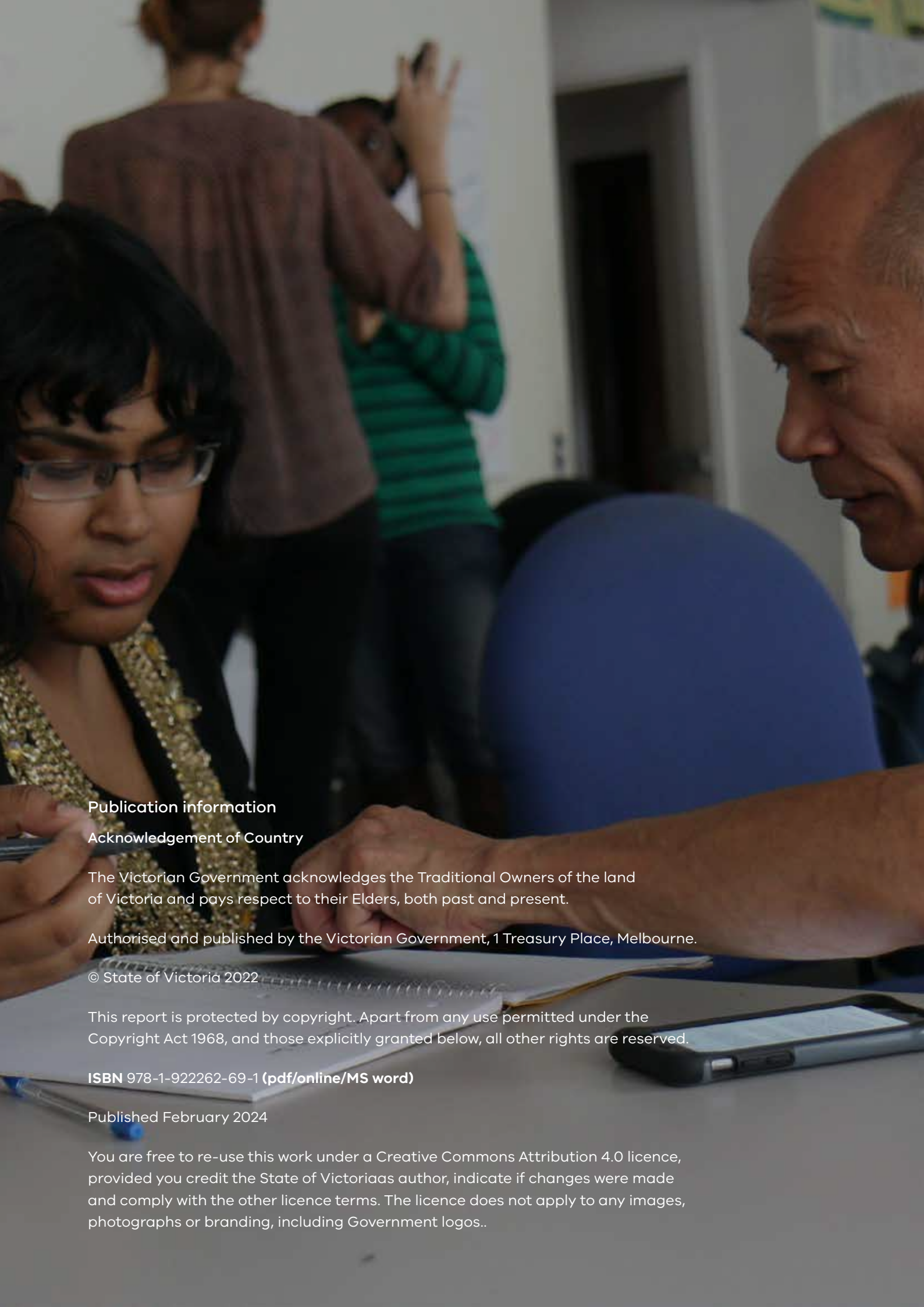


# Family Engagement and Parenting Programs and Services Guide

Corrections Victoria



## Publication information

### Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land of Victoria and pays respect to their Elders, both past and present.

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# Introduction

Corrections Victoria (CV) has undertaken significant work in developing programs and initiatives recognising that strong family connections play a pivotal role in promoting rehabilitation, reducing recidivism and supporting reintegration of individuals released from prison.

Many people in prison experience barriers relating to maintaining positive family relationships. These challenges may include the impact of complex past and current trauma, shifts in parenting roles, separation, financial disadvantage and families not knowing how to engage in or access support<sup>1</sup>.

Strong family relationships have been shown to improve mental health, education and employment outcomes as well as reduce family violence<sup>2</sup>. People in prison with solid social connections are also more likely to engage in positive behaviours post their release.

CV policy initiatives have moved away from seeing parenting or family engagement initiatives as optional services to ones that are critical for the effective operation of the system and that are vital in achieving its broader mission of reducing reoffending and increasing community safety.

Supported by the growing international body of research on the importance of family engagement programs and services, CV has embarked upon innovative and system wide responses to develop and strengthen parenting capacity and family engagement for people in prison.

The Family Engagement Programs and Services document has been developed to describe CV's approach to family engagement across the prison system and clearly identify and explain the service response offered to people in prison to encourage them to engage with or stay connected to family while in custody.

## Document purpose

This document will describe CV's response to family engagement across the Victorian prison system and provide an in-depth description of the prison programs and initiatives aimed at increasing family engagement opportunities for adults in prison and their families.

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- 1 Herman-Stahl, M., Kan, M. and McKay, T 2008, *Incarceration and the family: A review of research and promising approaches for serving fathers and families*, US Department of Health and Human Services.
  - 2 Thomas, P. A., Liu, H., Umberson, D 2017, Family relationship and well-being *Innovation in Aging*, 1 (3), doi: 10.1093/geroni/igx025.





# A systems wide approach to Family Engagement

Family Engagement is a fundamental component of an effective justice system. Supportive relationships are crucial in assisting a person in prison to get through their sentence well and achieve rehabilitation<sup>3</sup>.

There is longstanding international evidence of the negative mental health, behavioural, educational and financial consequence that follow parental incarceration for children. Children with parents who offend are also more likely to have contact with child protection services and to be placed in out of home care early<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, associations have been found between parental offending and poor physical health outcomes in young children including drug use in adolescence<sup>5</sup>. This suggested that incarcerated parents and their children require attention and support. CV and child protection services work closely to provide support to people in prison and their children.

Family engagement support provided during incarceration and post release are effective in positively impacting people in prison and their families. These positive outcomes include:

- Increase in parenting knowledge
- Increase in quality of family relationships
- Improved outcomes for children of incarcerated parents
- Improved understanding of family engagement services and supports.

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3 Lord Farmer 2017, *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*, Ministry of Justice

4 Whitten, T., Dean, K., Li, R., et al. 2020, 'Earlier contact with Child Protection services among children of parents with criminal convictions and mental disorders'. *Child Maltreatment*. doi:10.1177/1077559520935204.

5 Whitten, T., Burton, M., Tzoumakis, S. and Dean, K. 2019, 'Parental Offending and Child Physical Health, Mental Health and Drug Use Outcomes: A Systematic Literature Review'. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28, pp 1155-1168.



# What is meant by 'Family'?

Family can mean different things to different people, and there are many kinds of families. A contemporary definition of family is used by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) in the context of the Family Preservation and Restoration program.<sup>6</sup> The program defines family as including children, mothers, fathers, parents, siblings, kin and care families. Birth family refers to a child's family of origin and is inclusive of Aboriginal concepts of family. Families may or may not be biologically related and can include single sex, single parents, foster parents, blended families, shared parenting and a diverse range of carers.<sup>7</sup> Families often share emotional bonds, common values and contribute significantly to the wellbeing of one another.

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6 Victorian and Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response. Retrieved from <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/victorian-and-aboriginal-family-preservation-and-reunification-response>

7 LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Language Guide, Victorian Government. Retrieved from <https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>



# What is meant by 'Family Engagement'?

Families can be involved with each other without being engaged, which is where families are motivated and empowered to recognise their own needs, strengths, and resources to take an active role in changing things for the better. Family engagement is not a 'one size fits all' set of steps or programs with standardised practices; rather, it is a response to individualised needs and priorities to ensure the most beneficial outcomes for each family. This includes effective and positive parenting.

## Family Engagement objectives and principles

In providing programs and services across the prison system aimed at increasing family engagement, CV is committed to:

- Understanding the importance of family relationships while a person is in custody
- Understanding the importance of kinship and culture to Aboriginal people and their families
- Recognising the impact and unique challenges faced by children when a parent or care giver is sent to prison
- Recognising families as an important source of support for people in prison
- Promoting the value of family connections throughout a person's contact with the justice system
- Understanding the importance of family relationships as a motivating force to desist from reoffending.

The objectives of this approach are:

- To help maintain or re-establish family connections
- To provide support to people in prison and their children to reduce intergenerational impacts
- Strengthening positive parenting skills
- To enhance family engagement and throughcare for people in prison and their families.







# Corrections Victoria's programmatic response to improve family engagement

CV's programmatic response for improving family engagement caters to both people in prison and their families. It aims to provide all people in prison access to programs and initiatives to improve family relationships while in custody and best prepare those in prison for their release into the community.

The service response is aligned with the CV Offender Management Framework (OMF) particularly with respect to reducing recidivism and successful reintegration into the community. The programmatic response to family engagement is shaped by several key objectives and principles which provide effective and targeted initiatives.

Figure 1 on pages 10 and 11, outlines all current programs and services that play a role in increasing family engagement across the Victorian prison system

**Figure 1**

## → PARENTING PROGRAMS

### **Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)**

*Beechworth, Dhurringile, Fulham, Hopkins, Langi Kal Kal, Loddon/Middleton, MRC, Margoneet/Karreengo, DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre, Barwon Prison*

### **Parenting Inside Out**

*Margoneet, Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

### **Tuning into Teens Program**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre, DPFC*

### **Getting to Know Your Teenager Program**

*DPFC*

### **Bringing up Great Kids After Family Violence**

*DPFC*

### **Parenting After Family Violence**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

### **Tuning into Kids Program**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre, DPFC*

## → PRISON STAFF

### **Youth Team Leader**

*MRC*

### **Family Engagement Workers**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

### **Custodial Case Management Staff**

*All prisons*

### **Mother and Child workers**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

### **Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer/Aboriginal Liaison Officers**

*All prisons*

### **Family Practitioners**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

### **Multicultural Liaison Officer**

*Select prison locations*

## → CV RUN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES

### **Phone calls and mail contact**

### **Permits**

### **Visits**

Figure 1 (cont.)

→ PROGRAMS

**Family Engagement Service**

*\*includes Strengthening Connections Family Therapy DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

**Living with Mum Program**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

**Maternal Child Health Nurse**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*

**Vacro Family Therapy**

*Beechworth, JLTC, Tarrengower Prison*

**Inside Access**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Prison Visits Support Program**

*Port Phillip Prison*

**VACRO Family Visits Program**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, MRC, Loddon/Middleton, Beechworth, Dhurringile, Barwon Prison, Hopkins, Margoneet/Karreenga, Langi Kal Kal*

**Angel Tree**

*Port Phillip Prison, Loddon/Middleton Precinct Dhurringile, Barwon Prison, MRC, Fulham, DPFC*

**Camp for Kids**

*MRC*

**Fun with Mum Program**

*DPFC*

**Connect with your Kids Program**

*MRC*

**Read Along Dad/Mums Program**

*Loddon/Middleton, Tarrengower Prison, Port Phillip Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre, Barwon Prison*

**Family and Child Protection Support**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Family Connect**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Family Reunification and Support Program**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Just for Dads**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Healthy Relationships**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Building Better Relationships**

*Ravenhall Correctional Centre*

**Craft Program**

*Tarrengower Prison*

→ CULTURALLY AND RACIALLY MARGINALISED PROGRAMS

**Genesis Reintegration Program**

*MRC, Port Phillip Prison, Barwon Prison, Marngoneet*

**Indo-Chinese Prisoner Support Program**

*MAP, MRC, Port Phillip Prison, Barwon Prison, Margoneet, Tarrengower, DPFC*

**African Family Services**

*DPFC*

**Baggarook Women's Transitional Housing**

*Women being released from DPFC and Tarrengower Prison*

**Muslim Connect**

*DPFC*

**Australian Vietnamese Women's Association**

*DPFC, Tarrengower Prison*



# Family Engagement Programs

## The Family Engagement Service

→ **Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC), Tarregower Prison**

The Family Engagement Service plays a crucial role in assisting parent / carers at DPFC and Tarregower Prison. The service provides support to women in prison to develop strong familial links/support and increases opportunities to strengthen social capital.

The Family Engagement Workers are central to supporting women and their families and co-ordinating a range of other programs and services including:

- Strengthening Connections Family Therapy
- Vacro Family Visits Program
- Safe, Strong and Connected Program
- Tweedle Parenting Program
- Vacro Family Therapy Program (previously known as Parents and Families Program)

## Strengthening Connections Family Therapy Service

→ **DPFC, Tarregower Prison**

The Bouverie Centre deliver a family therapy service to women and their families at DPFC and Tarregower Prison, known as

Strengthening Connections. Strengthening Connections focuses on the critical role of maintaining or re-establishing connection with children and family to support women to strengthen their support networks post release.

Strengthening Connections is available to all women. Highly trained family therapists specialise in working with women and families with complex or clinical needs.

The program's three-tiered service model enables women to access the program and receive a level of service that suits their unique family connection needs. Strengthening Connections uses single session therapy to target a key concern during each session with the family therapist.

- Step One – a universal group education program where women are encouraged to map family connections and identify characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Step Two – a trained family therapist works individually with the woman on independent family goals to help cultivate healthy family connections.
- Step Three – the family therapist works with the woman and her family members in the community to provide intensive family therapy.

## Living with Mum Program

### → DPFC, Tarrengower Prison

Corrections Victoria (CV) recognises that women's needs differ to men, specifically that protection and strengthening of a woman's core familial relationships is pivotal to her rehabilitation and reintegration. The Living with Mum (LWM) Program is a full-time mother and child residential program run by CV, which is offered at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) and Tarrengower Prison. Women who are pregnant or who are the primary carer of a child under school age can apply to participate in the Program. The aim of the Program is to encourage and foster the mother-child relationship and reduce the impact of a mother's prison custody on her dependent children.

Any woman can make a LWM application if she is:

- remanded into custody, sentenced or expects a custodial sentence and can demonstrate that they were the primary carer of their infant or pre-school child prior to their imprisonment.
- pregnant and due to give birth while in prison.

To promote the health and development of the child, provisions are made to allow the child to move between the prison and the outside environment to maintain other family relationships, and to participate in relevant and appropriate programs. All efforts are made to ensure that the child is supported to access community programs and contacts that are consistent with the child's age and development.

## Maternal Child Health Nurse

### → DPFC, Tarrengower Prison

This program provides an outreach service, led and primarily delivered by Maternal and Child Health nurses. It is focused on achieving improved outcomes for infants, children, mothers and their families who are experiencing a period of increased need, and who could benefit from targeted actions and interventions.

## Family Therapy Program

### → Beechworth, Judy Lazarus Transition Centre, Tarrengower Prison

Delivered by the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Vacro), the Family Therapy Program seeks to improve family connectedness through trauma-informed practice that aims to empower parents to make positive changes and potentially change the outcomes for their children.

The Family Therapy Program includes various activities for people in prison who are parents or carers and involves children, young people, partners, caregivers, and extended family members. Should family contact be deemed inappropriate, Vacro can provide individual support sessions to the incarcerated parent.

## Inside access

### → **DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Facilitated by the Mental Health Legal Service, the Inside Access service includes weekly in-reach support for ancillary legal matters and legal education sessions to women at DPFC and Tarrengower Prison. Inside Access provides support to women navigating various family legal issues including matters involving DFFH Child Protection.

## Prison Visit Support Program

### → **Port Phillip Prison**

Red Cross volunteers provide support for friends and families visiting Port Phillip Prison before, during and after their visit time with loved ones. In a waiting area located externally to the prison, volunteers run the Visitor Support Centre which is designed to provide non-specialist practical and emotional support to families and friends.

Volunteers also operate a child focused program inside the prison visit centre. They create a safe and supportive environment for children and their families and facilitate a range of fun family activities. The program aims to create a more enjoyable environment for visitors and their loved ones and contributes to the maintenance and strengthening of family bonds.

## Family Visits Program

### → **DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, Metropolitan Remand Centre, Loddon/Middleton Prison Precinct, Beechworth Correctional Centre, Dhurringile Prison, Barwon Prison, Hopkins Correctional Centre, Marngoneet Correctional Centre/Karreenga, Langi Kal Kal Prison**

Delivered by VACRO, the Family Visits Program provides people in custody access to supported visits with their families in addition to regular visitation. Both the incarcerated people and their families are supported by the Family Visits Worker throughout their program engagement, predominately through arranged video visits. The key purpose of the Family Visits Worker is to cultivate positive, pro-social relationships to improve reintegration outcomes post-release.

The Family Visits Program works collaboratively with the Family Engagement Service at DPFC and Tarrengower Prison and the Programs staff at all other locations. This coordination includes working with the Family Therapy Services to implement parenting and family engagement strategies.



## Angel Tree

→ **Port Phillip Prison, Loddon/Middleton Prison Precinct, Dhurringile Prison, Barwon Prison, MRC, Fulham Correctional Centre, DPFC, Tarrengower Prison**

Delivered by Prison Fellowship, the Angel Tree program allows men in prison to nominate children to receive a Christmas gift. Prison Fellowship then calls on supporters and friends to donate gifts, or money to buy Christmas gifts. These are then delivered to the homes of the children or given out at a prison Christmas party.

\*Ravenhall Correctional Centre also has the Card Making Program which provides materials for men to make cards and sent to their family to maintain mainly relationships and connections for holidays such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, birthdays, etc.

## Camp for Kids

→ **MRC**

Delivered by the Prison Fellowship, the Camp for Kids is designed to be a time of encouragement, learning, and fun, where children of inmates and ex-prisoners spend time with other kids with a parent in prison, hear the gospel, learn valuable interpersonal skills, and have a lot of fun.

## Fun with Mum Program

→ **DPFC**

Delivered by Prison Network, the Fun with Mum program provides purposeful, positive, engaging diversionary activities for children visiting a parent in prison in an informal, non-intrusive supportive manner to ensure that the visit and interaction is fun and positive. Transport assistance for children who would otherwise be unable to visit their parent in custody is provided.

## Connect with your Kids Program

→ **MRC**

Delivered by Box Hill Institute, the Connect with your Kids Program assists people in prison to stay in touch with their children in a meaningful way. Participants are enrolled in a nationally accredited module of a Certificate Two in Information Technology and then recorded reading a book for their child which is later sent to the child along with a copy of the book. The incarcerated parent or guardian can select from various culturally appropriate books and engage in various tasks of editing and adding music onto a CD and making a personalised bookmark for their child. This program allows the child to then listen to their parent's voice and read along, helping to maintain the family connection. Additional benefits include improving people in prison's literacy and computer skills as well as craft activities.

## Read-Along Dad/Mums Program

→ **Loddon/Middleton Prison Precinct, Tarrengower Prison, Port Phillip Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre, Barwon Prison**

The Read-Along Dads/Mums Program assists people in prison to stay in touch with their children in a meaningful way. Participants are recorded reading a book for their child which is later sent to the child along with a copy of the book. The child can then listen to their parent's voice and read along, helping to maintain the family connection. Additional benefits include improving people in prison's literacy levels and engagement in writing and craft activities.

## Family and Child Protection Support

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Family and Child Protection Support program provides advice and advocacy on child and family issues including Child Protection and DFFH matters and assistance with family law issues.

## Family Reunification and Support Program

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

The Family Reunification and Support Program offers support to engage in meaningful contact with children, parents, siblings, or extended family members. Supported is provided for primary carers and liaison and advocacy related to child protection, legal representatives, and family court. The program can also offer support to arrange child visits.

## Family Connect

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Support is provided to assist the men to improve family relationships, both through maintaining contact and reengaging with family members. Assistance is provided to build communication skills to increase connections and confidence to maintain family relationships. The service provides but is not restricted to the following assistance:

- To maintain contact with family members via phone, writing letters or supported visits,
- Connect family members with services and support
- Facilitate family conferences (where appropriate)
- Include the family member (where appropriate) in care plan meetings in preparation for release.

## Just for Dads

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

This program is facilitated and coordinated by the Family Team to assist fathers / carers to engage positively with their children during visits. The program is run in the Visits Centre where themed activities are arranged and facilitated to enable engagement and improve the quality of the visit for the children.

## Healthy Relationships

### → **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Healthy Relationships is a 24-hour program with a focus on enhancing individual functioning within important interpersonal relationships. The primary goal of the program is to identify risks in the relationships that contribute to offending and identify opportunities for enhancing relationships by developing positive and protective relatedness goals.

## Building Better Relationships

### → **Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Building Better Relationships is a 11-hour program for participants who experience current or historical issues within their relationships including intimate, familial and peer relationships. The program aims to increase participants' awareness of what a healthy relationship looks like and provides them with the skills to develop and maintain these in their own life.

## Indo-Chinese Prisoner Support Program

### → **Melbourne Assessment Prison, Metropolitan Remand Centre, Port Phillip Prison, Barwon Prison, Marngoneet Correctional Centre, Tarrengower Prison, DPFC**

Delivered by the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association (AVWA), the Indo-Chinese Prisoner Support Program (ICPSP) provides culturally appropriate individual support, family liaison, information and advocacy to Indo-Chinese people in prison and their families, including contacting family abroad. Supports include referrals to culturally appropriate services and incorporates supporting sporting and cultural events such as Lunar New Year and Full Moon festivals at various prisons.

## Baggarook Women's Transitional Housing

### → **Women being released from DPFC and Tarrengower Prison**

The Baggarook Program is a partnership between the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Services (VALS) and Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) which provides short-term transitional housing and support to Aboriginal women who are being released from prison and are at risk of homelessness. By providing immediate housing upon release from prison and case management support, women are provided a stable environment to assist them in taking the first step towards long-term stable housing.

Participants live in independent units where Baggarook Case Managers support participants through their release requirements, reintegration referrals and help to develop independent living skills. Dependent on individual needs, factors being addressed in the program may include family engagement and connectedness, parenting, family violence as well as mental and physical health and drug and alcohol use.

Family reunification is supported through the program and there is an adjoining bedroom between each set of two units with children's bedding and furniture to enable sleepovers where appropriate.





# Parenting Programs

## Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

→ **Beechworth Correctional Centre, Dhurringile Prison, Fulham Correctional Centre, Hopkins Correctional Centre, Langi Kal Kal Prison, Loddon/Middleton Prison Precinct, MRC, Marngoneet Correctional Centre/Karreenga, DPFC, Tarrengower Prison, Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is an evidence-based parenting program and has been implemented across several prisons in Victoria.

CV facilitators are currently trained to deliver Groups and Seminars for 0-12yr and Teen (up to 16 years). Groups are a 12-hour parenting program, where participants actively engage in a range of exercises to learn about the causes of child behaviour problems and how to use strategies to promote child development, manage misbehaviour and plan for high-risk situations.

Seminars are 90-minute sessions that provide a brief introduction to Triple P strategies. Facilitators have a choice of six Seminars to deliver, such as 'Positive Parenting', 'Raising confident, competent children', and 'Raising resilient children'.

Triple P bolsters CV's suite of parenting programs and assists people in prison to develop parenting skills and strategies to confidently parent and support their children post release.

## Parenting Inside Out

→ **Marngoneet Correctional Centre, Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

The Parenting Inside Out program operates out of Marngoneet and Ravenhall Correctional Centre and has both a 90-hour and 12-hour program version. This program has been developed specifically for incarcerated parents and carers. The longer program version includes weekly supported play and story book dads.

## Getting to Know Your Teenager Program

→ **DPFC**

Getting to know your teenager is a two-hour program that focuses on understanding adolescent behaviour, how to communicate better with teenagers, and developing strategies and tools for parenting. The program also includes ways parents and carers can have fun with their teenagers and enjoy spending time together.

## Bringing Up Great Kids After Family Violence

→ **DPFC**

This two-hour program is aimed at providing guidance to parents experiencing family violence. This includes learning how to support child development, understanding the meaning behind a child's behaviour and how this may be influenced by their experience of family violence, and how to welcome safety, respect, care and love into their relationship with their children. The program also provides information on self-care and how to find further support on family violence.

## Tuning into Kids Program

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre, DPFC**

Tuning into Kids is a two-hour program aimed at parents of children aged up to 10 years old. The program includes understanding emotional intelligence and competencies, what can happen when children do not develop these competencies and how parents can support their children to develop these skills.

## Tuning into Teens Program

→ **Ravenhall Correctional Centre, DPFC**

The Tuning into Teens Program provides women information on emotional intelligences and competencies and why these skills are important, what happens when teenagers don't develop these skills, and how these skills develop.

The program also focuses on the influence that parents have on an adolescent's emotional competence.





# Prison staff

## Family Engagement Workers

### → DPFC and Tarrengower Prison

The Family Engagement Workers seek to create a holistic service for women in prison at DPFC and Tarrengower Prison, recognising the fundamental role that children and loved ones play in rehabilitation and reintegration.

The Family Engagement Workers provide women day to day assistance to manage their family life within prison. This may include:

- Supporting women and children to engage with the Living with Mum Program
- Providing parenting programs to mother and carers
- Providing Department of Family Fairness and Housing (DFFH) information and assistance
- Aiding women who are seeking assistance to contact family
- Providing coordination and support to engage in complementary services within the prison.

## Family Liaison Officers

### → Ravenhall Correctional Centre

The Family Liaison Officer provides family related case management to men in prison at Ravenhall to promote, strengthen and repair family bonds. The Family Liaison Officers facilitate calls and family conferences while the prisoner is in custody and can continue to support the family with regular family case management meetings for up to three months after a prisoner is released.

## Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers

### → All prisons

The Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer (AWO's) are part of CV's commitment to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and to ensure that Aboriginal Victorians experience the same justice outcomes as the broader Victorian community.

The main responsibilities will include:

- Providing ongoing welfare, advocacy and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women people in prison
- Overseeing pre and post release plans to ensure appropriate entitlements are in place to assist with women people in prison' reintegration into the community
- Facilitating Aboriginal cultural events and activities, including NAIDOC events and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific programs.

## Mother and Child Support Workers

### → DPFC, Tarregower Prison

The Mother and Child Support Workers provide support to mothers and primary care givers at DPFC and Tarregower Prison. The main responsibilities include:

- Providing support to mothers and children to prepare for release and facilitate access to health and community services
- Providing support to mothers in participating in the Living with Mum Program
- Providing support during pregnancy as well as parenting support
- Supporting mothers to maintain or rekindle relationships with their children, where appropriate.

## Youth Team Leader

### → MRC

The Youth Team Leader provides assessment and support for young people (aged 18-25) in custody. The Youth Team leader will reach out to pro-social networks and other professional supports including family members to maintain, strengthen and if necessary, re-engage with services and supports.

## Custodial Case Management staff

### → All Prisons

Case management staff across the prison system provide support to people in prison based on their criminogenic needs, including focusing on positive and pro social family and relationships. Case managers assist people in prison to connect to their families by way of making referrals to any relevant family engagement services, assisting those in prison to develop goals around family engagement and assisting with applying for family focused permit activity.

# Corrections Victoria run family engagement activities/initiatives

CV acknowledges the pivotal role of family and community ties as part of the rehabilitation process, and (if eligible) people in prison are supported to establish and/or maintain critical relationships while in custody by participating in the following activities and initiatives.

## Visits

Victorian prisons provide facilities for personal and professional visits for all people in prison. The facility acknowledges the importance to people in prison of maintaining family ties and friendships.

- **Family visits** – visit on the weekends and public holidays, including family, friends, community supports and with children who do not reside in the prison. This program is delivered at all Victorian prisons. On visit days families can gift newspapers, magazines or photographs without prior approval. Approved visitors may also leave authorised property and monies for people in prison ensuring that families are given the opportunity to provide gifts and essential items to their loved ones throughout their prison sentence.
- **Residential visits** – a family visit program which extends beyond normal visiting hours and which is not directly supervised and closely mirror conditions in the community. This program is delivered at Tarrengower Prison.
- **Child access visits** – a three-hour access program which operate each Sunday afternoon at DPFC for mothers and their children.

- **Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH) supervised visits** – Supervised child access visits with DFFH.
- **Inter-prison visits** – Inter-prison visits may be applied for by people in prison with a confirmed long standing close personal relationship with another prisoner.
- **Christmas Party** – A dedicated visit day for children of people in prison to attend for a Christmas Party.

## Leave Permits

People in prison can apply for leave from prison for a number of reasons. The below permits aim to allow people in prison permission to engage in activities outside the prisons to improve family engagement, maintain family relationships, or engage in caregiver duties.

- **Family Ties (Primary Care Giver) Permit**  
The purpose of the Family Ties permit is to allow a prisoner who has been the primary caregiver of a child or children or a sick or elderly relative prior to imprisonment, to maintain family ties. This permit can also be used to allow a prisoner who has a child residing in custody to maintain family ties by accompanying the child outside the prison for medical reasons or in the interests of the socialisation of the child in cases where there is an expectation that the parent would be present.

- **Family Ties (Exceptional Circumstances)**

Exceptional Circumstances enables an eligible prisoner to visit a member of their family or a person with whom they have had a long-standing relationship where that person has been unable to visit the prisoner for a period of at least 12 months as a result of documented health/incapacitation reasons.

- **The School Holiday Program (SHP)** – The SHP provides an opportunity for women to have their child or children stay with them for up to 4 days during the School Holidays. The SHP gives people in prison the opportunity to maintain their mother and child relationship whilst in custody. This program is provided at Tarrengower Prison.

- **Marriage and Commitment Ceremonies**

Prisons have processes in place to enable people in prison to apply for, and if approved, manage a marriage or commitment ceremony.

- **Funeral permits** – allows eligible participants to attend sorry business or funeral arrangements to partake in family grieving and related ceremonies.

## Phone and mail contact

- **Video Visits/Skype calls** – access to telephones for people in prison to maintain communication links with family, friends, and other community supports.
- **Phone** – access to telephones for people in prison to maintain communication links with family, friends, and other community supports.
- **Mail** – people in prison are encouraged to maintain written contact with family and friends and relevant professionals by mail.
- **Inter-prison calls** – Inter-prison calls may be applied for by people in prison with a confirmed long standing close personal relationship with another prisoner.
- **Court ordered child access** – Family Engagement Workers facilitate women access to court ordered contact with children as per their court order.



# Acronyms

Acronyms	Description
AVWA	Australian Vietnamese Women's Association
AWO	Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer
CARM	Culturally and Racially Marginalised
CCS	Community Correctional Services
CV	Corrections Victoria
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
DFFH	Department of Families Fairness and Housing
DPFC	Dame Phyllis Frost Centre
FES	Family Engagement Service
FEW	Family Engagement Worker
FOCAL	Friends of Castlemaine Library
ICPC	the Indo-Chinese Prisoner Support Program
OMF	Offender Management Framework
PaF	Parent and Family Program
SHP	School Holiday Program
VACCA	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
VACRO	Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
VALS	Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service



