Disability services

Disability resources
information sheet

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Respite funding resources

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (CRCC) operate nationally throughout Australia. CRCC are information centres for older people, people with disabilities and those who provide care and services. CRCC provide free and confidential information on community aged care, disability and other support services available within Australia.

CRCC can also help arrange respite, when carers need to take a break from caring. The Centres do this by acting as a single contact point for information need by carers and by organising, purchasing, or managing respite care assistance packages for carers. Examples of respite care assistance include:

- in-home respite care
- support workers to assist carers when taking a break away from home
- residential respite care.

*Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre*
Freecall: 1800 052 222

Yooralla Breakaway Flexible Respite

The Yooralla Breakaway Flexible Respite program operates in the Eastern and (inner and middle) Southern Metropolitan Regions of Victoria. It provides access to funds for planned respite both in and out of home.

The aim of this program is to give carers of people with a disability broader options for obtaining support that is meaningful to them whilst providing a positive experience for the person with disability. Funding can be used for in-home support (short-term), recreation, assistance to go on a family holiday (i.e. accommodation/travel costs), camps, holiday programs, group holidays and activities.
Yooralla Eastern Region
Address: 587 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills VIC 3127
Telephone: (03) 9831 5600
Email: breakaway.eastern@yooralla.com.au
Website: yooralla.com.au/services/respite/community-respite

Yooralla Southern Region
Address: 319 Neerim Road, Carnegie VIC 3163
Telephone: (03) 8574 4700
Email: Carnegie.lsc@yooralla.com.au
Website: yooralla.com.au/services/respite/community-respite

Yooralla Gippsland Region
Address: 24 Kay Street, Traralgon VIC 3844
Telephone: (03) 5174 1111
Email: gippsland@yooralla.com.au
Website: yooralla.com.au/services/respite/community-respite

Carers Victoria – Western Metropolitan Region

Carers Victoria in the Western Metropolitan Region has a program called Respite Connections that provides carer support. Respite Connections can provide support in finding, accessing respite and assisting with the costs.

Carers Victoria
Address: Level 1, 37 Albert Street, Footscray VIC 3011
Telephone: (03) 9396 9550
Freecall: 1800 052 222
Email: rc@carersvictoria.org.au
Website: carersvic.org.au/respite-connections

Western Leisure Care – Western Metropolitan Region

The Individualised Program at Western Leisure Care can provide a number of hours of respite care to support an individual with a disability under the age of 65 years. The program can also provide limited financial support to enable people with a disability to have a holiday or weekend away.

Western Leisure Care
Address: 45 - 47 Macey Avenue, Avondale Heights VIC 3034
Telephone: (03) 9317 8347
Care Connect – North West Metropolitan Region

Care Connect coordinates a number of respite support programs for carers of persons with a disability living in the North West Metropolitan Region. The Respite for Older Carers program (also coordinated for the Southern Metropolitan Region) provides short term respite funding for carers of 60 years. Mental Health Respite provides respite funding for all ages, and the Adult Flexible Respite funding is for adults with a disability aged 18-65 years.

Disability Client Services, Department of Human Services

Individual Support Packages are funds allocated by the Department of Human Services to a person to meet their disability-related support needs in order to maintain independence at home, learn new skills and participate in the local community.

Respite Victoria

Respite Victoria links people to eight regional disability respite websites in Victoria. Each regional website links to the respite service search (local and state-wide), and has specific local information about respite and recreational services, including attendant care agencies with can provide support workers.

Local regional disability respite websites:
Respite Information and Development in the East (RIDE): respitesteast.org.au
Respite South: respitesouth.org.au
Respite North and West: respitenorthandwest.org.au
Respite in Gippsland (RIG): respitegippsland.org.au
Respite Barwon South West: respitebarwonsouthwest.org.au
Respite Grampians: grampiansrespite.org.au
Respite Loddon Mallee: respiteloddonmallee.org.au
Respite Hume: respitehume.org.au
Respite through your local council

Home and Community Care

Each local council has its own Home and Community Care Program that often includes respite services. Contact your local council to find out what services you may be eligible for.

Find your local council at dpcd.vic.gov.au

Respite through community respite programs

Able Australia

Able Australia has a subsidised respite program for ages 12-18, for up to 8 hours a month at $10 per hour, servicing metropolitan Melbourne. There may be a long waitlist to access this service.

Able Australia
Address: 616 Riversdale Road, Camberwell VIC 3124  
Postal Address: PO Box 1213, Camberwell VIC 3124  
Telephone: 1300 225 369  
Email: info@ableaustralia.org.au  
Website: ableaustralia.org.au

Independence Australia

Independence Australia has a limited amount of respite funding available for individuals with a disability of any age living in Victoria. There may be a long waitlist to access this service.

Independence Australia
Address: 208 Wellington Street, Collingwood VIC 3066  
Telephone: 1300 704 456  
Email: theteam@independenceaustralia.com  
Website: independenceaustralia.com
Case management

To find case management in your local area contact your local Department of Human Services (DHS) - Disability Intake and Response Service. See earlier section under Disability Client Services, Department of Human Services.

Alternatively you can also contact your local council. Find your local council at dpcd.vic.gov.au

Care Connect

Care Connect is a major community care provider that supports people to live independent lives at home and in the community. Care Connect supports children, young people, adults, older adults and carers in accessing:

- information services and support
- assessment and planning
- case management and care coordination
- advocacy
- service delivery
- carer support.

Care Connect National office
Level 1, 204 – 206 Gipps Street, Abbotsford VIC 3067
Telephone: (03) 9270 9999
Freecall: 1800 116 166
Email: info@careconnect.org.au
Website: careconnect.org.au

Emergency Care Plan Template

The carer information pack is available from Carers Victoria and includes an Emergency Care Plan Template that can be used to compile the most critical information when a person is caring for someone. To download a copy visit carersvic.org.au/file-assets/factsheet/carer-information-pack/ or contact your local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre for a printed copy.
Family Relationship Service for Carers

Family Relationship Service for Carers (FRSC) is a state-wide government-funded program that funds and supports families and carers who look after someone with a disability. FRSC assists family members in counselling and planning for the future, issues relating to disability and caring, and maintaining family relationships. The program usually provides funding for three to five sessions of counselling by qualified psychologists or counsellors sourced in the local area. Referrals can be from other service providers or family members. Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) manages this service in Victoria.

EACH (Community Inclusion and Support Services - CISS)
Address: Administration 2, Building 254 Canterbury Road, Bayswater VIC 3153
Telephone: 1300 303 346
Email: frsc@eac.com.au
Website: each.com.au

‘Talk it over’ - Carer Counselling Program

Carers Victoria has a state-wide program that is free for carers and can provide up to six sessions of counselling on issues such as managing stress, coping skills, loss and grief, dealing with change, practical problem-solving, emotional support, health and wellbeing.

Counselling can be arranged at a counsellors office, over the telephone, or somewhere closer to your home, and is available in multiple languages. Referrals can be made through other services or by carers themselves.

Carer Advisory Line
Freecall: 1800 242 636
Email cav@carersvic.org.au
Website: carersvic.org.au

Community Health Services

Most local councils in Victoria have a Community Health Service that provides primary health care services such as occupational therapy, speech therapy and counselling at a low or subsidised cost subject to income assessment.

To find your local service visit: health.vic.gov.au/pch/commhealth/index.htm
Australian Psychological Society

To find a qualified psychologist in your area and to identify those that can provide Medicare rebates and those who have specialty areas contact the Australian Psychological Society or visit their website.

Australian Psychological Society
Telephone: (03) 8662 3300
Freecall: 1800 333 497
Email: referral@psychology.org.au
Website: psychology.org.au/FindaPsychologist

General Practitioner Mental Health Care Plan

People can talk with their doctor about any mental health issues they may have. Doctors can set up a Mental Health Care Plan, which can involve a referral to a psychologist for up to 12 sessions a year, or 18 sessions in exceptional circumstances.

Website: health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-pubs-b-better

Support groups

Spectrum Connections

Spectrum Connections is an Autism Spectrum Disorder family support group facilitated by Care Connect and jointly funded by Care Connect and a Knox City Council Community Development funding grant. The program provides an environment for families or carers of an individual with an Autism Spectrum Disorder to meet and support each other.

Sessions are held in both Knox and Maroondah. Knox meetings are held fortnightly on Fridays in Upper Ferntree Gully and Maroondah meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday of each month.

Care Connect - Eastern Metropolitan Region
Telephone: (03) 9840 4444
Freecall: 1800 116 166
Email: spectrumconnections@careconnect.org.au

Amaze

Amaze (previously Autism Victoria) has a list of support groups in Victoria for individuals on the Autism Spectrum as well as their carers. Visit ‘For support groups’ at amaze.org.au/discover/about-autism-spectrum-disorders/resources/ to find a support group in your area.

There is also a great tip sheet on how to start your own support group.
**Carers Victoria**

The Carer Advisory Line can be contacted for information on support groups or starting a support group.

*Carers Advisory Line*
Freecall: 1800 242 636
Website: carersvic.org.au/advice/talk-things-over

**Online support groups**

*Raising children*: raisingchildren.net.au

**Strengthening Parent Support Program**

Strengthening Parent Support Program offers support to families in establishing formal and informal parent support groups. These groups are seen as an important adjunct to the service system by offering mutual support for families of children with disabilities and developmental delay through the sharing of common experiences, concerns and aspirations. The Parent Support Program representatives are a great source of information on support groups in the local area as well as other resources.

Website: education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/intervention/services/family.htm#H2N10144

Strengthening Parenting Support providers:

*Gateway Services Inc.*
Address: 10-12 Albert Street, Geelong VIC 3218
Telephone: (03) 5221 2984

*South West Access Network Inc.*
Address: 71 Koroit Street, Warrnambool VIC 3280
Telephone: (03) 5561 8111

*Parent Support Network - Eastern Region Inc.*
Address: 18 Balwyn Road, Canterbury VIC 3126
Telephone: (03) 9830 0412
Website: psn-emr.com.au

*Parent to Parent Gippsland*
Address: PO Box 3163, Gippsland Mail Centre VIC 3841
Telephone: (03) 5135 3131
Wellington Special Needs Network Inc.
Address: 87 Fitzroy Street, Sale VIC 3850
Telephone (03) 5144 3629

PINARC Support Services Inc.
Address: P.O. Box 1841 Mail Centre, Ballarat VIC 3354
Telephone: (03) 5333 4721

Wimmera Uniting Care
185 Baillie Street, Horsham VIC 3400
T: 03 5382 6789

Benalla and District Support Group for Children with Special Needs
Address: RMB 2707, Benalla VIC 3672
Telephone: (03) 5762 7057

SCAFFALD – Supporting Children and Families for all Levels of Disability
Address: 145 Crook Street, Strathdale VIC 3554
Telephone: (03) 5442 7897
Freecall: 1800 224 799
Email: bendigo2@riac.org.au

Melbourne Citymission
Address: 123 Albion Street, Brunswick VIC 3056
Telephone: (03) 9385 3235

Moira Child and Family Support Inc.
Address: 928 Nepean Hwy, Hampton East VIC 3189
Telephone: (03) 9532 1316

Parent to Parent West Inc.
Address: 81 Cowper Street, Footscray VIC 3011
Telephone: (03) 9687 7066
Relaxation

Guided relaxation CD from Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre

Contact your local Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre (located under Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre on page 1) for a free copy of a guided relaxation CD.

Relaxation tips from Spectrum Connections support group members

1. Find something that lets you wind down, and make it a routine, daily if possible.
2. Book in a fixed appointment to do something fun or relaxing for yourself – and do not cancel it. Treat it like you would a specialist appointment and commit to it.
3. Move past the guilt of doing something for yourself, and remind yourself ‘I need this or I will burn out’ or ‘this will energise me to better care for my child’.
4. Research practical strategies to deal with a current problem that is causing you stress, and then try to enjoy an activity without worrying as much, because you know what step you are going to take next, even if it might not be the whole solution.

Favourite activities for relaxation:

- meditation
- guided relaxation
- time alone
- aromatherapy
- exercise
- team sports
- pilates
- pampering
- foot spa
- hot bath
- massage
- scrapbooking
- crafts
- painting
- reading
- healthy diet
- Facebook
- getting out of the house
- sleep
- chocolate
- couple time / date night
- smart phone relaxation applications.

Crisis intervention for behavioural issues

Psychologist intervention

Contact the Australian Psychological Society for information on local psychologists who specialise in behaviour management and Autism, for example. See ‘Counselling’ for more information.
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services is a state-wide crisis assessment and treatment service. It is for children 0-18 years with serious emotional disturbance or a diagnosable psychiatric disorder whose condition is considered seriously detrimental to their growth or development and/or where there are substantial difficulties in the person’s social or family environment.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Telephone: 1300 767 299 to obtain details for your local service

Adult specialist mental health services (16 - 64 years)

There is a Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT) for each region in Victoria that operates 24-hours a day and provides urgent community-based assessment and short-term treatment interventions to people in psychiatric crisis. CATT services provide intensive community treatment and support, often in the person’s own home, during the acute phase of illness as an alternative to hospitalisation. Individual CATT services can be called 24-hours a day, however the central number below only operates between 9.00am-5.00pm weekdays.

Adult specialist mental health services
Telephone: 1300 767 299
Website: health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/services/adult/index.htm

Behaviour Support Services

Behaviour Support Services (BSS) is a service run by the Department of Human Services for children, adolescents and adults with a disability. BSS delivers systematic, environmental, educational and other therapeutic strategies to prevent the occurrence of behaviours of concern.

BSS practitioners include a range of staff with tertiary qualifications in relevant disciplines including psychology, nursing, social work, speech pathology, and staff who have relevant behavioural training and experience.

BSS is committed to the use of non-aversive techniques that maximise quality of life and reduce behaviours of concern.

Contact your regional Disability Intake and Response Service (see page 1) who will provide you with further information on eligibility criteria and referral pathways.

For direct contact to your regional Disability Intake and Response Services please call:

Behaviour Support Services
Freecall: 1800 783 783
Telephone Typewriter Service: 1800 008 149
Emergency respite

Overnight respite facilities
Visit your regional disability respite website to search for local respite facilities in your area (see Respite Victoria). Facilities differ in terms of the ages and complexity of needs that they cater to, and fees.

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres
As described previously (see Respite funding resources), CRCC can help to arrange in-home respite quickly where possible. They can also help identify which overnight respite facilities might have vacancies with short notice.

Family Options
Family Options aims to support families of people with a disability by providing a choice to share their care responsibilities with volunteer carers on a short-term or long-term basis. Contact your regional Disability Intake and Response Service (see above) to find out more which agency in your area provides this program and how to apply. For example, in the Eastern Metropolitan Region this program is run by Yooralla. Find out more at:


Annecto - Emergency After-hours Response Service
Annecto - Emergency After-hours Response Service (EARS) is a program that can assist in unexpected times of need outside normal business hours. EARS provides assistance including short-term personal care, telephone and in-home support, at no cost after-hours. The service is available to:

- people with a disability
- people who are ageing and their carer
- people who are not existing clients of another service with an after-hours component.

EARS operates in the Western, Northern and Eastern Metropolitan DHS Regions, as well as in the Grampians DHS Region.

Annecto - EARS
Freecall: 1800 72 72 80
Website: respitenorthandwest.org.au/services-and-support/annecto-emergency-after-hours-response-service-ears
Crisis support

After-hours GP helpline
If you have an urgent health concern and don’t know what to do, call the after-hours GP helpline for free health information and assistance from a registered nurse, or medical advice from a GP.
Freecall: 1800 022 222

Parentline
Parentline provides a state-wide telephone counselling service to parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years. Professional counsellors are able to explore a variety of issues that impact on parenting and relationships. Call on weekdays 8.00am – midnight and weekends 10.00am-10.00pm.
Telephone: 13 22 89

Lifeline
Lifeline is a 24-hour mental health crisis helpline with volunteer counsellors trained to provide emotional support.
Telephone: 13 11 14

Kids Helpline
Kids Helpline provides telephone and online counselling for ages 5-25 years.
Freecall: 1800 55 1800

MensLine Australia
MensLine Australia is a professional telephone and online support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way.
Telephone: 1300 789 978

Translating and Interpreting Service
For translating or interpreting service to assist in accessing any of the service listed in this document contact:
Telephone: 13 14 50