

## Acknowledgement

*National Council of Women of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Victoria and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. NCWV pays its respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.*



**ALERT To foster our relationship with RHSV, our postal address is now: 239 A'Beckett St Melbourne, 3000. PO Box has been closed.**

**QUOTE: 'For every child in need. No matter what'. UNICEF is one of the world's largest children's charities, working to protect and improve the lives of vulnerable children in over 190 countries. In Australia, we amplify children's voices, defend their rights, and help them fulfill their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.**

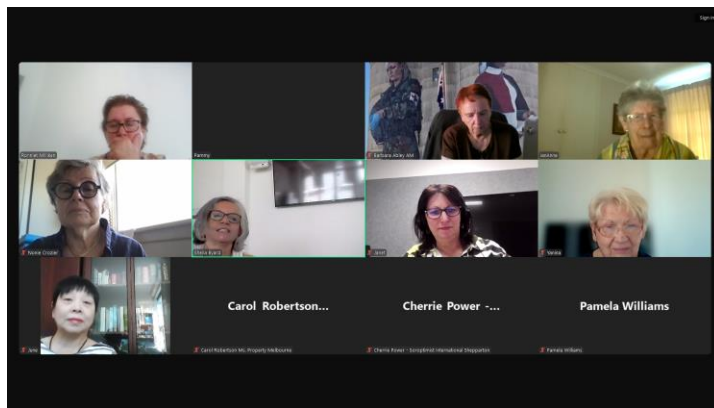
## From the President, Elida Brereton



It was pleasing to again see members in person at Ross House, in addition to those attending via ZOOM, but we do apologise for the delay and then loss of some features despite the best efforts of Ross House to overcome poor Internet connectivity. Our guest speaker, **Madhavi Johnson**, an Indian Australian, describes herself as "Mentor/Writer/ Gender & Human Rights Advocate".

Mahdavi shared with us a powerful message based on her work around the globe for UNICEF. Her account of the dreadful damage to children's mental and physical health in Ukraine, in Sudan, in Kenya and other countries suffering war, drought, revolution, and terrorism, was graphic and distressing, but UNICEF is making a difference despite relying greatly on private funding. The issues facing girls are of particular interest to Mahdavi and she opened our eyes to some of the appalling situations facing girls in some parts of the world.

Our **Annual Report** has been completed and is impressive, and can be accessed via a link on our website, or via the email link shown in this Newsletter. It is quite exciting to read the reports of our Program leaders and Advisors and to be reminded of the speakers we heard and the priorities of NCWV. Thank you Pam Hammond for your outstanding work in compiling items.



Some attendees at the October Council Meeting

NCWV can be proud of the advocacy and sharing of information undertaken by us during this [reporting] year.

**The NCWV Annual Report is available on the website:**

<https://ncwvic.org.au/publications.html>

It is good to see our Individual Members becoming more active under the leadership of Sheila Byard OAM, and we do hope to see many members and friends at our

**End-of-Year Luncheon on November 28<sup>th</sup>.**

Some of us are attending the NCWA Triennial Conference in Adelaide and if you wish to go as a Delegate of NCWV we need your name sent to me **by October 16<sup>th</sup>**. We are hoping for a strong Victorian representation.

**Next Council Meeting, i.e. November 7<sup>th</sup> at 5.15pm**, we will discuss the resolutions to be addressed by NCWA in Adelaide. I am keen to see NCWV as a leader in many issues, and we need/ value your feedback. Details follow from sisters in South Australia who are hosting 2024 NCWA Triennial Conference:

The NCW Australia National Triennial Conference is being held in Adelaide for the first time since 2009, on Thursday 21st November and Friday 22nd November 2024  
**Venue:** University of Adelaide, Union House

**Day 1: Thursday: Registration from 8am** (tea and coffee and light breakfast refreshments on arrival)

All day conference including the Annual General Meeting of NCWA, All NCWV members welcome to participate.

Working lunch provided to all registrants.

**NOTE: Thursday 3.15 - 4.15pm**, Registered attendees are invited to a reception hosted by Her Excellency the Governor of South Australia, Frances Adamson AC.

Evening: Registrants are free to enjoy an evening in Adelaide. A list of restaurants will be circulated shortly - bookings will be arranged so that registrants and guests can enjoy an evening of friendship and fellowship.

**Day 2: Friday** - half day with morning tea included - Expert speakers will be joining us for an important Symposium. We will be reaching out to school-aged attendees to join us.

The full speaker list to come!

**Book here:**

<https://events.humanitix.com/national-council-of-women-triennial-conference-2024>

**NCWV Council Thursday 3 October, 2024, 12 noon**  
was in person at Ross House Flinders Lane, also via ZOOM.  
**Speaker: Madhavi Srinivasan Johnson from Chennai Sth India. "UNICEF - A Promise to Stay for Children in Crisis".**



Madhavi moved to Australia in February 2019 and lives in Melbourne. Her passion for and engagement in women's issues and girls' rights led her through a 26-year career in international development/humanitarian work with UNICEF.

This was in India, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Kenya, Namibia and USA HQ (New York) to promote human rights and gender issues affecting children, design strategies for programming, advocacy, communication for behaviour and social change. She held senior positions in Namibia, Kenya and New York and has travelled extensively in the southern African region. She published her first collection of short stories titled 'Demon on Fire and Other Stories' in 2020. She is currently working on her second book, a creative non-fiction recounting her experiences in Africa.

Madhavi gave an overview of Australia's involvement with the UN: Australia, a founding member of the United Nations, has been an active participant in UN institutions for 70 years, and was an original signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Currently Australia is the 11th largest contributor to the UN regular budget. There have been several firsts for Australia in its association with the UN. Australia held the first Presidency of the Security Council, 1946 and provided the first military observers under the UN to Indonesia during the independence struggle. Since then, Australia has participated in 62 United Nations and other multilateral peace and security operations as peacekeepers and Observers (MFO) and has played a leading role in successful regional missions in the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea.

As the quote above states UNICEF 'Promises to stay' to support the 1 in 6 of the world's children who live in a conflict zone. Nearly 200 million children are living in the world's most lethal war zones, the highest number in over a decade. Children have become frontline targets in 6 ways:

1. **Killing and maiming** - Direct targeting or indirect actions, torture, crossfire, landmines, cluster munitions, improvised or other explosive devices or military operations, house demolitions, search-and-arrests, or suicide attacks.

2. **Recruitment/use of children in armed forces and groups** - compulsory, forced conscription or enlistment of children into any kind of armed force or group. The use of boys and girls as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers and spies, or when they are subjected to sexual exploitation.

3. **Denial of humanitarian access for children** - Intentional deprivation or impediment of humanitarian assistance essential for survival, including impeding the ability of humanitarian or other relevant actors to access and assist affected children. Warring parties often deny humanitarian actors access to those in need or prevent assistance from reaching civilian populations and humanitarian workers are targeted, treated as threats, as has occurred at in Gaza.

4. **Targeted attacks on schools or hospitals** - that cause destruction of such facilities causing catastrophic impact and gross violation of children's rights.

5. **Abduction of children** - Unlawful removal, seizure, capture, apprehension, or disappearance of a child either temporarily or permanently. Either intentional or as retaliation, to instil fear among populations, or to forcibly recruit and/or sexually abuse children. Boys have accounted for around three quarters of verified instances of abducted children. However, girls remain at risk of being abducted, including for sexual violence and exploitation. Children who are abducted may also become victims of other grave violations, such as killing, maiming, sexual violence or recruitment into armed groups.

6. **Rape or other grave sexual violence** - acts of rape, other sexual violence, slavery and/or trafficking, prostitution, forced marriage or pregnancy, sterilization, or sexual exploitation and/or abuse of children, used to intentionally humiliate a population or to force people from their homes. Stigma around rape means it is under-reported and disproportionately affects girls, who were victims in 97 per cent of cases 2016 to 2020.

The war in Ukraine has caused significant damage to vital infrastructure, impacting access to electricity, heating, water, telecommunications, schools and pre-schools damaged or destroyed, affecting families' incomes, access to services and disrupting education of Ukraine's children, with potentially lifelong consequences. Children in the frontline have been forced to spend up to 5,000 hours in basements and bomb shelters over the last two years – the equivalent of six months. As of September 2023, only around half of schools had been able to implement face-to-face learning and, in critical areas of the east and south of the country, just 15 per cent of children were able to attend classes, with the rest studying online. UNICEF estimates from last year that 1.5 million children are at risk of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues.

UNICEF was in Ukraine before the conflict, and has stayed working alongside national and local authorities, as well as civil society organizations, to deliver emergency assistance and support services to families fleeing war in Ukraine.



UNICEF in Ukraine provides support to make sure there is heating infrastructure, winter clothing and blankets for children; engage children in formal/-formal education and provide learning supplies; mental health and psychosocial support including gender-based violence services; safe water where water supply networks are damaged and provide sanitation and hygiene supplies; healthcare and reach vulnerable households with cash assistance.

UNICEF also works in neighbouring countries that have received Ukrainians fleeing, to provide support to children and their families through local councils and NGOs.

Devastating violence and insecurity in Sudan erupted in April 2023, forcing millions of families from their homes in search of shelter, food and safety. More than a million have fled across borders. This is especially dire for children and families trapped in areas directly affected by conflict, insecurity and protection risks. Civilian infrastructure across Sudan has been decimated, leaving communities without essential services like clean water and basic health care. Loss of family income and the socioeconomic fallout are proving devastating to the well-being of children. In 2023, Sudan saw the [highest number of verified violations against children](#) in more than a decade, a five-fold increase to a year earlier, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, and recruitment of children by armed groups. Sudan is now grappling with the biggest child displacement crisis in the world, with an estimated 5 million forced from their homes, compounded by disease, hunger, malnutrition, restricted humanitarian access - a combination that has claimed thousands of lives, now facing a hunger catastrophe.

Across 190 countries and territories, UNICEF does whatever it takes to help children survive, thrive and fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence. UNICEF's programs are supported by contributions from governments, foundations, intergovernmental orgs, the private sector, and individuals. Contributions to UNICEF come as direct or indirect funding, volunteers, consultants, and seconded personnel, partnerships, equipment, and other in-kind donations. In 2023, total contributions to UNICEF were US\$8.92 billion. The [public sector](#) contributed the largest share: US\$6.55 billion from government, inter-governmental and inter-organizational partners, as well as Global Programme Partnerships.

UNICEF's advocacy and programme work revolves around the 48 child-related SDG indicators organized around five domains of child well-being – Survive and Thrive, Learning, Protection from Harm, Safe and Clean Environment, and Life Free of Poverty. In 2015, the global community adopted the 2030 Agenda FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT to work together to build a future where every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Substantial improvements have been seen in child survival and development over the last 30 years but there have been setbacks due to the pandemic, while routine immunisation, rising malnutrition, school attendance has

not improved the foundational skills of over 600 million children and adolescents. In poor countries, child labour persists. 12 million girls annually are subjected to premature marriage.

Accelerating action to achieve child-related SDG targets is smart economically. Investing in children today and along the life-course strengthens human capabilities and builds future generations who are fulfilled and can contribute to economic growth and national well-being. Eventually!

### **NCWV Individual Member Report, Sheila Byard OAM**

The 2024 Millie Peden Excursion was to the Royal Children's Hospital on Wednesday 11 September. Despite some logistic difficulties, our visit was a great opportunity to renew contact between the Hospital and NCWV Individual Members, & members of the League of Women Voters Victoria, and other affiliates, including Soroptimist International Melbourne Inc. The sum of money raised was almost \$400, and we plan to make a contribution to the RCH Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Nursing Development Scholarship. This award offers a unique opportunity for an outstanding nurse at the RCH to further develop their career and help change the future of paediatric healthcare. The scholarship was established in 2009 by the Auxiliaries Executive Committee (AEC), headed by then President, Carole Lowen OAM who did so much to facilitate our visit. [https://www.rch.org.au/nursing\\_research/Scholarships\\_and\\_research\\_funding/](https://www.rch.org.au/nursing_research/Scholarships_and_research_funding/)

Welcome to the new Individual Members, and those who have recently renewed membership, and remember that new and old, that there is an opportunity to attend the NCWA Triennial Conference in Adelaide on October 21 -22.

**Congratulations to the Ukrainian Women's Association of Victoria** for their 75 years of dedicated service to the Ukrainian Community. We look forward to sharing the celebrations on October 27<sup>th</sup>



A group of Ukrainian members and friends of NCWV with Prof. Cassandra Szoeki.

## ADVISER NEWS

### Health Adviser: Prof Cassandra Szoeké

#### Inquiry into Ambulance Victoria calls for submissions

The service was built in a certain way for a certain purpose, but their purpose is now far broader. New technologies mean officers even deliver early treatments now and they provide the opportunity for rather ill people to be cared for out of hospital (e.g., Palliative care) but need emergency support.

Maybe a seismic rebuild is required to provide more effective care, rather than same staff for acute AMI requiring resuscitation and other different support requirements. You notice in busy times ambulance staff beg "only urgent calls", clearly they have already identified a potential to triage to another tier of ambulance, maybe several tiers. I am looking forward to collating our community experience, and, in particular, raising the point that the lower cost of in-home care is only possible when supported by such services.

NCWV would like to hear from members, delegates and friends on their experiences with Ambulance Victoria.

Please also read the following request from the Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee.

**The Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee is calling for submissions** to an inquiry into the core issues impacting the management and functions of Ambulance Victoria.

The Committee will inquire into issues involved with call taking, dispatch, ambulance ramping, working conditions and workloads of paramedics, procurement practices, allegations of fraud and embezzlement, governance and accountability and the workplace culture within Ambulance Victoria.

"The main focus of this inquiry will be on working conditions for paramedics and other employees and how that impacts patient care, and on the internal operating practices of Ambulance Victoria," said Committee Chair Trung Luu. We want to hear from Victorians with experiences with Ambulance Victoria, including employees and patients," he said.

Go to the Committee's [website](#) for the full terms of reference, to sign up to email alerts and to find out how to make a submission. Submissions open on **30 September and will close 28 February 2025**.

Public hearings will be scheduled in early 2025

#### Protecting Victorian Newborns and Infants Next Winter

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced \$18.7 million to deliver a new long-acting monoclonal antibody as part of a coordinated national prevention program for unprotected newborns and eligible infants up to eight months, from Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). The free infant vaccine will complement an expected Commonwealth-funded maternal vaccine as part of the coordinated national program – ensuring as many babies are protected from RSV as possible.

The monoclonal antibody is a long-acting vaccine that will be available for Victorian babies and infants whose mother was unable to be immunised or was immunised less than two weeks before delivery. The infant vaccine provides protection for about five months. A dedicated catch-up program will also be offered for eligible Victorian infants aged up to two years who are vulnerable to severe RSV and entering their second RSV season.

In most cases, immunisations will be administered in a hospital setting as part of standard post-birth care, helping parents avoid any additional healthcare costs and time spent attending appointments. For the 2024 RSV season, Victoria secured doses of the antibody for infants and children at the most severe risk from the virus.

RSV is not new and can cause respiratory infections in the airways and lungs such as bronchiolitis, pneumonia – it is especially common in infants and young children, with most infected by the age of two years. With more than 3,800 infant RSV-associated ED presentations in 2023/24 and approximately 85 per cent of those requiring hospital admission, the vaccine will help reduce pressure on EDs and keep Victorian babies healthy. See: [betterhealth.vic.gov.au/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv](https://betterhealth.vic.gov.au/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv)

### Emma Fu, Economics Adviser

I have received a reply from **IDCARE** on how we can protect ourselves from hackers. Please see below.

**Thank you for contacting IDCARE.** Our charity is a national community service that provides individuals with tailored response plans based on our view of current identity and cybersecurity risks. From the information that you have provided to us, you are concerned about your compromised credentials.

The below response plan is divided into the three main areas with actions you may choose to perform to enhance further protection measures in relation to your information. This email contains hyperlinks to IDCARE's fact sheets, Learning Centre and other relevant organisations. You may also prefer to research any hyperlinks to external organisations independently to locate the relevant information.

**Detect** - How do I know if someone is already using my information?

**Check** your existing accounts (Banking and Finance, Government Services, Social Media, Utilities, Online Shopping and other accounts) for unrecognised transactions, purchases or account changes to personal particulars e.g. name, address, mobile, email address, username, password.

### **Protect Other Existing Accounts**

IDCARE strongly recommends using unique passwords and setting up Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for your online accounts. You can do this with [Hotmail](#), [Gmail](#) and on the [Microsoft website](#) for an '@live.com' email address. Wherever you can set up MFA you use an App on your device such as Google Authenticator ([Google Play](#) / [AppStore](#)), or Microsoft Authenticator ([Google Play](#) / [AppStore](#)), rather than an SMS.

**Contact** your telecommunications provider/s, inform them of what has happened, and request additional security be added to your account. In addition to running antivirus we recommend the following action response considerations:

- **Check the Login Activity** for your accounts and sign out of any unrecognised devices ([Microsoft](#), [Gmail](#), [Yahoo](#), [AppleID](#), [Facebook](#))
- **Check for any forwarding rules** on any email accounts, including your application and web email interface ([Outlook/Hotmail](#), [Gmail](#), [Yahoo](#)).
- **Check for any of your email items** that have been placed on your RSS feed folder in Outlook or other email browser if used (This is where cybercriminals store emails they have sent or received they are trying to hide).
- **Check your account recovery settings** for unknown phone numbers and emails you may not recognise in your email, Microsoft, or other online accounts such as social media.
- **If you have social media accounts**, a number of providers in their Settings and Privacy / Security areas allow users to run privacy and security checks. We recommend that if these are available to run these checks and regularly change your passwords and follow the advice above in relation to setting up multi-factor authentication. Additionally, do not click on any links that your friends send to you and verify any serious claims that the profile makes with the actual person through other methods (give them a call etc.).
- **Check that your superannuation fund** account details remain unchanged and talk to your super fund about additional security measure options whenever changes are attempted, or transaction applications are made (such as attempts for early access).
- **Notify your banks** or other financial institutions of concerns, seek advice regarding cancelling and replacing any credit or debit cards, request additional security on your accounts, update your login details, and use multi-factor authentication (MFA) where possible.
- **Contact any Buy Now Pay Later** institutions where you hold accounts and request updated security.

**If misuse has already occurred**, what can I do?

Reporting cybercrime in Australia [ReportCyber](#) is an online cybercrime reporting system operated by the Australian Cyber Security Centre. When you submit your report, you will receive a reference number which can be used when extending a Credit Ban past the original 21 days. Information you submit in your report will be sent to the appropriate police jurisdiction for assessment, however not all reports are investigated.

**Be vigilant and stay informed.** Keep being super vigilant about scams and phishing emails. Having a little bit of information exposed (such as your full name, address, date of birth, or phone number) can make the job of scammers really easy in convincing people about their deception. Never feel pressured to respond immediately to unsolicited communications and do your own research. To stay abreast of the latest scams, identity theft and cybercrimes impacting our community you can subscribe to our [free online newsletter](#).

If you suspect any communication from IDCARE is not legitimate confirm with IDCARE using alternative contact (see [www.idcare.org](#)). Our charity and community services DO NOT accept payment from individuals.



Australia, PO Box 412, Caloundra, QLD, 4551, Individuals: 1800 595 160; Organisations: 1800 595 170

[www.idcare.org](#)

These are some tips from the Australian government. [Report and recover from hacking | Cyber.gov.au](#)

## Sandy Bird, Arts and Letters Adviser

Melbourne has had an abundance of riches with strong female solo performances in the last 6 months.

Heather Stewart's role in "RBG Of Many One" at The Playhouse, saw a performance at once riveting and resplendent.

Playing the famous Ruth Bader Ginsburg from her Brooklyn childhood through to her becoming the USA's second Supreme Court judge. A woman of ferocious will and defender of gender equality.

Next came Justine Clarke in "Julia" at the Southbank Theatre, a portrayal of Julia Gillard - our first female Prime Minister. Examining the forces which shaped her and bringing into sharp focus the gender-biased harassment she endured, and yes, the famous misogyny speech, had its moments.

Equally as involving but a tale of a vastly different trajectory - "Mother" at the Fairfax Theatre featuring Noni Hazlehurst looked at the plight of one woman as she lives a homeless life in the shadow of alcoholism and a lost child.

And Nadine Garner takes us on a Regency romp as she reads from Jane Austen's masterpiece and enacts the roles of all the major players in "Pride and Prejudice - An Adaption in words and music" at the Fairfax Theatre. Garner's range and reach is amazing.

So we have 4 incredible actors giving us wonderful, theatrical experiences and turning the world of humanity around for us to face it front on.

The UK may have had its 4 famous 'Dames of the theatre' - sadly now 3 due to the recent demise of Maggie Smith, but with Stewart, Clarke, Hazlehurst and Garner we have 4 Ozzie Dames and "Great Dames" at that!

Also: The film 'Maria Montessori' is on at multiple venues in Melbourne and elsewhere in Australia throughout the Palace Cinemas Italian Film Festival in October 2024. Well worth seeing, Dr Deborah Towns OAM!

## OTHER NEWS



**Australian Human Rights Commission**

### President's message



It was good to reflect at the recent Law Institute of Victoria Legal Sector Dinner on access to justice, the role of lawyers and the law. Too often our legal system delivers unequal access to justice – different standards of justice depending on who you are, where you live and how much is in your bank account. Last week's announcement by National Cabinet of major funding to help end gender-based violence, including significant funding for frontline specialist and legal services, is welcome in this regard.

*Transforming child justice* The National Children's Commissioner's new report on Australia's child justice approach calls for transformational change that puts child wellbeing first and addresses the root causes of offending by children.

[Read the report](#)

The Commission, in partnership with classroom experts Kimberlin Education and Clickview, has developed a suite of comprehensive resources for primary school teachers to engage with students in Years 3-6 on the topic of human rights. Teachers can download the free, ready-to-use, engaging lesson plans, student resources and additional teacher support content from the website.

[Read the report](#)



A new report on Australia's native title system centres the voices of First Nations women and calls for significant reform. Thirty years after the historic Native Title Act, the system is failing to fulfil human rights such as self determination, culture, and non-discrimination for First Nations women and their communities.

[Read the report](#)



The AHRC will conduct the free online ***Kep Enderby Memorial Lecture*** on **Friday 1 November**.

CEO of First Nations Collective **Marni Tuala** will share the findings of extensive consultations with First Nations peoples across Australia about their experiences of racism and recommendations for systemic change. The event will discuss 'Dismantling systemic racism – perspectives from First Nations peoples, Systemic racism, in law, policies and service delivery, has serious and ongoing consequences for First Nations peoples, including poor mental and physical health, economic disadvantage, over-incarceration and social exclusion.

*Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA)*. Our report has found there are significant gaps in Australians' knowledge about their rights and responsibilities around enduring powers of attorney which is exacerbating the risk of financial elder abuse.

[Read the report](#)



Melbourne  
Women's  
Foundation

I invite you to an inspiring evening filled with stories of transformation. Join us in celebrating our Changemaker Grants finalists, connecting with like-minded people committed to creating real change. .

**Changemaker Grants Expo, 6:00pm - 8:00pm, Thursday 24th October 2024, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne.**

This year, we're granting \$165,000, our largest amount yet, across two major grants and four runner-up awards.

Voting opens online on Monday 21st October. Members will receive instructions via email, with voting closing at 7:40pm during the event.

**Finalists for the \$80,000 Capacity Building Grant**

- Wellsprings for Women
- WomenCAN
- United Housing Co-operative

**Finalists for the \$45,000 Enabling Grant**

- Meals with Impact Foundation
- PartnerSPEAK
- Women's Circus

[Learn more about the finalists](#)

**Event Schedule:**

- **6:00pm** Welcome + acknowledgements
- **6:30pm** Grants showcase + refreshments
- **7:40pm** Online voting closes
- **7:45pm** Results, congratulations + thanks
- **8:00pm** Event close



Liza Nadolski, CEO Melbourne Women's Foundation



Victoria's largest seniors' festival is returning from 1–31 October 2024, with thousands of opportunities for older Victorians to take part in free and low-cost entertainment and events across the state, including Melbourne Town Hall Dance, Aged Care Tour, Country Concerts. The theme this year is – 'Explore. Engage. Evolve.' – encouraging older Victorians to stay curious and connected by exploring new activities/new people, and changing how we think of ageing. [Enjoy live music and dance, explore nature and historic sites, or learn something new. See what's on near you on our online events calendar.](#)



Chair, Women in Action; June Anderson

The Victorian Multicultural Gala, Saturday 24 August 2024, was a beautiful evening, blessed with perfect weather and enriched by engaging conversations and stunning views over the water. The event was a vibrant showcase of Victoria's multicultural and multifaith communities, featuring an array of dance, music, and culinary delights that underscored the joy and connection, inspiring, showcasing the exceptional talent within our diverse cultural communities. We were honoured to receive encouraging messages from our guest speakers including the Premier, the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Assistant Federal Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Their speeches highlighted the strength derived from our state's diversity, the need to continually nurture this asset, and the challenges to the cohesion that binds us together. It was uplifting to witness bipartisan support for multiculturalism and the work of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC).

Thanks to MCs, Krushnadevsinh (Kano) Ravalji and Manpreet Kaur Singh whose vibrant presence truly lit up the room. Thank you to the VMC and Department of Premier and Cabinet teams for organising such a spectacular event. Thank you for making the evening a resounding success. Your participation and support help foster a more inclusive community.

I also extend a warm welcome and congratulations to **Farah Farouque**, the newly appointed CEO of the [Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria](#) (ECCV). The ECCV has championed multiculturalism for 50 years. Farah brings with her a wealth of experience as an executive manager, policy analyst and advocate. We look forward to her leadership and the continued impact of the ECCV in fostering a more inclusive Victoria.

In an important step towards strengthening community protections, the **Department of Justice and Community Safety** (DJCS) has released proposed **anti-vilification reforms** and is inviting feedback from communities. I encourage you to provide your comments or submissions by **5:00 pm, Friday 11 October 2024**, via this [link](#). Your feedback will help ensure that the proposed reforms reflect the needs and voices of our diverse communities. Warm regards, Vivienne Nguyen, CEO VMC



Childcare has been in the news. That's because the Government has been handed a report by the Productivity Commission and it recommends that Australia build a universal early childhood education and care system. The findings of the report also show that a \$10/day cap on daily childcare fees will lead to the biggest increase in the number of children attending childcare. They also show that a \$10/day model will allow thousands of parents to enter the workforce should they choose to. That means **NOW** is the moment to get active. The Government is considering how it would implement the Productivity Commission's recommendation to build a universal early learning system – and you can help push them to opt for a fixed fee \$10/day model - which would be best for children, parents and the economy.

Thrive by Five already has a draft bill ready, which, if passed would establish a universal early learning system in Australia with fees capped at \$10/day, three days a week for most families, and free for low-income families. It will make a huge difference in the lives of families and children – and you can help us make it a reality. [Will you take a moment to email your local MP and ask them to publicly support our bill which will cap early learning fees at \\$10/day? All you need to do is add your name and postcode on our website and click send.](#)

Every MP who stands up and publicly says they support this bill brings us one step closer to having it introduced into Parliament and voted into law. Once it's law, our political leaders will have to deliver the universal, affordable and high-quality early learning system we have been fighting for. To help make that happen, your local MP needs to hear directly from you, asking that they publicly declare their support for our bill. When MPs hear from the people who elected them, they pay attention. The more people they hear from, the more they know they need to act. That's why we're asking you to get in touch with your MP and ask them to publicly show support for the Thrive by Five bill. Sending an email to your local MP asking them to publicly support our campaign will have a huge impact and it only takes a moment.

Thank you. Yours sincerely, Jay Weatherill.



NCWV has also been campaigning, sending briefings to government and resolutions via NCWA, resulting in the financial support for three and four year old kinder and childcare in Victoria, also that this be national. We support this call by Thrive by Five and encourage our members, delegates and organisation members to access the website and complete the email.



**October 11<sup>th</sup> is UN Day of the Girl**

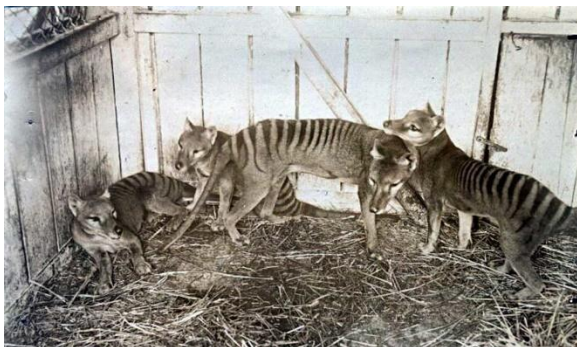
The world is less stable than it has been for generations, with conflict, crisis, soaring poverty, and rising child marriage putting girls at even greater risk. Every day, Plan International Australia stands with girls around the globe, supporting them through crises and helping them break down the barriers holding them back. **Every dollar you donate will be matched so you can help twice as many girls.** In the face of adversity, girls are resilient and determined. They are standing up for their rights, and leading change. Plan is helping them do it, and so can you. **Pop the date in your calendar and join us this International Day of the Girl on October 11 to show you stand with girls and their right to safety and equality.**

All gifts on October 11 will be doubled! Register to join us on Day of the Girl and be part of the movement for girls' equality. It's a day to show up for the future we believe in, to raise our voice, to empower all girls and celebrate their infinite potential. The state of the world can feel overwhelming, but making a difference doesn't have to be. Together, we can create a better future where the barriers to equality are removed and girls can forge their own destiny. Gifts made on October 11 will be doubled. So save the date! Visit <https://givingday.plan.org.au/> to join us and help take inequality out of the equation.



**Warm regards, Susanne Legena, Chief Executive Officer, Plan International Australia**

## Environment Victoria



National Threatened Species Day, 7 September each year, when many people stop and reflect on the fact that on that same date in 1936, Australia's Tasmanian tiger, also known as the thylacine (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*), slipped over the extinction line. A few days later, Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek announced 20 plants and animals had been added to the threatened species list. It comes on the back of last year which had more species added than any other year since the list was established. We need to protect our native plants and animals.

Together with state environment groups from across the country, we're calling on government to deliver strong laws – this year – to stop our iconic wildlife and plants from going extinct.

**[Will you add your voice this Threatened Species Day? >>](#)**

**[Speak up for strong nature laws](#)**

**Viva Energy's Geelong gas terminal proposal is back**, and we've only got one month to respond to their revised plans.

A couple of years ago, Viva put forward a proposal to build a huge floating gas terminal in Corio Bay, which would import enormous amounts of gas into Victoria – the equivalent of up to 600,000 tonnes of climate pollution. Thousands of Victorians spoke up against the project, as part of the Geelong Renewables Not Gas Alliance. Together with local schools, residents groups, fishing and boating enthusiasts and other environment organisations, we held rallies, lobbied MPs and made 2000 submissions outlining serious concerns with the proposal. In March 2023, the Victorian Planning Minister announced that Viva Energy's environment statement had serious deficiencies – sending them to redo crucial studies on marine ecology, noise impacts, air pollution and cultural heritage. The community hoped Viva would drop the project. Instead, they've come back for a second round. So, yet another Environment Effects Statement with submissions and hearings and we're being forced to check Viva's homework again. **[Join the webinar on Tuesday 15 October, listen to the experts and community members, and then make another submission >>](#)**

## Let's close the gender gap in health research to improve treatment & care for women and girls

Friday 25 October 2024  
12.30pm - 2.30pm  
Online or in person  
Queen Victoria Women's Centre  
210 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne



Hosted by Hon. The Hon. Jill Hennessy



Keynote provided by  
Hon. Mary-Jane Thompson  
Minister for Health



GEN VIC is collaborating with Monash Women's Health Alliance, the Victorian Chapter of the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI VIC) and Women's Health Victoria to combine our efforts and find solutions for closing the gender gap in health research.

**Our Purposes:** to provide a non-party political, non-sectarian, not-for-profit, umbrella organisation with broadly humanitarian and educational objectives, empowering women and girls; raising awareness of gender equality; act as a voice on issues and concerns of women and girls at State level; develop policies and responses on behalf of women

and girls on a State-wide basis; maintain and strengthen the Association's relationship with all members; link with women in Australia and International Council of Women through the National Council of Women of Australia and contribute to the implementation of their plans of action and policies.

**Our motto:** The Preamble to the original ICW Constitution said "We, women of all Nations, in the conviction that the good of humanity will be best advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, and that an organised movement will serve to promote the highest good of the family and of the Nation, do hereby band ourselves together in a federation of women of all races, nations and creeds, to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom and law: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

### National Council of Women of Victoria Meeting Dates for 2024

Month	Date	Day	Meeting Type	Time	Method
October	14 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	Zoom
October	17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	7 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Council Meeting	17.15	Zoom and Ross Hse
November	15 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	21/22		NCWA AGM & Conference		Adelaide
November	28 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Annual Luncheon	12:00	In person
December	5 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meetings	11:00, 12:15	Zoom and Ross Hse

This publication is compiled and edited by Pam Hammond, Vice-President NCWV, with support from President, Elida Brereton.