

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together, likely belonging to a child and an adult. The hands are the central focus of the image, set against a blurred background of a person wearing a pink shirt. The lighting is soft and natural.

Family Services

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Care for families of children with
life threatening conditions



“Very Special Kids is vital for our well-being and in assisting us to care for Breana. It’s the one place we can confidently leave Breana and know she will be well looked after.”

– Spiros Zois, father of Breana

When a child is diagnosed with a life-threatening condition, it is the beginning of a journey that is unpredictable and full of challenges that impact on all family members in different ways. Very Special Kids cares for families who have children with life-threatening conditions from the ages of 0 to 18 years of age.

Hospice and Family Accommodation

Respite care is provided at Very Special Kids Hospice, Victoria's only children's hospice. Child life therapy, art therapy, music therapy, physiotherapy and specialised 24 hour nursing and medical care is offered to all children and families in a relaxed, comfortable environment surrounded by gardens. Special holiday programs and weekend activities ensure a fun-filled atmosphere that is full of care.

The Road to Respite program is run in partnership with the Royal Flying

Doctor Service where a patient vehicle transports children living in regional Victoria between their home and the Malvern hospice. The Royal Flying Doctor Service drivers are partnered with a Very Special Kids hospice nurse to ensure children receive quality care during the drive.

Onsite Family Accommodation in two modern apartments allows families to be close to their child during a stay at Very Special Kids Hospice and can provide a base to access medical appointments in greater Melbourne.

How to make a Referral

Referrals can be made by doctors, family members or other health professionals.

To view eligibility criteria visit vsk.org.au or contact the Intake and Assessment Coordinator on **9804 6221**.

VSK also accepts referrals for children who have already died and would have met our eligibility criteria, for up to 12 months after the death.

For more information contact the Very Special Kids Support Line on **9804 6253**.

Family Support Services are provided by a team of 18 practitioners at various locations across Victoria.

Emotional support and counselling from a Family Support Practitioner who can assist families with strategies and resources to help them to manage the many challenges they face.

Sibling support program invites children who have a brother or sister with a life-threatening condition to meet other siblings for peer support, to build self-esteem and to simply have fun. This is offered during school holidays to primary school aged children.

Adolescent Program is for bereaved and non-bereaved adolescent siblings, and involves camps and specific day programs where they can build peer to peer connections.

Volunteers support families at home, during admissions at Very Special Kids Hospice and throughout stays at the Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Medical Centre.

Family activities where parents and children meet other families experiencing similar challenges. Activities include camps, family fun days, coffee mornings, pamper days and the End of Year Party.

Private Facebook Group where parents can connect with others on a similar journey, share experiences and support each other via an online platform.

Bereavement program includes counselling, annual parents' retreat, peer activities, sibling days, bereaved sibling group, annual Remembrance Day and anniversary cards. (Families can be also be referred to Very Special Kids up to one year after the death of a child.)

Family holidays can be booked at Woodend and Bairnsdale in Very Special Kids holiday cottages.



“Tye and Axel are Jett’s biggest fans, but it’s important they have a space to share their own feelings and challenges. They take part in the Sibling Program where they meet other kids who have a sibling with a terminal condition. This allows them to share experiences, challenges and fears in an open, responsive and playful environment”



–Kristy, mother of Jett,
Axel and Tye



We care for children and families across Victoria

Very Special Kids welcomes people of all backgrounds and respects that the families we support are different in many ways including country of birth, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion and ability.

All services provided are free of charge to families.

Barwon

Kurrambee Myaring
Community Centre
12 Merrijig Drive
Torquay Vic 3228
0400 007 693

Brunswick

Level 1/233 Sydney Road
Brunswick Vic 3056
0428 989 122
0408 910 878

Peninsula

1973 Frankston-Flinders Road
Hastings Vic 3915
0417 151 096

Loddon Mallee

52 Derwent Drive
Long Gully Vic 3550
0428 240 031

South West

Port Fairy Community House
Railway Place
Port Fairy Vic 3284
0428 393 162

Gippsland/Outer South East

Lakeside Children's Centre
2 Olympic Way
Pakenham Vic 3810
0417 543 514

Hume

23 Alexandra Street
Mooroopna Vic 3629
0408 583 378

Grampians

Barkly Square
25-39 Barkly Street
Ballarat Vic 3350
0457 727 505



For more information please
Free call: 1800 888 875



Very Special Kids
321 Glenferrie Road
Malvern 3144
Reception: 03 9804 6222
Hospice: 03 9804 6218
vsk.org.au