

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23





Cover image: Landsailing was one of the many activities that Benalla's young people got to experience at Come and Try Day in 2022. We hold this event twice each year, to connect children and families with local clubs and organisations. Ongoing participation in organised activities is beneficial for individuals and clubs alike.

Benalla and district is in North East Victoria

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we all live, work, study and volunteer. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

A number of the photos in this publication have been provided thanks to our program partners.

Tomorrow Today A Foundation for Rural Community Development – ABN 19 096 214 907  
Tomorrow Today A Foundation for Rural Community Development Public Fund – ABN 98 553 570 389  
Tomorrow Today Education Foundation – ABN 90 610 420 123

**Tomorrow Today is Benalla's independent community foundation. We connect people, resources and ideas to create a bright future for our great rural community. We believe that everyone should have the chance to thrive – and that education is the answer.**

**Working together with families, schools and the community, we are leading a long-term project to ensure all our children and young people can achieve their potential in school, work and life.**

**Local people are able to help shape our community's future by donating time, money and skills to this trusted local organisation, dedicated to responding to local needs.**

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**It is with great pride we present Tomorrow Today's Annual Report for 2022-23. Benalla and district's independent community foundation focuses on enabling local people to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous community.**

## CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Tomorrow Today's Annual Grants Program is a good barometer of how our community is faring. This year we received strong applications from a wide range of applicants. To the many locals who give to the Community Fund – thank you! Your generosity has supported 12 wonderful projects in Benalla and district. Maggie Fanning from EdSpace captured what the grant meant for them this year: "This funding allows us to go to another level for Benalla's young people."

We're pleased to report that the Education Benalla Program is flourishing, with over 20 programs and activities running in 2022/23. We continue to have strong attendance at our flagship Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) program, with over 80% of Benalla families with preschool aged children attending PEEP for a term or more, some until their children start school. PEEP is a wonderful community connector, linking families to one another and to local services. One Mum summed it up: "Hearing other people share their frustrations with parenting gives me that sense of 'I'm not alone'. To sit in a room full of parents and feel like I belong is amazing." PEEP is open to dads, grandparents and carers, too. We love seeing the diversity of our community in our PEEP rooms. For those families who can't attend PEEP, we offer home visits. Twenty-three families have been supported in their homes over the past 12 months.

Our PEEP program is a special part of raising a family in Benalla, but lots of families have told us that they would have loved support *before* their

baby was born. In response, we're currently building a program called ConnectParent. Still in its design phase, we're pleased to announce that five years of funding has been secured from the Paul Ramsay Foundation to offer this program to Benalla and district families. We are grateful for the generous and long-term support we receive from our philanthropic partners.

It has been troubling to see from the results of our preschool screening program that this year's children are performing significantly lower than last year's in some key areas. This suggests children are being read to less often and are spending more time on screens. We have provided feedback to the preschools and parents about the results and we're working with them to demonstrate activities they can use at home to promote school readiness. Our wonderful army of 22 trained volunteers continue to read with children in local preschools and schools. Thank you to all our committed volunteers.

One of Tomorrow Today's strengths is our independence, which allows us to respond quickly to community needs. During and after COVID we noticed a decline in children's physical activity and gross motor function. In addition to reinforcing the importance of balance and movement at PEEP, we're now offering Creative Movement classes for children and families who need extra support with gross motor skill development. Initial feedback from parents has been very positive.

A highlight of the past year has been watching our Full Impact Squad grow and thrive. This group of young people was formed during the pandemic with the aim of developing their skills and confidence to tackle local issues by raising awareness and planning community actions. Up to 24 members meet weekly during the school term, supported by us and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria. This year the Squad has coordinated a Spring Clean Benalla Day to improve the appearance and health of Lake Benalla and surrounds, worked with Benalla Rural City Council to create the Benalla Youth Festival and run stalls at the Benalla market to raise funds for two community buildings impacted by January's tornado. It has been inspiring to see the commitment of the Squad and the recognition they are now receiving from the Benalla community. You guys rock!

2023 brings us to the end of a five-year Strategic Plan and to the beginning of a new planning period. We are very proud of the progress made against our strategic objectives and goals. Of particular note is Benalla's 9% decrease in children who are developmentally vulnerable (*on one or more domain; AEDC data, 2015 vs 2021*) and the 19% decrease in the number of people aged 15 to 24 years who disengaged from education and/or employment (*ABS Census data, 2016 vs 2021*). This is an extraordinary achievement and a testament to the collaborative effort of Benalla's Early Years Network and the Future Work Steering Committee, which we chair.

We are part-way through a major independent evaluation of the Education Benalla Program

(EBP). The evaluation will help us understand what's working, what's not, and adapt accordingly. We also hope it will help us to secure ongoing funding for the program. It was gratifying to learn from the interim evaluation report that "78% of stakeholders see EBP as 'extremely important, in fact it's essential to the community'". Almost three-quarters agreed they are doing things differently due to the work of the EBP.

This past year we've worked hard to communicate better – with our community and those beyond. We've posted regularly on a range of social media platforms; we've had strong attendance at programs; we've been invited to present at national conferences; we've made two short films; we've been interviewed on ABC radio's The Conversation Hour; and we are frequently visited by other communities wanting to learn about our approach.

We've achieved much thanks to a generous community, and a skilled and compassionate team and Board. This year we would particularly like to thank Board member Nick Taylor who sprang into action in January when a storm collapsed the ceiling of the PEEP room. Thanks to Nick, and the ingenuity of our PEEP team, we didn't cancel a single PEEP session. Today, the PEEP rooms are refreshed and better than ever for our families and littlies.

Louise Pearce - **Chair**  
Rosie Koop - **Executive Officer**



**We are very fortunate to be supported by locals who generously give their time, skills, knowledge and funds. Pictured here are people who volunteer as committee members, Connect9 mentors, Reading Buddies, Kinder Pals and PEEP assistants, and who donate individually and through workplace giving programs.**





In 2023 we awarded over \$40,000 in funding to nine projects that aim to improve the educational and social outcomes of our children and build a stronger, more connected community.

# BENALLA'S COMMUNITY FUND

The generosity of local donors allows us to continue to support the Benalla and district community. Donations to the Community Fund are pooled and invested for local benefit. Income from the Fund is used to provide community grants that help create a stronger and more resilient community. Because the initial donation is kept in the Fund, each gift keeps giving year after year.

Over \$1.4 million is held in Benalla's Community Fund.

## NAMED FUNDS

Some donors choose to establish a Named Fund to give ongoing support to a particular charitable cause that's important to them. These special accounts within the Community Fund are managed by Tomorrow Today to track donations and grants for a particular donor or cause.

Current Named Funds that are benefiting our community:

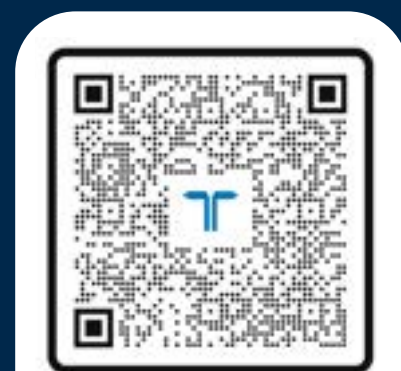
**Education Fund** - supports young people to access educational opportunities.

**Kingston Smith Memorial Fund** - established in memory of local toddler Kingston Smith. This Fund supports early intervention programs that enhance the education, health and wellbeing of young children in need.

**Lonsdale Fund** - provides financial support for young people whose educational opportunities are limited by alcohol or drug use within the family unit.

## WE WELCOME DONATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY FUND, OR NAMED FUNDS, AT ANY TIME.

Donations can be made over the phone, in person, by cheque or online. Scan the QR code below to donate online



## SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

In the 2022-23 financial year Tomorrow Today distributed \$105,000 in grants to groups, families and individuals across Benalla and district.

### Support for children and young people in families experiencing financial hardship:

#### Education | \$18,461

23 children and young people were supported to participate in school and learning, including four Year 12 Scholarships, thanks to the Education Fund, Lonsdale Fund and local donations. Funds from the Kingston Smith Memorial Fund were used to fund uniforms and swimming lessons, and to purchase resources for our Early Years Support program.

#### Sports and Hobbies | \$7,507

56 local children and young people were supported to participate in community sport and recreational activities, funded by philanthropic grants and local donations.

#### Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) Back to School vouchers | \$35,500

710 x \$50 FRRR Back to School vouchers were distributed to local families to help meet the cost of school essentials. \$7,000 of the total funding was made possible through local donations.

#### Support for groups and organisations | \$43,528

Tomorrow Today supports a range of local projects each year through our Annual Grants Program and Stepping Stones Grants. Both programs are funded by income from the Community Fund.



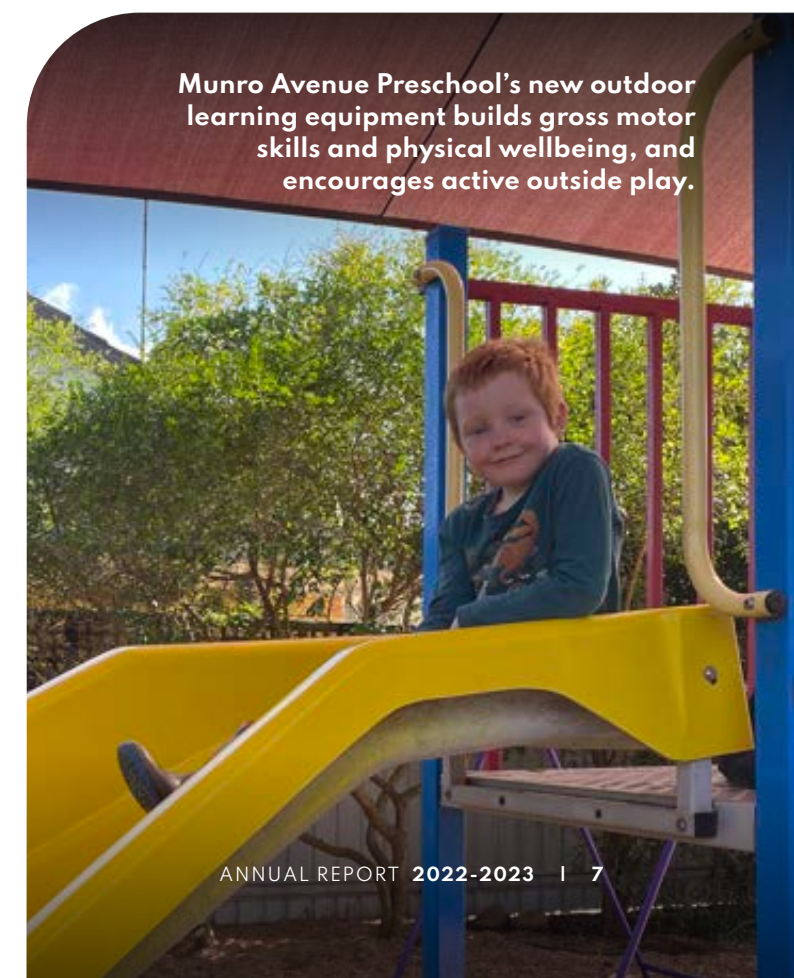
Our grants support projects that align with two major themes:

- Building a stronger, more connected community
- Improving social and educational outcomes for Benalla's children and young people

Our Annual Grants Program awards grants of up to \$5,000 to fund community groups and organisations to deliver projects that will build skills, strength and resilience in Benalla. Annual grants open in February each year and are announced in May. In 2023, we awarded \$40,657 to fund nine community projects.

Stepping Stones Grants of up to \$2,000 are available for community projects throughout the year. This year we awarded \$2,871 to fund three projects.

The successful projects are detailed in the following pages.



Munro Avenue Preschool's new outdoor learning equipment builds gross motor skills and physical wellbeing, and encourages active outside play.





The long-running Benalla Scouts will be able to run events whatever the weather with the help of two marquees purchased with annual grants funding.

**BERNARD BRIGGS KINDERGARTEN**  
Upgrade Kindergarten Bike Track | \$5,000

After many years of enthusiastic use, the bike track at Bernard Briggs Kindergarten needed some TLC. In consultation with the centre's Early Childhood Educator, a plan for the redevelopment of the track was created by a local landscape designer. This grant will fund the bike path upgrade and surrounding garden landscaping. This revitalised outdoor space will be a place for students to learn through outdoor play and further develop their gross motor and balance skills.

**BENALLA CENTRAL COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
Kitchen Garden Program | \$5,000

The Benalla Central Community Garden was established in 2018 with a grant from Tomorrow Today. The garden now has around 70 active volunteers and assists over 200 residents by providing free produce and a place to work together to grow food. This grant will fund equipment for a Kitchen Garden Program for young people aged 10-15 years to learn to grow and cook vegetables. The program aims to expand participants' life skills. Other local organisations collaborating on this program include Benalla Health,

local schools, Scouts and Guides, the Salvos, Vinnies, FoodShare, Waminda Community House and Benalla Sustainable Future Group's Food Co-Op.

**BENALLA FLEXIBLE LEARNING CENTRE**  
All OK Repairs | \$5,000

All OK Repairs is a small motor repair workshop run in conjunction with local tradespeople for students who are involved in, or at risk of being involved in, the youth justice system. The workshop employs staff to work one-on-one with students with the aim that they will then transfer to working in small groups at school, then transition to TAFE, an apprenticeship, or further training. The grant supports the implementation of the program and the purchase of parts and materials.

**BENALLA SCOUT GROUP**  
All Weather Marquees | \$4,849

Scouts has operated in Benalla for the last 115 years. The Group currently consists of 73 youth members ranging in age from 5 to 26 years. Members are supported by 17 volunteers. They hold camps and outdoor activities designed to help young people to learn independent life skills and develop friendships. This grant will be used to purchase two all-weather marquees for use on camps and at events, enabling local Scouts to run events come rain or shine.

**COOINDA VILLAGE**  
Hands-on Wood Working Group | \$5,000

Since COVID, many of Cooinda's senior residents have felt isolated from the Benalla community. This project will help foster connection by providing a space for Cooinda's residents and the general community (including members of the Benalla Men's Shed) to gather and participate in socialising and woodworking activities. The funding will contribute to the establishment of an undercover area that will allow activities to continue in all weather conditions.

**EDSPACE**  
Puppy Dog Tales | \$4,973

The successful Puppy Dog Tales program will be delivered by EdSpace students at Gumnuts Resort Kinder Benalla. The program includes units of education on dog safety, physical activity with dogs, reading with dogs and recognising emotions using the dogs as a teaching tool. The grant is for the purchase of equipment and materials to implement the program and for the development of the Puppy Dog Tales curriculum kit so that it can also be run at other kindergartens and day care centres.

**MUNRO AVENUE PRESCHOOL**  
Inclusion Support Resources | \$3,737

Munro Avenue Preschool is developing an enhanced, inclusive program and environment which caters to the very wide range of needs, ages and stages of their current and future cohorts of children and educators. Our grant funded a range of inclusion resources that support children's ability to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour. These resources include fidget toys, weighted blankets, squeezable toys, and props to conduct yoga activities. These items will provide educators

with the tools they need to create a more inclusive early learning program that will help to build a stronger and more resilient preschool community.

**NESAY**  
Community Engagement Activities | \$1,000

Established in 2022, the Benalla Hub brings together 11 community service organisations to provide Benalla and district residents with a centralised, accessible, safe space to access services. This grant is to assist with community engagement and building awareness of the services that are available at the Hub. The grant is for community engagement events at Waminda Community House, to share information about the services available at the Hub.



The All OK Repairs program pairs students with local tradespeople to learn practical skills, and helps students transition to small group learning and further training opportunities like TAFE or an apprenticeship.



**WAMINDA COMMUNITY HOUSE**  
**Wednesdays @ Waminda | \$5,000**

This very successful program provides a safe, inclusive place for children and their families to gather and learn. Up to 25 children per week attend and participate in skills-based activities like bike-repairs, art, cooking, reading and gardening. The program consists of a two-hour weekly session for children and a one-hour weekly session for parents/carers on a term-by-term basis. The grant will be used to fund materials, resources and guest facilitators to continue the program.

**TOMORROW TODAY**  
**STEPPING STONES GRANTS**

**MUNRO AVENUE PRESCHOOL**  
**Promotion of Physical Wellbeing | \$1,960**

This second grant to Munro Avenue Preschool funded the purchase of a range of outdoor resources to complement the new outdoor equipment and promote physical wellbeing. Equipment included dump trucks, toy tractors, gardening tools, moveable fencing, a water channel, a ring toss game and a storage cage to house the equipment. The resources have encouraged active and enthusiastic outdoor play.

**BENALLA P-12 COLLEGE**  
**Zonta Careers Breakfasts | \$625**  
**Tertiary Information Service | \$286**

These grants funded senior students to attend two career pathways events, the Zonta Careers Breakfast and the Tertiary Information Service. Both events provided information about career and further study options, helping students to make informed choices about their futures and building their aspirations.



**Wednesdays@Waminda provides a safe, creative and inclusive environment for students after school.**





Education week 2023 was an all-ages occasion. Our Full Impact Squad were on hand to help our PEEP children create storybook-inspired bear masks

# EDUCATION BENALLA PROGRAM



## OVERVIEW

The Education Benalla Program works with families from the earliest ages and stages to prepare children for school and ensure they are 'ready to learn'. We support children's literacy, numeracy and oral language skills through a range of activities run in preschools and schools. Funding for school and social needs is available to ensure equal access to educational and community activities.

Our Future Work activities strengthen the aspiration, confidence, employability skills and 'voice' of young people aged 11-19 years. In a whole-of-community approach, Tomorrow Today leads and partners in a range of activities that aim to help our young people enjoy happy, healthy and successful lives.

We enjoy wonderful community support with over 120 community partners and more than 60 volunteers contributing to improving child development and educational outcomes.

Our program partners include local and State Government departments and agencies; all Benalla schools, preschools and childcare centres; Benalla service groups, sporting and recreational clubs; other not-for-profits and local businesses.

**These partners play a pivotal role in improving education and life outcomes for all Benalla's children. Together we strive to ensure that:**

- every Benalla child starts school ready to learn,
- numeracy and literacy is measurably improved,
- student wellbeing is improved, and
- community aspirations for children's education are raised

This year, Ludowyk Evaluation undertook an online partnership survey with our program partners across the Early Years and Future Work sub-programs to capture the impact of the Education Benalla Program in the Benalla community.

**We are pleased to report the evaluation found the following influences of our work:**

- 78% of stakeholders saw the Education Benalla Program as being extremely important, or essential to the community. The remaining respondents (22%) stated the program is very important.
- 73% of partners agreed they were doing things differently because of the work of the Education Benalla Program.

**"Tomorrow Today Foundation begins interaction with young people early and with their families involved — this in itself is a true strength of the program."**

- Community member

**"They're pretty unique. I've never seen another organisation like them in my lifetime. And the work that they do to build up kids from the moment they're born – I just think they're incredible."**

- Community member

**"It's great to see Tomorrow Today in our community lifting aspirations and providing an avenue for every community member to participate in improving the outcomes for our young people."**

- School Principal

**The following pages detail the multiple projects and activities that form the Education Benalla Program**



Everyone loves a free meal, and it turns out that preparing and sharing a meal together is even better! Connect9 Masterchef night is a firm favourite with mentors and mentees alike.



## 2022/2023 PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

### PEEP (Parents Early Education Partnership)

Tomorrow Today's PEEP program celebrates the vital role parents play as their child's first and most important ongoing educator. The warm, supportive environment at PEEP encourages parents to share and learn from each other's experiences. At PEEP, parents and children experience the joy of sharing songs, books, rhymes and learning games together. Children engage in a range of stimulating play and craft activities to encourage their pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, oral language, social skills, and fine and gross motor skill development. Parents participate in facilitated discussions exploring child development and parenting topics drawn from evidence-based research. Regular outings and events broaden families' knowledge and deepen connections to the local community.

**227** families with

**303** children attended at least one term of PEEP.

**16** PEEP groups delivered each week assisted by

**145** volunteer hours

"I wouldn't be the parent I am today if it wasn't for PEEP."

- Parent

"I think the PEEP program is an asset to the community. It is a welcoming space for all families and provides a sense of belonging. It is a great way to socialise for both parents and children. The added bonus is that it's education-based, structured and available to all."

- Parent

### Early Years Support program

Tomorrow Today's Early Years Support program works with primary caregivers who are experiencing geographical isolation, health or accessibility issues. Early Years specialists assist caregivers to learn strategies to manage the challenges of parenting and to support their child's learning. Visiting children and families in their homes helps them to build and maintain important connections and supports them to transition their child from home to preschool, and from preschool to primary school.

**108** home visits made to

**23** families with

**26** children

"I had 1:1 sessions to help my son as he transitioned to Kinder, and then prepare for Prep next year. I felt so supported, seen, and important as a parent. Having this support helped me to support my son."

- Parent



In all our Early Years programs we encourage families to read with their children as often as they can. Reading regularly fosters their language development and early literacy skills.





Our Creative Movement Classes have been well attended by many families who might otherwise miss out on these type of discretionary activities

### Creative Movement

In our Creative Movement classes, children aged from 18 months to 5 years and their carers, explore their creativity, moving to music, singing songs, developing gross motor skills and improving their emotional expression. The sessions are planned and implemented by a trained facilitator and run for an hour each week of the school term.

**28** families with  
**41** children participated in  
**34** sessions

### Benalla Early Years Network

Tomorrow Today chairs the Executive of the Benalla Early Years Network. The quarterly meetings bring together representatives from local preschools and schools, and family support, health, disability and welfare services. The Network provides a forum to discuss emerging issues, professional development opportunities for Early Years professionals, and to plan activities to improve the learning and development of children aged 0 to 8 years.



### Kinder Pals

Kinder Pals are trained volunteers who work with children at five of Benalla's preschools. They spend an hour, once a week, reading and talking about picture books with small groups of children, expanding early literacy and language skills by engaging them in story retelling, picture description and rich conversation.

**12** Kinder Pals worked in  
**5** preschools and gave  
**133** volunteer hours

### Preschool screening

Pre-literacy, pre-numeracy and oral language skills form the foundation for successful early learning. Tomorrow Today, in partnership with local preschools, offered screening of these skills for all 4-year old children. Parents are provided with tips to further develop these skills through everyday activities at home. Play-based resources and activities are provided to preschool teachers to use in their classroom settings.

**246** children at  
**6** preschools were screened



### Kinder Immersion

The Kinder Immersion program supports local kindergartens to prepare children for school entry. The program was offered to children who were starting primary school in 2023 but had been identified by their preschool teachers as not being academically or socially 'ready'. Our play-based activities immerse children in opportunities to enhance their pre-literacy, pre-numeracy and oral language skills.

**12** children at  
**2** preschools participated for  
**6** weeks



Early phonics and letter recognition are just some of the activities Kinder students focus on in Kinder Immersion.



Parents are a child's first and most important ongoing educator. We encourage our families to engage with their children in activities that help them to learn important concepts like counting.



## Great Start to School

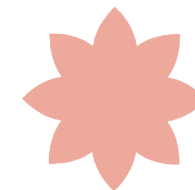
Our Great Start to School program helps parents prepare their children for the transition to primary school. Families engage in facilitated discussions about a range of topics related to school readiness, including the importance of before and after school routines, strategies to promote physical and emotional independence, and developing pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills through everyday activities.

**13** families starting at  
**3** Benalla schools participated in  
**2x2** hour sessions at Tomorrow Today

## Prep Immersion

Tomorrow Today partners with Benalla P-12 College to run the Prep Immersion program. Working with the school's Prep teachers, we identify students who have commenced school but are not 'switched on' for learning. Students participated in the small group program throughout Term 2, 2023.

**20** Prep students  
**4x40** minutes sessions per week over the  
**8** week program



"I am so very grateful for all the time and effort given. Our daughter has come ahead in leaps and bounds and is constantly expanding her reading and writing abilities and knowledge everyday."

- Parent

## Reading Buddies

Trained Reading Buddy volunteers provide invaluable support to the Year One and Two Literacy Program at Benalla P-12 College. Buddies develop warm and nurturing relationships with students, which in turn improves their confidence and learning.

**29** children at Benalla P-12 College were helped by  
**10** Reading Buddies who gave  
**285** volunteer hours

## ConnectParent

ConnectParent is a new program that is currently in the research and development phase. The program aims to support families in the critical first 1,000 days, from conception to age two. ConnectParent will train and supervise community volunteers to support families to connect to the services and support they need to help them thrive.



## Come and Try Day

Participating in an activity outside of school gives children the opportunity to make friends and learn new skills, including teamwork. Being connected and belonging to a group also has a positive influence on children's engagement in school and learning.

We hosted a Come and Try Day, in September 2022 and another in March 2023. These free events were attended by over 160 local children and their families with 23 local sport and recreation organisations showcasing the activities they offer in one location, free of cost. Tomorrow Today offers financial assistance to enable children from families with a pension or health care card to join local clubs and participate in regular out-of-school activities.

**56** young people were supported to join  
**12** local clubs and organisations  
**237** volunteer hours.

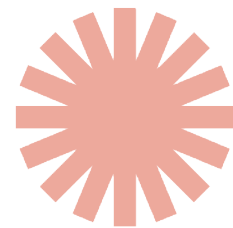
## Individual funding assistance

For many of Benalla's children and young people, educational opportunities are severely limited by financial and social disadvantage. Thanks to the support of generous local donors, Tomorrow Today provides financial assistance so that children and young people can participate in a wide range of school and community activities.

**36** students were assisted on  
**37** occasions

**"Wearing a uniform helps promote pride and inclusion in our students and the vouchers make a massive contribution to that. We are extremely grateful to Tomorrow Today for sourcing the vouchers for the college."**

- Wellbeing Worker,  
Benalla P-12 College



## FRRR Back To School vouchers

The rising cost of living has had a significant impact on many families in Benalla and district. Tomorrow Today, in partnership with the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), provides \$50 vouchers to local schools for distribution throughout the year to families experiencing financial hardship. The vouchers can be used to purchase education-related items like school uniforms, shoes, school bags and stationery.

**710** \$50 vouchers distributed to  
**10** Benalla and district schools



**With the help of willing locals, the Full Impact Squad painted faces, sold beeswax wraps and made pancake spaghetti to raise money for the repair work to local buildings affected by damaging weather events.**

## Full Impact Squad

The Full Impact Squad is a youth-led forum for young people aged 11 to 19 to explore local issues and empower them to drive change. In 2022-23 the Squad grew from 10 to 24 members and participated in four workshops facilitated by other young people from the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic).

The Squad planned and implemented three community events: the Benalla Spring Clean Day, which involved the community in cleaning up around Lake Benalla; B-Town Rave, a youth dance party; and a Youth Live Music event. They also held two market stalls, raising over \$600 to assist with repairs to storm-affected community buildings.

The causes the Squad chose to support reflect the wider issues that they identify as meaningful to them: the environment, access to social activities for young people, celebrating diversity and supporting their local community.

**24** young people engaged in  
**4** workshops, and planned and implemented  
**3** community events and  
**2** fundraising events

**"Being in the Squad has helped my confidence. It has helped with knowing I can use my voice for change."**

- Full Impact Squad member



## Connect9

Connect9 is Tomorrow Today's much-loved community mentoring program for Benalla's Year 9 students. Each student is matched with a community mentor who is their 'buddy' throughout the ten-week program. With the generous support of local partners, the young people and their mentors were able to connect to new skills and hobbies, people and experiences, as well as opportunities to explore careers and set life goals.

**25** young people were supported by  
**25** volunteer mentors who gave  
**554** volunteer hours.  
**45** professional hours donated

**"It's a wonderful opportunity to experience new activities and be able to socialise and have a good time with people you may not know and get to know amazing people."**

- Mentee

**"It is hard for parents to show everything about a community to their child. This program shows them lots of aspects and they get to trust other adults in a safe environment."**

- Parent

## Hands on Learning

Hands on Learning recognises that young people learn in different ways. The program, designed to prevent early school leaving, engages small groups of students in authentic 'hands-on' projects that encourage the development of the skills and attributes they need to succeed in life. Tomorrow Today provides input and financial support for the program. In 2022-23 the Hands on Learning program at Benalla P-12 College collaborated with Benalla Health, Benalla Rural City Council, Waminda Community House, St Vincent de Paul Society and Benalla Men's Shed to build, fill and distribute over 120 wicking beds to members of the community who are experiencing food insecurity.

**47** students in Years 7-11 attended for  
**1** day per week.  
**8** students in Years 5-6 attended for  
**2** hours per week

## Live4Life

Live4Life aims to increase young people's mental health knowledge and where to seek assistance for mental health issues with a whole-of-community approach. Tomorrow Today is a partner in the delivery of this suicide prevention program. Free mental health training is provided to teachers, parents, community members, service providers and Year 8 and 11 students attending Benalla P-12 College, FCJ College, and Benalla Flexible Learning Centre.

**127** Year 8 students and  
**141** Year 11 students undertook training in Youth Mental Health First Aid

## Great Start to Work

Great Start to Work provides young people with the confidence and 'know-how' to apply for paid part-time work outside school hours. Over a six-week program, participants connect with local employers to learn about employee roles, employer expectations, workplace rights and responsibilities and practice their interaction skills in a series of mock interviews.

**7** young people participated for  
**3** hours per week for  
**6** weeks.  
**9** local businesses supported the program



**The confidence that comes from a new outfit is captured here on the faces of our Great Start to Work participants when they got dressed for success at Benalla Salvos.**

**"The Great Start to Work program has just done so much for my daughter's confidence. The difference in her is amazing and we are very grateful she has had the opportunity to participate."**

- Parent



## Year 5 & 6 Careers Activities

The Year 5 & 6 Careers Day is an immersive program where students are encouraged to think about what's possible for their future, build their aspirations and ease the transition to secondary school.

The day encompasses hands-on activities where students identify their personal strengths, explore key skills needed to be successful in the world of work, and meet "Living Library Books", local professionals who share the stories of their working lives and the career paths they've taken. This program was run in conjunction with You thrive and was created in response to research by myfuture - Australia's national career information service - that identified the benefits of early career support.



The Year 5 & 6 Careers Days help to build aspiration at a young age by combining self-awareness activities and small group interactions with inspiring career talks by local people.

**19** professionals participated in Living Libraries over  
**2** days with  
**194** students

"The students were so engaged and really loved all the activities. Probably more substantial were the conversations these students were having around the activities... I think you have achieved your mission of opening our students' minds to possibilities!"  
- Teacher

## University Bus Trips

Giving young people the opportunity to be immersed in the culture of tertiary life can open a new world of possibilities for their future. Senior students from local secondary schools had the opportunity to visit CSU Thurgoona and LaTrobe Wodonga. They learnt about courses and career pathways, and visited lecture theatres, and recreation and accommodation facilities.

**48** Year 10, 11 and 12 students visited  
**2** universities

"Actually attending and learning about a Uni I feel will influence which Uni I may go to."  
- Participant



Tertiary education can be a daunting prospect for regional teens. Our University Bus Trips are designed to give them a taste of university life.

## REACH Diverge and Purpose workshops

In 2022 and 2023 Tomorrow Today engaged the Reach organisation to deliver the "Diverge" and "Purpose" workshops at Benalla P-12 College and FCJ College. These workshops aim to build aspiration, encourage self-reflection, and improve confidence and self-belief.

**42** students at Benalla P-12 College in 2022 and  
**101** students at Benalla P-12 College and FCJ College in 2023 attended  
**3** workshops

"The biggest thing I learned in this workshop was how to be honest to myself and others."

- Student

## Year 12 Scholarships

Progressing to tertiary studies can be an exciting but stressful time for many young people and their families. The worry of finding affordable accommodation, while budgeting for course fees, food, and course resources can be a barrier for many young people.

Tomorrow Today awarded \$2,000 scholarships to two students from Benalla P-12 College and two from FCJ College to assist them in pursuing the career of their choice.

The successful students have been accepted into the following courses:

- Bachelor of Music at Australian Institute of Music
- Bachelor of Engineering/Science at Monash University
- Bachelor of Criminology at Australian National University
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at LaTrobe University



"Receiving the TT scholarship in 2023 means more than just financial assistance to me. It also represents recognition of my hard work, dedication and passion towards my academic pursuit. I am truly grateful for the opportunities this scholarship has provided me."  
- Scholarship recipient



### Increasing work placement opportunities

Tomorrow Today chairs the Benalla Future Work Steering Committee. Bi-monthly meetings are attended by local secondary schools, local apprenticeship providers, NE Tracks LLEN, Benalla Rural City Council, Charles Sturt University, GOTAFE, and D&R Henderson. Attendees share the latest career information, and plan and implement actions related to career development. The committee is tasked with increasing local work experience placements and school-based apprenticeships, and strengthening community aspiration for our young people.

- 154** Year 10 students completed a week of work experience
- 42** young people were enrolled in a school-based apprenticeship in Benalla in 2022-23
- 2** work experience students hosted by Tomorrow Today



One of the most popular Connect9 activities is a night-time scavenger hunt. Exploring the town and local landmarks with their mentors is a fun way for our Year 9 students to learn about the history of Benalla.

Visiting the police station needn't be a negative experience! Our Connect9 mentors and mentees learned about policing careers from local officers





# BOARD DIRECTORS



**LOUISE PEARCE**  
Chair

Louise works for Melbourne University as a consultant in the vocational education sector. Her career is focused on education with a particular passion for supporting young people. Louise and her husband raised their family in Benalla where she has been an active community member holding positions of office in sporting clubs, Guides and Scouts. Louise is a member of the Committee of Management of the local NE Tracks LLEN (Local Learning and Employment Network).  
**Committees:** Audit, Education Benalla Program Management



**SALLY GAMBLE**  
Treasurer

Sally is a founding director of Tomorrow Today, serving as Chair from 2009 to 2021. Over the last twenty years she has contributed to the community through numerous organisations, including as a long-term member of the Regent Honeeater Project committee. She is a Director and Company Secretary of the national peak organisation, Community Foundations Australia.  
**Committees:** Audit, Finance and Investment (Chair), Grants (Chair), Education Benalla Program Management



**NICHOLAS TAYLOR**  
Deputy Chair,  
Company Secretary

Nick is a commercial builder who established his business, Landmark Construction Group Pty Ltd, in Benalla in 2001. His long history of community involvement includes serving on St Joseph's Primary School Council, the Sandhurst Diocese Education Board and the Benalla Racing Club Committee. Nick has been a volunteer with the Samaria CFA for more than 20 years, for a large part of this time as Captain.  
**Committees:** Audit (Chair), Finance and Investment



**FLORENT THIVILLIER**  
Convenor, Education Benalla Program

Florent is an industrial engineer who came to Benalla in 2001 from his native France. Originally moving here to work at Schneider Electric, he and his wife fell in love with Benalla and chose to raise their family here. Florent's active involvement in the community has included being a participant and coach in numerous local sporting clubs. He is currently Distribution Centre Manager for a major food manufacturer.  
**Committees:** Grants, Education Benalla Program Management



**MELINDA LAWLEY**

Melinda has worked with young people throughout her career, initially as a secondary teacher before moving into community and health fields. This trajectory underpins her commitment to working across sectors to enhance outcomes for young people. Melinda has lived in Benalla for 25 years and worked alongside Tomorrow Today for much of this time. She is currently the CEO of a youth welfare organisation in Shepparton and a non-executive director at Benalla Health.  
**Committees:** Risk Management, Education Benalla Program Management



**LARISSA MONTGOMERY**

Larissa is a senior project officer with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and has a career background in environmental sustainability. She has experience in project management, community engagement and governance and is passionate about building strong, resilient and connected communities. Larissa grew up and continues to live in Tatong and has been an active member of many different community groups over the past 18 years.  
**Committees:** Grants



**MARTIN SMITH**

Martin is a senior operational risk manager and Chartered Accountant, with experience in compliance, banking and finance roles in Australia and overseas. Now Melbourne-based, he has been an active member of the local primary school council and a committee member and coach in junior sport. Martin remains connected to his home-town of Benalla. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.  
**Committees:** Risk Management (Chair), Finance and Investment



**SARAH WALLIS**

Sarah brings a wealth of experience and local community connections to the board. As well as working for Agriculture Victoria as the Young Farmer Coordinator, which incorporates leading the Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program, Sarah has been involved in several community groups in the Benalla district including Landcare as a facilitator, delivering accredited training, administering scholarships and mentoring programs; Tatong Playgroup; and roles in emergency response. Sarah joined the board in June 2023.



**MARSHA WATSON**

Marsha is a registered pharmacist and successful local business owner. She partnered in the establishment of Jenny Milner – Marsha Watson Pharmacies Pty Ltd in 1999 and has been sole proprietor since 2011. In 2012, Marsha was named Victorian Pharmacist of the Year for 'being a quiet achiever who has passionately served her local community for many years'. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Benalla, Benalla Business Network and Benalla Golf Club.  
**Committees:** Risk Management, Grants

## WITH THANKS TO OUR SKILLED VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Adrian Aldous (Audit, Finance and Investment)
- Liz Chapman OAM (Education Benalla Program Management)
- Cameron Gray (Audit)
- Geoff Hill (Audit)
- Mark McDonald (Finance and Investment)
- Terry Trounson (Finance and Investment)



# FINANCIALS

## TOMORROW TODAY FOUNDATION

The objective of Tomorrow Today Foundation (company name - Tomorrow Today A Foundation for Rural Community Development), is to enable the people of Benalla and district to create a stronger, more resilient and prosperous rural community.

The company is trustee of the Tomorrow Today Public Fund which provides tax deductibility for all gifts over \$2. The Public Fund and the Open Fund (for supporters not needing a tax deduction) together make up Benalla's Community Fund. During the year, funds were raised to continue building the Community Fund and grants from Community Fund income were made to benefit the district.

Tomorrow Today Foundation purchased the commercial property at 66-68 Nunn Street, Benalla, in 2017. Ownership provides a secure base for all Tomorrow Today's community activities and a long term rental income stream from leased offices. Costs are kept to a minimum thanks to substantial pro bono property management, legal and other support, along with the installation of solar panels. This year improvements were made to the three larger offices used for community activities - one through a planned renovation and the other two when storm damage presented an opportunity to 'build back better'.

Our thanks to the many people and organisations who contributed to such a great result.

## TOMORROW TODAY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The objective of Tomorrow Today Education Foundation is to reduce the level of social disadvantage in Benalla and district.

During the year, the company worked with families, schools and the wider community to deliver the Education Benalla Program. The Program responds to the multiple effects of high levels of social disadvantage to improve the educational outcomes of Benalla's young people. Our staff coordinate and deliver more than 20 different activities that make up the Program, supported by generous grant funding from beyond Benalla.

**Generous grant funding from beyond Benalla has supported the Education Benalla Program since it began in 2010. A full list of this year's supporters can be found on pages 34 & 35**

Tomorrow Today is pleased to acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government.



The following pages include financial reports for our three charitable entities. We submit full reports to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) by the reporting deadline each year. Copies of our audited financial reports are available on request or from [www.tomorrowtoday.com.au](http://www.tomorrowtoday.com.au)

## TOMORROW TODAY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

- ABN 90 610 420 123

### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants	1,145,916	773,182
Donations	12,005	68,871
Other income	19,569	6,643
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>1,177,490</b>	<b>848,696</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Employee benefits expense	699,658	582,329
Program expenses	175,733	215,800
Community Grants distributed	71,340	76,833
Other expenses	31,689	38,686
Professional fees	7,810	8,460
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>986,230</b>	<b>922,108</b>
<b>Current year surplus</b>	<b>191,260</b>	<b>(73,412)</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>191,260</b>	<b>(73,412)</b>

### Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 30 June 2023

<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,133,828	1,296,226
Accounts receivable and other debtors	11,437	16,543
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>1,145,265</b>	<b>1,312,769</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Plant and equipment	29,140	29,590
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>29,140</b>	<b>29,590</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,174,405</b>	<b>1,342,359</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and other payables	38,948	60,802
Employee provisions	72,680	83,546
Funds in advance	255,000	577,513
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>366,628</b>	<b>721,861</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Employee provisions	1,723	5,704
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>5,704</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>368,351</b>	<b>727,565</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>806,054</b>	<b>614,794</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>		
Education Benalla Program reserve	605,730	414,712
Special purpose reserve	139,299	165,936
Retained surplus	61,025	34,146
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>806,054</b>	<b>614,794</b>



**TOMORROW TODAY A FOUNDATION FOR RURAL  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - ABN 19 096 214 907**

	2023	2022
<b>Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income</b>		
For the year ended 30 June 2023		
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants	25,000	25,000
Donations, sponsorships & fundraising	36,493	29,811
Rental income	115,016	87,949
Investment income	18,267	22,386
Profit/loss on disposal of investments	1,490	7,017
Other income	19,904	20,444
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>216,170</b>	<b>192,607</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Community grants distributed	24,825	17,420
Investment property expenses	16,834	20,462
Investment property loan - interest paid	3,938	4,688
Management fees	37,915	37,035
Professional fees	12,670	11,220
Investment fees	4,807	5,054
Other expenses	26,158	28,086
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>127,147</b>	<b>123,965</b>
<b>Current year surplus</b>	<b>89,023</b>	<b>68,642</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		
Items to be reclassified subsequent to profit or loss when specific conditions are met:		
Net changes in fair value of investments	34,892	(58,755)
Net changes in investment property valuation	-	-
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>34,892</b>	<b>(58,755)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>123,915</b>	<b>9,887</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>		
For the year ended 30 June 2023		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	322,855	272,255
Accounts receivable and other debtors	14,747	21,088
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>337,602</b>	<b>293,343</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Investments	522,051	483,311
Property, plant and equipment	39,858	30,071
Investment property	1,220,000	1,220,000
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>1,781,909</b>	<b>1,733,382</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>2,119,511</b>	<b>2,026,725</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and other payables	4,817	10,946
Borrowings	25,000	25,000
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>29,817</b>	<b>35,946</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Borrowings	100,000	125,000
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>129,817</b>	<b>160,946</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,989,694</b>	<b>1,865,779</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>		
Open Fund capital reserve	617,751	583,349
Open Fund income reserve	46,385	30,343
Special purpose reserve	101,124	92,195
Property equity reserve	989,194	951,694
Retained surplus	235,240	208,198
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>1,989,694</b>	<b>1,865,779</b>

**TOMORROW TODAY A FOUNDATION FOR RURAL  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC FUND - ABN 98 553 570 389**

	2023	2022
<b>Income Statement</b>		
For the year ended 30 June 2023		
<b>INCOME</b>		
Donations	110,177	77,421
Investment income	25,483	25,947
Profit on disposal of investments	-	2,683
<b>Total income</b>	<b>135,660</b>	<b>106,051</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Grants distributed	31,417	33,915
Investment fees	6,557	5,971
Loss on disposal of investments	9,428	3,651
Other expenses	8,718	9,168
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>56,120</b>	<b>52,705</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>79,540</b>	<b>53,346</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>		
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:		
Net changes in fair value of investments	44,051	(72,211)
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>44,051</b>	<b>(72,211)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<b>123,591</b>	<b>(18,865)</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>		
For the year ended 30 June 2023		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	213,004	152,885
Accounts receivable and other debtors	300	3,400
Accrued income	9,795	14,693
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>223,099</b>	<b>170,978</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Investments	653,739	582,269
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>653,739</b>	<b>582,269</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>876,838</b>	<b>753,247</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>876,838</b>	<b>753,247</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>		
Settled Sum	100	100
Corpus	820,583	703,931
Accumulated funds	56,155	49,216
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>876,838</b>	<b>753,247</b>



The Tomorrow Today team is made up of dedicated local people, all of whom work towards building a more connected community and improving the outcomes for Benalla's children and young people.



# OUR SUPPORTERS

Our board and staff wish to thank the many individuals, families, community groups, businesses and philanthropic funders who have given to Tomorrow Today to support our work. We also appreciate the significant contribution made by local volunteers and partnering organisations. Their generosity makes our work possible.

**WE ARE PROUD TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING FUNDING PARTNERS FOR THE 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR**

## Victorian Government

### The William Buckland Foundation

### H & L Hecht Trust managed by Perpetual

### The Ian Potter Foundation

### Paul Ramsay Foundation

### Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal

### The Very Good Foundation managed by

### Perpetual

### Drakensberg Trust

### Goodman Family Foundation



**Our 2022 annual community event brought together volunteers, funders, donors and program participants to meet, mingle and celebrate the breadth of work Tomorrow Today undertook during the year.**

# GIFTS RECEIVED DURING THE 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR



We know that people give what they can, when they can. It all makes a difference. The following people, organisations and businesses have donated, sponsored or provided in-kind support this financial year. We are very grateful to everyone who has chosen to support us.

- Aldous, C
- Alexander AO, B & R
- Amery, K
- Anonymous donations (17)
- Arnott, N
- Benalla Baptist Church
- Benalla Church Street Surgery
- Benalla Ensign, sale of 'Watermark' books
- Benalla Flexible Learning Centre
- Benalla Fore Players Golf Trip
- Benalla Saints Sports Club–Small Town Sing
- Benalla Veterinary Clinic
- Bennison, J
- Black, E
- Botta, C
- Brown, M
- Brownstein, G & Gamble, S
- Burston, G
- Burston, L
- Chapman OAM, L
- Cowan, R
- Cuming, A
- Dobson, B & K
- Donnelly, K & F
- Dosser, V - Smith Dosser
- Duffy, P
- Edwards, J
- Falkiner, D
- Farken, A
- Foletta, M
- Frey, M & Birnie, S
- Gilder, R
- Gourley, J
- Hausner, M
- Healy, T & Gill, J
- James, S
- Jenny Milner Marsha Watson Pharmacy

- Jenny Milner Marsha Watson Pharmacy workplace giving
- Landmark Construction Group
- M & B Richardson Trust
- Magistrates' Court of Victoria
- Martin, D
- Matheson, S
- McIntosh, K
- Mitchell, P & K
- Monger OAM, A
- Morton, E
- Murphy, H
- N & L Smith Builders
- Nicholas, V
- Noonan, E
- Ogilbee, H
- Parris, J & B
- Piper, M & S
- Pruden, J
- RBR Refrigeration
- Read, U & Lee, C
- Reece Plumbing
- Rees, D
- Rial, F
- Rotary Club of Benalla
- Rubira, J
- Smith, B & D, & Birnie, M
- Smith, D
- Smith, T - Smith Dosser
- Smyth, M & S
- Tallis, M
- Tanner, P & L
- Thivillier, F & Lefebvre, L
- Thompson, P
- Trimble Plumbing & Civil
- Vial, B, & Stevenson, A
- Wednesday Sewing Group
- Widdup, R





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