



# Preface

Women get lots of information when they have a baby. Often the focus of all this information is the baby. **Maroondah for Mothers** is about you as a mother in your local community. It is a guide for you to services and activities that have a focus on you as a person with your own needs and interests – plus the baby!

The aim of the Guide is to help you to:

- ▲ enjoy being out and about in Maroondah with your baby.
- ▲ put yourself – and your well-being first (at least some of the time!)
- ▲ take advantage of local services that are there to support you as a mother.

Having a baby changes how you see your local area. You see it through different eyes: How easy is it to get around with a pram? Can you park easily at the shopping centre? Which shops are easy to get into with a pram and perhaps other children in tow? Where will you feel welcome as a mother? Are there any change rooms or comfortable places to feed your baby when you're out and about locally? **Out and about with a baby in Maroondah** (page 3) gives you some tips.

Many mothers find being at home with a young baby quite isolating at times. Sometimes it can seem like everyone else is out at work. **Staying in touch, meeting people, making friends** (page 7) lets you know about opportunities for meeting people, especially other mothers in your local area. All babies go through difficult times, and having people you know close by can really help.

**Enjoying yourself: looking after your own health and well-being** (page 10) acknowledges that women need time and support to recover from the birth and also adjust to life with a new baby. This section gives you ideas about ways to look after your own health and enjoy local activities.

**People and places for support and advice** (page 14) gives you information about the range of local services which have a particular focus on supporting mothers and can provide advice or information.

None of the listings in this guide is exhaustive. We hope the information included here will act as a starting point for finding out more about your local area and what it has to offer you as a mother. Share the ideas listed here with other mothers. They are sure to have their own favourite mother friendly services too!

Every effort has been made to find out about and include mother friendly services and businesses, but we are sure to have missed some! The PRISM project is keen to hear about and support other services and businesses in Maroondah who are making special efforts to welcome mothers.

Contact Leanne Skipsey on ☎ 9870 8450 with details.

We hope **Maroondah for Mothers** gives you information that will help to make being a mother easier and more enjoyable.

# Out and about with a baby in Maroondah

With the arrival of a new baby, going down the street or out to shop is not so straight forward as it once was.

*“Everyone who’s had children knows that manoeuvring a baby in a pram can be really frustrating, especially with a toddler and a load of shopping as well, yet I often find myself apologising for requiring extra help.”*

Mothers are entitled to the same convenience and ease of movement that other members of the community enjoy, especially as the role of parenting is such an important one. Do ask when you require extra help or consideration because you have a baby in tow.

## Baby care rooms

When you’re out and about with a baby it’s a comfort to know that there are safe havens where you can feed and change the baby and just to take a break if you want to.

Baby care facilities vary greatly from a simple pull down change facility sometimes included in the disability toilet, to total baby care rooms for parents.

The Nursing Mothers’ Association of Australia (NMAA) has developed criteria for Baby Care Rooms and gives awards to places that meet them. A Baby Care Room symbol is awarded to a facility with:

- a convenient, quiet place to feed in privacy
- comfortable seating
- clean surroundings
- somewhere clean and safe to change nappies
- hot and cold water and drying facilities
- waste disposal facilities
- a smoke free zone
- preferably access for fathers caring for infants, without interfering with the privacy of breastfeeding women.

There is a Baby Care Room which meets these standards in **Myer, Eastland** on Level 3, near the lifts.

Other varied baby care facilities include those at:

**Eastland Shopping Centre** situated on level 2, near Centre Management

**Eastland Shopping Centre** situated on level 2, near McDonalds

**Croydon Shopping Centre** off Main St, near the walk through to the station - enter through the kiosk.

All Maternal and Child Health Centres in Maroondah are places you are welcome to feed and change your baby - even when you’re not coming to see the nurse (see page 14).

Many mothers make use of disability toilets when out and about because they provide enough space for prams and toddlers! Some also have a pull down change table, e.g. at **Ringwood library** (see page 8) or **Wyreena Community Arts Centre** (see page 8).

Community houses are also places where mothers can feed and change babies in a friendly environment (see page 8).



## Breastfeeding your baby in public - your rights explained

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995 mothers have the right to breastfeed their children wherever and whenever they choose. This protection extends to all main areas of public life, including entertainment and food venues, educational institutions, shops, offices and workplaces.

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act it is unlawful for any person to discriminate against you by, for example, requesting that you cease breastfeeding or leave the premises.

If someone does make such a request of you, remind them that your right to breastfeed your child is protected under the Equal Opportunity Act.

If they persist in demanding that you stop breastfeeding, you can lodge a complaint of discrimination against them with the Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission. Since the Equal Opportunity Act was introduced, the Commission has already received and resolved a number of complaints from women who have suffered such discrimination.

For more information about your right to breastfeed in public places, call the Commission on ☎ 1800 134 142 from 10 am to 4 pm Mondays to Fridays.

Adapted with permission of the Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria.

## Pram friendly parking

Some shopping centres provide parking suited to the needs of parents with prams. The spaces are wider allowing space for the pram alongside the car, and are mostly close to entrances to the shops. Some examples are located at:

### Eastland Shopping Centre:

Level 0 - via Adelaide St, turn left into undercover ground level carpark.

Level 1 - Western carpark near Safeway entrance; Eastern carpark, open parking near Bank of Melbourne; Eastern carpark undercover near Australia Post.

Level 2 - Western carpark near Suzanne Grey.

Level 3 - Western carpark near Kmart.

**Ringwood Market** - outside the main entrance.

## Shopping with a baby

Most supermarkets offer home delivery and some will take your order by phone and then deliver. Ask about services available where you shop.

**Safeway at Ringwood** has a number of features designed to make shopping with children easier, including a range of trolleys (e.g. with a baby capsule, toddler seating) a lolly free check out, wide aisles for ease of movement, assistance to take shopping to your car and home delivery.

**Jefferies Family Supermarket** Mc Adams Square, 40 Plymouth Rd, Nth Croydon ☎ 9725 3288

Jefferies offers friendly shopping with a focus on customer service. There is parking close by and the aisles are wide. You can ring or fax your shopping list through, to be home delivered, C.O.D. (free for orders over \$40). Also, see page 5 for home cooked meals' service.

Some shops welcome mothers and children by offering extra services such as pram loan, toys or play areas for children.

Look for stores in Maroondah with a PRISM mother friendly sticker. It means the store has made an effort to make shopping easier for mothers.

**Eastland Shopping Centre** offers a service for parents where they will lend you a pram whilst you are shopping. Prams are available at the service desk on Level 2, near Lincraft.

### **McAdams Square Healthfoods**

Ian and Jan Woods, Shop 14 ,  
McAdams Square, Plymouth Rd  
☎ 9725 9907

Offers nutritious foods for babies & toddlers, with easy parking outside, wide aisles for prams, and a toddlers' play area.

**ABC Shop** Shop 160, Ground Floor  
Eastland Shopping Centre, 171-175  
Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood  
☎ 9879 5094

Children and babies are welcome at the ABC Shop, while you browse through the selection of books, CDs, videos and toys. There's plenty of space for prams and a storytime for children is held on Wednesday mornings, (please call to make a booking).

### **Celebrations Bookshop**

Shop 10 McAdams Square,  
Plymouth Rd, Nth Croydon  
☎ 9725 5933

Celebrations sells books, cards, gifts and a range of other products to pamper and nourish you. To assist mothers and parents whilst shopping, toys are provided for children's play.

### **Tralee Salon**

Shop 4, 204 Warrandyte Rd,  
Ringwood Nth ☎ 9876 3314

This salon takes special care of mothers. Babies and children's needs are catered for: toys are provided, there's plenty of space for prams and parking nearby.

### **Bargain Box Fabrics**

73 Bedford Rd, Ringwood  
☎ 9870 0796

Provides toys for children's play, whilst you shop.

## **Making life easier – services that come to you**

Some days leaving the house can seem impossible, especially if you or the baby are unwell.

*“When I found out about what I could have home delivered I was relieved nappies, groceries, chemist items. I don't have to go through the drama of strapping the baby into the capsule, getting him out, manoeuvring through the shops, and getting everything back to the car and unloaded.”*

Phone the places where you shop to enquire about whether they provide a home delivery service. Apart from supermarket home delivery, there are some other local services you might find helpful.

**Maroondah's Milk** - Lee and Janet Hughes-Gage,  
29 Greengable Court, Croydon Hills ☎ 9722 9577  
(24 hour message bank, calls returned)

Maroondah's Milk is turning back the hands of time in terms of service. This business provides, throughout Maroondah, free home delivery of milk and other dairy products direct from the dairy. Also fresh juice and soy products

**The Flying Greengrocer** - Ian & Michelle Roodhouse  
☎ 9733 0374

The Flying Greengrocer delivers free within Maroondah. Fruit and vegetables delivered from the market direct to you. Also farm fresh free range eggs and freshly squeezed juices.

### **Home cooked meals to order**

Every mother knows what it feels like to run out of steam for cooking dinner. **Jefferies Family Supermarket** offers a cooked to order, home-cooked roast dinner and dessert. Just ring through ☎ 9725 3288 to order by 11.00 am on the day required. Dinners are available Mondays to Fridays and can be delivered with your groceries.

### **Nappy Services**

Some mothers find it really helpful to have nappies delivered, even just for a few weeks: Nappy Wash ☎ 9510 5206  
Nan's Nappies ☎ 9330 2822

### **Home help**

Home help, provided short or long term, can also be a lifesaver. Two services operating in Maroondah are:

**R&J Home Services** ☎ 9879 8996

**Silver Circle** Ask for private home help ☎ 9879 8500

## Public transport with a baby

Using public transport with a baby is not always straightforward. Knowing a bit about local services can be helpful.

For public transport information, call The Met Information Centre on 13 16 38. The Eastern Region Yellow Pages local directory also has a page on public transport.

Other numbers for local timetable information are:

**Croydon Station** ☎ 9610 8874

**Ringwood Station** ☎ 9610 8855

**National Buses** ☎ 9481 8333

Bus drivers will generally provide assistance with getting prams onto buses, or if unable to, they will seek assistance from a passenger. Most people are happy to help, but you may need to ask!

**Telebus** ☎ 9735 3133

This service operates between Croydon station and Wonga Park. Call and they will pick you up from home according to their timetable. Ask for a timetable to be sent to you.

## A train trip to the City

There are frequent trains to the city after peak hour. Phone your local station for details. A one way trip takes about 35 minutes. Free **City Circle trams** ☎ 13 16 38 are an enjoyable way to travel round the city.

In the City, there are **Parents' Rooms** at: **Flinders and Spencer St Stations** for baby changing and feeding.

The parents' room at **David Jones** in Burke St is recommended (includes a microwave oven), and is particularly convenient if you have toddlers or young children.

**Daimaru** at Melbourne Central has recommended parents' facilities too, including microwave oven, boiling water, children's play area, TV and a breastfeeding room.

The **Queen Victoria Women's Centre** at 210 Lonsdale St is a pleasant place to stop and rest and feed the baby in the women's lounge (baby change facilities too), or have a coffee in the Gallery Café.

Occasional childcare is offered at The **Melbourne City Childcare** Centre, 104 A'Beckett St, Melbourne ☎ 9329 9561. Fees \$3.50 per hour at the time of printing. Bookings may be made up to one week in advance.

## Parks, playgrounds, walks and bike tracks

The arrival of a baby is often the time you start to appreciate the local parks and natural surroundings. Getting out and enjoying the local area can be very relaxing and refreshing, especially if you've had a wakeful night. Spending time walking or cycling can be a simple and enjoyable way to unwind and keep fit. Go with the family, have some quiet time out alone or enjoy the company of another mother.

Maroondah has some beautiful natural resources with 13 walking and nature trails in local parks and numerous bike tracks. The best way to find out about these is to get hold of two publications:

**A guide to playgrounds and recreation areas in the City of Maroondah** provides useful information, such as ages the play equipment is suitable for, toilets, free BBQs, bike tracks, nature walks, and sporting facilities.

**Leisure in Maroondah** is a poster map of Maroondah showing parks, bike tracks, community centres etc.

Both publications are available through Maroondah City Council Customer Service Centres: ☎ 9876 9899 (Ringwood) or ☎ 9722 9529 (Croydon)

Two local spots that are great for a walk with the pram, to feed the ducks or for a picnic with friends are:

# Staying in touch, meeting people, making friends

## Ringwood Lake

A major attraction in Maroondah, with shady and peaceful parts for walking and fishing and busy parts with playground, BBQs, tables and seating shaded by gazebos. Parking is on Maroondah highway or in Daisies Hotel car park with direct access to the lake (many mothers find this parking easier with little children).

## Croydon Library Lake

This is a great spot to feed the ducks, with seating provided. Over the road is the Croydon Town Park which has a new timber playground with sound chimes. It's fully fenced, and near a sheltered BBQ facility.

For further general information about our local area, **Maroondah Community Guide** has lots of useful information, phone Public Affairs on ☎ 9871 0390 for a copy.



*"I have lots of friends with children, but none of them had a baby at the same time as me. Before I had Sarah I was working full-time and I didn't know many people in the local area. I felt really isolated at home, so it was great when the maternal and child health nurse introduced me to another mother who lived just a few blocks away. We went to the park together, and now do something together with the babies almost every week."*

New babies bring both joys and difficulties, and it's valuable to have people around you to share these with.

Renewing acquaintances, reconnecting with family, expanding our range of friends - all these can be important at a time when life with a baby is often very demanding and sometimes isolating.

Sometimes friendships change when you have a baby. It can be a good time to make new friends, especially with other local mothers who understand what it's like to be at home with a new baby.

Knowing other mothers with young children in your area can make a big difference to how you feel and cope. They can be someone to ring when you've had a bad night, someone to go out with (to the pool, cinema or park), someone to talk to and someone to share childcare with so that you both can get a chance to have a little bit of time out.

## Contacting other mothers

**First Time Mothers' Groups** run by your Maternal and Child Health Nurse can be a good way to get to know other mothers locally. Maternal and Child Health Nurses are also happy to put you in touch with other mothers who live close by (see page 14 for Maternal and Child Health details).

## Local support groups

Getting in touch with a local support group might also be a way to meet other mothers with similar interests or concerns. See page 15 for a listing of local support groups in Maroondah.

## Playgroups

Joining a playgroup can be a great way to meet other mothers, develop new friendships and break up the daily routine when you are at home with a baby. As your baby grows, it's also fun for them to meet other babies and older children.

For details of playgroups in your area, contact **Playgrouping Victoria**, ☎ 9388 1599. They can put you in touch with your current area contact.

Your Maternal and Child Health Nurse also has a list of local playgroups and some playgroups advertise on Maternal and Child Health Centre notice boards.

## Community houses and community centres

Community houses are for everyone. They are places where people come together, share or gain skills and knowledge, or find support. Activities include classes such as creative writing, singing, meditation, yoga, or computer training, a variety of arts and crafts like pottery, leadlighting or painting and groups, including bush walking, playgroups and social groups.

Such classes and activities also offer the opportunity for welcome adult company – sometimes lacking when you are at home with a young baby. Most houses offer on site low-cost childcare to give parents a break.

Local community houses are:

**Arrabri Community House** Allambanan Drive, Bayswater North ☎ 9720 3778

**Central Ringwood Community Centre Inc** Bedford Park, Bedford Park Rd, Ringwood ☎ 9870 2602

**Glen Park Community Centre** Glen Park Rd, Nth Bayswater ☎ 9720 5097

**North Ringwood Community House Inc** Oban Rd, Ringwood North ☎ 9876 3421

**Yarrunga Community Centre** Croydon Hills Drive, Croydon Hills ☎ 9722 8942

**Wyreena Community Arts Centre** 13-23 Hull Rd, Croydon ☎ 9725 4611

## Local libraries are great meeting places

Both Ringwood and Croydon libraries welcome mothers and babies. The children's areas have comfortable seating for mothers to feed their babies and staff are sensitive to the needs of mothers.

**Story time** provides a wonderful opportunity to meet other local mothers and babies. Three age groups are catered for:

**Story time for tinies** offering stories, songs and rhymes for babies and children from 6mths to 2 years (Ringwood - every Tues 10.15am)

**Toddler time** for 18 mths-3yrs (Croydon - every Fri 11.00am)

**Storytime for preschoolers** (Ringwood – 2nd Thurs of the month 9-11am and 4th Wed of the month 7- 9 pm; Croydon – 1st Tues of the month 9-11am and 3rd Sat of the month 10am-12pm)

**Ringwood Library** 4 Melbourne Street Mall, Ringwood ☎ 9870 0177

Ringwood Library is well situated for a visit whilst shopping at Eastland Shopping Centre. Parking is nearby with 2 hour parking at the top level off Ringwood St or the undercover carpark below, enter from Bond St. Pram access is via the ramp past Fast Pasta. The library also has a pull down change table in the disabled toilet.

**Croydon Library** Civic Square, Croydon (behind Safeway) ☎ 9724 3232

Croydon Library is a great spot for an outing. Beside the library is a large pond where feeding the ducks is a favourite pastime and on the other side of Mount Dandenong Rd is Croydon Town Park (see page 7). The library has a disabled toilet which can take a pram and staff say it is fine to feed and change babies in the library.

## Toy Libraries

Many mothers drop in regularly with children, so visiting the toy library can be a great way to meet other mothers. Being on duty also provides an opportunity to get to know other people locally, (people are rostered on with 2-6 others). Toy libraries offer an extensive range of toys, games, music, dress-ups, puzzles and tapes - all for borrowing!

**Croydon Toy library** is located at Keystone Hall, Civic Square, Croydon

Contact: Roslyn Robinson  
☎ 9879 0972

**Maroondah Toy Library** is located at Scout Hall, Hubbard Reserve, Evelyn Road, Ringwood  
Contact: Jenny Curtis ☎ 9870 8953  
or Liz Bruhn ☎ 9874 1039

## Meet another mother for a cuppa

Coffee shops can be a great place to take a break, to meet people and enjoy the pleasure of having someone wait on you.

Cafes and restaurants are becoming more aware of the needs of mothers with young children. Some provide space to move around with a pram, toilets with a change table, high chairs, play areas for children, staff willing to heat bottles and a welcoming atmosphere.

Look out for PRISM mother-friendly stickers in cafe windows.

A few of the mother and baby friendly cafes and restaurants in Maroondah are listed below. Contact Maroondah City Council on ☎ 9871 0278 to request a copy of 'Dining out made easy in Maroondah' for other ideas.

**The Conservatory Tea Rooms** 13-23 Hull Rd, Croydon.  
☎ 9725 4611

Attached to Wyreena Community Arts Centre, the Conservatory Tea rooms are set in a classic English glass conservatory. Overlooking gardens, it is a pleasant and relaxing setting for mothers. There's plenty of parking, easy access and space for prams, baby change facilities, and for older children, a playground nearby. Some mothers have already discovered it as a great place to come with other mothers! On Wednesdays between 10 and 11.30 am mothers are particularly invited to get together (with or without babies) and take some time out over a cuppa.

**All Smiles Florist Café** Shop 1&2, 10-14 Railway Ave, Ringwood East. ☎ 9879 2855

All Smiles offers a taste of the inner city in the suburbs. It has a colourful, welcoming atmosphere where you can dine inside amongst the flowers or outside. There's plenty of space for prams and it's a friendly place to meet with other mothers.

**Spikes Café at Ringwood Public Golf Course**

352 Canterbury Rd, Ringwood ☎ 9876 8049

Spikes Café has plenty of space for prams and welcomes mothers to take their time over a cuppa with each other. The picturesque views over the golf course create a relaxing atmosphere.

**Canticle Bakery** McAdams Square, Plymouth Rd Nth Croydon ☎ 9723 3717

Lovely woodfired baking and a relaxed environment for a cuppa. Sidewalk dining makes it easy with a pram.

**Chili's Texas Grill** Lake Centre  
293 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood  
☎ 9876 0711

Friendly casual dining, spacious for prams, has a baby change facility, and is considerate of the needs of mothers.

# Enjoying yourself – looking after your own health and well-being

As mothers, most of us are so busy looking after the family's health that looking after ourselves doesn't always happen.

Yet your own health and well-being needs are equally important, and you deserve to spend some time enjoying and looking after yourself, as well as other members of the family. Caring for your health and well-being may involve recreational and leisure activities, nurturing/relaxing, or time spent stimulating your mind and learning a new skill - whatever suits you best.

It's not always easy to organise time free from other responsibilities, but sometimes partners, family, or friends really appreciate the opportunity to be involved in caring for the baby. Paid childcare may be another option - there is a range of childcare available to meet differing needs.

Mothers often say that a little time out for themselves on a regular basis makes a big difference to how they feel and actually contributes to enjoying their baby even more.

Here are just a few ideas about ways you might take time to look after your own well-being.

## Recreation and leisure: facilities and activities

Getting back to or starting new activities after you have a baby can be a bit daunting at first. The following tips from other mothers might be helpful:

*"Go with someone else"* Trying out new activities with a friend, your partner, family member or neighbour makes it a lot more fun!

*"Drop in first to check it out"* Recreation centres are happy for you to drop in, have a look around, ask questions about the activities and instructors, and what arrangements there are for your baby.

*"Letting the instructor know it's your first visit"* so you get some extra support and encouragement"

*"Make the most of the people around you who want to help"* This might involve someone else caring for the baby while you have some time out, or going with another mother to attend an activity together and share the baby care.

A casual game of tennis with a friend or playing netball with other mothers can be a good way to keep active and do something enjoyable. Maroondah has many recreation and sporting centres to choose from:

### Croydon Leisure Centre

Civic Square, Croydon ☎ 9725 3311

Offers a range of activities: gymnasium, aerobics, tennis, squash, basketball, netball, volleyball, circuit classes, gymnastics, spa and sauna. A crèche is available Mon- Fri mornings with qualified staff. There's also a cafeteria.

### Ringwood Fitness Centre

20 Station St, Ringwood ☎ 9870 4337

A family business offering squash, raquetball, aerobics, circuit and personalised programs. Childcare is provided Mon-Fri mornings. Free tea and coffee facilities. Beginners welcome.

### Maroondah Indoor Sports Stadium 362 - 378 Canterbury Rd, Ringwood ☎ 9876 8399

Facilities include basketball, netball and volleyball courts. Daytime and night competitions (beginners welcome), fitness coaching, introduction to basketball skills, childcare facilities, and café. Plenty of space for mothers and babies/children to get together over a cuppa after a fitness class or a game.

### Ringwood Aquatic Centre Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood ☎ 9870 0519

This is an all weather facility. Water aerobics classes are offered, and a health and activities pool is ideal for water familiarisation, light hydrotherapy and exercise.

### **Croydon Memorial Pool**

Springfield Avenue, Croydon  
☎ 9724 3230

Heated outdoor 50 metre and toddler pool open November through March.

### **AMF Ringwood Tenpin Bowling Centre**

79 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood ☎ 9870 4888

Full ten pin bowling facility. The centre offers free childcare (daytime and evening) to league players. There's also a café.

### **Ringwood Public Golf Course**

352 Canterbury Rd, Ringwood  
☎ 98768049

There is an 18 hole par 70 golf course, a light meals area, and social lounge 'pokie free' Open 7 days 10am-Till dark. There's a great café too (see page 9).

### **Athletics tracks**

For mothers who like to run, there are athletics tracks in Proclamation Park, (New St Ringwood) and in Town Park in Croydon.

## **Relaxation, going for walks, nurturing yourself**

Just making some time each day for relaxation can be a real help in coping with the demands of a baby – even more so, if someone else can care for the baby while you take a bath, read a book, go for a walk or get out for coffee.

Take the opportunity for a walk with the pram when the weather's good or make a regular time to go walking with a friend (see page 6 for parks and places to go).

Some women find having a regular massage, or doing yoga are great ways to relax and renew their energies. Some local possibilities are:

### **Inspiration Centre of Wholistic Wellbeing**

34 Railway Avenue, East Ringwood ☎ 9876 8559

Inspiration provides facials, aromatherapy and relaxation massage. Mothers and babies are very welcome, with space for prams and handy parking.

### **Ringwood School of Yoga**

Suite 1, 1st Floor, 44 Main St, Croydon ☎ 9870 2248

Hatha yoga is an integrated system of physical exercises, breathing techniques, and relaxation practices.

### **Massage Therapy for Women**

Fiona Phillips ☎ 9878 5537 Mobile 0418 539219 (anytime)

As a mother, Fiona is aware of how difficult it is to get out with a new baby. So she comes to you, allowing you to relax in your own home after the massage.

### **Jane Chesneau Aromatherapy and Health Care**

2/39 Campbell St, Heathmont ☎ 9879 7037

Therapeutic, relaxation and aromatherapy massage is offered and available in your home.

### **Natskin Beauty Therapy, Massage and Spa Clinic**

Shop 2, Eastland Shopping centre 171-175 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood ☎ 9870 3090

All sorts of beauty therapy and massage including aromatherapy, stress massage and pampering packages. Babies welcome, parking handy, easy pram access.

## **Adult classes and courses**

Being at home with a baby can be an opportunity to explore classes and courses in your local area. On site childcare is often available and may make it possible for you to have some time out to learn a new skill or undertake further training - or at some venues you can have your baby with you.

### **Community houses and community centres**

There is a range of activities and courses offered (see page 8).

**Womens Health East** See page 14 for the courses offered.

**Swinburne TAFE** Croydon campus, 12-50 Norton Rd, Croydon

☎ 9210 1100 A broad range of courses is available and childcare is offered on site. For course information ☎ 1300 368 777.

## Going to the movies

This can be a relaxing change from the daily routine at home, especially if you go with a friend. Some cinemas are now holding morning sessions, specifically for parents, where babies and children are welcome, mobile children and crying are allowed!! The sessions are called nursery, or cry baby sessions. Cinemas closest to Maroondah that hold these sessions are **Village Cinemas at Knox City**.

## Care for the baby, while you have some time out

*"I use childcare once a week to have a break. I can go into any shop I like and I get more done in those few hours than in a week. The older kids love it and have come out of their shells. They are starting to learn that they can play with others and that they can have more than one friend. Sometimes just the older kids go to childcare and I get to spend some quality time with my baby."*

Time to yourself! As mothers we often think this will never happen again. Considering various types of care for your baby (or older children) can be one way of getting some well deserved time out for yourself.

Friends and family are sometimes just waiting to be asked to mind the baby, or you may like to try formal childcare. Parents use childcare for a range of reasons, including having valuable time out on a regular or occasional basis, work related care, time to attend appointments, and for extending social and play opportunities for children.

Phone the **Child Care Access Hotline** on ☎ 1800 670 305 for a copy of "Your guide to childcare". They can also tell you about government financial assistance with childcare costs. Ask other mothers too about the services they have used locally.

## Occasional Care

Sometimes you may want childcare for just a few hours. Occasional Care provides short periods of care for children under school age. Sessions are usually up to three hours, but what is available varies. Contact individual centres for details about bookings, costs, and the forms you need to fill in.

Occasional care is available at:

### Maroondah Occasional Day Care Centre

15 Civic Square, Croydon ☎ 9725 5359

Council affiliated occasional childcare is available 9am - 4pm, school term only.

### Sage Cottage Occasional Childcare

Warrawong Day Care Kindergarten, Grey St, East Ringwood ☎ 9870 2780

Occasional childcare is available between 8.45am-12.45pm Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri.

### Knaith Rd Childcare Centre Inc

Knaith Rd, Ringwood East ☎ 9870 6966

A non-profit, community managed child care centre for children aged 0-6 years. Ring to book between 9.30am-3.30pm Mon – Fri. Ask for their brochure on what to look for in quality childcare.

### North Ringwood Community Children's Centre Inc

Norwood Reserve, Warrandyte Road, Nth Ringwood ☎ 9879 2875  
Session times are 9.00am-12.00pm and 1.00pm- 4.00pm,

### Swinburne TAFE Childcare Centre

Croydon Campus, 12-50 Norton Rd, Croydon ☎ 9213 6875

Offers childcare to the general community as well as for students. Sessions are 8.00am -1.00pm or 1.00pm -6.00pm.

## Community Houses

Ask at your local house about occasional care (see page 8).

### Family day care - home based childcare

The Maroondah Family Day Care Scheme is a network of registered and experienced carers who provide care and activities in their own homes for other people's children. Contact Louk Theil on ☎ 9871 0254 for further details.

### Centre based care - for regular full time or part-time care

An extensive range of childcare centres is listed in the Maroondah Community Guide available through Council by phoning Public Affairs on ☎ 9871 0222.

# People and places for support and advice

*“Just talking - just having someone outside the family, who listens and actually hears what I’m saying. It really helped me to talk through all sorts of things with my maternal and child health nurse - like the constant crying which meant no sleep for any of us, my milk supply, or lack of it, and how to juggle the needs of my toddler on top of a new baby.”*

Sometimes looking after a baby can be very demanding and you may feel like you are crossing uncharted waters.

Listed below are a range of local services and groups which you might find helpful. You may need to contact more than one to find what you are looking for.

## Maternal and Child Health Service

There are nine Maternal and Child Health Centres in the City of Maroondah. The Maternal and Child Health nurses are interested in your health and well-being as well as your baby's welfare, and they are happy to help with queries you may have about your own health needs. The nurses have had many years of experience working with mothers and they know just how hard being a mother can be at times.

Nurses offer groups to first time parents. These are a great opportunity to meet other mothers of young children, share experiences and stories, and learn more about caring for yourself and your baby.

Nurses are in contact with many families locally, and are pleased to introduce mothers to other mothers who may live nearby.

Nurses also monitor child health and development from 0 to 6 years; discuss and arrange child immunisation; and offer help in understanding child behaviour, and in developing parenting skills. They may suggest referrals to other health professionals for you or the baby where appropriate.

Mothers are encouraged to find the nurse with whom they feel comfortable – you do not need to go to your closest Centre.

After hours appointments and non appointment (drop-in) sessions are offered at some centres.

For more details about the Service, contact the Maternal and Child Health team leader, Brenda Armstrong on ☎ 9871 0361. For help after hours, see details on back cover.

## Choosing a GP

*“ I seem to have been at the doctor’s surgery every few weeks since Melanie was born. There always seems to be something – ear infections, mastitis, thrush, coughs and colds...I’m exhausted dealing with it but I’ve really got to know my doctor better. It’s made such a difference.”*

As with all practitioners you see regularly, it is important that your GP is someone you feel comfortable talking with. It may be helpful to ask your family, friends and other mothers which GP they visit. Finding the right GP for you might take a little time.

Mothers have offered these tips to make the most of your doctor's appointments:

- make a longer appointment if you feel you need more time to talk
- don't feel as though you have to hurry – take the time you need.
- write down your questions – it's easy to forget when you're there.

With a new baby it can be handy to know about after hours services. Speak to your GP about after hours arrangements.

Or contact: GP After Hours Service based at Mitcham Hospital ☎ 9210 3146, or casualty at Maroondah ☎ 9871 3333, Box Hill ☎ 9895 3219, Knox ☎ 9210 7400 or William Angliss ☎ 9764 6111 Hospitals.

## Womens Health East

28 Warrandyte Rd, Ringwood  
☎ 9879 2199

Womens Health East provides a range of services, including:

**Wellwoman's clinic:** medical service for sexual and reproductive health. **HealthLine:** telephone information, support and referral on women's health and well-being issues, ☎ 1800 069967.

**Young women's clinic:** for sexual health issues run by a women's health nurse and a female doctor (bulk-billed).

**Courses and workshops:** for women, including relaxation and stress management, women and their sexual cycle, anger management, self esteem and assertiveness.

**Library:** lending books, videos, brochures and women's health kits. Membership is free and regular newsletters are sent to all members.



## Local support groups

Your Maternal and Child Health Nurse may be able to assist you with details of specialised support groups (eg if you have a multiple birth or a child with special needs). Here are some general ones for mothers.

### First Time Mothers Groups

These are organised and resourced by the Maternal and Child Health Nurses, and are great opportunities for first time mothers to share experiences with other mothers over a cup of coffee. Groups meet for eight weeks and your nurse will let you know when the next group is starting. Many mothers develop a network of friends through attending and continue to meet after the eight weeks.

### Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA)

Nursing Mothers provide information and practical assistance for all women to make informed choices about feeding their babies. A library, telephone counselling, and a casserole service is provided for members, as well as regular discussion meetings and coffee mornings. For Ringwood group, contact Stephanie ☎ 9870 8431 and for Croydon/Lilydale, Maryanne ☎ 9727 1098.

### Mothers' Support Group

This group is for mothers who are feeling anxious, tired, isolated or depressed. It provides an opportunity to meet with other mothers who feel or have felt the same way. Contact Sharon on ☎ 9723 7932 or Kay Vine at North Ringwood Maternal and Child Health Centre on ☎ 9726 6157. Child care is provided, bookings required. Contact Carol on ☎ 9879 3933.

### PaNda Support Group (Post and Antenatal Depression Association)

Maroondah Social and Community Health Centre  
☎ 9879 3933

A support group for women experiencing depression after the birth of a baby. Meets on the second Wednesday each month, 12.30-2pm.

### Mother and Baby Group

For mothers experiencing difficulties. Contact Anne Cumming on ☎ 9879 6936 or Sophie Constantinides on ☎ 98709788. Heathmont Maternal and Child Health Centre - Mondays 10-12noon.

### **Sole Parenting Support Program**

North Ringwood Community House, 120 Oban Rd, Ringwood North. Contact Janet Eckhardt on ☎ 9876 3421  
Counselling, information, referral and support group.

### **Starting Out**

5 Pitt St, Ringwood ☎ 9879 2173  
A program for pregnant and parenting young women where you can meet and talk with other young women in a friendly environment.

### **Family support and parenting services**

Parenting can place enormous strains on relationships and finding the balance between children, partner and time for yourself can be an ongoing challenge. You may be dealing with step family dynamics or with sole parenting or you may have a very unsettled baby. Having support can make a huge difference.

A range of organisations may be helpful, here are just a few.

### **Maroondah Settling Day Stay Program**

Sometimes mothers of very unsettled babies benefit from some hands on assistance. This program operates from the Ringwood Maternal and Child Health Centre. Speak to your Maternal and Child Health Nurse to make a booking. This service is for Maroondah residents and is free.

### **Family Care Sisters - Rest Home for Mothers**

69 Alto Ave, Croydon ☎ 9723 6797

A service for mothers who are exhausted, recovering after surgery, or requiring time out from family. A restful and relaxing environment allows recuperation, support from staff and the companionship of other mothers. Bookings are essential, phone Mon- Fri. Costs: there is a set daily rate or by donation.

### **Parentzone**

16 Railway Place, Ringwood ☎ 9876 8945

Provides free information and support for parents of children from birth to 18 years. The service is for ALL parents, including parents of all cultures, parents with a disability or chronic illness and parents of children with special needs. Parentzone can provide information about local parenting courses, support groups and services, as well as offering the chance to meet and chat with other parents.

### **Maroondah Social and Community Health Centre**

75 Patterson St, East Ringwood ☎ 9879 3933

Counselling and family support, including: **Lunch at one** a weekly lunchtime support group with childcare, for parents having particular difficulties with parenting (speak with Carol).

### **Anglicare Outer East- Family Support**

22 Croydon Rd, Croydon ☎ 9725 1622

Counselling, family support and groups for parents.

### **Family Violence**

For support and assistance if you are feeling unsafe in your own home due to the actions of a current or past partner, including verbal or physical abuse. Assistance to make your own choices in achieving a safe space for you and your children. Contact **Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Service** ☎ 9870 5939

## Information Services

The following services provide information on women's health and well-being.

**Women's Health East HealthLine**  
☎ 1800 069 967

Information, support and referral on women's health and well-being issues.

**Women's Health Victoria**  
Queen Victoria Women's Centre,  
210 Lonsdale St, Melbourne  
Health information line,  
☎ 9662-3742

**Women's Health Information Centre**

Royal Women's Hospital,  
132 Grattan St, Carlton,  
☎ 9344 2007

Information on women's health issues, provided by midwives.

**WIRE (Women's Information and Referral Exchange)**  
☎ 9654 6844 or 1800 136 570  
free call Mon - Fri 9am-7pm

**Council of Single Mothers and their Children** ☎ 9654 0622  
Mon - Thurs 9.30 - 1.00pm

Information, referral and support, share housing register, quarterly newsletter, free membership.

## After hours and Crisis numbers

**Maternal and Child Health After Hours Telephone service**  
Mon - Fri 6pm till midnight. Weekends and public holidays  
12pm till midnight ☎ 9853 0844

**Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia [NMAA]**  
24 hour Breastfeeding Helpline ☎ 9885-0653

**Parentline**

☎ 13 22 89 24 hours every day

Asking for help is often the hardest part of being a parent. Parentline is a confidential 24 hour telephone information service offering advice, and referral. Parents who are deaf, hearing impaired or speech impaired may call TTY 13 63 88.

**Parents Anonymous**

☎ 9654-4654

A counselling line to help parents concerned about child abuse

**Vic Womens Domestic Violence Crisis Service**

☎ 9329 8433 or 1800 015188

Telephone counselling (24 hrs) and crisis accommodation

**Centre Against Sexual Assault**

After hours (24 hrs crisis line) 93491766 or 1800 806292

**Wesley Contact Centre**

Assistance with emergency accommodation and material aid

☎ 9879 5344

**G Line**

☎ 1800 622 112

Free crisis counselling and referral service for gambling problems

