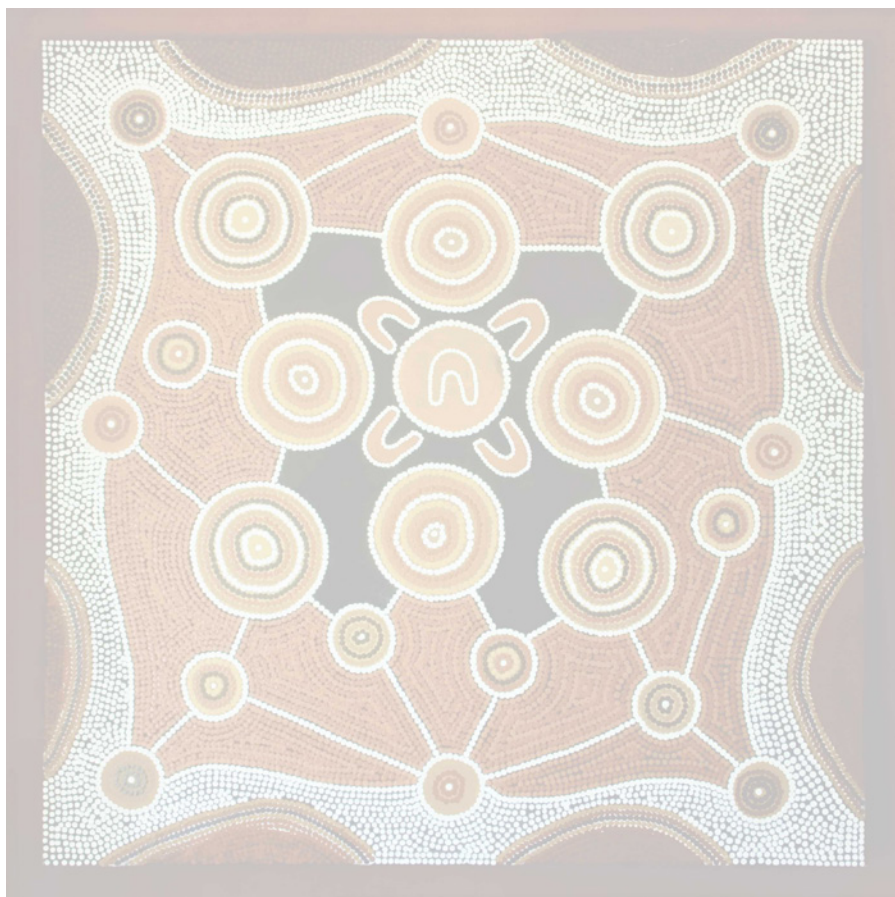




Victorian Family Preservation and Reunification Response Program (VFPRR) Information Booklet

umfc

Supporting and empowering
families towards lasting change



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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians and Elders past and present, who have raised children, taught them about the world around them and gave them the gift of culture and language. We recognize our part in bringing fairness to our Indigenous brothers and sisters and creating a community where all children, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can 'grow up strong'.



Supporting and empowering families towards lasting change

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Who is UMFC and what do we stand for?



UMFC was established in 1979 and, over almost five decades, has transformed from a small-scale agency into our region's leading support service for children and families.

We take pride in our ability to respond to the needs of our local community. We offer a diverse range of services and programs that are designed to strengthen, nurture and support children, young people and families.



“We take pride in our ability
to respond to the needs of our
local community.”

- Child and Family Services
- Care Services (Foster Care and Kinship Care)
- Carers, Aged and Disability Services
- Hume Riverina Community Legal Services
- Family Relationship Services (Post Separation Services)
- Financial Counselling
- The Orange Door

Victorian Family Preservation, Reunification & Response Program

UMFC's Victorian Family Preservation, Reunification and Response Program (VFPRR) aims to support and empower you and your family towards long lasting change.

This is achieved with an initial phase of rapid, intensive, and flexible support delivered by the VFPRR Practitioner by completing in home visits for approximately 1 hour at a time, up to three times per week (approximately 200 hours).

Our VFPRR team will work alongside you and your family to create or enhance supportive and lasting networks and resources to meet the needs of your family.

You and your children will be supported to engage in with other services including:

- Medical Services
- Mental Health Services
- AOD Services
- Family Violence Services
- Education and any other supports that your family needs.

This intensive response is then followed by a stepping out process where the VFPRR Practitioner supports you and your family to transition to other services or community supports of a less intensive nature (approximately 40 hours).



Further information on VFPRR

VFPRR provides an approach for your children and family to have the right support, when and where you need it most and with the right team of people.

We provide a partnership between UMFC and Child Protection to support your family to build capacity to keep your children safe through two key objectives:

- **Family preservation -**
creating safety at home and preventing removal and placement into care.
- **Family reunification -**
creating safety so children can be returned to their home from out of home care.

Your VFPRR Practitioner will work with your family to create safe and nurturing environments for your children. You will be supported through therapeutic interventions and practical supports to help reach not only your short-term goals but also to help your family thrive into the future.

Through this program, an individually developed Child and Family Action Plan will be created with participation from each family member, including the children. VFPRR is a child led program that understands that children of all ages should be involved in the decision making and change in their lives.

Parents/carers and Children will be invited to participate in care team meetings to ensure you and your children are the leaders in the change. Care teams are held with any services and support people you may have involved with your family that you feel are relevant to include such as CP Practitioners, schools/child care, Mental Health workers, AOD workers, extended family members, carers and any other relevant support people.



Please note that the services and support we provide is tailored to meet the specific needs and circumstances of your family.

Rights, Responsibilities, Privacy and Confidentiality

What are your rights?

When working with UMFC's VFPRR you have the right to:

- be treated with respect and courtesy at all times
- have your values, beliefs and culture acknowledged
- know what happens to your information and who will see it
- provide feedback at any time.

Your practitioner is responsible for:

- being understanding of your individual needs
- respecting your confidentiality
- listening to you and your family, without judgment
- being open with you about any worries that they may have for your family
- seeking your permission for referrals and potential discussions with other professionals before these occur
- following up on your questions and doing what they say they will do.



What does UMFC's VFPRR expect from you?

We reasonably expect that you will:

- treat staff with respect and courtesy at all times
- respect the privacy of any other persons you may learn are attending the service
- notify us as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a planned appointment
- be active in the development of your family goals and follow up with tasks needed to achieve these goals
- provide accurate and complete information about your current situation and worries
- be responsible for your choices and behaviours.

Why is my personal information collected?

When you receive a service from Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC), we create a file for you that contains your personal information.

We only collect information that is relevant in providing you with the most appropriate service. We do so in accordance with the law and government funding requirements.

You have the right to not provide us with your personal information (however, if this is the case, we may be restricted in our ability to offer you a service). Please also note that your de-identified information may still be used for UMFC research, planning, and quality control purposes.

Is my information secure?

Your file is stored securely at all times. Any electronic data is secured by restricted access.

We have strict guidelines about who can see and use your information. All our personnel treat your information with the utmost confidentiality.

Can I access and update my information?

You may ask to access the information held in your file. You may ask to view the file, to obtain a summary of all or parts of it, or to obtain your information.

Sometimes, you may not be able to see all of your file, but the reasons why will always be explained to you. You may ask to update any information in your file that is not accurate or current.

Consent to share information

It is often important for your UMFC practitioner to share information with other services so that you and your children receive the best possible support. In such instances, we will share your information through mutual agreement and discussion with you. At times, it may be required by law for us to share your information without your consent.

This might include:

- suspected child abuse or child at risk
- providing information to a court through subpoenas
- if we believe you are at risk of harming yourself or others.

What if I have more questions?

We encourage you to talk to your practitioner in the first instance. If you have further questions or are unhappy with the way your personal information is being managed, please contact our Privacy Contact officer. You may make a formal complaint if you remain dissatisfied.



Privacy Contact Officer – Quality and Risk Manager Tel: 02 6055 8000.

Joint Work with DFFH Child Protection

You can only be referred to the VFPRR Program by DFFH Child Protection. There will be a period of joint work where your family is supported by both UMFC VFPRR Practitioner and your Child Protection (CP) Practitioner.

This joint work may occur for part or all of the engagement period with the VFPRR Program depending on the court orders. During this time VFPRR Practitioner and CP Practitioner will be in communication on a weekly basis to ensure that your family's support needs are being met.

The VFPRR Practitioner will send a weekly summary to the CP Practitioner outlining what work has been undertaken between your family and the VFPRR Practitioner.



This summary will share information including what is going well, worries, and what future steps are going to be taken to reduce the worries. You will be made aware of all information shared with CP in these summaries.

During the joint work period you will be invited to participate in care team meetings which will include your VFPRR Practitioner, CP Practitioner and any other services you feel are relevant to include.

Feedback and Complaints

Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC) welcomes all feedback. Feedback tells us what's working and what's not, and helps us to make sure we're providing high-quality and suitable services.

If you're not satisfied with any aspect of our service, we encourage you to raise any concerns directly with your practitioner in the first instance. At all times, we will try to work with you to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Steps to Making a Complaint:

Step 1:

Write or speak with your UMFC practitioner or therapist or their team leader. You may use an advocate, interpreter, or support person to assist you if required. Please ask us if you need help to organise this assistance.

Step 2:

The practitioner or therapist or their team leader will let you know what they will do to investigate your concern and how long this will take. In most cases, they will investigate and respond to you verbally and in writing within 21 days.

Step 3:

If you're not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you may ask for a review from a more senior UMFC staff member such as a Service Manager, an Executive Director or the Chief Executive Officer.

If you wish to take the matter further, you may contact:

Child Safety Commissioner

1300 782 978 • www.ccp.vic.gov.au

Department of Education

1300 333 231 • www.education.vic.gov.au

Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (Vic)

1300 884 706 • www.dffh.vic.gov.au

Department of Social Services

1300 653 227 • complaints@dss.vic.gov.au

Victorian Ombudsman

1800 806 314 • www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au

NSW Ombudsman

1800 451 524 • www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner

1300 796 344 • www.lsb.vic.gov.au

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

1800 035 544 • www.ndiscommission.gov.au

UMFC Board Chair

PO Box 725, Wodonga, Victoria 3689

Victims of Crime Commissioner Victoria

1800 010 017

www.victimsofcrimecommissioner.vic.gov.au

Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner

1300 006 842 • www.ovic.vic.gov.au

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

1300 363 992 • www.oaic.gov.au



Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC) Telephone: 02 6055 8000
Email: admin@umfc.com.au PO Box 725 Wodonga VIC 3689

Ending Involvement

Our services are voluntary and you have the right to leave our service at any time.

You may leave the service due to:

- no longer needing support from Child and Family Services
- leaving the local area
- transferring to another agency, which is able to meet your needs more appropriately.

When work is completed with UMFC 's VFPRR Program, there is a closure procedure which your practitioner will discuss with you.

Once the VFPRR Program has closed, you are welcome to re-refer through The Orange Door if you need further support at any time in the future.



The Orange Door Ovens Murray 1800 271 157
or email oma@orangedoor.vic.gov.au



Consent and Acknowledgment



I (name),

have discussed and understand the information provided about my involvement with UMFC's VFPRR, including:

- ☐ **Rights and responsibilities**
- ☐ **Privacy and confidentiality**
- ☐ **Feedback and complaints procedures**
- ☐ **Consent**

It has also been explained to me that Consent includes sharing information not only at the time of referral but also sharing information during my VFPRR involvement.

Signed: Date:

My Practitioner is (name),

..... (phone)

Available days

Important Phone Numbers

Police / Ambulance / Fire: 000

Call in an emergency

Parent Line: 13 22 89

Phone counselling for parents and carers of children aged 0-18 years (Victoria)

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Mental Health crisis support, suicide prevention and support 24/7

Maternal & Child Health Line: 13 22 29

Information, support and advice to Victorian families with children from birth to school age

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

Phone and online support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way www.mensline.org.au

Kids Help Line: 1800 551 800

Confidential and anonymous phone and online counselling for young people aged 5-25 years www.kidshelpline.com.au

The Orange Door Ovens Murray: 1800 271 157

Providing intake, information and advice for families in need of support with the wellbeing and development of children

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (Child Protection, Disability, Housing, Homelessness)

Wodonga: 02 6055 7777

Wangaratta: 03 5722 0555

Child Protection After Hours: 13 12 78**Child Protection Intake: 1300 360 391****Suicide Line: 1300 651 251**

Phone counselling service to support anyone affected by suicide 24/7

Mental Health Crisis Line:

Wodonga: 1300 881 104

Wangaratta: 1300 783 347

Psychiatric triage – information, assessment and referral

Centre Against Violence:

03 722 2203, 1800 806 292

Crisis support, counselling, advocacy, information and support about family violence, sexual assault and problem sexualised behaviours.

DirectLine: 1800 888 236

Drug and alcohol counselling, advice and referral service 24/7
Emergency Relief Service

St Stephen's Wodonga: 02 6048 6900

Emergency relief
Monday to Friday 9:30am to 12:30pm

Anglicare Wangaratta: 03 5723 7900

Emergency relief Monday to Friday
9:30am to 12:30am

Safe Steps: 1800 015 188

Confidential service for women experiencing violence and abuse
24/7 www.safesteps.org.au

Hume Riverina Community

Legal Service: 02 6055 8090

Telephone legal advice and face-to-face clinics



Please note that access to UMFC's Child & Family Services VFPRR Program is only available through Child Protection Navigator.
DFFH Wangaratta 03 5722 0555



Supporting children,
young people and families
in their time of need

You can visit or contact UMFC's
two local offices as follows:

Wodonga Office:

27-29 Stanley St Wodonga
PO Box 725 Wodonga VIC 3689
Telephone 02 6055 8000

Wangaratta Office:

36-38 McKay St Wangaratta
PO Box 389 Wangaratta VIC 3676
Telephone 03 5720 0000

admin@umfc.com.au
www.umfc.com.au



We celebrate diversity and are committed
to inclusion for all as a service and a workplace.
We are a Child Safe Organisation

Reg No. A5357 ABN 99 081 624 768

