

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy
Minister for Equality



Friday, 17 February 2023

CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR LGBTIQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring that LGBTIQ+ community members feel safe, included and respected.

A team of organisations with a strong track record of working with LGBTIQ+ communities will create and run two landmark safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people.

Minister for Equality Harriet Shing announced that Drummond Street Services will lead a partnership with Cafs (Child and Family Services Ballarat) and Wellways to deliver this project.

The LGBTIQ+ safe spaces will offer mental health and wellbeing services tailored specifically for LGBTIQ+ young people, allowing them to access welcoming and inclusive support when they need it, close to home.

They will also give LGBTIQ+ young people in the region more opportunities to connect with peers and older role models, to increase their sense of belonging.

The Labor Government has awarded the group \$2.85 million to deliver a three-year trial which will establish two physical safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people located in Ballarat and Geelong, along with outreach services for young people on the Surf Coast.

Further details of how the safe spaces will run will be decided in consultation LGBTIQ+ people through steering committees that will include LGBTIQ+ organisations, LGBTIQ+ young people and others from across rainbow communities.

Drummond Street Services, Cafs and Wellways have been selected to develop and deliver the safe spaces initiative through an open grants process, based on their extensive experience providing mental health and wellbeing services and for their work with LGBTIQ+ young people.

The safe spaces initiative responds to a community-led proposal that identified the need for further targeted LGBTIQ+ wellbeing support services in the region.

The program is part of the Government's broader efforts to drive inclusion and equality for LGBTIQ+ communities through its 10-year plan, Pride in Our Future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2022–32.

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"We're thrilled to appoint Drummond Street Services, Cafs and Wellways to run these safe spaces, which will ensure that LGBTIQ+ young people and their families across Victoria can get the support they need, closer to home."

Quote attributable to Drummond Street Services CEO Karen Field

"We look forward to building on our local LGBTIQ+ services and working alongside the community to design and deliver Safe Spaces, ensuring the services are reflective of and responsive to the diversity of folk across the region."

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