

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Equality



Friday, 25 August 2023

QHUB SAFE SPACES CELEBRATE WEAR IT PURPLE DAY

Victoria's young lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer communities will have more safe spaces and crucial mental health supports with QHub in Geelong and Ballarat with outreach to Surf Coast.

QHub is an LGBTIQ+ youth mental health project developed in partnership between Drummond Street Services Queerspace, Wellways in Geelong and Cafs Ballarat. The name QHub was chosen by 350 LGBTIQ+ young people in a co-design process and announced on Wear It Purple Day.

QHub will provide safe, affirming and inclusive spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people to access mental health support, social connection opportunities and wellbeing activities, with the opening of newly refurbished spaces soon.

The Andrews Labor Government announced \$3.2 million in funding for the design and delivery of the *LGBTIQ+ youth safe spaces for Western Victoria* grant program in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23*.

Victoria's first LGBTIQ+ strategy, *Pride in our future 2022-2023*, recognises that increasing mental health support and safe spaces for young LGBTIQ+ people is vital, with young rainbow people particularly vulnerable to suicide and negative mental health outcomes because of discrimination.

Pride in our future is a decade-long plan to strengthen the LGBTIQ+ sector and advance equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse LGBTIQ+ communities.

Victoria has made great progress towards equality in recent years, removing discrimination from legislation, providing strong support for LGBTIQ+ organisations and events and delivering the Victorian Pride Centre, but there is always more to do.

The Labor Government will continue to work with Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities to realise the goals set out in the 10-year Strategy. Held on the last Friday in August, Wear It Purple Day strives to foster supportive, safe, empowering and inclusive environments for LGBTIQ+ young people.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"Wear It Purple Day is an opportunity to recommit to supporting LGBTIQ+ young people and accepting them exactly as they are."

"Safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people are incredibly important, we know mental health and well-being outcomes for vulnerable young people in our LGBTIQ+ communities are significantly improved through access to local support."

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

"All LGBTIQ+ Victorians deserve dignity and respect, and the right to feel safe. Wear It Purple Day is an opportunity to commit to this as a universal right and to celebrate the contribution of LGBTIQ+ Victorians to our community."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Delivery of an historic trial of safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people in western Victoria – providing greater access to targeted mental health and wellbeing support close to home – is one of the achievements of *Pride in our future*."

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