

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

Greetings from the BRMC Team,

Physical distancing and staying at home are essential these days but working together and supporting each other are too. Our Senior Services team have delivered over 350 meals and we are delighted to feature that news and some pics this week. Diversity Homework Club has gone online to assist school students and they have welcomed peer tutors from Ballarat Grammar and Ballarat Clarendon College. Loreto College and Lateral Plains from Ballarat and Paw Po women's enterprise in Nhill have come together with our Ballarat refugee and asylum seeker support network to provide 25 vulnerable households with a re-commissioned laptop computer to stay connected. Across Ballarat, Beaufort and Ararat other community volunteer tutors are honing online skills as they continue to deliver English sessions. Collaboration with compassionate green-thumbed community members will also provide fresh fruit and vegetables to people through a donation depot at the Ballarat Welcome Centre. Enjoy reading about these and other multicultural community initiatives this month.

BRMC wishes the Muslim community a blessed and generous Ramadan.

The Victorian Government is helping Victoria's Muslim community find new ways to celebrate Ramadan, with many of the traditional services and customs ruled out this year due to coronavirus measures. For more info visit www.premier.vic.gov.au/supporting-victorias-muslim-community-during-ramadan



Ramadan Mubarak!

Meet the Board

BRMC is governed by an elected committee of management elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. A full list of Committee members can be found on the BRMC website at www.brmc.org.au/about-us/#executive. We will be featuring each of our generous and skilled Board members in each monthly newsletter.

We are starting with our Women's Officer:

Joy Sawiche Juma

Women's Affairs Officer, BRMC Executive Committee

Joy is a mother of two boys and one girl and a Registered Nurse/Midwife and Infant Massage Therapist.

Originally from Kenya, Joy and her family came to Australia in 2004. She lived in Horsham for 9 1/2 years and worked at the Wimmera Base Hospital as a midwife and general nurse. Joy was privileged to work with multicultural families, especially mothers and women, helping them maneuver through the complex health system in Australia.

In 2013 they moved to Ballarat. Joy was nominated for the "Victoria's Multicultural Award for Excellence 2013" and recognised for Service Delivery by Multicultural Victoria in Health and Community Services by Denis Napthin (Premier of Victoria, 2013). In 2017 Joy was offered the opportunity to join "It Takes Courage". This bore the cookbook "It Takes Courage" - recipes and stories from around the world. She is also part of their "Unstoppable Women" project and an "Equality for all" Advocate through Women's Health Grampians.



Joy's passion is to inspire her daughter, young girls and other women from different backgrounds and cultures, to help them find their way and navigate a successful life in Australia. To be a champion and advocate for prevention of violence and uphold equality for all.



FRESH FOOD DROP-OFF

Ballarat Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network (BRASSN) is gathering fresh food donations to assist households and families in need.

Donations of fresh fruit and vegetables welcome

MONDAYS & TUESDAYS, 11AM - 12PM

At rear entry of **Ballarat Welcome Centre**
25-39 Barkly St, Ballarat

(same location as Twilight Markets)

Ballarat Welcome Centre will be set up for contactless drop-off so please bag or box your items and label with contents.

Short-term parking is available on Barkly Street in front of Barkly Square but best access is via the rear carpark (off Princes Street South).

Enquiries: www.facebook.com/brmc.ballarat or 03 5383 0613



Ballarat Regional
Multicultural Council Inc.

Ballarat Welcome Centre Twilight Market going online next month!

Keep an eye on the [BRMC website](#) and [Facebook page](#) for the Big Reveal in June. In the meantime, join us as we give you some peeks into

the market place in advance of our launch in Refugee Week 2020.

Still featuring quality handmade, locally-sourced and ethically-produced goods from across our region and around the world, the Ballarat Twilight Market Online helps customers connect with their favourite vendors. A wide range of goods are available to buy and have delivered to your door. Some of the highlight collections include Naturally Berry, A TUK, Melinda Muscat, Grecia Sanchez Guatemalan Goods, Eco Enviro Concepts, Friends Against Domestic Violence in East Timor, Firebird Studios, and more.



Quick Program Updates

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- Support for Vulnerable Children and Families
- Learning from Home Advice
- Staying Safe Online
- Financial Counselling - CAFS Ballarat
- Language Café Online
- With One Voice Choir Live Stream
- Victoria Together

Quick Program Updates

Stepping Stones to Small Business

The inaugural Ballarat Stepping Stones to Small Business Volunteer Mentor training and induction takes place as an online webinar on Thursday, 14 May from 11am - 1pm.

Twelve community participants with backgrounds in education, business, community development and the arts are being readied to provide one-on-one support and guidance for Stepping Stones alumni from our region who are using this COVID-restricted time to still actively develop their micro-enterprise ideas.

Stepping Stones mentorships are also being augmented by fortnightly online business skills workshops offered by Small Business Victoria and the Brotherhood of St. Laurence for the thousand-plus women across metropolitan Melbourne and our Central Highlands / Goldfields / Wimmera region who have successfully completed Stepping Stones to Small Business.

For more information contact Deborah Klein, Stepping Stones Ballarat Regional Coordinator: steppingstones@brmc.org.au or 0457 934 728.



2019 Ballarat Region Stepping Stones To Small Business Alumni



L-R Rear: Joy, Flavia, Dung, Claudia, Fiona, Mary, Mary
 L-R Front: Abrar, Nyibol, Natacha, Hellen
 Absent: Rose, Martha

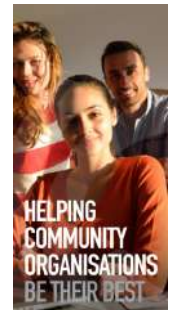


Good Governance Program

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

Our Migration and 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. Settlement Services provide support and community links to assist people in their first five years as refugees or vulnerable migrants. We are also providing emergency relief, fresh food and support to vulnerable households so don't hesitate to get in contact.

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

Our volunteer tutors are at hand to help and now include peer tutors from Ballarat Grammar and Ballarat Clarendon College. We can help with homework and schooling needs through our online support and we can help you get connected. We are working online and will be delivering some learning packs to our students this month.

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



Community Volunteer Migrant English Tutoring

We are delighted to share that our Migrant English Program tutors and students are going great guns. Upskilling on the go is the name of the game. Not only are we teaching and learning English, we're polishing our tech skills too. As our participants undertake this journey with enthusiasm and curiosity, we'd like to share the story of MiNo, Loi, Fili and Anh.

They started with us in August 2019 with very little English. With their own hard work and the untiring efforts of their tutors Julie, Denise and Tamika who worked on their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, they are now confident users of the language. The joy of learning is evident from their beautiful smiles!



A big 'thank you' to all our tutors - you are our rock stars!

We are also offering the program online to learners in Beaufort, Ararat and Horsham, bringing English learning within the safety of their homes. The support the program offers is being appreciated now more than ever before owing to its flexibility and the fact that each learning session caters to the clients' individual linguistic needs.

If you would like to join our exciting journey as a tutor or learner, please send an email to Sara at s.kaur@brmc.org.au

Note for MEP tutors: MEP Community of Practice catch-up is scheduled to take place in the last week of May. An email with other details will be sent out soon.

Senior Services

BRMC Senior Services team were busy bees on 21st and 22nd April delivering 135 meals to seniors across Ballarat and regional areas as far as Berringa, Garibaldi, Dereel and Ballan. Our seniors were delighted to receive a bag of treats along with their meal. It's so wonderful to see all the happy faces of our seniors and having a chat from a distance.



Meals will continue to be delivered fortnightly in May and June. Senior Services are also able to assist with shopping, medication collection and phone support.

If you know of a senior in need of support please contact Teresa on 0417 109 052.

Opportunities & Items of Interest

Government Support for Multicultural Communities

The Victorian Government is supporting multicultural and multifaith families to ensure they stay connected to their communities amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Ros Spence announced \$11.3 million to help these communities, which are facing their own unique challenges due to social isolation, language barriers or difficulties accessing services such as income support, Medicare or Centrelink.

Media Release: www.premier.vic.gov.au/helping-multicultural-victorians-through-coronavirus

Victorian Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter

ECCV has joined 29 other ethnic and multicultural organisations across Victoria (including BRMC) in signing the Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter to the Victorian Premier and Crisis Council of Cabinet, urging the government to meet the needs of culturally diverse Victorians amidst COVID-19.

Media Release: <https://bit.ly/35iiZwS>

Open Letter: <https://bit.ly/3bQq0aF>



Ballarat RAR Donations

Ballarat Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR) would like to thank the local community for their generous donations to assist refugees and asylum seekers living in the Ballarat area in a recent urgent call for donations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ballarat RAR thanks you for your ongoing support.

Ballarat Emergency Food Relief Drop-off

As part of the *Be Kind Ballarat* campaign, the City of Ballarat is asking residents to drop off food donations between 10am and 12pm on weekdays. Donations will be given to local welfare organisations for distribution to vulnerable people in the community.

The emergency food relief drop-off point is located at the loading bay at the rear of the Ballarat Central Library (off Market St).

Read more: www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/news/city-ballarat-open-emergency-food-relief-drop-point-ballarat-library



International Student Emergency Relief Fund

The Victorian Government has announced a \$45 million International Student Emergency Relief Fund for international students facing financial hardship as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19).

For information and to register your interest in applying for support through the fund, visit www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/help-and-support/support-for-students-coronavirus/international-student-emergency-relief-fund

Support for Vulnerable Children and Families

A \$77.5 million funding package will help provide additional support to vulnerable children and families across Victoria amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The package includes \$46 million to increase the capacity of family services to provide outreach support to the most vulnerable Victorian families.

Read more: www.premier.vic.gov.au/more-support-to-keep-families-and-children-safe

Learning from Home Advice

When you start to think about helping your child to learn from home, remember that no one expects you to be a subject expert or teacher. The most important thing you can do is to continue to provide comfort, support and encouragement to your child.



For translated information visit: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/home-learning-translated-advice.aspx>

Staying Safe Online

Staying connected online has never been more important. Here are some tips for staying safe online during COVID-19. Information includes helpful safety tips for parents and carers on how to protect children. Visit: www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/covid-19

Cyber Safety Information Session for Parents & Carers

Tuesday 19th May

Join Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service for a Cyber Safety Webinar for Parents & Carers. This session will explain cyber-bullying and sexting, what the law says, and tips for keeping your kids safe online.

Book now: lawweek.net.au/event/cyber-safety-information-session-for-parents-carers

Financial Counselling - CAFS Ballarat

Are you experiencing financial difficulties?

CAFS Ballarat are providing Financial Counselling services during COVID-19 for people experiencing financial hardship. The service is completely free and confidential.

Contact CAFS on 03 5337 333 or intake@cafs.org.au

Language Café Online

Thursday 28th May, 4pm - 5.30pm

The Language Café is now online!

The Language Café aims to regularly bring people from all walks of life together to chat in different languages, improve English conversation skills and make new connections.

Register Now: www.eventbrite.com.au/e/language-cafe-online-tickets-85911506629

Once you have registered you will receive an email at 4pm on Thursday 28th May with a link to join the online meeting.



With One Voice Choir Live Stream

Creativity Australia continue to deliver their With One Voice choir program with online live sessions. Round up your housemates and sing your hearts out with one of their 16 professional Conductors from around Australia. Each week night there are at least two, thirty minute sessions to choose from.

Visit www.facebook.com/WOVLive for more information and like their page to stay up to date.



Victoria Together

The Victorian Government has launched Victoria Together - a new online portal showcasing the best Victoria has to offer including live music, comedy, entertainment, nature and art. This is part of a dedicated campaign to help keep Victorians connected and to help keep our creators creating.

Visit: www.together.vic.gov.au

Victoria Together

**Experience the best
Victoria has to offer online**

together.vic.gov.au

Support Resources

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Maintaining good mental health is important for our wellbeing during this time. If you need to talk to someone, these services can help.

- **Lifeline Australia:** 13 11 14 or www.lifeline.org.au
- **Beyond Blue:** 1300 224 636 or coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au
- **eheadspace:** 1800 650 893 or headspace.org.au/eheadspace
- **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au/coronavirus
- **Embrace Multicultural Mental Health:** embracementalhealth.org.au

Family and Domestic Violence

Whatever your situation, it is important to know that help and support is available. These services are available 24/7.

- **1800RESPECT:** 1800 737 732 or www.1800respect.org.au
- **Safe Steps:** 1800 015 188 or www.safesteps.org.au
- **InTouch (Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence):** 1800 755 988 or intouch.org.au

If you are feeling unsafe or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 000.

Have you experienced racism?

Racism is never ok and should never be tolerated. If you feel you have been discriminated against, victimised or vilified, you or someone on your behalf can make a complaint to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

Visit: www.multiculturalcommission.vic.gov.au/experienced-racism-heres-what-you-can-do

Remember... you are not alone.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information

For updates, advice and **translated resources** visit
www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus



If you have a coronavirus question and need a translator:

- Call 131 450 (TIS National)
- Then request the Coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398

Keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only

BRMC connects and supports diverse communities to be safe and informed and to minimise the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19).

BRMC Contact Details

Ballarat Welcome Centre, Barkly Square

25-39 Barkly St, Ballarat VIC 3350



Phone: 03 5383 0613

Email: info@brmc.org.au

Website: www.brmc.org.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/brmc.ballarat



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.  



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