

AUGUST 2026



NEWSLETTER

Community Health

Learn about our key healthy lifestyle messages and community services.

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We hope you are keeping warm in this last month of winter!

In this edition, we're shining a spotlight on World Breastfeeding Week, celebrating local families and the importance of creating a community where breastfeeding is welcomed and supported. We're also recognising Dental Health Week, with practical tips to help keep smiles healthy at every age.

As the month continues, we celebrate diversity and inclusion through Wear It Purple Day, encourage a love of reading during Children's Book Week, and acknowledge National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, celebrating the strengths, cultures and bright futures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

We hope this help you get involved, learn something new and connect with the many health and wellbeing initiatives happening across our community.



**Swan Hill
District Health**
Connected Care. Best Experience.

Meet our team

**Say Hi to Bronte from the Health Promotion team.
Bronte has recently finished her Masters of Health Promotion
in 2025 through Deakin University.**

She is a passionate Health Promotion officer that works to promote oral health, edible gardening , healthy eating in our community. She enjoys being able to collaborate with a wide range of community partners in her role.

Bronte is the Smiles 4 Miles coordinator for the Swan Hill LGA. Smiles 4 Miles is a state-wide program run through Oral Health Victoria. The program works with kinders, long day cares and Family day cares to promote good Oral Health from the start.



Fun fact about Bronte:

*Bronte is also known as the tomato
that visits kinders and long day cares!*

Dental Health Week

2026 the theme for Dental Health week is 'My Smile' which focuses on people looking after their teeth across the lifespan.

Looking after teeth and gums in the early years

- Ages and stages of oral health for children



0-6 months

- Use a damp cloth/ baby face washer to wipe gums down
- Teething may start as early as 3 months



DHSV Brushing with
your baby 0-18
months video



6-18 months

- Use a toothbrush with water to brush any baby teeth
- Parents should be brushing the child's teeth
- Teeth may start appearing from 6 to 9 months old



Brushing with your
toddler 18 months+
video



18 months+

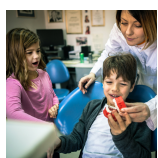
- Use a toothbrush with children's toothpaste (a pea-sized amount)
- Adults should be brushing children's teeth up to the age of 8
- Children on average have all 20 baby teeth by age 3



Tips about visiting the dentist



- It's recommended children have a check up by the age of 1
- Bring child when parents or older siblings have appointments
- Ask the dentist if child can play with a tooth model or brush puppet
- At home, play dentist office or read books around visiting the dentist



Child Dental Benefit Scheme- Eligibility tool



Answer a series of
questions to determine
eligibility

World Breastfeeding Week 1-7 August

Breastfeeding Matters & so do your stories

This **World Breastfeeding Week (1-7 August)**, we're celebrating and supporting local families by recognising that every breastfeeding journey is unique.

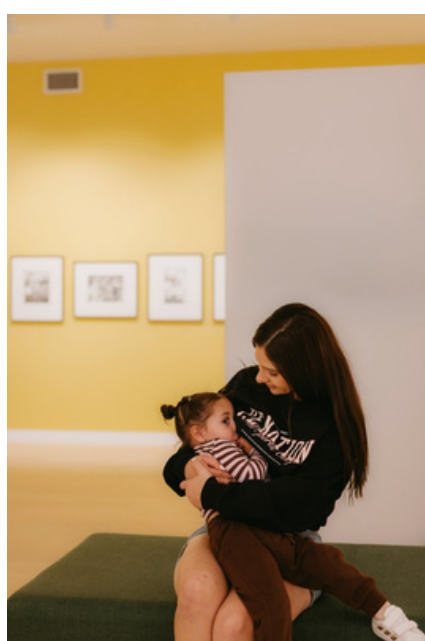
As part of this year's campaign, Swan Hill District Health is proud to launch our local **Breastfeeding Matters, and So Do Your Stories** photography project, featuring local mums and their babies and children sharing their own breastfeeding experiences. Through beautiful images captured by Nicole Featherby Photography and heartfelt stories, the campaign celebrates the many different breastfeeding journeys within our community while reinforcing an important message: every story matters.

Throughout August and beyond, you'll see these local faces and stories shared across our SHDH social media channels and throughout the community. By showcasing real families, we hope to celebrate and normalise breastfeeding, encourage positive conversations, and help create a community where parents feel supported to breastfeed wherever and for however long they choose.

Breastfeeding provides lifelong health benefits for both babies and mothers, but achieving breastfeeding goals is often influenced by the support families receive. Whether it's offering encouragement, creating welcoming spaces for parents to feed their baby, or simply recognising that every family's journey is different, we all have a role to play in building a breastfeeding-friendly community.

A heartfelt thank you to the local families who generously shared their stories. Your courage and willingness to be involved will help inspire, educate and empower other parents, contributing to a stronger culture of breastfeeding support across Swan Hill.

Keep an eye out for the campaign throughout August and remember, breastfeeding matters, and so do your stories.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLE FEATHERBY

Kidney Action Week

Your kidneys are the unsung heroes of your body, working 24 hours a day, every day. They clean around 200 litres of blood per day, filtering out toxins and getting rid of extra fluid via urine. There are 2.5 million Aussies who don't know they have markers of kidney disease!

A simple urine test – a piss take – can help detect kidney damage early, and save lives. If you're at risk, don't wait for symptoms to take action.

Who should get tested?

Anyone with high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, smokes or vapes, had acute kidney injury, has a family history of kidney failure, is over 60 years of age, or is a First Nation Australian over 18 years, should get tested. Ask your GP for a full Kidney Health Check.



Kidney Health Australia



Stories That Help Children Grow

Children's Book Week highlights stories as powerful tools for learning and sparking conversations. Our Health Promotion and Paediatrics Teams have worked together at SHDH to deliver Giggles, Wiggles and Words project. The project's aim is to highlight importance of early childhood literacy and ways to bond with your child through active play and nutritious eating with resources including the INFANT messaging booklet.

Giggles, Wiggles and Words also encourages the use of children's books to support conversations as reading promotes language development, imagination and learning.

Six books were selected for **Giggles, Wiggles and Words** which align with Health Promotion's priorities including eating and growing a variety of foods, movement, oral health, gender equity and connection. See the **Giggles, Wiggles and Words** booklist below!

- Which Food Will You Choose? by Claire Potter & Ailie Busby
- Peggy Goes Gardening by Tonka Uka
- Maisy Goes to the Dentist by Lucy Cousins
- From Head to Toe by Eric Carle
- No difference Between Us by Jayneen Sanders
- Respect Aunt Fay Muir & Sue Lawson

INFANT Messaging Booklet & **Giggles, Wiggles and Words** Colouring sheet [here](#).





**WEAR IT
PURPLE DAY**

28.08.26



Wear It Purple Day is a chance to celebrate, support and empower LGBTQIA+ young people to be proud of who they are.

By wearing purple, we show our commitment to creating safe, inclusive and respectful communities where every young person feels seen, valued and accepted.

This Wear It Purple Day, pop on something purple and help spread the message that everyone deserves to belong.

Promoting Gender Equity From The Very Beginning

Starting August 2026, families welcoming a new baby will soon receive more than congratulations. SHDH Health Promotion team are partnering with SHDH Midwifery and Maternal Child Health to distribute 100 gender equity book packs to families of newborns in the Swan Hill District. Each pack includes the children's book *No Difference Between Us* by Jayneen Sanders, along with information about reading to babies and key messages from the *Raise Them Equal* project by Women's Health Loddon Mallee.

This initiative aims to support families to challenge harmful gender stereotypes and promote gender equity and respectful relationships from birth. When families are supported to raise children free from limiting ideas about gender, communities' benefit from healthier, safer, and more inclusive environments.

To ensure every family can engage with these messages, SHDH Health Promotion team has developed translated welcome letters in five languages: Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Malay, Hazaragi and Dari. These translations support early engagement for non English speaking families, ensuring all parents can access information about reading, bonding, and raising children with equal opportunities. The very first family to receive a pack overcame a language barrier thanks to the Vietnamese translation, demonstrating the real impact of inclusive communication.

Midwives at SHDH will provide families with the book packs upon discharge with MCH nurses capturing families who have birthed outside of Swan Hill. We are grateful to SHDH Midwifery, Swan Hill Maternal Child Health team, and Women's Health Loddon Mallee for collaborating to ensure these important messages reach families across our community.

If you would like to learn more or get involved, please contact Tara at tmirabito@shdh.org.au

Pictured: Tania, Lisa, Tara, and Nicole before the first book pack was presented to a local Vietnamese family in SHDH Midwifery.





Art Acknowledgement: Learning from Country by Tovani Cox.

Living Our Truth | 4 August 2026

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day is a national celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children held each year on 4 August since 1988.

The 2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day theme is Living Our Truth, honouring the power of truth-telling, the sharing of knowledge across generations and the importance of telling our stories.

We invite all Australians to join the nationwide celebration, to listen to and value children's voices, and to recognise the importance of nurturing their experiences, identities and aspirations. Together we can ensure every child grows up safe, strong, connected to culture and supported to reach their full potential.



Healthy eating

Cooking Up Connections with MDAS Elders

On a cold, foggy Wednesday on 22 July, the hall was filled with warmth as Elders came together at MDAS for a cooking session in partnership with MDAS, Swan Hill District Health Dietetics and Health Promotion.

The group cooked a hearty minestrone soup featuring locally sourced bush tucker ingredients, sharing stories, knowledge and plenty of laughs along the way. The morning also provided an opportunity to yarn about future cooking sessions and the kinds of recipes the Elders would like to explore together.

It was a fantastic 3 hours of cooking, learning and connecting, and we look forward to continuing this partnership with MDAS in the months ahead.



MDAS
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES



Community Health



New look, same great service. This is the website for the service previously known as VVED. It looks different, but the service remains the same. If you have any issues registering, call Admin for help on **9485 9070**.

Video call with emergency doctors and nurses



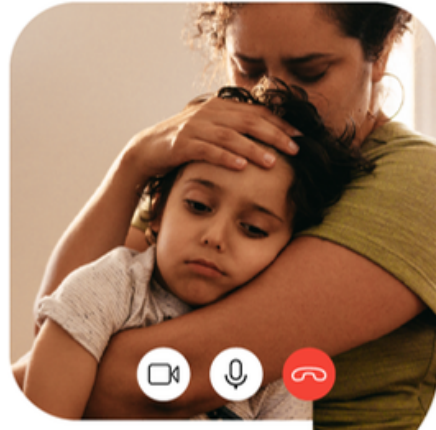
Free, 24/7



Video call from anywhere in Victoria



When you need urgent care and can't wait to see your usual doctor



Social Support Groups

Swan Hill District Health provide community members with recreational and social support through a variety of activities to suit individual interest and hobbies. These include celebrating fun activities, special theme days, music and outings, with encourage social interaction and foster friendships.

For more information phone Jamie and the Social Support team, on 03 5033 9359 or 0427 840 217

Groups include:

- **Active Ageing** - Mondays 9am or 10am, Scout Hall, Ken Harrison Reserve
- **Shedders** - Mondays 9am - 1pm, Neighbourhood House Men's Shed
- **Arties** - Tuesdays 9.15am -1pm, Swan Hill Senior Citizens Hall
- **Forget Me Nots** -Tuesdays 9.30am -1pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
- **Crafties** - Wednesdays 9am - 1pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
- **Italian Groups** -Carte Italiana/Bingo Italiano - alternate Wednesdays 1.30 - 4pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House.
- **Afghan Men's** - Wednesdays 4-7pm, Swan Hill Uniting Church
- **O.P.A.L.s** - Thursdays 10am- 2pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
- **Garden Club** - Fridays 1-3pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
- **Games Group** - Fridays 9.30am - 12.00pm, Swan Hill Neighbourhood House
- **Outings** - we have outings in the community to local events and nearby towns most months. Please phone to enquire about our next outing. Cost varies.



eat fruit & veg move more often smile together

