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Surrogacy

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Summary

- Surrogacy is not a simple alternative to having a child.
- The process of surrogacy and surrounding issues are complex.
- Surrogacy legislation in Australia may vary from state to state.

Surrogacy arrangements are medically, emotionally, financially and legally complex. For some people who previously were unable to have children, including gay couples and women who are unable to carry a pregnancy, surrogacy offers the opportunity to have a child.

The information provided here relates to surrogacy arrangements in Australia. If you are considering undertaking surrogacy elsewhere you may find the information available on the [Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority's website](#) helpful.

The surrogate

A surrogate, sometimes also called a gestational carrier, is a woman who conceives, carries and gives birth to a child for another person or couple (intended or commissioning parents). The surrogate agrees to give the child to that person or couple after the birth. In most parts of Australia, including Victoria, a surrogate cannot be the genetic mother of the child she carries. This means that her egg cannot be used in the surrogacy arrangement. The future child's mother and father, or a donor, provide the egg and sperm to form an embryo. This embryo is then transferred to the uterus of the surrogate who carries the pregnancy and gives birth. In Australia, only altruistic surrogacy is allowed. This means that it is illegal to pay the surrogate for her role beyond reimbursing her for medical and other reasonable expenses.

Reasons for surrogacy

A surrogacy arrangement may be considered if:

- a woman is unable to become pregnant or carry a pregnancy because she has had a hysterectomy or is missing part of her uterus, ovaries or other parts of the genital tract
- a woman has a health condition that makes pregnancy dangerous
- a couple in a male same-sex relationship wish to have a child using the sperm of one or the other partner
- a single man wishes to have a child using his sperm
- a woman who has frozen embryos in storage dies and her male partner wishes to use the embryos to have a child.

Things to consider before entering a surrogacy arrangement

There are many medical, emotional, financial and legal issues to consider when entering a surrogacy arrangement. There are also matters to be aware of once the surrogate gives birth and gives the child to the intended parents.

General information is provided here but for detailed information about all aspects of surrogacy visit the [Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority \(VARTA\) website](#).

Key factors for a successful surrogacy arrangement

Factors that can contribute to a positive surrogacy arrangement include:

- all parties being in good mental and physical health
- clear and open communication between all parties
- clear boundaries and mutual understanding of the relationship and interactions between the surrogate and her family and the commissioning parent(s)
- having realistic expectations about the chance of a successful outcome
- all parties having a good understanding of the medical processes involved
- being realistic about the timeline (it can take a year or more before embryo transfer occurs)
- being prepared for the emotional responses and reactions that can occur during the process
- agreement between parties regarding what is fair and reasonable payment of the surrogate's expenses (including what expenses will be covered)
- being aware of and prepared for the financial costs involved
- agreement between parties on how the pregnancy and birth will be managed.

Surrogacy legislation in Australia

All surrogacy arrangements in Australia must be altruistic (where the surrogate does not get paid for acting as a surrogate, other than being reimbursed for medical and other reasonable expenses).

Most Australian states have specific legislation that outlines the requirements for surrogacy. In the absence of legislation, states and territories are required to abide by national ethical guidelines issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Check with your local IVF clinic or legal advisor for the current surrogacy legislation in your state or territory. There is also information available on each state's legal position on altruistic surrogacy.

Surrogacy legislation in Victoria

Under the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008, the following requirements apply:

The commissioning parent(s):

- must be infertile or unable to carry a baby or give birth, or there is a likely medical risk to the mother or baby if pregnancy is carried out

The surrogate:

- must be at least 25 years old
- must have previously been pregnant and given birth to a live child
- must not use her eggs in the surrogacy arrangement.

It is preferred that the surrogate has already completed her family but this is not a legal requirement.

All parties, including the commissioning parent(s) and the surrogate and the surrogate's partner (if she has one):

- must undergo a criminal record check and a child protection order check
- must have received counselling and legal advice.

Some clinics also require the donor involved in the arrangement to comply with these two requirements.

The medical risks of surrogacy

There are certain medical risks involved in surrogacy. They are similar to the risks of other assisted reproductive treatment (ART) procedures [<https://www.varta.org.au/resources/publications/possible-health-effects-ivf/>]. These risks include:

- for the child – if more than one embryo is transferred this increases the risk of [multiple birth](#). Multiple birth is associated with [premature birth](#), low birth weight and health problems for the babies
- for the egg provider – fertility drugs are given to stimulate the ovaries to produce multiple eggs. There is a small risk that these can cause [ovarian hyper-stimulation syndrome](#) (OHSS). OHSS is a potentially serious condition which, in very rare cases, can lead to blood clots, kidney failure and death
- for the surrogate – pregnancy and birth are associated with some risks, including development of [gestational diabetes](#) and [high blood pressure](#), bleeding, and needing a caesarean section.

For more detail about the risks involved in surrogacy, consult your fertility specialist.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- An IVF clinic in your state or territory
- [Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority](#) (VARTA) Tel. (03) 8601 5250
- [Surrogacy Australia](#)

References

- *Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act 2008*, Victorian Government. (pdf) [More information here](#).
- Harris K, Fitzgerald O, Paul R, et al. 2016, *Assisted reproductive technology in Australia and New Zealand 2014*, National Perinatal Epidemiology and Statistics Unit, University of New South Wales, Sydney. (pdf) [More information here](#).
- *Ethical guidelines for assisted reproductive technology (ART)*, 2017, National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Government. [More information here](#).
- *Surrogacy*, Victorian Assisted Reproductive [More information here](#).

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Parents

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- [Support for parents](#)

Parenting basics

- [Children and health services](#)
[There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...](#)
- [Family and child support services](#)
[There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues...](#)
- [Happy families](#)
[It might be valuable to occasionally evaluate the dynamics of your family to ensure that everyone is as happy as they could be...](#)
- [Healthy budget - tucker talk tips](#)
[You can buy more food if you spend most of your money on basic healthy foods like bread, cereals, fruit and vegies...](#)
- [Parenthood and your relationship](#)
[The birth of your first child can significantly change your relationship with your partner and may impact on other relationships...](#)
- [Parenting children through puberty](#)
[Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring...](#)
- [Parenting on your own](#)
[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)
- [Parenting services](#)
[Parenting is one of the most important tasks we undertake but it doesn't always come naturally...](#)
- [Raising Children Network](#)
[Raising Children Network is an online parenting resource providing research-based information...](#)
- [Travelling with children](#)
[If your child is old enough, involve them in planning a trip so they can get excited about it...](#)

Family structures

- [10 tips for happier step-parenting](#)
[Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it ... 10 tips for happier step-parenting...](#)
- [Adoption](#)
[Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...](#)
- [Empty nest syndrome](#)
[The grief of empty nest syndrome often goes unrecognised, because an adult child moving out of home is seen as a normal, healthy event...](#)
- [Foster care](#)
[Foster care is temporary care of children up to 18 years by trained, assessed and accredited foster carers...](#)
- [Kinship care](#)
[Kinship care is the care provided by relatives or a member of a child's social network when a child cannot live with their parents...](#)
- [Moving out of home – tips for parents](#)
[If you don't approve of your child's reasons for moving out, try to keep the lines of communication open...](#)
- [Parenting on your own](#)
[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)
- [Parenting when you're a foster carer](#)

[As a foster carer, you are providing a safe and supportive home for a child or teenager who can't live with their family of origin. You may face challenges that affect you physically, emotionally and...](#)

- [Permanent care](#)

[After experiencing abuse, neglect or rejection, many children are slow to put their trust in anyone...](#)

- [Single parenting](#)

[In single-parent households, issues such as holidays or major family purchases are more likely to be decided with the children...](#)

- [Stepfamilies](#)

[Becoming part of a stepfamily involves adjusting to a number of changes...](#)

- [Surrogacy](#)

[Surrogacy is a form of assisted reproductive treatment \(ART\) in which a woman carries a child within her uterus on behalf of another person or couple...](#)

Communication, identity and behaviour

- [10 tips for managing sibling rivalry](#)

[Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves... 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry...](#)

- [Body image and young people - staying positive \(video\)](#)

[The pressure on young girls and boys to be physically perfect is creating an epidemic of children and teenagers with low self-esteem and negative body image. Reporter Flip Shelton introduces us to the...](#)

- [Body image – tips for parents](#)

[Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like...](#)

- [Bullying](#)

[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)

- [Children and shyness](#)

[If your child's shyness is especially debilitating, you may like to consider professional help from a counsellor or psychologist...](#)

- [Children and sibling rivalry](#)

[Sibling rivalry is a common problem, particularly among children who are the same sex and close together in age...](#)

- [Discipline and children](#)

[Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control...](#)

- [Family conflict](#)

[It is normal to disagree with each other from time to time and occasional conflict is part of family life...](#)

- [Internet addiction](#)

[Internet addiction refers to the compulsive need to spend a lot of time on the Internet, to the point where relationships, work and health suffer...](#)

- [Parenting on your own](#)

[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)

- [Partying safely – tips for parents](#)

[With a few simple plans in place, a good time can be had by all at a teenage party – even the parents...](#)

- [Peer pressure](#)

[Peer groups can be a very positive influence on your teenager's life...](#)

- [Sex education - tips for parents](#)

[Mothers are more likely to talk about intimate, emotional and psychological aspects of sex than fathers...](#)

- [Talking to primary school children about sex](#)

[Some parents find it hard to talk with their primary age children about sex, but help is available...](#)

- [Teenagers and communication](#)

[Accept that your adolescent may have a different view of the world and respect their opinions...](#)

- [Young children and communication](#)

[Children thrive with words of encouragement and praise...](#)

Raising healthy children

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [Children – keeping them active](#)

[A young child is naturally active, so build upon their inclinations to use their body...](#)

- [Children's diet - fruit and vegetables](#)

[If you eat and enjoy fruit and vegetables every day, your child may eventually follow your lead...](#)

- [Dr Margaret's Story \(video\)](#)

[Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio...](#)

- [Eating disorders and adolescents](#)

[Often, an eating disorder develops as a way for an adolescent to feel in control about what's happening in their life...](#)

- [Healthy eating tips](#)

[A good balance between exercise and food intake is important to maintain a healthy body weight...](#)

- [Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need](#)

[Everyone's immunisation needs are different and are influenced by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation...](#)

- [No Jab No Play](#)

[No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...](#)

- [Obesity in children - management](#)

[If your child is overweight, you can help by making healthier lifestyle choices for yourself...](#)

- [Parenting on your own](#)

[A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...](#)

- [Parent's guide for active girls](#)

[Physical activity is an important part of health and wellbeing, and girls should remain active as they grow up...](#)

- [Soft drinks, juice and sweet drinks - children](#)

[Encourage children to drink and enjoy water. Sweet drinks such as juice, cordial and soft drinks may cause health problems for children if consumed in large amounts...](#)

- [Youth suicide – the warning signs](#)

[All suicide threats are serious. You don't have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...](#)

Common childhood health concerns

- [Abdominal pain in children](#)

[Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment...](#)

- [Allergies explained](#)

[Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people...](#)

- [Anxiety and fear in children](#)

[You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings...](#)

- [Asthma, children and smoking](#)

[Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma...](#)

- [Asthma in childhood - triggers \(video\)](#)

[Parents and children talk about some of the factors that can cause a child's asthma to flare up...](#)

- [Back pain in children](#)

[Children with back pain may grow into adults with chronic bad backs, so it is important to encourage sensible back care...](#)

- [Bedwetting](#)

[Bedwetting is a problem for many children and punishing them for it will only add to their distress...](#)

- [Behavioural disorders in children](#)

[Untreated behavioural disorders in children may mean they grow up to be dysfunctional adults...](#)

- [Bronchiolitis](#)

[Bronchiolitis is a common chest infection in babies under six months of age...](#)

- [Chest infections](#)

[A chest infection affects your lungs, either in the larger airways \(bronchitis\) or in the smaller air sacs \(pneumonia\)...](#)

- [Chickenpox](#)

[Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment...](#)

- [Children and vomiting](#)

[Mild vomiting is normal in most babies and improves over time...](#)

- [Children's feet and shoes](#)

[A child learning to walk receives important sensory information from the soles of their feet, and shoes can make walking more difficult...](#)

- [Choking](#)

[Don't slap a choking person on the back while they are upright - gravity may cause the object to slip further down their windpipe...](#)

- [Colds](#)

[Cold viruses are spread by sneezing, coughing and hand contact...](#)

- [Colic](#)

[Caring for a crying baby with colic can be stressful, so take some time out to calm down...](#)

- [Constipation and children](#)

[A healthy diet, plenty of fluids, exercise and regular toilet habits can help relieve constipation in children...](#)

- [Coughing and wheezing in children](#)

[Coughing and wheezing in babies can be distressing for you and your baby, but in most cases symptoms can be relieved at home...](#)

- [Cradle cap](#)

[Cradle cap is not contagious and it is not caused by poor hygiene or bad parenting...](#)

- [Croup](#)

[Croup is a viral infection of the throat and windpipe that causes noisy breathing, a hoarse voice and a harsh, barking cough...](#)

- [Cysts](#)

[Cysts may be as small as a blister or large enough to hold litres of fluid...](#)

- [Dental anxiety and phobia](#)

[Dental anxiety is common, but there are ways to help you manage it. Talk to your dentist about which strategies are right for you...](#)

- [Dental treatment](#)

[Modern techniques mean that dental and oral health treatment is almost always painless...](#)

- [Depression explained](#)

[The most important thing is to recognise the signs and symptoms and seek support...](#)

- [Ear infections](#)

[It is estimated that around four out of five children will experience a middle ear infection at least once...](#)

- [Epilepsy in children](#)

[Children with epilepsy generally have seizures that respond well to medication, and they enjoy a normal and active childhood...](#)

- [Feet - problems and treatments](#)

[Correctly fitted shoes help you avoid foot and leg pain or injury...](#)

- [Fever - children](#)

[Fever is a way in which the body fights infection. A fever is not dangerous and does not always indicate a serious illness...](#)

- [Fever - febrile convulsions](#)

[A febrile convulsion is a fit that occurs in children when they have a high fever...](#)

- [Food allergy and intolerance](#)

[Food allergy is an immune response, while food intolerance is a chemical reaction...](#)

- [Gastroenteritis in children](#)

[Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea \(runny or watery poo\) and...](#)

- [Growing pains](#)

[Growing pains may cause a lot of pain but they are harmless and can respond to simple treatments...](#)

- [Hand, foot and mouth disease](#)

[Good personal hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of hand, foot and mouth disease to others, both for those infected and their carers...](#)

- [Head lice \(nits\)](#)

[No product can prevent head lice, but regular checks can help prevent the spread...](#)

- [Hearing problems in children](#)

[The earlier that hearing loss is identified in children, the better for the child's language, learning and overall development...](#)

- [Immunisation history statements for children](#)

[By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria...](#)

- [Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia \(video\)](#)

[Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved...](#)

- [Jaundice in babies](#)

[If your baby is full-term and healthy, mild jaundice is nothing to worry about and will resolve by itself within a week or so...](#)

- [Lactose intolerance](#)

[Symptoms of lactose intolerance include bloating, gas, abdominal pain and diarrhoea...](#)

- [Male Circumcision](#)

[Male circumcision involves the surgical removal of the foreskin of the penis...](#)

- [Melissa's story \(video\)](#)

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[Do not leave young adults alone if they suddenly develop a fever because they may become seriously ill very quickly...](#)

- [Nappy rash](#)

[Most babies get nappy rash at some stage, no matter how well they are cared for...](#)

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[The major symptom of whooping cough is a severe cough, which is often followed by a 'whooping' sound...](#)

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[Talk to a qualified medical expert like your doctor to find out more about immunisation...](#)

- [Caitlin and Liam's story \(video\)](#)

[Find out how important you and your child's immunisation is to the most vulnerable members in our community...](#)

- [Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia \(video\)](#)

[Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved...](#)

- [Immunisation in secondary schools](#)

[Some immunisations are recommended for all Australian teenagers...](#)

- [Children and health services](#)

[There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...](#)

Keeping yourself healthy

- [10 tips for happier step-parenting](#)

[Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it ... 10 tips for happier step-parenting...](#)

- [10 tips for managing sibling rivalry](#)

[Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves... 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry...](#)

- [10 tips to raise an optimistic child](#)

[Be a positive role model ... 10 tips to raise an optimistic child...](#)

- [Abdominal pain in children](#)

[Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment...](#)

- [About child, family and relationship services \(video\)](#)

[Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services...](#)

- [Adoption](#)

[Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...](#)

- [Agoraphobia](#)

[A person with agoraphobia is afraid to leave familiar environments, because they are afraid of having a panic attack...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

[A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...](#)

- [Allergies explained](#)

[Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people...](#)

- [Animals and child safety](#)

[Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets...](#)

- [Anxiety](#)

[Anxiety is extreme worry that interferes with our daily lives. Find out more about anxiety disorders, treatments, trauma, triggers and phobias...](#)

- [Anxiety and depression in men](#)

[Improve your understanding of anxiety and depression, then take action...](#)

- [Anxiety and fear in children](#)

[You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings...](#)

- [Anxiety disorders](#)

[Anxiety disorders are common mental health problems that affect many people...](#)

- [Anxiety Disorders - Diagnosis \(video\)](#)

[Anxiety disorders are common, affecting about one in ten with persistent, excessive worrying that can hinder their ability to function. They may worry constantly about things that do not warrant it or...](#)

- [Anxiety Disorders - treatment and support \(video\)](#)

[In this video clip, participants discuss the various forms of treatment and support they have received from medical professionals as well as from other sources. Some of the strategies for managing...](#)

- [Asthma, children and smoking](#)

[Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma...](#)

- [Asthma in childhood - triggers \(video\)](#)

[Parents and children talk about some of the factors that can cause a child's asthma to flare up...](#)

- [Asthma - pregnancy and breastfeeding](#)

[Pregnant women with asthma need to continue to take their asthma medication as it is important to the health of both mother and baby that the mother's asthma is well managed...](#)

Children with special needs

- [Autism spectrum disorder \(ASD\)](#)

[ASD is a complex disorder that affects a person's ability to interact with the world around them...](#)

- [Autism spectrum disorder - tips for parents](#)

[Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong condition, but you are not on your own and there are plenty of professionals and groups who can help...](#)

- [Cognitive disability and sexuality](#)

[People with intellectual disability can express their sexuality in satisfying ways...](#)

- [Disability - schooling choices](#)

[If your child has a disability, you need to consider extra issues when your child starts school...](#)

- [Down syndrome and family support](#)

[For a person with Down syndrome, being included in all aspects of family life can lead to a successful life within the community...](#)

- [Down syndrome and health](#)

[There are a number of significant health and medical issues that are more common in people with Down syndrome...](#)

- [Down syndrome and learning](#)

[You should focus on what your child with Down syndrome can do, rather than what they can't do...](#)

- [Physical disability and sexuality](#)

[Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support...](#)

- [Sex and chronic illness](#)

[Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support...](#)

Child safety and accident prevention

- [Animals and child safety](#)

[Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets...](#)

- [Bicycle safety and children](#)

[As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety and become safer road and bicycle users...](#)

- [Body image – tips for parents](#)

[Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like...](#)

- [Bullying](#)

[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)

- [Child safety and injury prevention](#)

[By making a few practical changes to your home, you can dramatically reduce the risk of injury to your child...](#)

- [Child safety – at home](#)

[The best way to reduce the risk of injury to children is to remove a potentially dangerous item or add a safety product...](#)

- [Child safety in the car](#)

[Taking care to restrain children correctly while travelling in a car is the best way to prevent injuries...](#)

- [Farm safety – children](#)

[Children who live on farms are at greater risk of injury and death than their parents or other farm workers...](#)

- [Hot weather and child safety](#)

[Babies and children can quickly lose body fluids in hot weather, which can lead to dehydration...](#)

- [Internet safety for children](#)

[A child's digital footprint can be as easy to follow as their real footprints...](#)

- [Mobile phone safety for children](#)

[Teach your child strategies for responding to mobile phone bullying...](#)

- [Playgrounds and child safety](#)

[Play environments can be safe and beneficial for your child. With proper planning, you can make sure your child gets plenty of playtime activity...](#)

- [Poisoning and child safety](#)

[Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 immediately if you suspect your child has been poisoned or given the wrong medicine or the wrong dose of medicine...](#)

- [Road and traffic safety for children](#)

[As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety, and become safer road users...](#)

- [Water safety for children](#)

[Toddlers are most at risk of drowning because they are mobile and curious but don't understand the danger of water...](#)

Child protection and family violence

- [Bullying](#)

[Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...](#)

- [Child abuse - reporting procedures](#)

[Any person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child needs protection can notify Child Protection...](#)

- [Child Protection Service](#)

[Child Protection provides child-centred, family-focused services to protect children from harm caused by abuse within the family...](#)

- [Family violence - tips for children](#)

[Kids are not to blame for violence at home, it's not your fault and it's not a special secret...](#)

- [Parenting support to help prevent abuse](#)

[There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children...](#)

- [Recognising when a child is at risk](#)

[Too many children are physically, sexually and emotionally abused and when this happens, it is up to adults to speak up...](#)

- [Sexual abuse - helping your child](#)

[As a parent, you have an important role in helping your child recover from sexual abuse...](#)

Grief and trauma

- [Death of a baby](#)

[Miscariage, stillbirth or neonatal death is a shattering event for those expecting a baby, and for their families. Grief, relationship stresses and anxiety about subsequent pregnancies are common in...](#)

- [Grief and children](#)

[It can be difficult to talk to a child about death, but it is important to be honest with them...](#)

- [Grief – support services](#)

[People who have support from family and friends are less likely to suffer poor health after bereavement and loss...](#)

- [Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services](#)

[Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...](#)

- [Sudden unexpected death in infants \(SUDI and SIDS\)](#)

[You can reduce your baby's risk of sudden unexpected death by providing a safe sleeping environment and avoiding tobacco smoke...](#)

- [Trauma and children – tips for parents](#)

[Tell your child the facts about a distressing or frightening experience using language they can understand...](#)

- [Trauma and children - two to five years](#)

[Preschoolers may not have the words but will show their distress at traumatic events through changes in behaviour and functioning...](#)

- [Trauma and families](#)

[When a family is affected by trauma, everyone will react in a different way...](#)

- [Trauma and primary school age children](#)

[Children look to their parents or carers to judge how to deal with a crisis...](#)

- [Trauma and teenagers - common reactions](#)

[A teenager may be deeply upset by a traumatic event, but not share their feelings with their parents...](#)

- [Trauma and teenagers - tips for parents](#)

[Teenagers may turn to friends rather than parents for support in times of trauma and distress...](#)

- [Trauma - reaction and recovery](#)

[It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions after a distressing or frightening event, and help is available...](#)

- [Youth suicide – the warning signs](#)

[All suicide threats are serious. You don't have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...](#)

Support for parents

- [About child, family and relationship services \(video\)](#)
Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services...
- [A Healthy Start to School](#)
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...
- [A Healthy Start to School](#)
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...
- [Children and health services](#)
There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...
- [Community health centres](#)
A community health centre is publicly funded and offers a range of health services to local residents...
- [Early support for a child with disabilities](#)
For children diagnosed with a disability, getting the support they need as early as possible will give them the best chance of minimising the long-term effects of the disability...
- [Family and child support services](#)
There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues...
- [Foster care, permanent care and adoptive parent support services](#)
Provides an overview of the financial and family support services available to foster carers, families providing permanent care and adoptive parents...
- [Maternal and child health services](#)
Your local maternal and child health service will be a great source of support after your baby is born...
- [Parenting centres support families](#)
Early Parenting Centres help families whose children have sleep, feeding or other difficulties...
- [Parenting children through puberty](#)
Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring...
- [Parenting on your own](#)
A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...
- [Parenting support to help prevent abuse](#)
There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children...
- [Phototherapy at Home](#)
Jaundice is very common in newborns, so it's nothing to be too worried about. Treatment is very easy and safe. It all happens using blue light from a special blanket that you wrap your baby in. The...
- [Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services](#)
Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...
- [Relationship support services](#)
You may need outside help to resolve problems and ensure your relationship stays healthy and strong...
- [Year 12 exams - managing stress](#)
Help your child manage stress during exams by getting them to use good study habits, eat well, exercise, relax, sleep and keep things in perspective...

Related Information

- [A Healthy Start to School](#)
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...
- [A Healthy Start to School](#)
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- [No Jab No Play](#)

No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...

- [Adoption](#)

Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...

- [Permanent care](#)

After experiencing abuse, neglect or rejection, many children are slow to put their trust in anyone...

[Home](#)

Related information on other websites

- [National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Government](#)
- [Your Fertility](#)

Support Groups

- [Surrogacy Australia](#)

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Last updated: May 2017

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