Balancing school with part-time work
Your child may want to take on a part-time job in the later years of secondary school. They need to understand what will be required of them both at work and at school. You and your child should both carefully consider how many hours your child could work.
You can help your child balance work, school and family time by:
• talking about time-management and self-management
• having some ground rules about getting to work on time and keeping up with school work
• keeping an eye out for signs of stress, such as anxiety, sleeping problems, irritability or moodiness
• ensuring that your child has ‘down time’ and quality time with family and friends
• checking that they are being treated well and paid fairly, and that they work in a safe environment
• encouraging saving and being ‘money smart’.

A greater choice – senior secondary years
Victorian Certificate of Education
The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is a two-year course of study usually undertaken over Years 11 and 12. However, an increasing number of students are choosing to do their VCE over three years, starting in Year 10.
The VCE provides a pathway to further study at university, technical and further education (TAFE) institutes and work. It is an internationally recognised qualification.
There are more than 90 studies (subjects) in the VCE, including Vocational Education and Training (VET) in school units. Students can start their VCE as early as Year 10 – about half of Year 10 students undertake one or more VCE or VET units. It is also possible to undertake a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT) (see page 22) within the VCE.

VCE studies
A VCE program generally consists of 20 to 24 units taken over two years. A ‘study’ or subject is broken up into four units over two years. Each unit is half a year in length and is numbered 1, 2, 3 or 4. Units 1 and 2 can be taken as single units in Year 11, but Units 3 and 4 must be taken as a sequence of two units in Year 12.

VCE graduation
Students graduate by satisfactorily completing a minimum of 16 units, including at least three units from the English group of studies. They will also need three sequences of Units 3 and 4 studies in addition to the English requirement. These sequences can be from VCE studies and Vocational Education and Training units. The school’s VCE coordinator will ensure your child is undertaking the right number of units and the right combination of units to graduate.

For more information, speak to your child’s VCE coordinator or visit the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/index.html

What is the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank?
The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), formerly known as the Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER), is a measure of how well a student has performed in the VCE. It is calculated by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) using VCE study scores and is used to offer university and some TAFE places. It may be used as one of a number of ranking criteria, or to indicate whether students are eligible for selection.

For more information, speak to your child’s VCE coordinator or visit the VTAC website at www.vtac.edu.au

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is an option for Year 11 and 12 students offering practical work-related experience and learning. Like the VCE, the VCAL is an accredited secondary certificate.
Students doing the VCAL may be interested in pursuing training at vocational education and training providers, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or getting a job directly after finishing school.

VCAL is offered at three levels: Foundation, Intermediate or Senior. Students enrol in a VCAL learning program at the level that matches their skills and abilities. For example, a Year 11 student may study at either Foundation level or Intermediate level. Students can gain one or more VCAL qualifications at different certificate levels depending on their abilities and learning goals.

Students in Intermediate and Senior VCAL must undertake Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) (see following section) as part of their qualification. If students start their VCAL and then decide they would like to complete their VCE, they can transfer between certificates. Intermediate and Senior VCAL units will contribute to the VCE.

Students may undertake VCE units as part of their VCAL.

VCAL studies
The VCAL has four compulsory curriculum areas, called strands. These strands are Literacy and Numeracy Skills, Industry Specific Skills, Work Related Skills and Personal Development Skills. Through these strands VCAL students may do Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) programs, School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs), structured workplace learning, and community or school activities to develop employability skills.
When a student successfully completes the program at their chosen level, they are awarded a VCAL certificate. The VCAL coordinator at your child’s school is responsible for ensuring that VCAL students undertake the right number and combination of units to achieve their certificate.

For more information, speak to your child’s VCAL coordinator or visit the VCAA website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vcal/index.html
Vocational Education and Training in Schools

Students who want to undertake a study program in a specific industry can choose Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) as part of their VCE or VCAL studies.

VETiS includes VCE VET programs, pre-apprenticeships, School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs) and other nationally recognised VET qualifications. It provides students the opportunity to complete nationally recognised VET certificates, and also provides VCE or VCAL students with a pathway to university, TAFE, further training or employment.

VETiS programs are typically delivered through partnerships between schools, industry and training providers. They enable students to take part in VET training, structured workplace learning and gain practical skills in the industry in which they are interested.

For more information, talk to the VCE or VET coordinator at your school, or visit www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/qualsprograms/vet.htm

Structured workplace learning

As part of a nationally recognised vocational training program, secondary school students can undertake structured workplace learning in an industry setting.

In Victoria, this is an important part of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) programs undertaken by VCE and VCAL students.

For more information, talk to the VCE or VET coordinator at your school, or visit www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/careertrans/worklearn/default.htm

School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

In the past, many young people had to leave school to pursue an apprenticeship or traineeship. With the introduction of School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs), students can undertake part-time paid employment, and structured training, while completing their VCE or VCAL.

As part of School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships, the student enters into a training contract with an employer, and has a training plan registered with Skills Victoria. The student spends part of the normal school week in employment and training.

For more information, talk to the VCE or VET coordinator at your school, or visit www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vet/programs/newapprent.html or www.education.vic.gov.au/beyondschool/apprenticeandtrainee.htm

DEVELOPING FUTURES IN SCIENCE AND MATHS

A major shakeup of the way maths and science are taught at Patterson River Secondary College is giving students valuable real life experience. The school’s innovative approach was recognised at the annual 2010 Victorian Science and Mathematics Education Excellence Awards.

The awards celebrate maths and science by recognising one school from each region for developing innovative partnerships with industry, tertiary and community organisations.

At Patterson River Secondary College a partnership with the City of Kingston is allowing students to work with native plants grown from local seeds in the school’s Outdoor Learning Area.

Planning is also underway for students to work with experts from the local council and supporters of local wetlands in the regeneration of significant foreshore, creek and wetland areas.

A further partnership with South Pacific Seeds will challenge students to find the most suitable vegetable varieties for the Australian climate through scientific inquiry. Such investigations also engage students through technology, with students able to use GPS units, data loggers and TI Calculators to collect data in the field.

“We were thrilled to be recognised at the awards because it recognised the emphasis we are putting on providing innovative and practical experiences for students, which will help set them up for careers in maths and science fields,” says Mrs Maree Vinocuroff, principal.
Health and wellbeing

The teenage years

The teenage years represent a transition from childhood to adulthood. With this comes many changes – changes to bodies, emotions, behaviours and attitudes.

Teachers and staff understand these changes and can provide information and support. Friendships developed during secondary school can provide peer support and help children develop social skills and self-esteem.

Making new friends and feeling comfortable are especially important when children start secondary school. It is important to remember, however, that your child’s friendships may change as they develop a sense of themselves and make sense of the world around them. A child’s relationship with their parents and family may similarly change.

Students adapt to adolescent life in different ways. If you feel that your child is having difficulties, it is important to discuss your concerns and ask for help if needed.

Supporting your child’s welfare

Parents have an important role in supporting their children’s progress at school. It is also important to know that there are staff with specific roles to support student wellbeing and student learning available in schools.

Student welfare coordinators

Secondary schools have student welfare coordinators who are responsible for helping students handle issues such as truancy, bullying and family conflict. They work with other welfare professionals and agencies to address student needs.

If you are concerned your child may be having difficulties at school, or they are at risk of disengagement, you should contact the school.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/studentsupport/supportinschools

School nurses

Some Victorian government secondary schools have a school nurse who works with the student welfare team and organises health education activities.

The school nurse can give students confidential information, guidance and support. They can help students find and get in touch with other health services.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/schoolnursing/default.htm

Student support services

Student support services staff comprise psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers, visiting teachers and other related professionals. They work directly with students and families to better understand speech and language, social and emotional issues which might be affecting the student’s ability to learn.

They also work with teachers and schools to support students with additional needs.

Drug and sexuality education

Issues related to drugs and sexuality figure prominently in many parents’ concerns about their child’s journey through adolescence.

Parents have a critical role to play in building the resilience of their children and helping them to become healthy and active members of the community. Drug education and sexuality education can help to increase positive parent–child communication.

Schools are required to provide a minimum of 10 hours per year, per year level, of drug-specific education classroom programs and activities.

Victorian government schools are also required to provide age-appropriate sexuality education at all levels, as a part of health and physical education. All schools are supported through information, resources, programs and departmental staff.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/childhealth/drugeducation.htm

Bullying

To ensure all Victorian government secondary schools are healthy and safe places to learn, each school takes bullying and cyberbullying very seriously and has policies and guidelines to prevent and manage it.

What is bullying and unacceptable behaviour?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, with more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, damages their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Bullying includes:

- direct physical bullying, such as hitting, kicking, damaging property
- direct verbal bullying, such as name calling, intimidation, racist/homophobic remarks
- indirect bullying, such as spreading rumours
- cyberbullying, which includes the use of digital technologies to bully or harass someone, such as setting up a defamatory website.

Unacceptable behaviour refers to a wide range of behaviours that are not appropriate or acceptable, including harassment, discrimination and threats or acts of violence.

Many antisocial behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. Some examples of behaviours which are not bullying include:

- a situation where there is mutual conflict, that is, a balance of power where students are both upset and usually want a resolution to the problem
Health and wellbeing

- doing poorly in their school work
- wagging school
- being frightened to walk to and from school
- feeling ill in the mornings
- being unwilling or refusing to go to school

Some of the signs that a child is being bullied or is a target of unacceptable behaviour include:

- being unwilling or refusing to go to school
- feeling ill in the mornings
- being frightened to walk to and from school
- wagging school
- doing poorly in their school work
- becoming withdrawn, starting to stammer, lacking confidence
- crying themselves to sleep, having nightmares
- asking for money or starting to steal (to pay the bully)
- refusing to talk about what’s wrong
- having unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- beginning to bully other children or siblings
- becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- reluctance to discuss cyberbullying in case their computer or phone is taken away.

What can I do if my child is being bullied or targeted by unacceptable behaviour?

Step 1: Listen carefully to your child and show concern and support.

Step 2: Congratulate your child for confiding in you.

Step 3: Give sensible advice – don’t encourage your child to fight back; this will most likely increase the bullying or unacceptable behaviour.

Step 4: Assist your child to develop positive strategies including:
- saying ‘leave me alone’ and calmly walking away
- avoiding situations that might expose them to further bullying or unacceptable behaviour
- making new friends
- using technologies safely and responsibly.

Step 5: Ask your child the following questions to understand if there is a repeated pattern:
- What, where and when did the incident happen?
- Who was involved on each occasion?
- Did anybody else see it and, if so, who?
- What solutions have been tried so far?
- What are the names of any teachers who may be aware of the problem?

Step 6: Work with your child’s school to solve the problem. Schools take their responsibilities in relation to bullying and unacceptable behaviour very seriously and they have more success when parents work with the school to solve the bullying problem.

If you were not aware that your child was being bullied or the target of unacceptable behaviour, then perhaps your child’s teachers did not know about it either. You should:
- Make an appointment with your child’s teacher and make notes of the points you want to discuss before the meeting.
- At the meeting try to stay calm and present information in a way that makes it clear that you and the school are working as partners in trying to fix this problem.
- Recognise that the school will need time to investigate and to talk to teachers and, perhaps, other students.

Step 7: Work with the school to establish a plan for dealing with the current situation and future incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour. Before you leave, ask for clarification about the next steps in the plan.

Step 8: If needed, ask for appropriate specialist staff to become involved.

Step 9: Encourage your child to report any further incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour to a teacher they trust at the school.

What can I do to reduce bullying and unacceptable behaviour at school?

- Report all incidents of bullying and unacceptable behaviour to the school, not just incidents that happen to your own child.
- Let your child know how much you disapprove of bullying and unacceptable behaviour and why.
- Respect for others should be modelled and encouraged at home.
- Talk to your child about the qualities associated with caring friendships and discourage them from staying in friendships where they are mistreated or not respected.


Sexual assault and sexual harassment

Student safety is of the highest priority in Victorian government schools. Students and parents are encouraged to report any incidents of student sexual assault or harassment to school staff as soon as possible. The resource Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault, Procedures for Victorian Government Schools outlines the step-by-step process for principals and school staff to respond to an allegation or disclosure of student sexual assault or harassment.

Parents, students and school staff can be confident that when an allegation of student sexual assault is reported to school staff it will be dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/childhealth/sexualassault.htm
Before your child starts secondary school it is essential that you inform the school of any allergies or medical conditions. Please complete the relevant information in the school’s application-to-enrol form.

If you want to provide updates to this information, such as a change to your child’s Student Health Support Plan or Medication Authority Form, contact the school.

You may need to provide this information again when your child attends school excursions or camps.

Medical alert bracelets provide essential information in the time of emergency.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. The most common allergens in school-aged children are eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (for example, cashews), cow’s milk, fish and shellfish, wheat, soy, certain insect stings and some medications.

The key to preventing anaphylaxis is avoiding any known triggers. It is important to make sure the school is aware of any foods or items which could affect your child. The school will then work with you and your child’s doctor to develop prevention strategies and an Anaphylaxis Management Plan.

To assist in this process you should provide the school with a copy of your child’s Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy Action Plan along with an up-to-date photograph of your child. You must also supply your child’s adrenaline autoinjector (eg EpiPen®/Anapen®) and any other related medication. Your child may also choose to wear a medical warning bracelet to indicate allergies.

The Department has developed Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools to assist schools in planning for and supporting students with anaphylaxis. For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/anaphylaxis.htm

Emergencies

Schools are well prepared to deal with emergencies, and place the highest priority on the safety, health and wellbeing of students.

Every government school in Victoria is required to have an emergency management plan that outlines responsibilities, procedures and actions in the event of an emergency.

It is important to familiarise yourself with the details of the emergency management plan for your child’s school and raise any queries or concerns with the principal, a teacher or school council representative.

You should also make sure the school has your current contact details, including mobile phone number.

You are also asked to notify the principal of any emergency situation involving your child. Schools are required to report all emergency situations to the Department’s Emergency and Security Management Unit. This process then allows for schools to support those impacted as a result of an emergency situation.
Student support

Victorian government schools are committed to ensuring that all students have access to a quality education to meet their individual needs.

To improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities, Victorian government secondary schools:

- provide parents with a choice of learning environments to best develop their child's potential
- support students and their families in making the transition from school to higher education, training and employment
- involve students and parents in school program planning decisions
- support students to access programs that allow them to pursue achievable post-school pathways
- ensure that the expertise of professionals working in mainstream and specialist schools is maintained and developed.

Schools enrolling students with disabilities may also be eligible to receive additional student resources from the Victorian Government.


Support for Koorie students

Wannik, from the Gunaik Jidpai language, meaning ‘Learning Together – Journey to Our Future’ is the education strategy for Koorie students in Victoria. It is designed to ensure Victoria’s Koorie students reap the benefits of quality schooling.

As Koorie parents this means you will:

- feel welcomed and respected within your school community
- feel assured that your child is valued within the classroom
- have ongoing discussions with your school regarding your child's education and future aspirations
- have your child's aspirations realised and supported by the school community
- have your cultural heritage acknowledged and celebrated in the school and in the curriculum.

Individual Education Plans for Koorie students

Every Koorie student must have an Individual Education Plan developed between the school, the student and the parent/carer for every year of schooling including Years 11 and 12. The plan sets out academic and life goals for your child. The plan is a partnership agreement between you, your child and the school.


Refugee student support

English language schools and centres provide intensive English as a second language (ESL) tuition for newly arrived students from language backgrounds other than English. Refugee students can attend these schools and centres for up to 12 months.

Funding is also provided to other schools with significant numbers of refugee students.

In addition, every region has a full-time ESL program officer to support schools with ESL learners, including those with refugee students.


Support for international students

A dedicated International Student Coordinator (ISC) is provided in every secondary school accredited to accept international students. The welfare of international students is the responsibility of International Student Coordinators and these staff are the first point of contact for all international student queries or issues.

A ROLE MODEL FOR HER PEERS

Growing up in a single-parent family with four girls, Teneille has always been motivated to work hard and value her studies. But only recently did she realise that studying at university was something she could aspire to.

In her final year at Swan Hill College, Teneille’s hard work and strong academic achievements have been recognised through a series of scholarships and awards.

Each year 20 Indigenous students are eligible to apply for two-year scholarships to help with their education in Years 11 and 12. It is awarded to high-achieving Koorie students across Victoria and is based on a written application.

After being awarded the Wannik scholarship, Teneille also applied for and won the Kwong Lee Dow Scholarship at the University of Melbourne. The scholarship, based on academic success, supports students to have ongoing contact with the university in preparation for their academic studies the following year.

This scholarship, together with her school-based apprenticeship at ANZ where she works one day a week, mean Teneille is on track to reach what once seemed like an impossible dream of studying commerce at university next year.

"Teneille has always been a hard-working student and she has just bloomed over the last few years and found new confidence after winning these scholarships," says Jan Blackman, assistant principal.

"Her success has made her mother so proud and her sisters are now putting their hand up for leadership opportunities too."
Finances

Parent payments
In Victoria, government schools by law provide free instruction to all students but, in some instances, schools can request payments from you.

These payments fall into three categories:

1. **Essential** educational items that you are required to provide or pay the school to provide for your child; for example, stationery, textbooks and school uniforms
2. **Optional** extras offered on a user-pays basis, which you may choose whether your child accesses or participates in; for example, school magazines or extracurricular programs or activities
3. **Voluntary** financial contributions; for example, landscaping of the school grounds or additional computers.

School councils are responsible for developing a school-level policy for parent payments. This policy must comply with the Department’s policy, meet the community’s expectations and be provided to you.

The Department’s policy outlines the parameters, terms and conditions within which requests for payment may be made.


**Financial assistance**

The School Start Bonus helps low-income families with the costs associated with their child starting Prep or Year 7 at a government or non-government school.

If you receive an eligible Centrelink benefit and hold a valid Health Care Card or Pension Card you may be eligible to receive the one-off $300 payment.

The Education Maintenance Allowance

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is provided to low-income families to help with education-related costs.

If you have a child under 16, receive an eligible Centrelink benefit and hold a valid Health Care Card or Pension Card you may be eligible to receive the EMA.

The allowance is split evenly between the parent and the school, and is paid in two instalments, one in March and one in August.

The parent portion is often used for uniforms and excursions, while the school portion may be used for expenses such as textbooks, stationery and special programs.

Parents can elect to have the parent portion of the EMA paid into their bank account or receive a cheque.

Students 16 years and over may also be eligible for financial assistance through the Centrelink Youth Allowance scheme.


**Student scholarships**

A range of scholarships are offered through bequests and donations to provide financial assistance to selected secondary students.

For more information, including closing dates and application forms, visit [www.education.vic.gov.au/scholarships](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/scholarships)

→ Handy hint

Ask your child’s school about any camps or excursions that may occur throughout the year so you can budget for them in advance.
Your child’s progress

Research shows that involvement in schools by parents helps children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Unlike primary school, your child will have many different teachers at secondary school. You can establish good relationships with your child’s teachers by contacting them early in the year as well as attending parent–teacher evenings. Doing this will help you develop an understanding of the work your child will be undertaking throughout the year and provide teachers with insights into the way your child learns best.

Secondary schools encourage parents to contact them, so phone or make an appointment to visit the school if you wish to discuss any ideas or concerns.

You can participate in your child’s secondary education through school councils, parent clubs, volunteering and staying up-to-date with what is happening by reading the school newsletter. Regularly logging into the Ultranet is a handy way to review your child’s learning progress, attendance, observations from teachers and learning tasks. This will help to keep you informed between formal reporting cycles and parent–teacher nights. It may also give you the information you need to start a conversation with your child about their learning. See page 5 for more information.

Student report cards

The student report card provides you with a clear picture of your child’s progress. It is used in all Victorian government schools in Prep to Year 10. You will receive a report card twice a year and an invitation to attend an interview to discuss your child’s progress.

Each student report card uses A–E ratings, which indicate how your child is performing against consistent statewide standards. It details what has been achieved, areas for improvement and future learning, a future education plan and suggestions about how you can help. No matter where your child attends school, they will be assessed against the same standards for their year level. This is particularly useful if your child moves to a new school.

For more information, speak to your school or visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/studentreports

Raising concerns and parent complaints

If you wish to raise a concern or complaint, speak first with your child’s year-level coordinator or home-room teacher.

Phone them directly or organise a meeting through the school office. The school will take your concerns seriously and work with you to resolve any issues.

Koorie families can ask the school to speak with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer to assist in resolving any of their concerns.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/complaints.htm

Parent–teacher interviews

Parents normally have at least one formal interview with their child’s teachers each year and can have more. It is a good idea to prepare for the interview by making a list of questions or issues that you would like to discuss.

A parent–teacher interview enables you to:

• discuss how your child is progressing, both academically and socially
• see examples of work
• get to know your child’s teachers
• keep informed about plans for your child’s future learning
• negotiate an agreed method of continued communication, such as email, phone, notes made in a student’s diary or the Ultranet.

If you cannot make the formal interview, or would like to have other meetings throughout the year, contact the school for an appointment with your child’s teachers or year-level coordinator.

Interpreting services are available for parents from non-English speaking backgrounds. For more information contact your child’s school.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/complaints.htm

School newsletters

Schools place important information in newsletters, so reading your child’s school newsletter is essential. In cases of shared custody, you may need to arrange for two copies to be provided.

Parent Update

The Department also produces Parent Update, a free email newsletter for parents of children aged from birth to 18 years. It features parenting tips and advice, expert opinion, parenting stories and the latest information on education in Victoria.

You can subscribe online at www.education.vic.gov.au/parentupdate

Parent Update is also available on the Ultranet.

Staying informed
School councils

All government schools have a school council enabling parents to be involved in governing the school. Councils generally have between six and 15 members and include parents, the principal, staff and sometimes community members.

Elections are held early in the school year and must be completed by the end of March. All parents of students of the school are eligible to vote and stand for council. School council training is available to members.

If you would like more information about school council, including how it operates, when it meets, membership and subcommittees, talk to the principal or visit the Department’s school council website.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/schoolcouncils/default.htm

For advice on legislation and policy matters relating to school council governance and responsibilities, contact the Department’s Community and Stakeholder Relations Branch via email at community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au, or call your regional office (see back cover).

Two independent school council organisations provide information and support for school councils:

• Association of School Councils in Victoria (visit www.asciv.org.au or call 9808 2499)

• Victorian Council of School Organisations (visit www.viccso.org.au or call 9429 5900).

Parent clubs and associations

Many schools have a parent and citizens association or parent club for parents seeking an active role in the school. Parent clubs allow you to participate and contribute to your school community and to stay connected with your child’s education throughout secondary school.

Parent clubs, in partnership with the school council, organise social, educational and fundraising activities. For more information contact your child’s school.

For more information, contact Parents Victoria on 9380 2158 or 1800 032 023 (free call for country callers) or visit www.parents.victoria.asn.au

Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)

Koorie families can liaise with their Local Aboriginal Education Committee Group to receive help and advice regarding their child’s learning at school. For more information, visit www.vaesi.org.au/

Volunteering

There are many ways to become involved in your child’s school, from helping out in the canteen, with excursions and events, providing assistance with reading and mathematics, and joining environment committees and cultural groups.

Careers and planning for the future

There are many education, training and career options available to young people in Victoria. This means that students have to make important and often difficult choices about their future at various stages of their secondary education.

Victorian government secondary schools provide students with career education and counselling to support them in making an informed decision about the best path to take.

The people who can help you and your child with career pathway planning and options at school include:

• careers practitioner

• Managed Individual Pathways coordinator

• year-level coordinator

• student wellbeing coordinator

• teachers.

It is recommended that students and parents discuss their decisions together and involve their school’s careers practitioner and year-level coordinator.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/careers/default.htm

Leaving school before the end of Year 12

By law, children under 17 years must participate in education, training or employment. A student can leave school before this age provided they have completed Year 10 and participate in full-time education (at least 25 hours per week), training or employment, or a combination of these activities until they reach 17 years of age.

Research shows that there are good reasons to stay at school. Education and training will increase your child’s chances of being employed. Many students who leave school without finishing Year 12 or equivalent are more likely to experience unemployment.

Victorian government schools now provide a variety of curriculum options for Years 11 and 12 students, offering hands-on learning activities and providing the opportunity to gain practical industry-related experience.

For more information, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/stages/years10to12.htm
Support in schools

Preparing young Victorians to choose a career pathway is a significant responsibility for all schools. Relevant programs include career education programs, career counselling, information and resource management, pathways planning, employment services, mentoring, work experience programs, careers advice and guidance services.

There are also initiatives to improve student outcomes in making the transition from school to further education, training and employment.

For more information about these programs, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/default.htm

In addition, the Commonwealth Government has funded Youth Connections, a youth service that supports 13 to 19 year olds at risk of disengaging or who have disengaged from education and training.

For more information about Youth Connections, visit www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Pages/YouthConnections.aspx

How you can help

You have a key role to play in your child’s career planning and can have a powerful impact on your child’s career development. You can start a conversation when your child asks questions about life after school. Most young people respond well to casual conversations about careers. Talk about the world of work that you have experienced. Share some of your work and life experiences and those of other family, friends and community members.

You can help your child to identify:

- what they like (their interests)
- what they are good at (their strengths and abilities)
- what is important to them (their values)
- options and what jobs are out there
- preferred options
- plans to achieve objectives.

To help provide the best possible support and guidance to your child, you need current information on the options and pathways for young people.

For more information about helping your child with career planning, visit www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/careers/default.htm

Careers and Transitions
myfuture
www.myfuture.edu.au
Job Guide
www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au
Career bullseye posters
Year 12
Youthcentral
www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au

→ Handy hint

By encouraging your child to think about career options sooner rather than later, you will help give them more time to investigate alternatives and increase their chances of finding a satisfying career path. Encourage them to look at job advertisements to discover different career options.
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>Welcome to Secondary School
Further information

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Website: www.education.vic.gov.au

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Information and Referral Service
Phone: 1800 809 834 (freecall)
Email: edline@edumail.vic.gov.au

Regional offices:
For more information about Victorian government schooling
contact your regional office:

- Barwon South Western Region 5225 1000 (Geelong)
- Grampians Region 5337 8444 (Ballarat)
- Eastern Metropolitan Region 9265 2400 (Glen Waverley)
- Gippsland Region 5127 0400 (Moe)
- Hume Region 5761 2100 (Benalla)
- Loddon Mallee Region 5440 3111 (Bendigo)
- Northern Metropolitan Region 9488 9488 (Coburg)
- Southern Metropolitan Region 9794 3555 (Dandenong)
- Western Metropolitan Region 9291 6500 (Footscray)

Translations
Electronic copies of translated versions are available in Arabic, Chinese, Turkish and Vietnamese:
www.education.vic.gov.au

Additional copies (English only)
Information Victoria
1300 366 356
www.information.vic.gov.au

Order additional copies by emailing parenthandbook@edumail.vic.gov.au

In case of emergency
For immediate help phone: 000 or 112 from some mobile phones

Help lines
Parentline: Counselling, information and referral service for Victorian parents and carers with children
from birth to 18 years, phone: 13 22 89
Lifeline: 24-hour counselling, phone: 13 11 14
Men's Line Australia: 24-hour help line for men, phone: 1300 78 99 78
Kids Help Line: Free and confidential telephone counselling for 5-to-25 year-olds, phone: 1800 55 1800