBTQIA+ community. By embedding gender equity at the foundation of our policies, programs, and projects, health promotion can actively address these inequities and ensure that women and gender-diverse people are not disadvantaged.</p>
<p><b>Mental health</b> Promoting healthy eating, respectful relationships and reducing harm from smoking and vaping can generate significant co-benefits for mental health and overall wellbeing. These actions, implemented across diverse settings, not only lower chronic disease risk but also help prevent mental ill-health and improve quality of life.</p>	<p><b>Size inclusivity</b> By applying a size-inclusive lens to our health promotion work, we strive to create welcoming environments where people of all body sizes feel supported in their health and wellbeing.<sup>iii</sup> Weight stigma, driven by assumptions, stereotypes, anti-fat bias and diet culture, can negatively impact individuals' relationships with their bodies, food, movement, and overall wellbeing. Our approach aims to challenge these biases and foster genuine inclusion across all settings.<sup>iv</sup></p>

## Alignment to the Ballarat Community Health - Health Promotion Plan 2025-2029

Our work is closely aligned with the BCH 2024-2029 Strategic Plan, ensuring our efforts support the organisation's broader goals and long-term community commitments. Guided by a strategic purpose to create healthy communities through accessible, high-quality and affordable services, BCH is committed to addressing health inequities, improving wellbeing and delivering sustainable outcomes. Key focus areas include supporting children and young people, enhancing mental health through promotion and early intervention and advancing public health through targeted initiatives that empower individuals and strengthen community resilience.

## Our Priority Areas, Objectives and Outcomes

### Priority Area 1 - Increasing Healthy Eating

Good nutrition is essential for overall health and wellbeing<sup>v</sup>. Eating well helps protect against infections, supports oral health and reduces the risk of chronic diseases later in life<sup>vi</sup>. Diets aligned with the Australian Dietary Guidelines not only promote better health but also have a lower carbon footprint, benefiting the environment<sup>vii</sup>. Nutritious eating also supports mental wellbeing across all life stages<sup>viii</sup>.

Accessing and affording fresh foods can be challenging,<sup>3</sup> especially for the 13.2% of Australian households experiencing food insecurity<sup>ix</sup>. Our partners and stakeholders have told us that more people have been forced to turn to emergency food relief services, many for the first time, and more children are coming to school hungry and without adequate food for the day.

Improving healthy eating requires a range of strategies across all ages<sup>x</sup>. BCH will continue to deliver evidence-based programs and initiatives such as Vic Kids Eat Well and Smiles 4 Miles to support healthier food environments in key settings. To advance health equity, priority will be given to actions that support communities at greater risk of diet-related health issues and food insecurity<sup>xi</sup>.

2025-2029 Objectives	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access, availability and promotion of a wide variety of nutritious foods and drinks, including fruit and vegetables, as recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines</li> <li>• Increase purchase, and consumption, of nutritious food and drinks</li> <li>• Reduce children and young people's exposure to marketing of ultra processed to reduce consumption</li> <li>• Improve dignified access to nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food for priority populations experiencing food insecurity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of key settings offering nutritious food and drinks</li> <li>• Increased purchase of nutritious food and drinks within key settings</li> <li>• Reduced exposure to ultra-processed food and drink options in key settings</li> <li>• Increased sustainable and equitable food access opportunities</li> </ul>

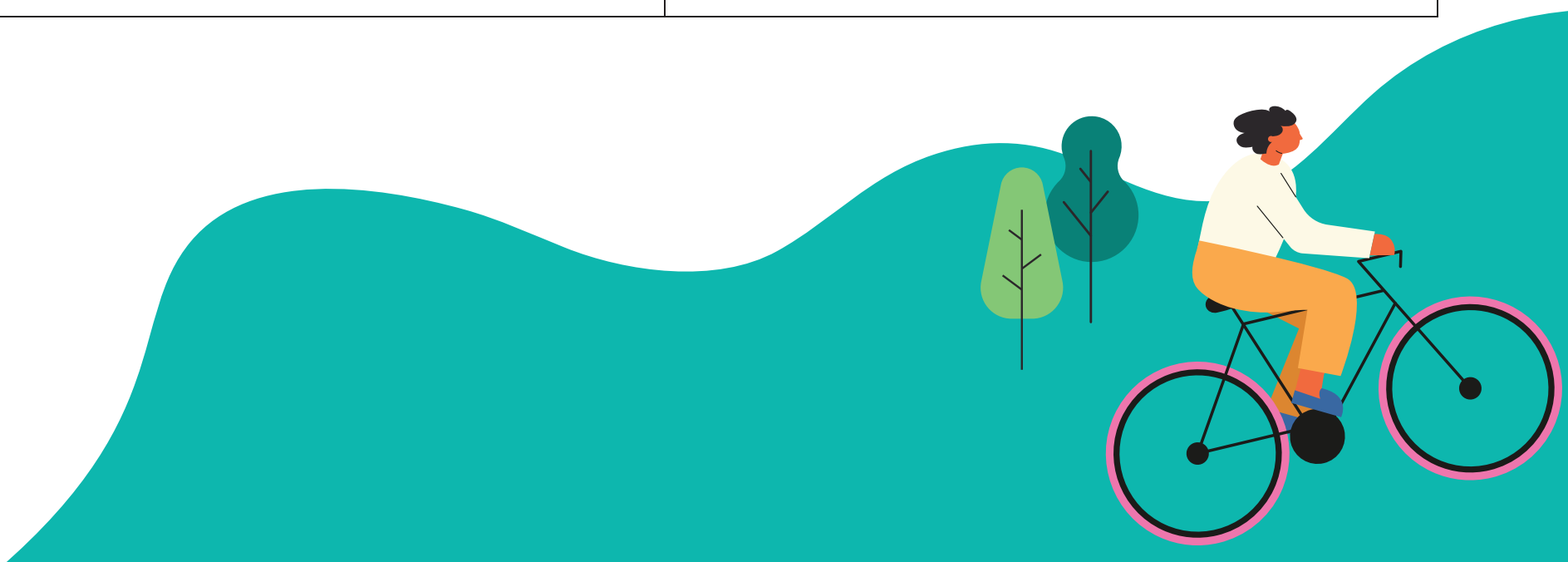
## Priority Area 2 - Reducing Harm from Tobacco and E-Cigarette Use

In Australia, tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of premature death and the second leading risk factor contributing to the burden of disease<sup>xii</sup>. While smoking prevalence in Victoria has declined over the past five decades, data shows that 11% of Victorian adults aged 18 and over smoked tobacco daily in 2022 <sup>xiii</sup>, higher than the national daily smoking target of 5% or less by 2030 <sup>xiv</sup>. An application of an equity lens indicates the most disadvantaged groups in Australia are bearing a disproportionate share of tobacco-related illness <sup>xv</sup>.

The use of e-cigarettes (vapes) is also increasing, with almost double the number of Victorian adults reporting vaping in 2022 compared to 2018–19<sup>xvi</sup>. Concerningly, research shows a gateway effect with young people aged 12–17 who had ever vaped being five times more likely to start smoking in the future than those who had never vaped<sup>xvii</sup>. Additionally, Ballarat ranks among the top five regional/rural LGAs in Victoria with the highest prevalence of vaping<sup>xviii</sup>.

BCH will work with local and state partners to develop and implement smoke- and vape-free policies, build capacity, promote equitable access to cessation services and deliver targeted education on the risks of smoking and vaping and the benefits of quitting.

<b>2025-2029 Objectives</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the number of smoke and vape free environments</li><li>• Increase awareness of the harms of smoking/vaping and other nicotine products, including exposure to second and third-hand smoke/aerosol</li><li>• Increase knowledge of nicotine cessation (smoking/vaping) support options, including those in health and community settings</li><li>• Increase community capability to address smoking/vaping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased number of key settings that are smoke and vape free</li><li>• Community members have greater knowledge and capacity to reject vaping</li><li>• Cessation support is accessible and part of routine care</li><li>• Increased confidence to seek help if needed</li></ul>



### Priority Area 3 – Preventing all Forms of Violence

Preventing all forms of violence has emerged as a priority for BCH during recent community consultations involving BCH staff, partners and residents<sup>xix</sup>; <sup>xx</sup>. Of particular concern is the prevalence of gender-based violence. In 2022 alone, the City of Ballarat recorded 1,571 family violence incidents against women, almost twice the Victorian local government area average<sup>xxi</sup>.

Gender-based violence has far-reaching impacts on individuals and the whole community including financial insecurity, housing instability and long-term trauma. Children exposed to violence face greater risks to their development, learning and wellbeing. Certain groups, such as women with disability<sup>xxii</sup>, Aboriginal and multicultural women, young women aged 18–34 years <sup>xxiii</sup> and gender diverse people <sup>xxiv</sup>, are disproportionately affected due to structural inequalities and limited access to support.

Given the impact of gender-based violence, Ballarat has been selected for the Victorian Government's nation-first Saturation Model initiative, overseen by Respect Victoria. This initiative will 'saturate' the community with coordinated, evidence-based prevention efforts to address the drivers of gender-based violence. As a key partner, BCH is committed to working collaboratively to deliver place-based initiatives that aim to create a safe community where everyone is respected and free from violence.

2025-2029 Objectives	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of environments that foster respect, healthy relationships, gender equality and safety</li> <li>• Increase knowledge about respect, healthy relationships, gender equality and being an upstander</li> <li>• Increase capability to challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence</li> <li>• Increase awareness of support options and confidence to seek help when needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of key settings fostering respect, healthy relationships, gender equality and safety</li> <li>• Promotion of respectful, equal relationships through positive peer norms</li> <li>• Reduced tolerance for behaviours that reinforce gender inequality and stereotypes</li> <li>• Increased confidence to seek help if needed</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 4 – Improving Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is fundamental to individual and community wellbeing. Each year, 1 in 5 Victorians experience a mental health condition and nearly half will encounter mental health challenges at some point in their lifetime<sup>xxv</sup>. Improving mental wellbeing emerged as the highest community concern during recent consultations<sup>xxvi</sup>; <sup>xxvii</sup>.

Prioritising mental wellbeing helps to reduce stigma, strengthen social connections, enhance physical health, boost productivity, and foster safer, more resilient communities. Mental and physical health are closely interconnected; people living with poor mental health are at greater risk of developing chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes—and vice versa<sup>xxviii</sup>. Certain groups face higher mental health risks due to disadvantage, isolation or stressors. Young people in Ballarat also report higher rates of loneliness compared to the state average<sup>xxix</sup>.

Promoting mental wellbeing requires inclusive opportunities for connection, resilience and participation. This is further supported by actions across BCH's other priority areas including healthy eating, positive relationships and tobacco/e-cigarette harm reduction<sup>xxx</sup>.

2025-2029 Objectives	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of environments that foster mental wellbeing by promoting inclusivity, emotional safety, and positive relationships</li> <li>• Increase community capability to build and practice relationship skills, resilience, and emotional regulation, enhancing capacity to manage stress, build self-esteem, and maintain positive mental wellbeing</li> <li>• Increase community capability to recognise and respond to behaviours that negatively impact mental wellbeing, including bullying, exclusion, and discrimination</li> <li>• Increase awareness of mental health support options and build confidence to seek help when needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of key settings that support mental wellbeing and social inclusion</li> <li>• Increased rates of belonging, supportive relationships and resilience</li> <li>• Improved early identification of, and response to, mental health concerns</li> <li>• Increased confidence to seek help if needed</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 5 – Whole of Setting Approaches

At BCH we believe that creating health-promoting environments, where people live, work, learn and play, will help foster healthier communities where everyone can thrive. This is why we are part of the Achievement Program, a state-wide initiative that supports the development of healthy early childhood services and schools. The Achievement Program is supported by the Victorian Government, delivered by Cancer Council Victoria and aligned with key initiatives including Respectful Relationships, the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, SunSmart, Be You, ResourceSmart Schools, Smiles 4 Miles and the Healthy Eating Advisory Service.

<b>2025-2029 Objectives</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the number of early childhood services and schools that are creating healthier environments for their students, staff and families</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased number of key settings registered with the Achievement Program</li><li>• Increased number of key settings achieving recognition for priority areas within the Achievement Program</li></ul>

## Theory of Change

Health promotion is inherently long-term work. The outcomes of our efforts such as improved health literacy, behaviour change, and reduced health inequities often take time to emerge and may not be immediately visible. While some impacts can be measured in the short term, many of the benefits of health promotion are cumulative and become evident over years or even decades. At BCH, we remain committed to sustained, evidence-informed action, knowing that the foundations we lay today contribute to healthier, more resilient communities in the future.

# Our Theory of Change

## Increasing Healthy Eating

### If we

- ▶ Implement initiatives that foster supportive food environments across key settings.
- ▶ Provide leadership, coordination, and support to the *Food Access Network (FAN)* in advocating for food relief.

### We can expect

- ▶ Increased understanding and capability to support healthy eating initiatives.
- ▶ Adoption of healthy food practices across key settings.
- ▶ Enhanced sector collaboration on food insecurity.

### This will lead to

- ▶ Health and wellbeing supported by nutritious and healthy food and drink options.
- ▶ Healthy eating messages embedded in the curriculum.
- ▶ Increased access to nutritious foods and reduced exposure to ultra-processed options.
- ▶ Increased sustainable and equitable food access opportunities.

### And the impact will be

- ▶ A well-nourished community where good food supports health and wellbeing.

## Reducing Harm from Tobacco and E-Cigarette Use

### If we

- ▶ Implement initiatives within key settings that promote smoke/vape free environments, reduce tobacco/e-cigarette use and encourage cessation.

### We can expect

- ▶ Policy and environmental reviews across key settings.
- ▶ Increased knowledge regarding the harms of smoking and vaping.
- ▶ Increased stakeholder capability to address smoking and vaping.

### This will lead to

- ▶ Increased number of smoke/vape free environments.
- ▶ Community members have greater capacity to reject vaping.
- ▶ Increased confidence to seek help if needed.
- ▶ Cessation support is accessible and part of routine care.

### And the impact will be

- ▶ A healthy community where smoking/vaping are de-normalised, and harm is reduced.

## Preventing All Forms of Violence

### If we

- ▶ Implement initiatives within schools that foster respect, healthy relationships and gender equality.
- ▶ Scope the needs of early childhood services regarding respect, healthy relationships and gender equality initiatives.

### We can expect

- ▶ Policy and environmental reviews across key settings.
- ▶ Increased understanding of respect, healthy relationships and gender equality.
- ▶ Stakeholders are empowered to address behaviours that condone violence.
- ▶ Stakeholders will role model positive behaviours.

### This will lead to

- ▶ Promotion of respectful, equal relationships through positive peer norms.
- ▶ Reduced tolerance for behaviours that reinforce gender inequality and stereotypes.
- ▶ Increased confidence to seek help if needed.
- ▶ Strengthened key settings capability to support individuals facing disrespect or inequality.

### And the impact will be

- ▶ A safe community where everyone is respected and free from violence.

## Improving Wellbeing

### If we

- ▶ Implement initiatives with schools that foster wellbeing.
- ▶ Scope the needs of early childhood services regarding wellbeing initiatives.

### We can expect

- ▶ Policy and environmental reviews across key settings.
- ▶ Increased understanding of wellbeing.
- ▶ Strengthened protective factors such as resilience, emotional regulation and positive relationships.
- ▶ Increased awareness of support services.

### This will lead to

- ▶ Increased number of key settings that support wellbeing.
- ▶ Increased confidence to seek help if needed.
- ▶ Improved early identification of mental health concerns.

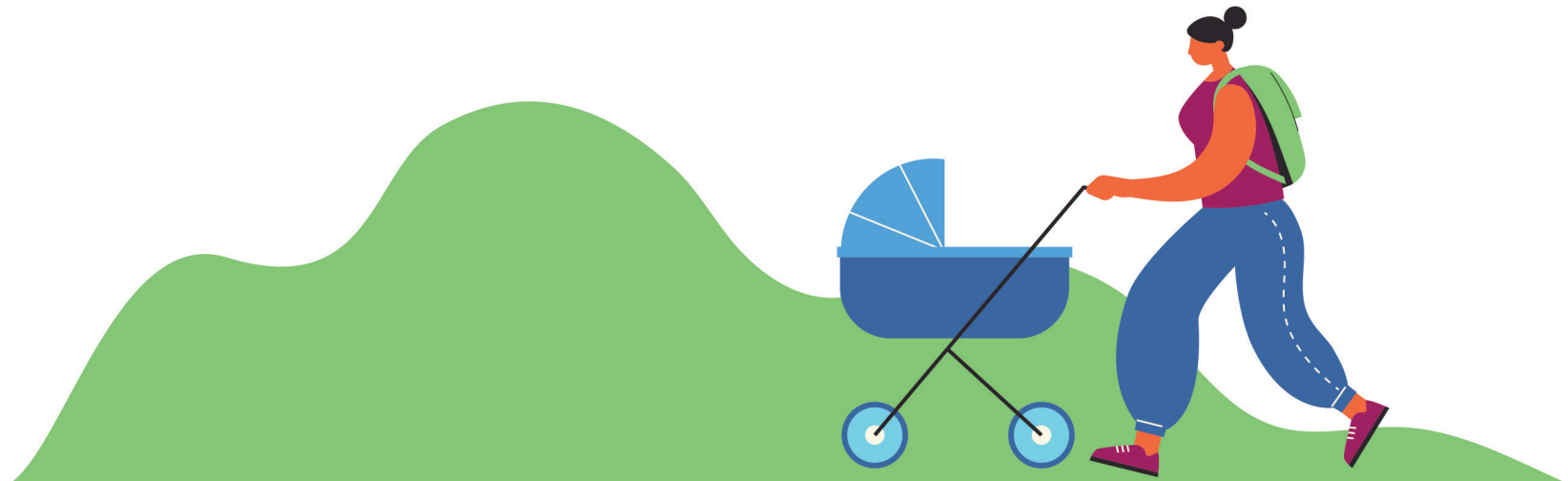
### And the impact will be

- ▶ A thriving community where wellbeing is nurtured and supported.



## Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are core components of our health promotion work, ensuring that activities are implemented as planned and that desired outcomes are achieved. Our 2025–2029 monitoring and evaluation approach will align with the CH-HP Impact Measures Practice Guide, providing a robust framework for assessing progress and impact. Short- and medium-term measures have also been developed to help us systematically track our objectives and inform continuous improvement. Throughout 2025–2029, we will ensure full adherence to all CH-HP planning and reporting requirements, supporting accountability, transparency and state-wide collective impact.



## Bringing the Plan to life - Year 1

### Increasing Healthy Eating (Food Environments)

Objectives:

- Increase access, availability and promotion of a wide variety of nutritious foods and drinks, including fruit and vegetables, as recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines
- Increase purchase and consumption of nutritious food and drinks
- Reduce children and young people's exposure to marketing of ultra processed foods and drinks to reduce consumption
- Improve dignified access to nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food for priority populations experiencing food insecurity

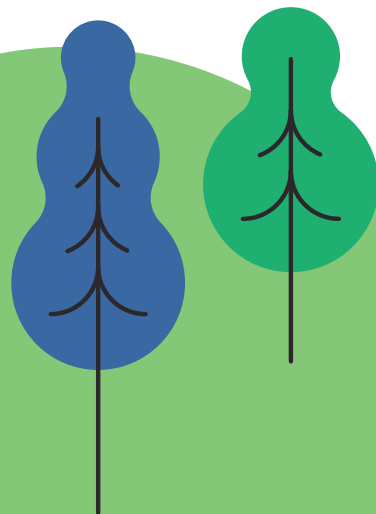
Initiative/Activity	Actions	Measures
<p><b>Smiles 4 Miles</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children 0-5 years</p> <p>Settings: Early Childhood Services Long Day Care</p> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Develop Oral Health Promotion Plan for Smiles 4 Miles Program for approval by Oral Health Victoria (OHV).</p> <p>Build the capacity of local Early Childhood Services (ECS) staff to improve the oral health of children by delivering centre-based Smiles 4 Miles training to early childhood educators and Federation TAFE Early Childhood Education and Care students, actively supporting Smiles 4 Miles ECS and coordinating public dental screening in partnership with Grampians Health Ballarat. Online Q&amp;A support sessions will be provided to Smiles 4 Miles services to improve the quality of evidence item submissions for Smiles 4 Miles Awards.</p> <p>Deliver a range of play-based activities around oral health and healthy eating during Dental Health Week, and at Ballarat's Biggest Playgroup and Children's Week events to raise the profile of oral health in the community.</p>	<p>Approval of plan by Oral Health Victoria.</p> <p>Number of ECS actively supported and number/proportion awarded, including the proportion of ECS in identified OHV high- risk areas.</p> <p>Number of current and student educators trained in Smiles 4 Miles.</p> <p>Number of Smiles 4 Miles ECS supported to register for dental screening and number of dental visits completed.</p> <p>Number of play-based activities delivered promoting oral health and healthy eating</p>

<p><b>Victorian Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care including Cooks Connect</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children 0-5 years</p> <p>Settings: LDC</p> <p>Domain: Policy</p>	<p>Consult with Long Day Care (LDC Cooks) and Coordinators to understand barriers and enablers to participation in Cooks Connect Ballarat, including alternative modes of delivery.</p> <p>Deliver professional development sessions to LDC Cooks and Coordinators through Cooks Connect Ballarat incorporating the Victorian Menu Planning Guidelines (Menu assessment for LDC and FoodChecker).</p> <p>Provide centre-based support to LDC services that demonstrate a readiness to undertake Menu Assessment using FoodChecker by completion of the Pre-FoodChecker Checklist prior to their visit. Develop an online booking system for LDC services to schedule a centre-based support visit including details of item required for completion prior to visit, provision of hardy copy resources to support session.</p>	<p>Number of LDC Cooks and Coordinators engaged to understanding barriers and enablers to participation.</p> <p>Number of professional development sessions offered for Cooks and Coordinators.</p> <p>Number of LDC demonstrating readiness to undertake menu assessment against the Victorian Menu Planning Guidelines using Food Checker and number provided centre-based support visits.</p> <p>Number of ECS meeting the Victorian Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care.</p>
<p><b>Achievement Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children 0-5 years</p> <p>Settings: ECS</p> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Support newly registered ECS to complete the Healthy Eating and Oral Health priority area of the Achievement Program.</p> <p>Develop a local Achievement Program Newsletter to engage with ECS that have achieved Healthy Eating and Oral Health recognition, supporting them to maintain a healthy eating focus.</p> <p>Coordinate the VicHealth Secret World of Food Activation at the Ballarat Library during June 2026.</p>	<p>Number of ECS actively working toward recognition of Healthy Eating and Oral Health Priority Area and number of recognitions received.</p> <p>Number of ECS supported to maintain a healthy eating focus.</p> <p>Number of bookings of ECS and school holiday event participation.</p>

<p><b>Little Food Explorers</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children 0-5 years</p> <p>Settings: ECS</p> <p>Domains: Environments and Community</p> <p>Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Review evaluation data from Little Food Explorers Pilot Program delivered in 4 early years settings during Terms 1-3 in 2025. Incorporate recommendations into planning for Djila-tjarriu Children's Centre.</p> <p>Deliver Little Food Explorers Program to Djila-tjarriu Kindergarten during Term 4 2025 and Term 1 &amp; 2 2026 to increase food literacy and curiosity and knowledge and skills in edible food growing for children aged 3+.</p> <p>Delivery of the program at Djila-tjarriu Kindergarten will also support the development of a Children's Food Garden at the Djila-tjarriu Community Hub.</p> <p>Deliver Little Food Explorers activities to increase fruit and vegetable literacy through Parent Place Outreach, Library Services and Children's Week celebrations.</p>	<p>Evaluation recommendations incorporated into programming of Little Food Explorers at Djila-tjarriu.</p> <p>Participation in Little Food Explorers by children, educators, families and volunteers.</p> <p>Number of educators and families reporting an increase in children's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- awareness and willingness to try new vegetables and fruit.</li> <li>- consumption of vegetables and fruit with their meals or in their lunchboxes.</li> <li>- willingness to participate in edible food growing activities.</li> </ul> <p>Number and type of extension activities delivered by participating ECS.</p> <p>Case Study incorporating qualitative feedback from educators and families about Little Food Explorers.</p> <p>Number of events delivered, and number of children and families engaged.</p>
<p><b>Vic Kids Eat Well</b> (Lead)</p>	<p><b>Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Services:</b> Support OSHC services to make healthy eating changes through the Vic Kids Eat Well (VKEW) movement. Build motivation and momentum by celebrating the achievements of services through newsletters and social media.</p>	<p>Number and setting type actively supported</p>

<p>Target: Children and young people 5-18 years</p> <p>Settings: Schools and OSHC Services</p> <p>Domain: Community and Environments</p>	<p><b>Schools:</b> Promote the VKEW movement as part of BCH's Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program) to encourage settings in the Ballarat region to implement a whole of school approach to healthier food environments.</p>	<p>Number and proportion supported to implement, or maintain, at least one healthy eating change.</p> <p>Number of small bites achieved</p> <p>Number of small bites maintained</p> <p>Number of big bites achieved</p>
<p><b>Food Access Network (Lead)</b></p> <p>Target: Food Security stakeholders</p> <p>Domain: Prevention System Actions</p>	<p>Lead the Food Access Network. Provide backbone support to coordinate co-designed initiatives to support community members at risk of or experiencing food insecurity and help build more sustainable and equitable food systems.</p>	<p>Number of organisations represented.</p> <p>Number of joint/co-designed initiatives developed/delivered.</p>
<p><b>Eat Well Feel Good (EWFG) Ballarat – Healthy Food Retail phase 2 (Support)</b></p> <p>Target: Recreation centre Patrons</p> <p>Settings: Recreation</p> <p>Domain: Community and Environments</p>	<p>Continue to work with our partner, the City of Ballarat, to support the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (BALC) Café to promote healthy food and drinks. This will include creating a green zone in the display cabinet to show case healthier items and assessing the café offerings utilising HEAS's Food Checker and determining degree of compliance with Healthy Choices Guidelines; working with the café owner to extend the range of healthy meals and snacks in Phase 2, reduce the number of confectionary items and chip varieties, and ensuring confectionary remains at the back of café and healthier snacks continue to be located at the front counter.</p> <p>Additionally, Health Promoters will audit and maintain the changes to the drinks fridge to comply with Healthy Choices</p>	<p>Number and proportion of café offerings categorised green and amber items displayed following the Phase 2 implementation of EWFG.</p> <p>Number of new healthy meals and snacks added to the menu.</p> <p>Number of confectionary and chip items reduced.</p> <p>Number of confectionary items to remain at back of counter and number of healthy snacks placed at front.</p>

	<p>Guidelines and provide the café owner with recommendations for sustainability.</p> <p>EWFG campaign materials and marketing strategies will continue to be utilised, and a video produced to promote the EWFG Campaign and the new healthy and nutritious changes to the café menu.</p>	<p>Changes to fridge display measured against healthy choices guidelines.</p> <p>Number and type of recommendations provided for sustainability.</p> <p>Social media reach and view data.</p>
<p><b>Community Supermarket</b> (Support)</p> <p>Target: Community members experiencing food insecurity</p> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Work with Foodbank to support the delivery of the Foodbank Community Supermarket. Receive referrals and book supermarket visits for community members at risk of or experiencing food insecurity.</p>	<p>Number of referrals.</p> <p>Number of community supermarket visits.</p> <p>Amount of food distributed.</p>



## Reducing Harm from Tobacco and E-Cigarette Use (Smoking, Vaping & Other Nicotine Products)

### Objectives:

- Increase the number of smoke and vape free environments
- Increase awareness of the harms of smoking/vaping and other nicotine products, including exposure to second and third-hand smoke/aerosol
- Increase knowledge of nicotine cessation (smoking/vaping) support options, including those in health and community settings
- Increase community capability to address smoking/vaping

Initiative/Activity	Actions	Measures
<p><b>VNSHS</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: BCH Clients and Staff</p> <p>Setting: BCH</p> <p>Domain: Prevention Systems Actions</p>	<p>Continue progression and implementation of the 8 standards of the VNSHS Audit to increase BCH's current score of 119 out of a possible score of 144.</p> <p>The aim this year is to prepare and apply to the VNSHS Regional Validation Program for recognition to achieve gold standard.</p>	<p>2026 Audit Score.</p> <p>Number small step categories where achievements have been made in settings that have been actively supported (small change categories 5, 7, 9 &amp; 10).</p> <p>Application submitted to VNSHS.</p>
<p><b>AAH Model</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: BCH Clients and Staff</p> <p>Setting: BCH</p>	<p>Prevention Systems Actions</p> <p>Progress the AAH model implementation to other BCH teams including the GP clinics, Mental Health, AOD services and Allied Health. This will include raising awareness of the AAH model, education and training, and encouraging documentation of smoking/vaping status and interventions applied within relevant client Management systems.</p>	<p>Number of BCH programs implementing AAH Model.</p> <p>Number of clients whose smoking/vaping status has been documented.</p>

<p>Domain: Prevention Systems Actions</p>		<p>Number/ proportion of identified smoking/vaping clients offered a brief intervention and number/ proportion of clients who took up the brief intervention.</p> <p>Number of staff completing AAH training module through BCH online training platform.</p>
<p><b>Partnering/ Consulting with Priority Groups</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Identified Priority Groups</p> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Incorporate the impact of smoking, vaping and other nicotine products on oral health during the delivery of annual Smiles 4 Miles Training to Federation TAFE Early Childhood Education and Care students.</p> <p>Collaborate with the City of Ballarat to scope and support the needs of identified priority groups and services including Maternal Child Health (MCH), Early Years, Young Parents and Families regarding potential initiatives to reduce smoking and vaping harm.</p>	<p>Number of Federation TAFE Early Childhood Education and Care students receiving the training.</p> <p>Number of initiatives implemented with priority groups.</p>
<p><b>Achievement Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0-5 years</li> <li>- 5-18 years</li> </ul> <p>Settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ECS</li> </ul>	<p><b>Early Childhood Services:</b> Support ECS to complete the Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Drugs priority area and achieve recognition.</p> <p><b>Schools:</b> Engage and support schools in the Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol &amp; Other Drugs priority area.</p> <p>Actively support all Ballarat schools participating in the SSMART ASSK Party-Safe Program and/or the Seeing Through the Haze</p>	<p>Number and setting type that have been actively supported to implement changes in tobacco and e-cigarette prevention.</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have developed or reviewed a written tobacco and e-cigarette policy while being actively supported.</p>

<p>- Schools (primary, secondary, P-12 and specialist)</p> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Incentive Project to undertake the Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Drugs priority area.</p>	<p>Number and proportion of settings that have achieved change in at least one small change category while being actively supported (small change categories 5, 7, 9, 10).</p> <p>Number of small change categories where achievements have been made in settings that have been actively supported (total small change categories).</p> <p>Number and proportion of small change category achievements made in settings targeting potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged populations while being actively supported.</p> <p>Number and setting type receiving recognition for the Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Drugs priority area.</p>
<p><b>SSMART ASSK Party-Safe Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Year 9 students aged 14-15</p> <p>Settings: Schools (secondary and P-12)</p> <p>Domain:</p>	<p>Deliver the SSMART ASSK Party-Safe Program to Ballarat schools actively participating in the Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program). The program uses theatre-based education to engage young people, effectively influencing knowledge, attitudes, and behavioural intentions. It also promotes access to relevant support services, including smoking and vaping cessation.</p>	<p>Number and type of schools participating.</p> <p>Number of students participating.</p> <p>Number (including %) of respondents reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased knowledge across the learning stations including vaping</li> <li>- increased confidence in saying no to vapes</li> </ul>

Individual/Family Behaviour Change		- ability to identify appropriate help/support services for vaping.
<p><b>Central Highlands Vaping Prevention Project</b> (Support)</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children and young people (aged 5-18 years)</li> <li>- Young people (aged 18-25 years)</li> </ul> <p>Settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schools (primary, secondary, P-12, specialist and Flexible Learning Options –FLO)</li> <li>- Universities</li> </ul> <p>Domain: Environments &amp; Community</p>	<p>In partnership with the City of Ballarat (Project Lead), Hepburn Shire Council, Moorabool Shire Council and local health services across the Central Highlands region, implement the following elements of the VicHealth funded collective impact project:</p> <p><b>Seeing Through the Haze Incentive Project:</b> Engage and support schools to implement Quit Victoria's Seeing Through the Haze resources and action the innovative anti-vaping campaigns designed by students as part of Module 3 'Making Change'. Provide professional development for schools to build capacity regarding the implementation of the Seeing Through the Haze resources.</p>	<p>Number and setting type that have been actively supported to implement changes in tobacco and e-cigarette prevention.</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have achieved change in at least one small change category while being actively supported (small change categories 5, 7, 9, 10).</p> <p>Number of small change categories where achievements have been made</p> <p>Number and type of schools engaged, and number and year level of students participating.</p> <p>Number of lessons allocated by school and year level of students participating.</p> <p>Number and type of campaigns/ initiatives developed.</p> <p>Case study Number of professional learning workshops held and number of school staff participating.</p>

	<p>Partner with Blurred Minds to deliver a webinar for families/carers and community members to empower them in vaping prevention conversations.</p> <p><b>University Student-Led Vaping Prevention Campaign:</b> Implement the QUIT Vaping Stories initiative identified by the university students in the 2025 focus groups and workshops.</p> <p>Short videos will be developed featuring university students telling their vaping stories. Videos will be promoted across various online platforms and include vaping cessation referral information.</p>	<p>Number of webinars held and number of attendees.</p> <p>Evaluation data related to developed initiative/s, including reach, views, shares.</p> <p>Case study documenting partnership with Federation University staff and students involved in the Student-Led Vaping Prevention Campaign.</p>
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## Preventing All Forms of Violence (Gender-Based Violence)

Objectives:

- Increase the number of environments that foster respect, healthy relationships, gender equality and safety
- Increase knowledge about respect, healthy relationships, gender equality and being an upstander
- Increase capability to challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence
- Increase awareness of support options and confidence to seek help when needed

Initiative/Activity	Actions	Measures
<p><b>Achievement Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children 0-5 years</li> <li>- Children and young people 5-18 years</li> </ul> <p>Settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ECS</li> <li>- Schools</li> </ul> <p>Domain: Environments and Community</p>	<p><b>Early Childhood Services:</b> Scope the needs of ECS and other stakeholders regarding potential initiatives that promote respect, healthy relationships and gender equality.</p> <p><b>Schools:</b> Engage and actively support schools in the Sexual Health and Wellbeing priority area.</p> <p>Actively support all Ballarat primary, secondary, P-12 and specialist schools participating in Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Curriculum Planning, Expect Respect and/or Affirmative Consent to undertake the Sexual Health and Wellbeing priority area.</p>	<p>Number and type of consultations undertaken.</p> <p>Development and implementation of support plan.</p> <p>Number and setting type that have been actively supported to implement changes in sexual health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have developed, or reviewed, supporting policies</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have achieved change in at least one of the following small change categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusive uniform policies</li> <li>- School health programs</li> <li>- Staff professional development and curriculum planning support</li> <li>- Referral pathways into BCH Services</li> </ul> <p>Number of small change categories made in settings</p> <p>Number and setting type receiving recognition for priority area.</p>

<p><b>Relationships and Sexuality Education Curriculum Planning</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: School Staff</p> <p>Setting: Schools</p> <p>Domains: Community and Environments, Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Provide Relationships and Sexuality Education Curriculum Planning to schools across Ballarat who are actively participating in the Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program).</p> <p>Support primary schools with curriculum planning using BCH's Primary Relationships and Sexuality Education Toolkit.</p> <p>Deliver Relationships and Sexuality Education capacity building/professional development for school staff.</p> <p>Develop a Relationships and Sexuality Education Toolkit for secondary schools in partnership with the Department of Education's Respectful Relationships Team.</p>	<p>Number and type of schools participating.</p> <p>Number of staff participating in capacity building/professional development.</p> <p>Relationships and Sexuality Education Toolkit developed and ready for release in 2026/27.</p>
<p><b>Expect Respect Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Young people 15-16 years</p>	<p>Deliver the Expect Respect Program to schools across Ballarat who are actively participating in the Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program). The program uses theatre-based education to engage young people, effectively influencing knowledge, attitudes, and behavioural intentions while modelling positive behaviours. It also promotes access to relevant support services.</p>	<p>Number and type schools participating and number of students</p> <p>Number/proportion of respondents: - reporting an increase in knowledge regarding respect, gender and healthy relationships</p>

<p>Settings: Schools (secondary &amp; P-12)</p> <p>Domains: Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Partner with Women's Health Grampians (WHG) to support a whole-of-school approach with a focus on targeted staff professional development, complimentary classroom activities and referral pathways.</p> <p>Expand the Expect Respect Consortia into a broader Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Schools Network. Building on the success of the consortia, the expanded network will be co-convened by BCH and WHG and will support a regional, collaborative approach to preventing gender-based violence in educational settings across Ballarat and the Central Highlands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reporting increased confidence to demonstrate desired behaviours</li> <li>- able to identify appropriate help/support services.</li> </ul> <p>Number of participants engaged in the expanded network and number of organisations represented.</p>
<p><b>The Gist Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Young people 16-18 years</p> <p>Settings: Schools (Flexible Learning Options - FLO)</p> <p>Domain: Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Deliver The Gist Program in partnership with Flexible Learning Option Schools across Ballarat. This 5-week program aims to improve the sexual health and relationships of vulnerable young people, while reducing the potentially harmful impacts of pornography.</p>	<p>Number of schools and students participating.</p> <p>Number and proportion of respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reporting an increase in knowledge regarding respect, gender and healthy relationships</li> <li>- reporting a positive change in attitude/behavioural intent</li> <li>- able to identify appropriate help/support services</li> </ul>

<p><b>Affirmative Consent Presentation</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Young people 16-18 years</p> <p>Settings: Schools (secondary &amp; P-12)</p> <p>Domain: Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Deliver Affirmative Consent Presentations in partnership with Ballarat CASA, YouthLaw Ballarat and Victoria Police. These lecture-style presentations are designed for senior students and aim to build greater understanding of Affirmative Consent from both legal and ethical perspectives.</p>	<p>Number and type of schools participating and number of students</p> <p>Number and proportion of respondents reporting an increase in knowledge regarding affirmative consent.</p> <p>Number and proportion of respondents reporting confidence in accessing appropriate help/support services.</p>
<p><b>Positive Wellbeing Program in Sporting Clubs</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children and young people 8-16 years</p> <p>Settings: Sporting Clubs</p> <p>Domains: Community and Environments, Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Partner with WHG's Act@Play initiative to adapt the Positive Wellbeing Program for Sporting Clubs.</p> <p>Conduct consultations with leadership from three sporting clubs across the Central Highlands to identify key gender equality issues facing clubs.</p> <p>Co-design four skits with junior players (aged 8–11 and 12–16) that reflect scenarios relevant to sporting clubs, with a focus on gendered drivers as key themes.</p> <p>Develop scripts and discussion points for skits, including support service information.</p> <p>Pilot Positive Wellbeing for Sporting Clubs in three sporting clubs across the Central Highlands.</p>	<p>Number and type of sporting clubs participating.</p> <p>Number of leadership consultations held and number of attendees.</p> <p>Number of co-design sessions held and number of attendees.</p> <p>Pilot Evaluation (including participant outcomes and suitability of Positive Wellbeing in Sporting Clubs for inclusion in the Act@Play).</p> <p>Case Study.</p>

<p><b>Healthy Masculinities</b></p> <p>(Support)</p> <p>Target: Young people 12-18 years</p> <p>Settings: Schools (secondary &amp; P-12)</p> <p>Domain: Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p><b>manKIND Program:</b></p> <p>Partner with the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) to deliver a pilot of the manKIND Program. manKIND is part of CMY Ballarat's Speak Up project, a youth-led primary prevention program focused on gender equity and prevention of gender-based violence.</p> <p>Over three sessions, youth facilitators deliver workshops covering the topics of masculinity, intersectionality and the mansphere. The third session is theatre-based and co-facilitated with BCH's Creative Learning Team.</p> <p><b>Values in Action Initiative:</b></p> <p>Partner with WHG, headspace Ballarat and St Patrick's College Ballarat to deliver the Values in Action Shield. The event combines interactive workshops and a soccer tournament to engage young people in conversations about respect, empower them to speak out against discrimination and gender-based violence and raise awareness of where to seek help if needed.</p>	<p>Number and type of schools participating.</p> <p>Number and year level of students participating.</p> <p>Case Study.</p> <p>Number and proportion of respondents reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an increase in knowledge regarding respect and healthy relationships</li> <li>- a positive change in attitude/behavioural intent regarding healthy masculinity</li> <li>- ability to identify appropriate help/support services.</li> </ul>
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## Improving Wellbeing (Mental Wellbeing)

### Objectives:

- Increase the number of environments that foster mental wellbeing by promoting inclusivity, emotional safety, and positive relationships
- Increase community capability to build and practice relationship skills, resilience, and emotional regulation, enhancing capacity to manage stress, build self-esteem, and maintain positive mental wellbeing
- Increase community capability to recognise and respond to behaviours that negatively impact mental wellbeing, including bullying, exclusion, and discrimination
- Increase awareness of mental health support options and build confidence to seek help when needed

Initiative/Activity	Actions	Measures
<p><b>Achievement Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children 0-5 years</li> <li>- Children and young people 5-18 years</li> </ul> <p>Settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ECS</li> <li>- Schools (primary, secondary, P-12 &amp; specialist)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Early Childhood Services</b> Scope the needs of early childhood services regarding initiatives that foster a sense of belonging, connection and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Schools:</b> Engage and actively support schools in the Mental Health and Wellbeing priority area.</p> <p>Actively support all Ballarat schools participating in Live4Life and/or Positive Wellbeing to undertake the Mental Health and Wellbeing priority area.</p>	<p>Number and type of consultations undertaken with early childhood services to develop a support plan</p> <p>Number and setting type that have been actively supported to implement changes in wellbeing.</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have developed, or reviewed, supporting policies while being actively supported.</p> <p>Number and proportion of settings that have achieved change in at least one of the following small change categories while being actively supported:</p>

<p>Domains: Environments and Community</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School health programs</li> <li>- Referral pathways into BCH/headspace services</li> </ul> <p>Total number of small changes categories made in settings that have been actively supported.</p> <p>Number and setting type receiving recognition for Mental Health and Wellbeing priority area.</p>
<p><b>Positive Wellbeing</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children and young people 8-14 years</p> <p>Settings: Schools (primary, secondary and P-12)</p> <p>Domain: Individual/Family Behaviour Change</p>	<p>Deliver the Positive Wellbeing Program to schools across Ballarat who are actively participating in the Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program). The program uses theatre-based education to explore challenging scenarios and emotions with children and young people, in a safe and supportive environment. It also promotes access to relevant support services.</p>	<p>Number and type schools participating and number of students</p> <p>Number and proportion of respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reporting an increase in knowledge regarding respect, gender and healthy relationships</li> <li>- reporting increased confidence to demonstrate desired behaviours</li> <li>- able to identify appropriate help/support services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Live4Life</b> (Support)</p> <p>Target: Young people 14-15 and 16-17 years</p>	<p>Participate in Live4Life Partnership Group alongside other community stakeholders.</p> <p>Partner with the City of Ballarat Youth Team, Live4Life and Cancer Council Victoria to develop a resource demonstrating the alignment between Live4Life and the</p>	<p>Number of organisations represented.</p> <p>Alignment Resource developed.</p>

<p>School staff and community members</p> <p>Settings: Schools (secondary &amp; P-12)</p>	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing priority area of the Achievement Program.</p>	
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## Whole of Setting Approaches (Achievement Program)

Objectives:

- Increase the number of early childhood services and schools that are creating healthier environments for their students, staff and families
- Support Health Promoters across the Central Highlands region regarding the implementation of various state-wide initiatives including the *Achievement Program* in common settings

Initiative/Activity	Actions	Measures
<p><b>Achievement Program</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0-5 years</li> <li>- 5-18 years</li> </ul> <p>Settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ECS</li> <li>- Schools (primary, secondary, P-12 &amp; specialist)</li> </ul> <p>Domains: Environments and Community</p>	<p>Engage and actively support both ECS and schools across Ballarat to implement the Achievement Program.</p> <p><b>Early Childhood Services</b> Review relevant local early years data and plans and develop and implement a consultation plan to understand the current needs of ECS in relation to key Achievement Program priority areas.</p> <p><b>Schools:</b> Engage and actively support schools working through the following priority areas of the Health Promoting Schools Framework (Achievement Program):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate and Health</li> <li>- Safe Environments</li> <li>- Sun Protection</li> <li>- Physical Activity &amp; Movement</li> </ul>	<p>Number and type of consultations undertaken with ECS and internal stakeholders.</p> <p>Number of settings that have been actively supported to implement the Achievement Program in the previous 12 months.</p> <p>Number of settings that had at least one Achievement Program recognition in the previous 12 months.</p> <p>Number of new Achievement Program recognitions in previous 12 months.</p>

<p><b>Central Highlands Healthy Places Community of Practice (CoP)</b> (Lead)</p> <p>Target: Health Promoters working in the Central Highlands region</p> <p>Settings: CH-HP funded agencies and local governments</p> <p>Domains: Prevention System Actions</p>	<p>Deliver the Central Highlands Healthy Places CoP to build the capacity of local Health Promoters to implement various statewide initiatives with a focus on healthy eating, vaping and smoking prevention and respectful relationships.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for joint initiatives including providing RSE in small rural schools.</p>	<p>Number of organisations represented.</p> <p>Number of Health Promoters engaged.</p> <p>Number of joint initiatives developed/delivered.</p>
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# BCH Health Promotion Initiatives

## Increasing Healthy Eating

### **Achievement Program**

The Achievement Program is a whole-of-service/school approach to Healthy Eating and Oral Health implemented in early childhood services and schools. This includes supporting settings to build strong leadership, support and a shared commitment to creating policies and practices that promote healthy eating and oral health, and ensure supportive behaviours are embedded in the school's culture and oral health messages are incorporated in the curriculum through formal and informal learning opportunities. It also includes providing staff access to resources to support their own healthy eating and oral health, and engaging families, the service community, and expert organisations in the promotion and implementation of healthy eating and oral health initiatives.

### **Cooks Connect Ballarat for LDC Cooks and Chefs**

Cooks Connect is a Healthy Eating Advisory Service initiative, designed to empower Health Promotion Officers in establishing and running a local Cook's Network. *Cooks Connect Ballarat is a collaborative community of long day care centre cooks, chefs and coordinators who meet regularly to share knowledge and develop their skills in menu planning to align with Menu Planning guidelines for long day care and children's nutrition-related needs. Session may include risk managing fussy eating, responding to allergies and intolerances and promoting healthy eating within their service. Cooks Connect Ballarat is an opportunity for long day care service cooks, chefs and coordinators to work toward meeting state-wide benchmark for Healthy Eating as part of the Achievement Program and Smiles 4 Miles.*

### **Eat Well Feel Good Ballarat in Sport and Recreation Settings**

Developed as part of the VicHealth *Local Government Partnership* initiative, the 'Eat Well Feel Good' (EWFG) project was designed to promote healthy eating among community members attending City of Ballarat sport and recreation venues. The project continues to support venues to offer and promote healthy food and drink options to users and is currently being implemented at the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre in partnership with the City of Ballarat.

## **Food Access Network (FAN)**

The FAN is a group of stakeholder organisations who work together to support food security initiatives and to advocate for better access to fresh and nutritious food for community members experiencing or at risk of food insecurity in the Ballarat Region. BCH coordinates FAN and provides backbone support to the network.

## **Little Food Explorers Program and Djila-tjarri Community Hub Children's Food Garden**

Liking and acceptance of vegetables (essential for healthy growth and development) is learnt during early childhood and these habits track into adulthood. Little Food Explorers is a project designed to build food literacy and curiosity to increase children's vegetable intake in early childhood settings (long day care and kindergartens).

BCH was funded by the City of Ballarat, Ballarat Local Food Coalition to pilot Little Food Explorers in three identified early years services during Term 1 and 2, 2025. Following successful implementation, an expanded Little Food Explorers will be delivered to Djila-tjarri Kindergarten during Term 4, 2025 and Term 1 and 2, 2026. Additional resources and materials have been funded to support the project, including Little Food Explorers Story Time Library, Educators' resources, extension activities, Worm Café, and Water saving wicking beds. BCH are also supporting the design and development of the co-located Community Hub Children's Food Garden.

## **Smiles 4 Miles**

Smiles 4 Miles is an oral health promotion program designed by Oral Health Victoria and delivered in early childhood settings to improve the oral health of children and their families in identified high-risk areas. Smiles 4 Miles includes training for educators, development of supportive policies, and activities and resources to engage children and families.

Participating early years services are eligible to receive dental health visits through a partnership with Grampians Health Public Dental services. Four -year-old children attending the early childhood services are provided with dental health examinations, education, fluoride applications on white spot lesions if required, and oral healthcare plans.

BCH also promotes Oral Health Victoria's Healthy Little Smiles program which provides training, resources and play-based activities to support early childhood educators, supported playgroup facilitators and library Storytime facilitators to promote oral health in a positive way for children aged 0-5 and their families.

### **Vic Kids Eat Well (VKEW)**

Vic Kids Eat Well (VKEW) is a state-wide movement that's focused on transforming the food and drink environments where kids and young people spend their time. By harnessing the power of community and taking simple steps, eligible organisations can create change to give all kids and young people across Victoria the healthy start they deserve. VKEW is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by Cancer Council Victoria's (CCV's) Achievement Program and Nutrition Australia's Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS). Since the launch of VKEW in 2022, the Health Promoting Schools Team has been engaging with schools and Outside Schools Hours Care (OSHC) to build strong relationships to support the rollout of VKEW across the City of Ballarat.

### **Victorian Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care**

Nutrition Australia's Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS) offers free Menu Assessments for early childhood services to complete. HEAS is guided by the Victorian menu planning guidelines for long day care and helps services to meet the guidelines by providing a detailed feedback report outlining where the menu meets the guidelines and any specific recommendations to make healthy changes. BCH Health Promoters provide one-on-one support to early childhood services to undertake menu assessments and group support through the newly launched Cooks Connect Network.

### **Foodbank Community Supermarket**

Foodbanks' Community Food Centre offer a free community supermarket shop and complimentary 3 course hot meal 2 days per week for community members at risk or experiencing food insecurity. Appointments are available via referral to BCH.

## Reducing Harm from Tobacco and E-Cigarette Use

### **Achievement Program**

The Achievement Program takes a comprehensive approach to preventing smoking, vaping, alcohol, and other drug use in early childhood services and schools. It focuses on strong leadership and a shared commitment to developing inclusive policies. These settings maintain smoke-, vape-, and drug-free environments with low-risk alcohol practices, and promote respectful, health-focused behaviours as part of their culture. Health messages are integrated into both formal and informal learning, while staff are supported with resources to understand and address these issues, including help to quit if needed. Families, the broader school community, and expert organisations are actively involved in promoting and implementing prevention initiatives.

### **Ask, Advise, Help (AAH) Pilot**

The Ask, Advise, Help (AAH) model is an organisation wide approach to embed smoking cessation brief advice into routine practice. The model can be used by individual health, community and social service professionals in their everyday interactions with patients, clients and consumers. The three steps to the AAH model are to: i) Ask about smoking status; ii) Advise, people on the best way to quit; and iii) Help, by offering a referral to smoking cessation support.

### **Central Highlands Vaping Prevention Project (funded by VicHealth)**

This collective impact project aims to reduce or prevent the uptake of vaping among young people (aged 10 to 25) in the Central Highlands region. This project is led by the City of Ballarat and supported by several health, local government, education and youth support service partners. BCH has been selected to plan and deliver three of the project activities:

- i. Youth-led initiatives in schools: *Seeing Through the Haze Incentive Project*
- ii. Youth-led initiatives at university/ies: *Quit Vaping Stories*
- iii. Youth-led initiatives at major shopping complex: *Escape the Vape in 2024/2025*

## **SSMART ASSK Party Safe Program**

The SSMART ASSK program is a party-safe, harm minimisation program designed to reduce year 9 students' risk-taking behaviour. Using live theatre and hands on activities, SSMART ASSK specifically aims to educate students regarding the harms of vaping and increase confidence in saying no to vapes, provide skills to reduce the risks, and potential harms, of unsafe sex and using alcohol or other drugs. Potential harms could include injury, sexual assault or violence. The program also promotes access to relevant support services, including smoking and vaping cessation.

## **Victorian Network of Smokefree Health Services (VNSHS) Audit and Action Plan**

The Victorian Network of Smokefree Healthcare Services (VNSHS) is a regional network of the international organisation, the Global Network, which aims to facilitate action on tobacco within healthcare services globally. VNSHS has eight standards for health services to meet to support their ongoing commitment in addressing the health risks of smoking.

## [Preventing All Forms of Violence](#)

### **Achievement Program**

The Achievement Program is a whole-of-school approach to Sexual Health and Wellbeing. This priority area focuses on providing relationships and sexuality education and fostering a positive, inclusive, and safe environment in schools. This includes promoting healthy relationships, ensuring access to appropriate resources, and developing policies that are diverse and respectful of all students and staff. The goal is to equip individuals with the knowledge to make healthy choices and to ensure their rights and well-being are respected within the school community.

### **Affirmative Consent**

The *Affirmative Consent* program is a lecture-style presentation about the laws and ethics of consent, help-seeking all local supports available. The presentation is followed by a panel discussion with representatives from Ballarat Community Health, Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA), Victoria Police and Ballarat Youth Law.

## Expect Respect

The *Expect Respect* program aims to engage year 10 students in practical and creative ways to learn about respectful, safe and equitable relationships. It achieves this by delivering a live-theatre performance accompanied by a question-and-answer session with a panel of local experts. BCH partners with Women's Health Grampians to offer a comprehensive, whole of school approach regarding the delivery of the Expect Respect program. Specifically, Women's Health Grampians will provide staff professional development through their CoRE alliance.

## The Gist

*The Gist* Program is a workshop series that aims to improve the sexual health and relationships, while reducing the potentially harmful impacts of pornography of vulnerable young people. This program is delivered, in partnership with Flexible Learning Option (FLO) Schools across Ballarat. These students frequently do not find mainstream educational programs suitable for their needs often receive little relationships and sexuality education in the alternative education space.

The program has five key learning themes, including The wide world of sex and intimacy; Consent and communication; Sex in porn, culture and the media; Sex, sexuality and gender diversity; Contraception and STI prevention. *The Gist* Program is further supported with a digital tool that incorporates all key learning themes from the workshops and encourages young people to further explore the topics outside the classroom.

## Healthy Masculinities

- **manKIND Program** - *manKIND* is part of CMY Ballarat's Speak Up project—a youth-led initiative promoting gender equity and preventing gender-based violence. In partnership with BCH and the City of Ballarat, the program will be delivered to year 8 and 9 students through three weekly sessions:
  1. Be a Man? – Exploring masculinity, gender stereotypes, and toxic influences in media
  2. Connecting the Dots – Examining misogyny through an intersectional lens and promoting upstander behaviour
  3. Putting the Puzzle Together – Interactive scenarios performed by BCH's Creative Learning Team to consolidate learning

Content is adapted from Sexual Health Victoria and the Department of Education's *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* curriculum to align with the *Respectful Relationships* Program.

- **Values in Action Initiative** - *Values in Action* is a collaborative initiative led by BCH, in partnership with WHG, headspace Ballarat and St Patrick's College Ballarat. The initiative combines interactive workshops and a soccer tournament to engage young people in conversations about respect, empower them to speak out against discrimination and gender-based violence, and raise awareness of available support services. The initiative reinforces that everyone deserves respect, has the right to speak out against harmful behaviour, and can learn strategies to build strong, positive connections.

### **Positive Wellbeing in Sporting Clubs**

WHG's Communities of Respect & Equality (CoRE) Alliance is a regional partnership committed to preventing violence against women through cultural change, guided by the *Change the Story* framework. Sporting clubs are key partners in both the CoRE Alliance and WHG's *Act@Play* program, which promotes gender equality through leadership, planning, and bystander training. However, there is currently a gap in engaging junior players (young people aged 8-16). In response, WHG has approached BCH to adapt the theatre-based program, *Positive Wellbeing*, for use in sporting club settings.

### **Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Education Curriculum Planning and Toolkit**

This program supports schools to navigate and deliver relationships and sexuality education (RSE) that is that is comprehensive, up-to-date, age- and stage-appropriate; whilst, fostering safety, respect, and inclusion, across a school. This whole-of-school approach embraces the collaboration between students, their families, educators, and the wider community to prevent gender-based violence and promote healthy relationships. The BCH Relationships and Sexuality (Puberty) Toolkit complements this framework with curated activities from leading agencies, helping schools plan effective RSE programs and connect students, educators, and families with trusted local support services. Through evidence-based resources and practical guidance, RSE helps children and young people: Understand and protect their rights; Build respectful and safe relationships; Recognize and celebrate diversity in identity, bodies, and sexuality; and make informed choices that support wellbeing—for themselves and others.

## Wellbeing

### **Achievement Program**

The Mental Health and Wellbeing priority area within the *Achievement Program* aims to foster positive social and emotional wellbeing and resilience within early childhood services and schools. It emphasises a whole-of-service/school approach, focusing on building a positive culture, supporting mental health conditions, promoting resilience and healthy relationships, and addressing risk factors like bullying. The goal is to create environments where individuals, from children and families to staff and workers, can thrive and be supported, ultimately leading to better engagement and productivity.

### **Positive Wellbeing**

The *Positive Wellbeing* program consists of a series of short performances, creative activities, and classroom discussions about gender stereotypes as well as how to promote gender equality and positive relationships. Students are asked to analyse, discuss and make decisions about friendships, behaviours, and establish a fundamental practice of consent. The program also addresses bullying, calling out problematic behaviour, rumour spreading, peer influences and resilience. The content is aligned with the Department of Education and is age- and stage- appropriate.

### **Live4Life**

The *Live4Life* Program is a rural and regional mental health education and youth suicide prevention model designed to be implemented by local communities. It involves community partnerships, evidence-based education (Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid) and the involvement of young people as leaders. The goal is to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and foster supportive community environments to prevent suicide among young people specifically in rural and regional communities.

## Whole of Setting Approaches

### **Achievement Program**

The *Achievement Program* is a comprehensive framework designed to create healthy places where we work, learn and play. The program provides resources, tools and guidelines that include a whole of service/school approach – from educators, staff, students, children and families to the wider neighbourhood and organisations. The framework is centred around seven key health areas and an additional pathway. These include Mental Health and Wellbeing, Safe Environments, Climate and Health, Physical Activity and Movement and Sun Protection; along with Healthy Eating and Oral Health, Sexual Health and Wellbeing (schools only), and Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Drugs. r members to share learnings, challenges, and successes as well as a platform to

### **Central Highlands Healthy Places Community of Practice**

Led by BCH, the purpose of the *Central Highlands CoP* is to mentor, support and build the capacity of local Health Promoters to implement various statewide initiatives with a focus vaping and smoking, relationships and creating healthier, more sustainable food environments. The CoP provides an opportunity fo collaborate on joint initiatives that have an increased reach and enhanced collective impact across the Central Highlands region.

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