

# Supporting parents to register a birth

**BIRTHS DEATHS  
AND MARRIAGES VICTORIA**

Recognising the significance of life events



# Birth registration



**It's never too late to  
register a birth.**

# Birth registration



**It's never too late to register a birth.** All kids need a birth certificate for a great start in life, in school and in their community. Adults need them too.

Children need birth certificates for a great start in life. A birth certificate is needed to:

- enrol at school
- get a driver's licence, tax file number and passport
- access government services and payments.

Birth registration is free. Birth certificates may be issued free of charge (fee waivers and Koori Access Fund).

Ideally, births should be registered within 60 days. However, we do process late birth registrations without imposing fines. Our priority is that births are registered.

After 70 days we write to mothers (details taken from notification of birth) to remind them to submit a birth registration statement (we are currently developing a second letter to send after 100 days).

Many Justice Service Centres across Victoria can assist with birth registrations and certificate applications.

# Strong identity, strong spirit



## Strong identity, strong spirit

Koori kids need a birth certificate for a great start in life, in school and in their community.

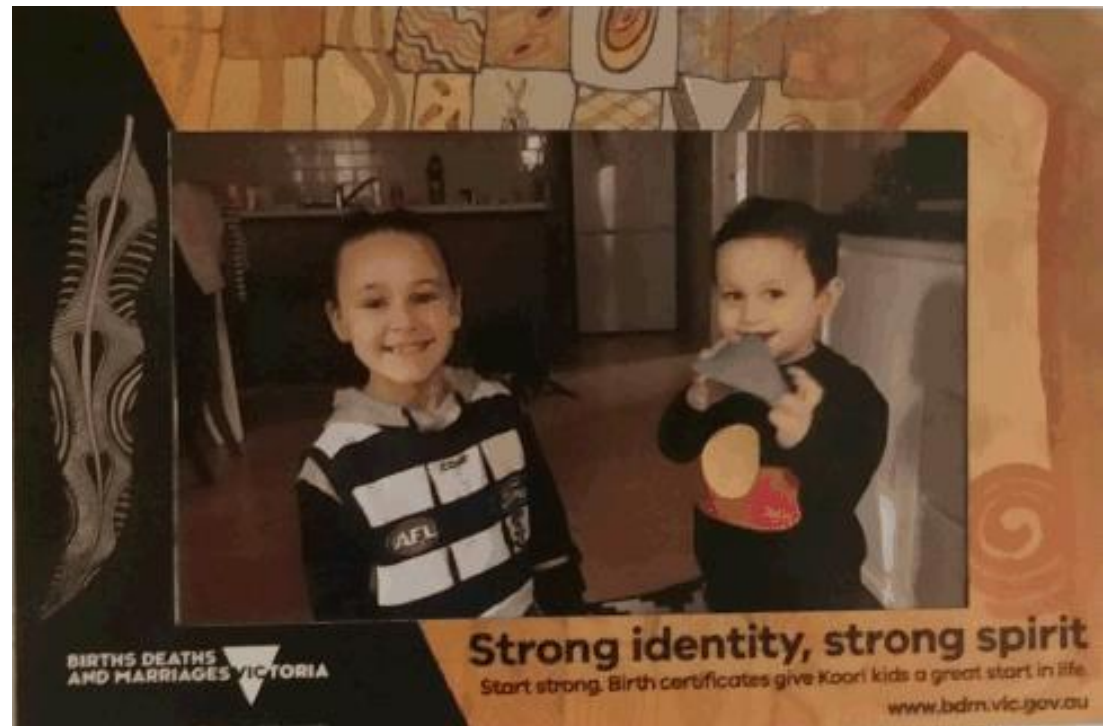
Adults need them too.

You need a birth certificate to get:

- a driver's licence
- a tax file number
- government services and payments.

It's never too late to register a birth.

Ask us more by emailing  
[bdmindigenousaccess@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:bdmindigenousaccess@justice.vic.gov.au)



# Strong identity, strong spirit



In October we piloted *Strong identity, strong spirit* in the lower Barwon South West region (Warrnambool, Framlingham, Portland and Lake Condah) with the aim of increasing:

- birth registrations and birth certificate possession within the Koori community
- awareness of, and access to, BDM services.

Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations helped us engage the community.

During our visit we registered fifteen births for children of all ages and processed 30 birth certificate applications.

In 2018 we will roll out *Strong identity, strong spirit* state-wide, guided by local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACHHOs) and Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees.

Contact Kristen Bell, our Koori Relationships Officer for more information.

On 6 December we are hosting a stakeholder forum to explore further opportunities to promote birth registration and birth certificates in the Koori community.

# Family violence support



**The Registry can assist when it is unreasonable or unsafe for a parent to fully complete the birth registration statement.**

# Family violence support



**Legislation requires both parents** complete the Birth Registration Statement (BRS)

In the case of a parent who has experienced family violence or sexual assault, BDM takes due care when making such enquiries. BDM can offer to initiate contact with the other parent and redacts information like the address and phone number at the time of sending the BRS to the other parent for signature.

BDM's website contains information 'Protecting your safety' while registering the birth of a child that includes important contact information for the parent should legal advice be required. This information has been co-produced as a result of pilot with Royal Womens' Hospital and Inner Melbourne Community Legal Centre.

Birth registration will be available online with implementation of our new core business system. BDM will consult with the hospitals and others to develop a best practice approach for limited continued distribution of hard copy BRS forms.

In addition, BDM is keen to investigate with Maternal & Child Health Services how to better distribute and share information related to the birth registration process, especially to assist victims of family violence or sexual assault.

BDM can, by exception, register a birth with only one parent listed, but adding the other parent to a birth certificate at a later date may require DNA evidence and a court order. This can be avoided by collecting the other parent's details at the time of initial registration.

# Your support



BDM is keen to work with MCH nurses to better support parents following the birth of a child, and especially with providing assistance to those experiencing vulnerability.

Contact BDM for more information relating to: birth registrations | *Strong identity, strong spirit* | family violence

Posters and other information can be provided for display.



# BDM contact information



## **Visit us in person**

Registry Service Centre

Ground floor, 595 Collins Street Melbourne (near Southern Cross Station)

8am - 4pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Visit the **BDM website** at [www.bdm.vic.gov.au](http://www.bdm.vic.gov.au)

Visit a Justice Service Centre (locations are listed on BDM's website).

**Call** BDM on 1300 369 367

**Email** BDM at [vicbdm@bdm.vic.gov.au](mailto:vicbdm@bdm.vic.gov.au)

For **Koori customers** email Kristen at [bdmindigenousaccess@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:bdmindigenousaccess@justice.vic.gov.au)