



## RESPOND Wangaratta Community Newsletter

December 2023

It has been a great and productive year for the RESPOND Wangaratta project! Community workshops were held in March, May and June. The June workshop saw project ideas defined with committed community members wanting to support them. Project working groups were established and actions have taken off! Read below to find out what's happening. The organisations involved in RESPOND are still receiving support from Deakin University regarding project delivery and evaluation. The RESPOND team is planning a community get together in late 2024 to celebrate achievements and continue support for further ideas identified. Thank you to everyone involved or following this journey, it has been thoroughly enjoyable to support our community with children's health and wellbeing.

It's not too late to get involved. If you see something that sparks your interest here and you want to know more please get in touch.

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The RESPOND Wangaratta Team includes representation from Gateway Health, Rural City of Wangaratta, Northeast Health Wangaratta and Deakin University.



## Mobile Art Bus

A working group has been established to deliver Mobile Art Bus Workshops throughout the Rural City of Wangaratta. The first workshop was held on 16<sup>th</sup> November with Moyhu/Myrree Schools Out of School Hours Care students. It was a huge success! Jess Young, the community member that attended the RESPOND workshops, facilitated the session with funding, and the use of the bus, from Pangerang Neighbourhood House. Bunnings kindly collected and donated waste materials and Gateway Heath attended and helped coordinate the workshop. More workshops will be held during the January school holidays and into Term 1 2024. If you're interested in your school or setting being involved please contact us.



## Recreation Reimagined Event

The Rural City of Wangaratta held 'Recreation Reimagined' on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October, 3-6pm at Apex Park. Representatives from local clubs showcased their offerings and were interactive in their displays, the aim of the event was for clubs to share their details and for the community to 'come and try'. Approximately 14 clubs/groups participated with each receiving a \$1,000 Active Wangaratta Grant from Council to help improve their membership base. The Hockey Club who had representatives attend the RESPOND workshop were keen to see an event like this held and it was great that the Hockey Club hosted a stall to promote their club.

Future 'come and try day' events are being planned for 2024, get in touch if you would like to be involved!



## **Cooking Skills and Food Growing Spaces**

A meeting was held in October with Respond participants that were interested in action ideas that support building skills and knowledge in both cooking (focus on affordable, nutritious, easy to make snacks/meals) and food growing. Several ideas were discussed and it was decided the group would focus on a potential cooking session with Outside School Hours Care and investigate some other ideas.

Cooking – we are hoping to develop a partnership with the Outside School Hours Care program at Whitfield Primary School, Pangerang Neighbourhood House (Mobile Hub) and several community members to run pilot cooking sessions in term 1 2024. We are planning to run some cooking sessions with other Outside School Hours Care programs in term 2, 2024. From the cooking sessions we would like to develop a resource that could be used by other Outside School Hours Care programs.

Cooking/Food growing – some background research into intergenerational cooking and gardening programs has been undertaken – with a focus on models where aged care services and schools work in partnership.

Food growing garden mapping - a garden mapping activity is being undertaken for early childhood services, schools, community and public places so that we have a clear picture of where food growing is happening in these settings across the Rural City of Wangaratta.

If you would like to be involved or know more please contact us.

## Active Travel to School

The Rural City of Wangaratta supported Appin Park Primary School to hold a Footpath Activation event on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October to launch large stickers placed on one of the footpaths leading into the school. Children had created pictures for the stickers in the school holidays at an activity held at the library. 36 children and adults enjoyed the event. Gateway Health came along on the day to support, it was a fantastic morning and such a nice way to start the day with a walk. The event was supported by funding from VicHealth.

The Council conducted a tally one month before the event to find that 5 children used the footpath during the time they observed and will return in December to conduct another tally to see how well used the footpath is and determine whether the stickers and event encouraged kids to continue to walk to school.

More events will be held next year if you would like to be involved please get in touch.



## Rural City of Wangaratta Community Directory

The Rural City of Wangaratta is updating its Community Directory to ensure it contains the most current and accurate information. The new Community Directory will be a place for the community to find out the clubs, groups and organisations available in the Rural City of Wangaratta. Sporting clubs, community groups and organisations have the opportunity to have their information listed here, showcasing what they do and how people can get involved. Click [here](#) to complete the survey to include your organisation/community group/club's details and feel free to share this link with others.

The survey was shared with RESPOND community members involved in this action idea. The council plan to get in touch with those interested in a working group to provide input on how this will look and operate with a first meeting likely in February 2024, if you're interested in being a member of this working group please get in touch.

## Accessibility for all Framework/Checklist for RESPOND Projects

A working group of community members has been established and have:

1. Reviewed existing accessible/inclusive event checklists that are used for planning purposes and the group is considering how these can be more widely used, including throughout RESPOND projects.
2. Identified a program that supports businesses/organisations with an assessment of how accessible and inclusive they are and rewards them with internationally recognised accessibility stickers that they can display. The program aims to encourage more accessible local spaces as well as create a broader awareness of accessibility needs. People with lived experience of disability are involved with the assessment and reward process. The group is identifying potential partnerships to see if they can get support to run a similar program in the Rural City of Wangaratta. Click [here](#) for information on the current program in Moira Shire.

If you would like to be involved or know more please let us know.



## Rural City of Wangaratta's Draft Recreation and Open Space Strategy

The action ideas created during the RESPOND community workshop that aligned with the Rural City of Wangaratta's Recreation and Open Space Strategy were provided to the consultant writing this during its draft. The strategy can be viewed [here](#). Community consultation will continue until Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2024.

## Resources

### Tiny Towns Fund

The new Tiny Towns Fund will support local communities to deliver quality tourism and community facility projects, such as splash parks and bike trails, playgrounds, community hall and library upgrades, public art and more. Towns with a population of up to 5,000 people in the 48 local government areas of regional Victoria are eligible to apply, as well as Alpine Resorts and Melbourne's 10 interface outer metropolitan local government areas. Click [here](#) for information.

The RESPOND team are here to support grant applications that align the RESPOND projects, reach out if you would like to discuss this!

### Vic Kids Eat Well

Vic Kids Eat Well is a free program that supports settings such as schools, outside school hours care, sports clubs, and a wide range of community organisations to offer nutritious food and drink options. The focus is on simple changes and healthy swaps that make a big impact. Settings receive local support from Gateway Health, Health Promotion Coordinators and resources and rewards from program developers Cancer Council Victoria. Click [here](#) for information.

## Communications

Visit the Community Resources page of the Gateway Health website, [here](#), for all RESPOND Wangaratta information and updates, including a community workshop summary report and a local RESPOND Wangaratta case study.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The RESPOND Wangaratta Team

