

COMMUNITY UPDATE ACROSS THE TRACK



Community Update #26 September 10, 2020



Asking R U OK? This week we are celebrating R U OK? Week right across our catchment to encourage people to connect with those around them by asking "are you okay?" We all know the current COVID-19 pandemic has had a big impact on each and every one of us, so this week is a chance to connect, and in some cases reconnect, with each other and those who might be struggling with life. By starting a conversation and commenting on the changes you've noticed, you could help a family member, friend or workmate open up. **Early Years staff members (pictured clockwise from top left) Hannah (Ouyen), Bev (Ouyen); Hedy (Murrayville) and Bek (Ouyen and Underbool)** are some of our champions reminding us to reach



out this week. There's four key steps to checking in on someone: 1. Ask are you okay? 2. Listen with an open mind. 3. Encourage them to take action to help them feel better. 4. Check in again with them in the coming days/weeks. You don't have to be an expert to keep the conversation going when someone says they're not OK. By knowing what to say you can help someone feel supported and access appropriate help long before they're in crisis, which can make a really positive difference to their life. It's not always easy to know how or when to start the conversation, but

there's some really useful tips and resources online at <https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>

Stage 3 remains in place: The Victorian Government has announced a plan to begin to slowly ease restrictions in coming weeks; however, the situation remains unchanged at this point. We continue to be under Stage 3 Stay at Home restrictions, with no changes to this until the end of the week or early next week. Again, we understand there is a lot of interest from community groups and volunteers to begin meeting etc. again; however, these activities will remain on hold until the Chief Health Officer's advice changes. We understand some people will be disappointed that these things can't be immediately reinstated, but MTHCS is following the steady and sustainable steps that Victoria's health experts tell us will see us out of the COVID-19 pandemic safely. To keep yourself, your friends and family safe, please continue to:

- keep your distance — stay 1.5 metres away from others
- practise good hygiene, including washing your hands
- stay at home if you are unwell
- work from home, if you can.

Managing illness in children: One of the most important things we can do to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community is to stay at home when we are unwell, even when we have the mildest of symptoms. This is true for our children as well. According to the latest advice from the Victorian Government, if a child is unwell, even with the mildest of symptoms, they must stay at home. If they have any COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, they should get tested and they must remain at home until they receive their results. A child must stay at home until they are symptom free, even if their COVID-19 test is negative and children do not need a medical certificate before returning to school or child care. More information is available at <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/covid-19/managing-unwell-students-covid19-factsheet.pdf>

Keep up with immunisations: While there have been concerning reports about immunisation rates falling across Victoria due to COVID-19, we are happy to report Mallee Track parents are on track with their children's vaccinations, according to the latest data from local councils. Information on the next immunisation clinic in Ouyen is as follows:

- Ouyen – September 21 at 10am.
Call 5018 8100 for appointments and to receive SMS reminders.
Information on additional clinics will be available at www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Services/Children/Immunisations

Pandemic project: As part of a Year 9 project at Ouyen P-12, students are collecting letters from community members about how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected them. The letters are to be written to an older or younger version of yourself, or a friend. The letters need to be sent to the school by 18 September and when the project is finished, the letters will be collated into a book. More details about the project is available on the Ouyen P-12 Facebook page.

Thank you! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to the families of our Ouyen Nursing home residents! Julie Smith (daughter of resident, Dorothy Curran) donated two beautiful handmade quilts after putting to good use her spare fabric and spare time during the stay at home restrictions. We have also received donations of an iPad from the family of resident Joe Lester and a Samsung Galaxy Tablet from the family of Joan Bathgate. Residents are enjoying getting used to video chats. We are so thankful for these and other kind gestures from our community. **Julie is pictured with her amazing quilt.**



Lois O'Callaghan, Chief Executive Officer, Mallee Track Health & Community Service

Contact us

Ouyen Service Centre 5092-1111 Sea Lake Service Centre 5070-2155
Murrayville Service Centre 5092-1111 Underbool Service Centre 5092-1111

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www.mthcs.com.au
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the coming days/weeks. You don’t have to be an expert to keep the conversation going when someone says they’re not OK. By knowing what to say you can help someone feel supported and access appropriate help long before they’re in crisis, which can make a really positive difference to their life. It’s not always easy to know how or when to start the conversation, but there’s some really useful tips and resources online at <https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>



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- Sea Lake – September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8.

Parents are required to book an appointment on 1300 520 520.

Sea Lake’s Marge Watson is still knitting up a storm (pictured), with her latest blanket progressing at a rapid rate!



Lois O’Callaghan, Chief Executive Officer, Mallee Track Health and Community Service

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