



*“Healthy Pets
Happy People”*

“Cherished Pets Social Service”

About the organisation

Ocean Grove-based Cherished Pets (CP) is proudly the first veterinary organisation in Australia that focuses on the Human-Animal Bond (HAB) to improve the health and wellbeing of people, pets and communities. The human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial relationship between people and animals that is influenced by behaviors considered essential to the health and wellbeing of both. By strengthening this bond, Cherished Pets supports both public and animal health and welfare.

Many of the individuals Cherished Pets support through its social services are confronting urgent challenges, such as health crises, domestic violence, homelessness, and mental health issues. Others are encountering barriers to accessing veterinary care due to age or limited mobility. The support they need for their pets isn't a convenience; it's a lifeline.

Cherished Pets' social veterinary services encompass crisis pet care, personalised home care assistance packages, and a dedicated volunteer program, all with a central focus on preserving and strengthening the human-animal bond. Through a person-centered approach, their compassionate team of veterinary social workers, dedicated veterinary professionals, and skilled volunteers offer immediate support to individuals facing crises - individuals whose already overwhelming challenges are further complicated by pet ownership. They ensure pets receive the care they need and are reunited with their owners, safeguarding this unique bond and minimising the likelihood of pets being surrendered.

For individuals experiencing homelessness, our services make a profound difference by providing vital veterinary support for their cherished animal companions who are essential for their mental and emotional wellbeing, offer companionship to reduce isolation, and give them purpose through life's challenges. Older people, who often lack support from family or friends, benefit from comprehensive case management, in-home veterinary assistance, transportation, and emergency boarding. This holistic veterinary support safeguards the human-animal bond, fostering emotional wellbeing, reducing loneliness, and nurturing social engagement through the joy of pet ownership. For survivors of domestic violence, where it is estimated that companion animals are present in 70 per cent of cases, providing accommodation for these pets ensures that clients can find refuge, creating a haven of safety and support for both.

www.cherishedpetcare.com.au/

How the grant will be used

Grant funds will provide salaries for the Veterinary Social Worker and Volunteer Coordinator ensuring timely immediate assistance for individuals facing crises and promoting the health and wellbeing of both pets and their owners. Additionally, the grant will facilitate expansion of home care assistance packages, directly supporting the health and wellbeing of more vulnerable individuals and their beloved pets.



“Making Waves Program Expansion in Geelong”

About the organisation

Making Waves Foundation is a volunteer-based organisation that challenges and supports young people with a disability or experiencing social challenges, to further personal growth and potential through transformative sailing experiences.

Skilled volunteers work with the participants to help build personal capacity, confidence, and optimism. This is a life changing experience for young people who otherwise have limited opportunities to participate in sport or adventurous activities.

The new skills and friendships created form pathways to a more inclusive and confident life. Volunteers serve as mentors and crew aboard a large ocean racing yacht and deliver four programs, Winds of Joy, Winds of Change, Winds of Strength, and Wright of Passage.

After successfully operating in Sydney and Melbourne since 1995, Making Waves recently established permanent operations in Newcastle, Brisbane, and Geelong.

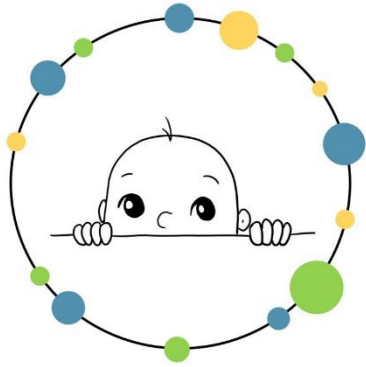
Making Waves commenced their flagship program, Winds of Joy, in Geelong in 2023, and have already delivered 17 sails for 112 young people on their 52-foot program yacht that has been modified to ensure easy accessibility and accommodate wheelchair users.

During this time, the Foundation also employed a Community Engagement Officer, recruited and trained more than 30 volunteers, and established a local leadership team.

<https://makingwaves.au/>

How the grant will be used

Grant funds will support the salary of the Community Engagement Officer who is responsible for recruiting and training new volunteers, managing local operations, introducing local schools and youth services to the program. This will allow us to deliver 128 program sails for 1,200 participants in 2024.



Tiny Dots

Early Intervention

“Community Care Clinic Outreach Expansion - Community Awareness Program Expansion”

About the organisation

Tiny Dots Early Intervention is a newly established not-for-profit charity providing assessment, referral and short-term intervention services to babies and toddlers aged 0-2 years who are significantly at risk of disability or developmental delay in the Greater Geelong area. Tiny Dots was established to address the growing gap in services provided within the region for infants/toddlers. There is no other service in Geelong dedicated to this clinical population.

Currently many children with delay or disability are not detected until they are school age when the window for brain change (neuroplasticity) is closing, the chance to access NDIS for therapy is shutting and the developmental gap between these children and their peers has already expanded.

Providing Allied Health (Speech Pathology/Occupational Therapy) assessments, Tiny Dots' expert therapists are trained to identify babies at risk of more subtle disabilities/impairments in the 0–2-year age group using specialist assessment tools. Tiny Dot's therapists can then appropriately refer families on to suitable support services or where appropriate continue to support the child and their family with comprehensive assessment and therapy.

Tiny Dots helps infants/toddlers because the younger the child, the more effective the therapy. By combining rigorous assessment followed by a tailored therapy program, Tiny Dots puts 'tiny dots' on the right path to achieve their greatest potential, helping infants and toddlers flourish and thrive. The Tiny Dots innovative early intervention program ensures delays are not missed in the early years of life, leading to improved developmental outcomes.

<https://www.tinydots.net.au/>

How the grant will be used

Grant funds will expand our free screening clinic to areas of greatest need within the region. It will fund staff to improve community awareness of the importance of access to early intervention therapy, how to access therapy in our region and research liaison with Deakin University.