



APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER



Ballarat Regional
Multicultural Council Inc.

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

Dear Members and Newsletter subscribers,

I hope you are well and if you are unwell that you are feeling supported. Thank you to many wonderful people who are sharing messages of support and connecting safely in creative and clever ways.

BRMC team is here for you. COVID-19 has changed the way we are connecting and working. Although we can't be together physically, as we normally love to do, there is so much we can create, share and do to keep each other supported, harmonious and safe through the pandemic. All of our staff are available by phone and online and our services continue.

April newsletter highlights our continuing link-ups and services and current advice about COVID-19. You can find more detail on [BRMC Facebook](#) and BRMC website www.brmc.org.au and we would love to hear from you if you would like us to promote information or your safe activities.

Enjoy the newsletter and stay home. Also, stay tuned for a special Ballarat Welcome Centre Twilight Market newsletter and virtual event coming your way in the next few weeks!

Warm Regards,
Ann Foley
Executive Officer

COVID-19: Stage 3

Here in Victoria, our government and healthcare professionals are doing everything possible to slow the spread of the virus. Follow the Stage 3 enforceable requirements to do your bit to save lives this month.

Stay home: there are only 4 reasons to be out:

- Shopping for what you need - food and essential supplies
- Medical, care or compassionate needs
- Exercise solo or in the company of no more than one person or members of your immediate household
- Work and study if you can't work or learn remotely

'Stay at home' and 'Restricted activities' FAQ: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-stay-home-and-restricted-activities-directions-faq

Useful Resources

- Latest updates and information on COVID-19 from the Victorian Department of Health & Human Services: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus
- Frequently Asked Questions regarding the virus, its transmission and testing, and preventative measures: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19
- Latest updates and information from the Australian Government Department of Health: www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert
- Support services to care for mental health and wellbeing:

- Lifeline Australia: www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
- Beyond Blue: www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak

Translated Resources

For in-language information regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) please visit these links.

- Translated Fact Sheets on the BRMC website
www.brmc.org.au/coronavirus-covid-19/
- Victorian Department of Health & Human Services
www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/translated-resources-coronavirus-disease-covid-19
- Australian Government Department of Health
www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/translated-coronavirus-covid-19-resources
- EthnoLink Language Services
www.ethnolink.com.au/covid-19-coronavirus-translated-resources/
- SBS
www.sbs.com.au/language/coronavirus
www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/coronavirus-explained-in-your-language

If you have a coronavirus disease question and need a translator:

- Call 131 450 (TIS National)
- Then request the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398

Keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies.

Quick Program Updates

- Stepping Stones Program
- Good Governance Program
- Migration and Settlement Services
- Migrant English Program
- Senior Services

Opportunities & Items of Interest

- Emergency Relief Packages for Victorians who need it most
- Ballarat Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network (BRASSN)
- Financial Support for COVID-19 Affected Job Seekers
- Ballarat RAR - Urgent Call for Donations
- Information for Pregnant Women and their Families
- Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project
- FECCA Access and Equity Survey 2020
- Business Information and Support
- Travel Information from Smartraveller
- Girl Space Ballarat has gone VIRTUAL
- Friday Sessions: Reflections on Love featuring Michael Westlake
- Entertainment for the Kids

Events in Review

- Ballarat Begonia Festival Parade
 - Multicultural Tucker
 - Harmony Fest
 - Launch and Flag Raising
 - Colours of the World Exhibition
 - Interfaith Messages for Harmony
 - Baha'i Naw Ruz Celebration
-

Quick Program Updates

Stepping Stones to Small Business

Our graduates from the 2019 program are developing business plans and marketing and are being matched with mentors. Due to COVID-19 coronavirus, the May 12 starting date of the 2020 Stepping Stones to Small Business Program has been postponed to a time to be advised.

We are still interested in learning about the women interested in participating in the Program, so you are welcome to enrol through Brotherhood of St Laurence Stepping Stones: www.bsl.org.au/services/refugees-immigration-multiculturalism/stepping-stones

I will be collecting your enrolment information and contact details, and will regularly update you about how Stepping Stones is working toward a start date. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at steppingstones@brmc.org.au

I look forward to welcoming you to the sisterhood of Stepping Stones as soon as possible - and in the meantime keep yourself and your loved ones safe and healthy!

Deborah Klein
Stepping Stones to Small Business
Ballarat Regional Coordinator



DO YOU WANT TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

Applications for the
2020 Ballarat Stepping Stones To Small Business Program
are NOW OPEN!

Stepping Stones To Small Business is a FREE micro-enterprise program for women from CALD backgrounds and women over 50 from any background

Stepping Stones includes:

- A 4-day Empowerment Program – Discover your strengths and gain financial literacy skills to help you choose your pathway to small business, employment or education
- Serious about business? We offer an 8-day Business Skills course tailored for women from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- Mentor support to achieve your goals.
- Referral pathways for employment and education opportunities.
- Free childminding, so you can enjoy worry-free learning.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY:

Deborah Klein

steppingstones@brmc.org.au 03 5383 0613

<https://www.bsl.org.au/services/refugees-immigration-multiculturalism/stepping-stones/>



Good Governance Program

The Good Governance program has trained mentors ready to assist community organisations. We are all set to deliver online, supporting mentors to participate in a mutually enriching dialogue with community organisations who have nominated for this support.

The program, delivered by BRMC in partnership with the Centre for Participation, promotes stronger, more cohesive and resilient communities by boosting good governance practices in community organisations. We work across twelve common needs of community organisations and match mentors to suit your needs.

For updates or to express your interest email the Ballarat program coordinator, Sara Kaur, at s.kaur@brmc.org.au



Migration and Settlement Services

Migration and Settlement Services offers a range of support and community links to assist people in their first five years as refugees or vulnerable migrants.

At present our Settlement Services coordinator is available to clients over the phone and online. Please contact Deruka if you are seeking support with employment, education, housing, information about health or other community links and supports.

Interpreter services are available if needed and we want to hear from you: d.dekuek@brmc.org.au or 03 5383 0613.

Diversity Homework Club

Diversity Homework Club is currently on school break and will be conducting online learning through Zoom video in Term 2.

If you know a young person who could use some help with their school work, contact Deruka at d.dekuek@brmc.org.au



Migrant English Program

Most of our local volunteer English tutors and students are in virtual contact. They are catching up through classes and conversations online via clients' computer and mobile screens within the safe confines of their homes in Ballarat and surrounds.



Online service delivery: planning session in progress

Through the support of the Victorian Strategic Engagement Coordinator (SEC) program we are now also extending volunteer tutoring to Beaufort and Ararat. We will be pleased to hear from people interested in being trained volunteer tutors and people in need of English tutoring support.



For details email Sara at s.kaur@brmc.org.au

Senior Services



Spreading some Easter cheer to our beautiful Seniors!

On Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th of April Senior Services will be delivering a two-course meal and a surprise chocolate bunny to over 120 senior homes!

We have been keeping in contact with our seniors over the phone and it is wonderful to hear they are in good spirits and taking a positive approach to the challenging times we find ourselves in.

Senior Services physical contact and group activities are suspended so we are keeping in contact by phone and email and until we can safely re-introduce our social gatherings: Multicultural Tucker, Seasonal Lunches, Bus Trips, Health and Wellbeing Days, Social Hub, Tai Chi and Home Visiting. We are very sorry that we cannot safely deliver these wonderful gatherings at present.

Senior Services are offering support with shopping, medication collection, telephone support and meals. We will be delivering additional meals throughout the month of April. Once dates are confirmed for future meal deliveries we will keep you updated on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/brmc.ballarat

If you know of a senior in need of support please contact Teresa Azzopardi on 0417 109 052. We are here to assist in whatever way we can.

Best wishes and stay safe, stay home.

Opportunities & Items of Interest

Emergency Relief Packages for Victorians who need it most

Victorians self-isolating due to coronavirus (COVID-19) with no access to food and essential supplies will receive emergency relief packages under a program introduced by the Victorian Government.

The program will support people in mandatory self-isolation, who have little or no food, and no network of family and friends to support them. Each eligible household will receive a two-week supply of essential goods.

The service can be accessed by calling the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398.

For more information visit www.premier.vic.gov.au/emergency-relief-packages-for-victorians-who-need-it-most



Ballarat Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network (BRASSN)

BRASSN brings together community volunteers, community agencies and others to share information and resources for refugee engagement and support. We also work to ensure essential information is available to people in our community who are most vulnerable and isolated due to their visa status or background. We are meeting weekly to ensure that local government and community assistance, donations of food and other needed items are distributed.

You can contact us by email on eo@brmc.org.au / 03 5383 0613 / 0418 627 517 if you want to assist or link us with someone in need.

Financial Support for COVID-19 Affected Job Seekers

The Australian Government has announced more financial assistance for coronavirus affected job seekers. There's more support for people who have lost their job or had their income reduced.

The Services Australia website has the most up to date information, so check for the answers to your questions here: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/more-financial-support-coronavirus-affected-job-seekers

Ballarat RAR - Urgent Call for Donations

Ballarat Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR) gives support socially and financially to people seeking asylum in our community. Due to the coronavirus pandemic fund-raising activities will not be possible in the immediate future. They desperately need extra funds to see them through this difficult time.



**BALLARAT
RURAL AUSTRALIANS FOR REFUGEES**

URGENT

COVID-19 has put a stop to RAR's regular fundraising activities.

People seeking asylum still need our financial support.

CAN YOU PLEASE HELP?

Donations to Ballarat RAR
BSB 083 729
A/C No. 83 931 941 2
[Bank: NAB Wendouree]

Contact Des Roache (treasurer)
Mobile
0418537713
Email
doreenroache@bigpond.com



Information for Pregnant Women and their Families

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) has published advice and information for pregnant women and their families regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Read the full article: www.ranzcog.edu.au/statements-guidelines/covid-19-statement



Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project

The Embrace Multicultural Mental Health Project provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

This project is run by Mental Health Australia in partnership with FECCA and NEDA. To help improve and inform the Embrace Project they would like to hear from CALD community members about their experiences and knowledge of mental health, mental illness, and wellbeing.

Find it here: <https://bit.ly/2wugaw1>

FECCA Access and Equity Survey 2020

Over the years, FECCA has produced Access and Equity reports for the Government based on consultations and surveys across Australia. The aim has been to find out about the experiences of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds accessing, finding and using Government services. This helps FECCA to provide feedback to Government on what is and what is not working.

The survey is designed to get insights and opinions from people from CALD backgrounds. It will take about 10-15 minutes to complete.

Survey: <https://bit.ly/33K0hNX>

Business Information and Support

The Victorian Government is providing information, advice and support to help businesses plan and respond to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Visit the coronavirus business support page: www.business.vic.gov.au/disputes-disasters-and-succession-planning/illness-and-business-management-plan/coronavirus-business-support

You can also call the dedicated business hotline on 13 22 15.



Travel Information from Smartraveller

From 25 March there is a ban on Australians travelling overseas.

A travel ban is in place for all Australians. You will not be able to depart Australia to travel overseas. The ban will help prevent travellers returning to Australia with coronavirus.

Visit the Smartraveller website for up to date information: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Girl Space Ballarat has gone VIRTUAL

Wednesdays, 4pm

The Girl Space program hosts a range of activities (sports classes, cooking, life skills, fun and games, etc.) for young women (aged 12 to 25) across the Ballarat and Grampians region. Now more than ever they believe it's essential to create and maintain connections, and provide a platform for young women in the region to continue engaging in activities.

They will be hosting weekly online sessions through their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/175523252932646). Plenty of exciting activities are planned for the weeks ahead and they encourage young women to make suggestions.

This group is very carefully moderated by staff from CMY and City of Ballarat. It is a safe, inclusive online space for young people to make new connections.

Please help spread the word about Virtual Girl Space and encourage young people in your networks to join!

**Girl
Space**
VIRTUAL

LIVE FITNESS CLASSES

TRIVIA SESSIONS

ART CLASSES

AND MORE..

WEDNESDAYS @ 4PM

 @GIRL SPACE BALLARAT



Friday Sessions: Reflections on Love featuring Michael Westlake

Friday 10th April, 7.30pm

Ballarat Baha'i Community will be hosting regular online Friday sessions focused on reflection, prayer and meditation and featuring special guests from the local arts community. It is hoped that these events will provide a means for connection as well as a space to be inspired and strengthened.

The third in this series will take place on Friday 10th April, featuring local pianist Michael Westlake. Michael will bring his mystical, reflective melodies to this space as we reflect on the all-pervading power of love.

If you'd like to attend, please download the Zoom app and message Ballarat Baha'i Community for the direct event link:

<https://www.messenger.com/t/ballaratbahai>



Entertainment for the Kids

Here are a couple of great things to keep the kids entertained and safe at home.

Story Box Library

Story Box features engaging online Australian stories read by some of Australia's finest storytellers. Their stories are a little bit cheeky, a little bit charming and a whole lot of fun: https://storyboxlibrary.com.au/login?library_login=true

To log in select your Library Service (Central Highlands Libraries) and enter your full library barcode number.



Animal House

Zoos Victoria have set up a few live stream cameras from Melbourne Zoo and Werribee Open Range Zoo, so you can enjoy the zoo from home. Watch zebras, lions, penguins, giraffes, snow leopards and more: www.zoo.org.au/animal-house

Events in Review

Ballarat Begonia Festival Parade

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

We had a beautiful morning at the Begonia Parade on Monday 9th March. A rainbow of colours with a true sense of community bringing people together to enjoy the magic of this event. Thank you to all who participated with BRMC.



Bangladeshi Community in Ballarat

Bangladeshi Community in Ballarat participated for the second time in the Begonia Festival Parade. There were around 40 members present including children. Community members are very proud to showcase some Bangladeshi cultural and traditional display items in the parade. Each year the community is getting more organised and stronger with effective members.



Multicultural Tucker

BRMC celebrated the Filipino culture at our March MCT on Wednesday 11th March. Seniors enjoying beautiful singing by Maria from the Philippines.



Harmony Fest Launch and Flag Raising

The Harmony Fest 2020 Launch and Flag Raising was held on Thursday 12th March at Queen Victoria Square (opposite Town Hall). The event was followed by a morning tea at Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC).



Colours of the World Exhibition

The Colours of the World Cultures Exhibition Launch was held at the Art Gallery of Ballarat on Saturday 14th March. The group exhibition showcased Ballarat's cultural diversity by bringing together artworks and artefacts to celebrate 10 years of City of Ballarat's Intercultural Ambassadors Program.



Interfaith Messages for Harmony

Ballarat Interfaith Network presented Interfaith Messages for Harmony on Sunday 15th March. A wonderful gathering of religions and cultures, guest speakers and live music. The event concluded with the release of white doves as a sign of peace.



Baha'i Naw Ruz Celebration

On Friday 20th March the Ballarat Baha'i Community held their Naw Ruz (New Year) celebration. The format of the celebration changed to online due to government advice regarding COVID-19. The program included spiritual reflections, music and some brief words on the significance of the New Year.



It's important to take care of yourself and those around you during these times. Reduce your risk of coronavirus by following advice from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus



Reduce your risk of coronavirus

- **WASH** your hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer.
- **TRY** not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- **COVER** your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- **STAY** at home if you feel sick. If you take medication make sure you have enough.
- **PHONE** your doctor or the hotline – **1800 675 398** – if you need medical attention. They will tell you what to do.
- **CONTINUE** healthy habits: exercise, drink water, get plenty of sleep.
- **WEARING** a face mask is not necessary if you are well.
- **BUY** an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60% alcohol.



Find out more

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

If you are concerned, call the

Coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours)

Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only

To receive this publication in an accessible format email COVID-19@dhhs.vic.gov.au
Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.
© State of Victoria, March 2020. (2001628_v1)



Health and Human Services

BRMC Contact Details

Ballarat Welcome Centre, Barkly Square

25-39 Barkly St, Ballarat VIC 3350

Phone: 03 5383 0613

Email: info@brmc.org.au

Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/brmc.ballarat

Website

Visit www.brmc.org.au



BRMC respectfully acknowledges the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people, their elders and community leaders, past, present and emerging - traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work.  

