



# WALKING INITIATIVES ACROSS THE LODDON CAMPASPE REGION

Healthy Loddon Campaspe funded and coordinated a range of walking-based initiatives designed to encourage people of all ages to be active, explore their local communities and connect with the outdoors. Programs including **StoryWalks, Adventure Bingo, WonderWalk and Walk This Way** provided free, accessible and self-paced opportunities for residents to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.

The initiatives were promoted through Healthy Loddon Campaspe communication channels, local councils, partner organisations, schools, libraries, social media, newsletters and community networks. Activities were designed to appeal to a broad audience, including families, children, older adults and people who may not typically participate in structured sport or recreation.



Healthy Loddon Campaspe collaborated with local councils, libraries, schools, neighbourhood houses and community organisations to deliver walking experiences that encouraged movement, learning and exploration. By utilising existing community spaces such as parks, trails, streetscapes and public open spaces, the projects created accessible opportunities for people to be active close to home.

## SUCCESSES

### PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The walking initiatives attracted strong community interest and participation across the region. The flexible and self-guided nature of the activities allowed participants to take part at a time and pace that suited their individual circumstances, helping to reduce common barriers to physical activity.

### ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

These projects were free and easy to access, requiring little or no equipment and allowing people of varying ages, abilities and fitness levels to participate. The activities encouraged intergenerational participation, with families, friends, walking groups and community members able to take part together while exploring their local area.



## BROADER BENEFITS

Beyond supporting physical activity, the walking initiatives provided important social and mental wellbeing benefits. Participants were encouraged to spend time outdoors, connect with family and friends, and engage with their local community in meaningful ways. StoryWalks promoted family connection and literacy, while WonderWalk encouraged mindfulness, curiosity and observation of the natural environment. Adventure Bingo inspired exploration and discovery through fun challenges, and Walk This Way supported people to establish regular walking habits while increasing confidence to be active in their local community.

Walking also provides valuable mental health benefits by reducing stress, improving mood and creating opportunities for social connection. By encouraging residents to walk together, explore local environments and participate in community-based activities, the initiatives helped strengthen community connectedness and support overall wellbeing.

## CHALLENGES

Maintaining awareness and participation across diverse communities required ongoing promotion and collaboration with local partners. Weather conditions, competing community priorities and varying levels of community awareness also influenced participation rates. However, the flexible and adaptable nature of the initiatives allowed communities to tailor activities to local needs and circumstances, helping to maximise participation and impact.

## SUSTAINABILITY & ONGOING BENEFITS

One of the key strengths of these initiatives was their ability to create lasting impacts beyond the initial delivery period. Many StoryWalk installations remained available for ongoing community use, while Adventure Bingo, WonderWalk and Walk This Way resources could be reused, adapted and promoted by local organisations. By encouraging people to explore local walking routes and public spaces, the projects helped establish positive habits that can contribute to long-term physical activity, social connection and improved wellbeing.



The Healthy Loddon Campaspe initiative is supported by the Victorian State Government