



**caring mums**

POWERED BY NCJWA VIC

## Caring Mums during COVID-19

The Caring Mums program is a service providing emotional support to mothers of babies and pregnant women. The program matches trained volunteers, all of whom are mothers themselves, to new mums with the goal of developing a secure trusting relationship. Through regular weekly meetings for up to a period of 12 months, mums' feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression decrease, while their parenting confidence and sense of belonging grow significantly. This process has countless benefits on their infants' development, wellbeing and attachment.

Caring Mums adapted its program so that its aims and values can still be upheld during the current pandemic. We continue to see mums in our current catchment whilst growing our service into new areas, using technology, as we understand the impact this reality has on vulnerable and isolated populations, including mums already facing many new challenges.

To keep our participants safe, we have replaced face to face contact with virtual platforms; We continue to accept referrals, conduct intakes and match mothers to volunteers while weekly connections between participants are maintained.

We have introduced a new virtual mothers' group (*Caring Mums Together*) and produce a monthly newsletter for participants, volunteers and referrers that includes relevant articles, interviews, podcasts and Ted Talks. We are also holding virtual "Caring Mums Conversations" offering additional connection, education and support with expert guest speakers on appropriate topics. We recently had a massage therapist who specialises in perinatal massage, discussing the importance of selfcare. We also invited a psychologist to speak about how to deal with the increase anxiety this environment brings. In addition, we conducted an evening where over 50 of our volunteers zoomed in to listen to an enhanced maternal and child health nurse. She spoke about the changes they have made in their service and reinforced the perfect fit Caring Mums are for them.

To address demand outside our catchment area we have introduced *Caring Mums Extended Reach*. We now accept referrals and requests for support from mothers and referrers from outside of our catchment area during this crisis. This will be initially offered for 4 months from the time the mother enters the program and will be reviewed then for further actions. In addition, we are offering our volunteers an opportunity to take on second mother via FaceTime as some of them want to do something worthwhile in the additional time lockdown has created for them.

Caring Mums evolves as the situation changes and we are constantly updating ways in which we operate to meet the current needs of mums today as they become more isolated due to COVID-19. We will remain committed to our goals and objectives while making sure that no mother will feel alone on her journey of motherhood.

THE NCJW (VICTORIA) SOCIAL SUPPORT TRUST



131—133 Hawthorn Rd  
Caulfield North VIC 3161

MAIL: PO Box 2220  
Caulfield Junction VIC 3161

T: 03 9044 5405 M: 0481 081 242  
E: [caringmums@ncjwvic.org.au](mailto:caringmums@ncjwvic.org.au)

ABN: 41 771 835 817  
[NCJWVIC.ORG.AU](http://NCJWVIC.ORG.AU)