

# Parents Next Newsletter



Djerriwarrh  
Community & Education Services

**Main Office:** 239 Station Road, Melton  
Contact: 03 8746 1000  
Website: [www.djerriwarrh.org.au](http://www.djerriwarrh.org.au)  
Email: [ParentsNext@djerriwarrh.org](mailto:ParentsNext@djerriwarrh.org)

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**“I wanted someone to guide me on the options available, given my situation, and that would also align with my long term goals”**

*Jaswinder - ParentsNext Participant*

Jaswinder is a mother of three young children who was referred to Djerriwarrh's ParentsNext program in February 2021.

Immediately before commencing on ParentsNext, Jaswinder was operating a beauty salon with her friend which she had to shut down due to COVID.



Despite the heartbreak of closing down her business, Jaswinder's determination to support her family never diminished. To make ends meet, she started working at a warehouse but after a short while she had to quit that job due to health problems.

Jaswinder had previously completed a Diploma in Business Management and also a Certificate III in Retail Banking and worked in various unrelated sectors without any long term gain or achievement from those jobs.

She had no professional careers guidance or assistance available to assist her in the right direction so that she

could make the most of her efforts and be able to achieve her goal of having a secure and meaningful career.

After unsuccessful attempts at securing employment based on her previous qualifications, Jaswinder started to look at a career in sectors that were in high-demand but at the same time aligned with her goals.

When Jaswinder was referred to ParentsNext in February 2021, she was relieved to know that she would receive assistance with planning her next steps either towards education and/or training that would lead to meaningful employment or more directly into paid employment much sooner.

Jaswinder told her ParentsNext Coach, Anuja:

**“ParentsNext referral was a blessing when I needed it the most”**

Our ParentsNext Coach, Anuja, worked with Jaswinder to assess her situation, past qualifications, future goals and aspirations to ensure she was guided onto the correct path to have the best chance of her being successful.

Jaswinder wanted to study nursing so her coach went through career planning and assessment with her to ensure the Health sector was the right fit for her and they decided that Jaswinder is well suited for a career in nursing.

## In This Edition

- **Jaswinder's Commitment to Succeed**
- **LJP Pre-employment Training Starts**
- **Strengthening Local Communities**
- **Manager's Message**

## **Djerriwarrh's ParentsNext site locations**

- ◆ Melton
- ◆ Sunshine
- ◆ St Albans
- ◆ Werribee
- ◆ Deer Park
- ◆ Footscray
- ◆ Melton South
- ◆ Bacchus Marsh
- ◆ Taylors Hill/Hillside
- ◆ Laverton
- ◆ Watergardens (outreach)



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AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

With 3 kids to look after, it was not possible for Jaswinder to start the nursing course until her youngest child was at school. Instead, Jaswinder asked for help in finding work in the Health sector to accelerate building her experience towards nursing which she would start when the time is right.

Due to our approach in integrating support across various programs within Djerriwarrh and synchronizing of these programs, Jaswinder was referred to our Local Jobs Program's Work Opportunities West (WOW).

Jaswinder started her 6 weeks health services pre-employment training in our WOW activity with Djerriwarrh on 23rd June 2021.

When we asked Jaswinder about her experience of ParentsNext and the support she has received from Anuja, Jaswinder said:

**"Anuja has patiently listened to my needs and acted according to that. She helped me get the clarity I needed.**

**I have decided to start looking for work first instead of studying"**

Jaswinder also told us that she has been very satisfied with the level of service, assistance and guidance she

has received and that she would recommend ParentsNext to anyone she knows who is in a similar situation.

Jaswinder is more confident and has come a long way in a very short time since she joined ParentsNext. Her commitment to succeed is a true testament of what you can achieve with the right support.

When asked about her biggest achievement, Jaswinder said:

**"Understanding what my priorities are and finalising decisions based on that. My life is on a positive track, I have clear goals and I can't wait to start work."**

Jaswinder is on track to complete her health services pre-employment training next month followed by 2 weeks work placement and then paid employment in her preferred career of health services.

We wish Jaswinder the best of luck in her future endeavors.

## Local Jobs Program - WOW activity

Djerriwarrh has started its Work Opportunities West (WOW) activity delivering Local Jobs Program (LJP) to the Western Melbourne Region.

On 23 June 2021, 18 job seekers started their journey to a career in health services. Job seekers are underway with their 'Introduction to Health Service's 4 week pre-employment training course, before starting their 2 weeks work placement with our local employers and then in to paid employment! It's been an amazing process so far, working closely with 6 of the local employment services providers.



We are equally excited to see day 1 of the Building and Construction journey that started on 25 June 2021 with 11 job seekers underway with their 4 weeks training followed by 2 weeks of work placement with our local employers and then into paid employment.

Our next Local Jobs Program intake is in August for both health services and building & construction. To see if you are eligible and to find out more about our WOW activity, contact our Local Jobs Program Coordinator, Samara, on 0407 461 307.

## Strengthening Our Local Communities

Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services ParentsNext team member, Tome Dimov, was part of a local initiative to support Wyndham residents with 'Bring Your Bills Advice Day' to help locals with their current electricity and gas bills.

On 20 May 2021, the Western Humanitarian Network (WHN) Legal Consumer Housing Working Group, supported by Wyndham City Council and the Energy Water Ombudsman Victoria, organised an event called Wyndham 'Bring Your Bills Advice Day (during Law Week)' at the Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Centre in Wyndham Vale. The local service providers who attended were:

- Anglicare - Financial Counselling
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria
- Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria
- Foundation House
- Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services ParentsNext program
- Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman
- Uniting Wyndham Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
- WEstjustice
- Wyndham City
- Wyndham CEC
- Telstra

This was a unique opportunity for the local community to come and receive professional advice regarding their utility bills.

The event was a big success with over 200 people attending on the day. The Consumer Policy Research Centre reported 106 families took up the benefit of applying for and receiving the \$250 Power Saving Bonus towards their current electricity and gas bills.



We are proud of all the local service providers and everyone who was involved in this initiative for supporting and strengthening our local communities.

Thanks to Tome Dimov for representing our ParentsNext team, participants and Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services in the local Wyndham area.

## A Message From The Manager

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to our second ParentsNext newsletter for 2021.

1 July marks the completion of 3 years of delivering the ParentsNext program for Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services. Since commencing the program in July 2018, our ParentsNext team has assisted more than 1,000 parents to start education or training and over 500 to start paid employment. We are very proud of the impact we have made on improving parents' lives by helping them achieve their goals,

increasing workforce participation for women, minimising intergenerational unemployment and for the amazing work we have done in supporting early school leaver parents to start and complete accredited education or training.

It has been a fantastic and rewarding 3 years for all of us working on the ParentsNext program and I'm certain that we have earned the trust and respect of our participants, our community and business stakeholders and the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, as an outstanding provider of ParentsNext services.



I'm also certain that the inspiring and positive workplace culture we have built is appreciated by all our team members and we all know that Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services is a great place to do meaningful work and build a rewarding career.

We now look forward to continuing this life changing work for the next 3 years to 30 June 2024. As part of the program changes coming into effect from 1 July, we will now be able to;

- directly register eligible parents with young children to the program
- provide financial assistance to support parents to undertake their activities and services and
- offer employers wage subsidies to employ parents to fill their job vacancies.

With 11 designated ParentsNext local service sites across the Western Melbourne region, Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services is well placed to assist parents across Melbourne's west with their individual pre-employment and work readiness needs.

If you are a parent with young children and would like to know more about the ParentsNext program and how it can help you, please contact us to discuss your eligibility and how to directly register with our services.

If you are a parent friendly employer who is interested in employing skilled and qualified parents back into the workforce and would like to know more about how wage subsidies and/or relocation assistance can help your business, please get in contact with our ParentsNext team for more information.

With the gradual easing of restrictions following the recent "circuit breaker" lockdown in Victoria and Greater Melbourne, all our 11 ParentsNext service sites have re-opened with a blended work model, including, where safe and possible, face-to-face appointments with our participants.

All 11 sites have individually tailored and up-to-date COVID-Safe plans in place and our staff have undergone COVID-Safe training. All members of the public can feel safe and confident when visiting our sites. We ask that all visitors to our sites adhere to the current COVID-19 measures at all times.

I am thrilled to announce that Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services has been successful in securing funding to deliver the Local Jobs Program -

Work Opportunities West (WOW) and also the Jobs Victoria Advocates program.

Our Local Jobs Program, WOW activity, involves the delivery of pre-employment training and other support, such as resume development and job interview assistance to job seekers in the Western Melbourne region. Participants in this activity must be registered with a jobactive, ParentsNext or Transition to Work provider. Our WOW activity aims to deliver a minimum of 50 job placements, including traineeships or apprenticeships, in the health services and building & construction sectors.

Our Jobs Victoria Advocates program will be delivered in partnership with commUnity Plus and operated from Sunshine, Deer Park, St Albans and Melton areas. Our team of three Jobs Victoria Advocates and one Assistant will be part of a larger team of Advocates operating across the state and will be meeting with people in local community spaces such as libraries, public housing foyers, sports clubs and shopping centres to share their knowledge and resources about finding a job.

If you are interested in any of the three programs mentioned here and would like more information on how the ParentsNext program can help you, or you would like information on careers advice in finding a job by talking to our Jobs Victoria Advocates, or you are registered with a jobactive, ParentsNext or Transition to Work provider and want a local job in the health services or building & construction sector, then contact us directly to help you take your next step towards achieving your goals.

Over the next 3 years, my team and I look forward to continue working with all our community and business stakeholders to take our service delivery to the next level of performance and keep making a positive difference in people's lives.

Whether you are a potential program participant, an employer, a business or community partner, or a future employee, I hope that this Newsletter provides you with a few reasons to contact us and get to know us better.

Yours sincerely,  
Gengiz Soy Turk

