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# CREATING A SUPPORTIVE SPORTS CLUB ENVIRONMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH



# Foreword

Sport is a big part of Australian culture and this is reflected in the participation levels of people, particularly young people, in some form of organised sport. Participation in a sports club is not just about the players — it includes all your volunteers (committee, canteen operator, line marker, etc.), your coaches, your umpires, your first aid officers and other officials — it is everyone who has a defined role within your club. Community sport is popular within the Glen Eira community, with your club being a part of more than 55 sports clubs and associations operating across a variety of different sporting codes.

Community sports clubs and associations play an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our community. Research shows physical activity helps support mental health, and sports clubs and associations can provide indirect benefits toward the health of members by:

- allowing for important social connections outside of typical friendship and family circles;
- providing a sense of belonging; and
- providing additional social support, resources and positive environments.

A sport club or association where members feel supported can lead to many benefits including improved player performance and wellbeing, and a positive club culture. For more detail on this, please visit [beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/pillar/wellbeing/the-mental-health-benefits-of-playing-a-team-sport](https://beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/pillar/wellbeing/the-mental-health-benefits-of-playing-a-team-sport)

Council has produced this resource to support sport clubs and associations with the important role they play in the health and wellbeing of our community. It provides a range of evidence-based resources directly targeted at sports clubs and associations, and includes a reference list of health and wellbeing support services available to assist you.

We hope you find this resource useful.



Community sports clubs and associations play an important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our community.

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# Sports clubs and associations' role in supporting mental health

There has been much research into the important role sports clubs and associations play in providing supportive environments for members, particularly in the area of mental health. With one in four Australians — one in three **women** and one in five **men** — experiencing anxiety at some stage in their lives<sup>1</sup> it is important that we create supportive environments for all people involved in organised sport.

Council's engagement with Glen Eira sports clubs and associations indicates that many clubs are interested in providing an environment that is supportive of their members mental health and wellbeing. Interest in this topic is growing at sports clubs across Victoria and Australia for a number of reasons, including the increasing instances of high-profile sporting figures talking about their mental health struggles. This has assisted in breaking down traditional stigmas about seeking help with mental health.

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) wants sports clubs to have access to evidence-based research supporting the implementation of mental health frameworks and the selection of a suitable mental health program. Its toolkit is designed to make things easy for sports clubs, by helping to select a suitable provider and deliver the best possible mental health and wellbeing program to participants.

The following questions will help sports clubs and associations select a suitable mental health and wellbeing program provider:

- **What expertise in mental health and wellbeing in sport does the provider organisation have?**
- **Are mental health professionals involved in developing the programs?**
- **Who are the program facilitators and what are their qualifications?**
- **What evidence can the organisation provide that documents its program's impact?**
- **How long has the provider worked within the community sport sector?**
- **What approach or model does the organisation use?**
- **Does the provider seek to support ongoing cultural change in your club?**

These are explained in more detail in the toolkit available for download from the VicHealth website: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/how-to-select-mental-health-program-providers-for-sports-clubs>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety>



# Supporting mental health of young people (12–24 years)

Orygen is a charitable not-for-profit research agency based in Parkville, Melbourne, that focuses on prevention and recovery to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. It conducts research, advocates, and educates to improve the mental health of young people from 12–24 years of age.

Research indicates that most mental health disorders start in the early teens to the mid-20s and that one in five young people will have experienced a depressive episode by the time they turn 18. With sports clubs creating connections for many young people, sport provides an important setting to support and provide positive benefits for young people’s mental health and wellbeing.

Orygen has created a **suite of free and accessible resources** designed to help sports clubs and associations support the mental health and wellbeing of young people from 12–24 years of age. These resources can also benefit other members of your sports club or association.

The suite of resources includes:

**Guide**

**Supporting mental wellbeing in community sport**  
A guide for responding

This is a four-part suite of resources designed to help sporting organisations support the mental wellbeing of young people aged 12–24 years. It includes a:

- toolkit** containing eight actions, this toolkit aims to provide sporting organisations with a clear framework and some practical tools to ensure that they are supporting young people’s mental health and wellbeing.
- checklist** once you have read the toolkit, use the checklist to tick off the ways your club can provide a safe and inclusive environment for players.
- guide** a practical guide to identifying and helping young people with signs of mental ill-health.
- video** a discussion featuring a young person, coach and research expert on how to have conversations about mental health in community sport.

If you’re involved in community sporting groups – with a focus on youth, gender, children or adults – the guide may help you look out for the signs that a young person may be struggling with their mental health, and to get advice on how you can act on anything you notice.

**How do I approach a young person if I’m worried about their mental health?**

The main thing to remember is to talk with a young person and to listen. This may seem easy at first because you might not know how to respond if a young person tells you something worrying. The first step is important in supporting the young person to seek appropriate help, you can be the only person who has your trust or opportunity to talk to them. Other young people struggling with a mental health problem are looking to someone trusted, someone or people who can help them, but aren’t always sure how to get the conversation. As a member of the community your role is to support the young person to seek appropriate support rather than being a problem that the young person presents with.

**Toolkit**

This toolkit aims to provide sporting organisations with a clear framework and some practical tools to ensure that they are supporting young people’s mental health and wellbeing.

The eight actions described in Figure 1 offer some key priorities. For each of these actions, the toolkit explains what the issue is, why it is important, and provides some practical ideas about implementation.

In your setting, there are likely to be aspects that we outline that are already well implemented, and others that need work. This toolkit can be used as a basis for recognizing areas of strength as well as priorities for change. Your sporting club can use the **Supporting mental wellbeing in community sport – a checklist** for sporting organisations in addition to this guide.

It’s also important to note that this advice might not easily apply to your setting. At the end of the toolkit, we offer some additional support options for those wanting more advice or guidance.

**Figure 1: A toolkit to promote mental health in community sports**

The diagram shows eight actions radiating from a central point: **Build team belonging and support**, **Build a culture of support**, **Identify members of mental health**, **Open lines of communication**, **Encourage participation**, **Provide support and resources**, **Build awareness**, and **Build a safe and inclusive environment**.

**Checklist**

**Supporting mental wellbeing in community sport**  
A checklist for sporting organisations

This checklist is designed to determine the toolkit’s **Supporting mental wellbeing in community sport** checklist for sporting organisations’ implementation progress. The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health. Once you have read the toolkit, use the checklist to tick off the ways your club can provide a safe and inclusive environment for players aged 12–24.

**1. Build awareness**

- Organise events with a mental health focus.
- Invite guest speakers who are experts in the field.
- Allow people to share experiences of mental ill-health and recovery.
- Share information about mental health in a written or video format.
- Facilitate for mental health check-ins.
- Have an annual mental health week or month.
- Provide local mental health services and support.

**2. Build a culture of support**

- Conduct history with your club/club to understand the club’s history, journey to the present and future.
- Family clubs should facilitate all events, from junior players, family/friends events, and scheduling.
- Share goals and commitment to ongoing goals, include all members of the community, share facilities with the broader community.
- Active communication and promotion through communication to internal participants and the broader community about the club’s response to mental health, inclusion, and support.
- Recruit and retain volunteers provide a range of volunteering opportunities, build relationships with volunteers, and acknowledge their work.
- Club officers build pride in a club by demonstrating that the club is a safe, supportive, and healthy place.

**Video**

04:29

# Support services for mental health

It can be hard to know where to go for support when you need it: either as an individual or as a sports club or association seeking to support members. The below list of support services provides an easy reference for sports clubs and associations to find resources and organisations that offer support for mental health. This list is certainly non-exhaustive and contains services within Glen Eira and more broadly.

## Health care providers/services

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### Connect Health and Community

Not-for-profit community health service helping residents in the south eastern Melbourne (Bayside and Glen Eira areas) to access a wide variety of health care and services including:

- mental health support services;
- youth support services;
- allied health services (physio, podiatry, osteo);
- speech therapy; and
- gambling harm support.

**Sites:** Cheltenham and Bentleigh East

**Contact:** 9575 5333

**Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8.30am–5pm

**Website:** [connecthealth.org.au](http://connecthealth.org.au)

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### Beyond Blue

Mental health support and service organisation, working with the community to improve mental health and prevent suicide.

**Contact:** 1300 224 636, available 24/7

**Website:** [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

**Online chat:** seven days a week, 11am–midnight

#### Beyond Blue Cup

Look, listen and ask for support campaign aimed at sporting clubs/communities.

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### Suicide Call Back Service

24-hour nationwide service that provides free telephone, video and online counselling.

**Contact:** 1300 659 467, available 24/7

**Website:** [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Online chat and video chat:** available 24/7

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## Lifeline

Crisis support, suicide prevention.

**Contact:** 13 11 14, available 24/7

**Website:** [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

**Lifeline text:** 0477 13 11 14, available 12pm–midnight

**Web chat service:** 7pm–midnight

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## Seniors Victoria

A one-stop shop for information relating to seniors including accessing mental health support services.

**Website:** [seniorsonline.vic.gov.au](http://seniorsonline.vic.gov.au)

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## Headspace

Free or low cost service where young people aged 12 to 25 can access qualified mental health professionals, GPs, drug and alcohol counsellors and vocational service providers.

Individuals can self-refer, however, a mental health care plan is required to see mental health professionals. There are also other workers and programs you can access without a mental health care plan.

### Local Headspace locations

**Bentleigh:** 973 Nepean Hwy, Bentleigh

**Contact:** 03 9076 9400

**Hours:** Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

**Elsternwick:** 319–321 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick

**Contact:** 03 9076 7500

**Hours:** Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

**Website:** [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

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## Kids Helpline

Free confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged five to 25.

**Contact:** 1800 55 1800, available 24/7

**Website:** [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

**Online chat:** available 24/7

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## Parentline

Telephone counselling and support service for Victorian parents and carers of children aged 0–18.

**Contact:** 13 22 89, 7 days a week, 8am–midnight

**Website:** [betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/parentline-service](http://betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/parentline-service)

# Resources

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Council has produced resource material to support children’s mental health (appropriate for ages 0–11 years): [gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/family-and-children/supporting-children-s-mental-health](http://gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/family-and-children/supporting-children-s-mental-health)

Emerging Minds offers free and innovative resources and training for community members who are interacting with children (aged 0–12) to support children’s mental health and wellbeing: [emergingminds.com.au](http://emergingminds.com.au)

*Beyond Now* is an app created by Beyond Blue where you can create a safety plan if you’re experiencing mental or emotional crisis and distress: [beyondblue.org.au/get-support/beyondnow-suicide-safety-planning](http://beyondblue.org.au/get-support/beyondnow-suicide-safety-planning)

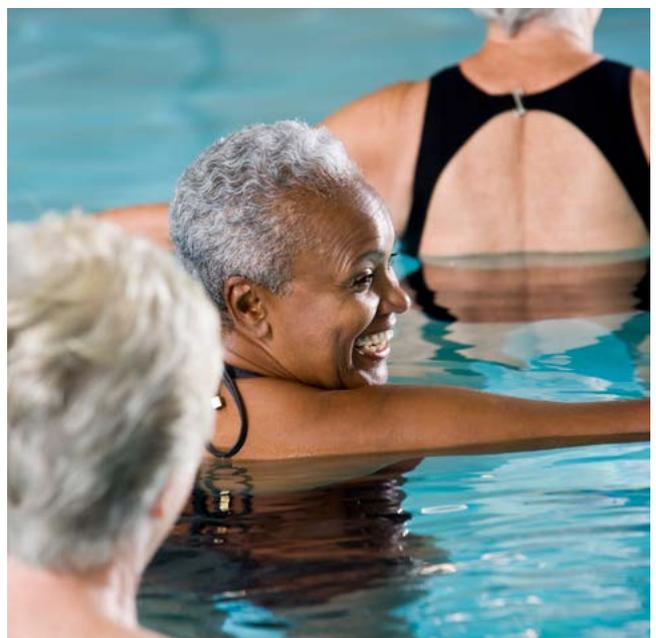
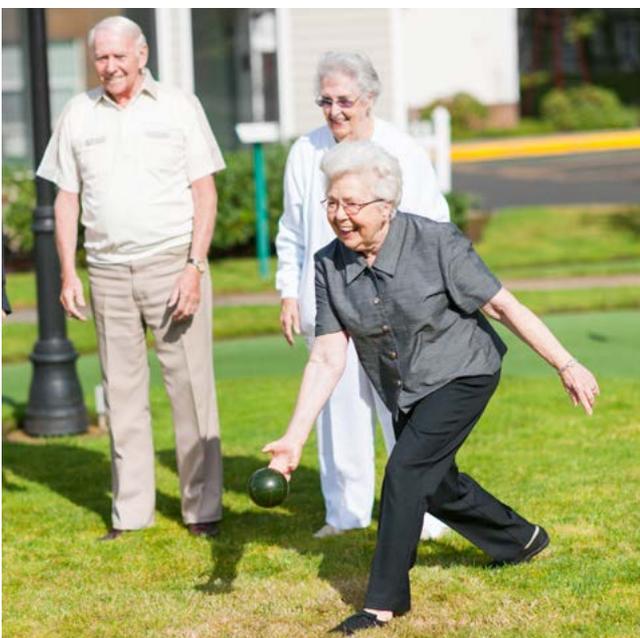
*iBobbly* app is a social and emotional wellbeing self-help app by The Black Dog Institute for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 15 and over: [blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/ibobbly](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/digital-tools-apps/ibobbly)

Love Me Love You is an organisation providing interactive and engaging supports that challenge views and stigmas surrounding mental health: [lovemeloveyou.org.au](http://lovemeloveyou.org.au)

- A variety of mental health awareness and training programs specifically created for sporting clubs and communities: [lovemeloveyou.org.au/sports-community](http://lovemeloveyou.org.au/sports-community)
- Link for an introductory video to the *Lifetime of Wellbeing* program that could be shown at sporting clubs: [Lifetime of Wellbeing Program \(journ01\) \(talentlms.com\)](http://Lifetime of Wellbeing Program (journ01) (talentlms.com))

Orygen is an Australian youth mental health organisation which produces evidence-based research, policy development, education and clinical care work: [orygen.org.au](http://orygen.org.au)

- Toolkit, factsheet and checklist for supporting mental wellbeing in community sport: [orygen.org.au/Training/Resources/Physical-and-sexual-health/Toolkits/Supporting-mental-wellbeing-in-community-sport](http://orygen.org.au/Training/Resources/Physical-and-sexual-health/Toolkits/Supporting-mental-wellbeing-in-community-sport)



# Support services for factors contributing to mental health

Whilst mental health is a broad term, there are known factors that contribute to the mental wellbeing of your sports club members. Some of these, such as gambling and alcohol, have a strong affiliation with the culture of sport. The following services list provides resources and organisations that can assist sports clubs and associations to address these key contributing factors.

## Gambling support

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### Gamblers Help Southern

Gambling help support program run by Connect Health & Community.

**Contact:** 9575 5353, available Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

**Location:** Bentleigh East — Connect Health & Community

**Website:** [gamblershelpsouthern.org.au](http://gamblershelpsouthern.org.au)

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### Gamblers Help

Service providing online, telephone and face-to-face counselling, advice and information related to gambling and associated issues.

**Contact:** 1800 858 858, available 24/7

**Website:** [gamblershelp.com.au](http://gamblershelp.com.au)

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### National Debt Helpline

Free helpline service providing financial counselling to help with managing debt.

**Contact:** 1800 007 007

**Website:** [ndh.org.au](http://ndh.org.au)

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## Resources

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Responsible Gambling Foundation Victoria (the statutory authority on gambling harm in the Victorian community), working with communities and partners to inform people about the risks of gambling and provide support: [responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au](http://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au)

*Love The Game* sporting club program aimed at sporting clubs helps to reduce young people's exposure to sport betting advertising and raise awareness on the risks of gambling harm: [responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/reducing-harm/love-the-game-program](http://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/reducing-harm/love-the-game-program)

# Drug and alcohol support

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## Taskforce

Support services for people within the South East Melbourne area covering family violence services, mental health support, drug and alcohol support, education services and rehabilitation programs.

**Contact:** 9532 0811

**Location:** Bentleigh

**Website:** [taskforce.org.au](http://taskforce.org.au)

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## Directline

Alcohol and drug counselling, information and referral service.

**Contact:** 1800 888 236, available 24/7

**Website:** [directline.org.au](http://directline.org.au)

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## Bayside Alcohol and Other Drug Service

Provide information, support and access to a range of AOD services.

**Contact:** 1800 229 263 (Dedicated hotline for the LGBTIQ+ community: 1800 906 669)

**Website:** [baysidealcoholanddrugservices.org.au](http://baysidealcoholanddrugservices.org.au)

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# Resources

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*My QuitBuddy* app offers support to help you quit smoking:

[au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/my-quit-buddy](http://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/my-quit-buddy)

*Daybreak* app helps to make positive changes to one's relationship with alcohol:

[hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak](http://hellosundaymorning.org/daybreak)

Hello Sunday Morning is an organisation providing resources and support to individuals who are wanting to develop a positive relationship with alcohol: [hellosundaymorning.org](http://hellosundaymorning.org)

Cracks In The Ice is an online toolkit providing evidence based information and resources about crystal methamphetamine for the Australian community: [cracksintheice.org.au](http://cracksintheice.org.au)

Good Sports works together with local sporting clubs to build a healthier sporting nation:

[goodsports.com.au](http://goodsports.com.au)

- Tackling illegal drugs program: [goodsports.com.au/programs/tackling-illegal-drugs-program](http://goodsports.com.au/programs/tackling-illegal-drugs-program)
- Resources/toolkit and downloads: [goodsports.com.au/resources-downloads](http://goodsports.com.au/resources-downloads)

# Family violence support

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Visit [gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/community-support/family-violence-support](https://gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/community-support/family-violence-support)

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## Safe Steps

Provides specialist services for anyone in Victoria experiencing or afraid of family violence, offering a 24/7 support service.

**Contact:** 1800 015 188

**Website:** [safesteps.org.au](https://safesteps.org.au)

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## 1800RESPECT

A national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.

**Contact:** 1800 737 732, available 24/7

**Website:** [1800respect.org.au](https://1800respect.org.au)

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## Orange Door Bayside Peninsula

Women, children and young people's family violence services, child and family services, Aboriginal services.

**Location:** 60–64 Wells Street, Frankston

**Contact:** 1800 319 353, Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm (closed public holidays)

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## Seniors Rights Victoria

Free, confidential helpline that provides information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people.

**Contact:** 1300 368 821

**Website:** [seniorsrights.org.au](https://seniorsrights.org.au)

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## Men's Referral Service — NTV

Free, confidential helpline for men that provides counselling, advice and support for anger, relationship and parenting issues.

**Contact:** 1300 766 491, Monday–Friday, 8am–9pm, weekends 9am–6pm

**Website:** [ntv.org.au](https://ntv.org.au)

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## MensLine Australia

A 24/7 telephone and online counselling service offering support for Australian men in relation to relationships, mental health and family violence amongst others.

**Contact:** 1300 79 99 78, available 24/7

**Website:** [mensline.org.au](https://mensline.org.au)

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## Resources

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*Daisy* app developed by 1800respect to connect people experiencing family violence or abuse to services in their local area: [1800respect.org.au/daisy](https://1800respect.org.au/daisy)

No To Violence (NTV) specialises in effective evidence-based engagement with men who are violent: [ntv.org.au](https://ntv.org.au)

- Outreach resource: [NTV1922\\_MRS-campaign-A4-posters\\_print-ready\\_FA.pdf](#)

Our Watch is the national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia: [ourwatch.org.au](https://ourwatch.org.au)

- *How Sport Can Change The Story: preventing violence against women through sport:* [ourwatch.org.au/resource/change-the-story-through-sport](https://ourwatch.org.au/resource/change-the-story-through-sport)
- Equality and Respect in Sport: initiative which aims to assist national sporting organisations to build their capacity to promote gender equality <https://sport.ourwatch.org.au>



If you have any feedback on  
this resource please contact  
[recservices@gleneira.vic.gov.au](mailto:recservices@gleneira.vic.gov.au)





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www.gleneira.vic.gov.au

### National Relay Service

If you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or speech-impaired, we ask that you call us via the National Relay Service and then ask for (03) 9524 3333.

Online: <https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au>

Teletypewriter (TTY): 13 36 77

Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727

### Social media

#### Glen Eira City Council:

[www.facebook.com/GlenEiraCityCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/GlenEiraCityCouncil)

#### @cityofgleneira:

[www.instagram.com/cityofgleneira](http://www.instagram.com/cityofgleneira)

#### Glen Eira arts, gallery and events:

[www.facebook.com/gleneiraarts](http://www.facebook.com/gleneiraarts)

#### Glen Eira Leisure:

[www.facebook.com/GESAConline](http://www.facebook.com/GESAConline)

<https://www.instagram.com/gleneiraleisure>

[www.twitter.com/GESAConline](https://www.twitter.com/GESAConline)

#### Glen Eira Libraries and Learning Centres:

[www.facebook.com/GlenEiraLibraries](http://www.facebook.com/GlenEiraLibraries)

<https://www.instagram.com/gleneiralibraries>

#### Glen Eira Maternal and Child Health:

[www.facebook.com/GlenEiraMaternalandChildHealth](http://www.facebook.com/GlenEiraMaternalandChildHealth)

#### Glen Eira Youth Services:

[www.facebook.com/GlenEiraYouthServices](http://www.facebook.com/GlenEiraYouthServices)

[www.instagram.com/gleneirayouthservices](http://www.instagram.com/gleneirayouthservices)

#### Glen Eira sustainable living:

[www.facebook.com/sustainablelivinggleneira](http://www.facebook.com/sustainablelivinggleneira)