

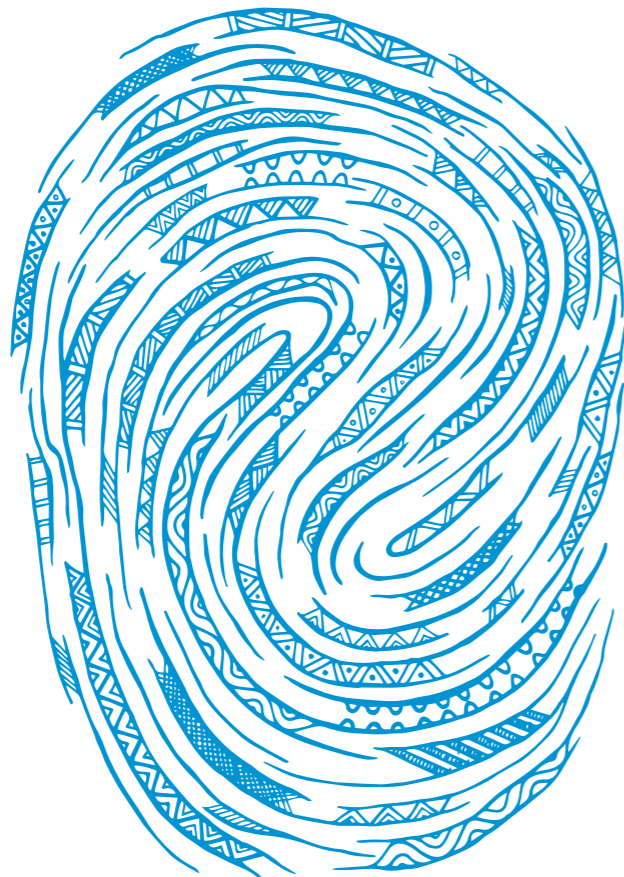


Community playgroup tool kit



City of
Whittlesea

This toolkit is designed to show you how to start up a Community Playgroup in the City of Whittlesea!



Artwork © Mandy Nicholson, 2017

Acknowledgement

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.

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1. Benefits of becoming a Playgroup Volunteer

Becoming a community playgroup volunteer is a fun way to help children learn and grow while meeting other local families and making new friends.

Benefits include:

- Giving back to the community
- Improving career opportunities, adding to your volunteering experience on resume!
- Meeting new people
- Developing social and communication skills

Playgroup volunteer leaders must be:

- Reliable to attend and run the group
- Available for 1-2 hours per week
- Support the group to set and pack up the venue
- Chat casually with families
- Collect money when required
- Working with other volunteers to run the group

2. Find interested families

Each playgroup is started by families who want to get together to enjoy the benefits of a playgroup, including social skills, creativity, motor skills, routine learning, confidence and parental support. To learn more about the benefits of playgroup, read [Playgroup Victoria's Start Guide](#) A few ideas to find families:

- Ask local parents who you met at parent's groups
- Start a Playgroup with a group of friends, neighbours or family
- Post a local shout out on a community Facebook page

3. Select a day of the week and time

Choose a regular day and time for the playgroup. Keeping the same schedule helps people stay interested. Think about when everyone is free.

This might include planning around school drop-offs, nap times, routine and how long the group will go for. Most playgroups last one to two hours. Also remember to include time for set up, clean up and pack up so everything runs well.

4. Find a venue

There are many places a community members can use when considering a location for Playgroups.

- Council venues – community centres and halls
- Church halls and religious establishments
- Preschools and childcare centre's
- Primary Schools
- Recreational and multipurpose spaces
- Girl guides and scout's halls

To book a Council venue please [click here](#)

5. Identify costs

Playgroups charge different amounts based on what they need. This can include money for morning tea, venue hire, toys, and other supplies. Community Playgroups depend on volunteers, donations, and grants.

Each playgroup needs to collect fees from families to help pay for running the group. It's a good idea to set a fee for each term. The Playgroup Volunteer Leader should collect and keep track of the fees.

Community Playgroups are responsible for any outstanding fee associated with venue hire. To work out how much to charge, the group needs to think about all the costs, like:

- Cost to hire the venue
- Public Liability Insurance (\$50 per year - Registering with PlaygroupVic includes public liability insurance)
- To renew your membership with Playgroup Victoria, visit playgroup.org.au
- Registering with Playgroup Victoria helps reduce venue fees within council buildings
- Joining Playgroup Victoria costs just \$50 per year.
- Buying toys and equipment (if needed)

Playgroups should stay low-cost so that all families can join in and enjoy the benefits.

As your playgroup grows, you can find other ways to raise money, like fundraising or applying for grants.

6. Fee collection

Community Playgroup Volunteers are recommended to collect fees each term to cover the identified cost outlined above. Below are options on how to collect fees:

Bank Account

Setting up a bank account for community playgroups is recommended as it provides a secure and organised way to manage funds, track expenses, and ensure transparency in financial transactions.

See our tips below:

- It's recommended for volunteers to open a bank account under the Community Playgroup's name.
- A community account requires at least two people listed, as the bank requests two signatures.
- Volunteers might need to visit the bank twice if requested—the first visit to open the account, and possibly another visit if an ABN is requested.
- If an ABN is needed, please complete [Playgroup Victoria's General Enquiry form](#), and they will provide a letter for you to take to the bank to finalise setting up the Playgroup account without obtaining an ABN
- While Bendigo Bank is recommended, you can choose any bank that's more convenient for you.

Cash collection

Some community playgroups prefer to collect cash. Once the term is over, you can visit the Council office to pay any venue hire or fees incurred for running the group with the collected cash.



7. Safety

At the City of Whittlesea, we work to ensure we have a child safe and friendly environment where children and young people are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. [Click here for more information on our Child Safe Policy.](#)

At playgroup, parents and carers stay to supervise, helping ensure a safe and supportive environment where children can enjoy age-appropriate toys and activities while learning and having fun.

Illness

It is essential families stay home if carers or children are unwell. We will see you back at playgroup when you are better.

Taking Photos

Please respect the privacy of other families and children when taking photos or recording videos of your child at playgroup. You may only photograph or film other children or families if you have received permission from the child, parent and/or carer.

Supervision

Children must always be supervised, including redirecting their behaviour when required.

Snacks and Hot Drinks

Please be mindful of food items brought into Playgroup due to any allergies within the group. It is highly recommended not to have hot drinks during playgroup, as this poses a safety risk to children should it accidentally spill.

Privacy and confidentiality

Any confidential or private information collected from families (enrolment forms, contact information, attendance details) must be stored in a secure, inaccessible location. Once a volunteer is no longer running the group, all documents must be disposed of appropriately (i.e. shredded.)

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

While a Working with Children Check (WWC Check) isn't mandatory for Community Playgroup volunteers, it is strongly recommended as a best practice. Some venues may require it, so be sure to verify their specific requirements. The WWC Check for volunteers is free of charge and can be applied for online here: Working with Children Check service.vic.gov.au

Remember, adults who do not have a child at the playgroup require a valid Working With Children Check.

8. Consider community grants (toys, venue, etc)

The City of Whittlesea offer community grants, to help community playgroups fund toys, equipment, and safe play spaces—[apply online or through your council.](#)

9. Consider toys and equipment

Some Council venues have shared toys and equipment that playgroups can use. Families can also donate toys to help grow the collection. When choosing toys for the playgroup, it's important to make sure they are right for the age of the children coming and in good condition.

10. Register your Playgroup

Registering your playgroup helps to promote it within the community. There are a few ways you can do this:

Council Playgroup Update

Please email playgroups@whittlesea.vic.gov.au to be listed, or to make any changes to your listing on [Whittlesea Council website](#)

Volunteers need to update their contact details with Community playgroups by clicking [here](#)

Playgroup Victoria Update

- Volunteers need to update their contact details with Playgroup Victoria by emailing any changes to membership@playgroup.org.au
- Please notify Community Development officers or Playgroup Support Officers if you are no longer able to run your groups.



11. Set group expectations

Setting group expectations for a community playgroup helps everyone feel safe, respected, and included. The group can talk together about what is important to help shape these. For example, expectations might include sharing toys, being kind to others, helping clean up, and making sure children are always watched by their parent or carer.

It's a good idea to write the expectations down and put them somewhere everyone can see. This way, families and children know what is expected and can enjoy the playgroup together.

12. Play and connect!

It is now time to meet with your Playgroup once a week during school term to have fun, play and connect!

The City of Whittlesea Playgroup team can support you with:

- Being available to answer your questions
- Helping you find the right location to suit you
- Supporting you through the registration process, including setting up a Community Playgroup bank account
- Providing tips on running your playgroup
- Participating in the community playgroup Leadership training that it's run by City of Whittlesea

Contacts

City of Whittlesea @ playgroups@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Playgroup Victoria [playgroup.org.au](https://www.playgroup.org.au)

Working with Child Check

service.vic.gov.au/find-services/work-and-volunteering/working-with-children-check

Contact City of Whittlesea

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whittlesea.vic.gov.au



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