

Hello.

Issue #01

It all starts
with hello...so
say hello, have
a chat, get to
know each other
and pass it on.

The Hello Campaign is raising mental health awareness by highlighting the importance of social connections in the Latrobe Valley.

We want you to know that social connection is important for improving our mental health and well-being, preventing mental illness and helping us to live well. Our social connections include the people we know, the friends we confide in, the family we belong to, and the community we live in.

When we asked the community how we could connect, you told us that it's important to make **time** for each other, **acknowledge** each other, know each other's **names** and just say **hello**.

Come find us at your local café, bus stop or down the street, say hello and get your hands on a Hello t-shirt, the Hello Times or The Art of Conversation playing cards.

Better yet, when you give it a go let us know how it goes by emailing us at hello@wearelatrobe.com.au or sharing it on social media using the hashtag: #WeAreLatrobe.

Follow us on Facebook, keep an eye out down the street or phone **5173 8398** to find out where we will be or to get involved.



Without hello.



With hello.

:)

Hello



Mark

For me, a lot of people move away and they denigrate the area, but to me, it's home. Go an hour that way and you're at the mountains, go an hour that way and you're at the beach, go an hour and a half that way and you're in the city. We're perfectly situated. Some people move away and that's fine for them but all my memories are firmly attached to here. We're lucky; we're surrounded by lots of family, a big supportive family.

We Are Latrobe is highlighting the extraordinary people who live, work and study in the Latrobe Valley by sharing their amazing stories.

More people are waiting to say hello at www.wearelatrobe.com.au

We Are Latrobe is a Latrobe Health Innovation Zone initiative supported by the Victorian Government.

I think the people of Latrobe are resilient, I know that gets overused, but we're also adaptable. Your skills aren't in vogue? They're not needed anymore? Well, you've got to go out and get new skills.

I was lucky that I had family. Nobody made me feel bad that I lost my job in '99, but it was because of my wife and extended family, they helped support us through it.

I went back to school at the young age of 41 and that was a hard year, but there's no greater motivating force than your wife and your three young kids who depend on you.

I was lucky that I had that opportunity; I got through the year. I was lucky enough to get a job at LRH and I'm still there today and I work with fabulous people.

There's no reason to move; there are no greener pastures if you like. We live here among nice spacious property. I feel a bit blessed really, I mean it could have gone horribly wrong but because of the family and things like community events, like parkrun, I've sort of struck gold there.

There are great people who run that, Tanya and Paul and the team of run directors. It's about 40 odd kilometres away but me and my two youngest, generally, we go over every week and we go to Traralgon because for me that's where I started, that's my home parkrun, and we love it.

Great community, made a lot of good friends, seen a lot of young people like Michael, who wouldn't say boo to a goose and here he is as a run director. It's fantastic to see that. Little Stella, we knew her before she was born and now she's up and running. We made lots of good friends and we love it. It's a great community event.

Helloments.

**Hello is such a small word,
but it can lead to so much more!
These “helloments” can brighten
up a day, make someone smile,
or even change lives.**

Concerts and proper engaging musical conversations.

I attended a concert in Melbourne recently. Upon entering the lobby, the door staff put your phone into a little fabric pouch that was magnetically closed. You could still go back out to the lobby and open the pouch if you needed to use your phone, but you couldn't take your phone into the theatre unless it was locked in the pouch. This led to a scenario before the show where people didn't have phones to get sucked into, people started to have actual conversations with their concert neighbours. I said hello to the guy next to me and we had a good chat about Black Sabbath vs. Iron Maiden (Sabbath the clear winner), overall it made the show a much more pleasant experience and I felt much more connected to those watching the show with me.

– *Seán (Traralgon)*

Growing tomatoes and learning all there is to know about gardening.

There's an older gentleman who lives down on the corner of the street that I live on. I often walk to work, so I pass by in the mornings and evenings. In summer the tomato bush out the front of his house would be absolutely chock full of tomatoes, and I was always a little jealous, because mine always seemed to get eaten by the birds! He's an avid gardener and veggie grower as am I.

One day I finally said hello on my way home from work, and asked him for tips on growing veggies, what followed was a masterclass of gardening knowledge and I also went away with a big bag of fresh tomatoes! I used the seeds from the ones he gave me to grow my own this summer! Now we often stop and chat about anything and everything.

– *Sarah (Moe)*

Making friends in a new town always begins with a hello!

When I first moved to the Valley four years ago, I hardly knew anyone. I moved down here for work from Sydney and the only people I knew were my workmates. It can be a challenge to meet new people as an adult. I found that over time, I began to see the same faces working in the cafés and bars. The intimidating thing is saying that first hello.

But gradually, I started saying hello to all the familiar faces I was seeing around town, and what a difference it made. People started inviting me to things, and gradually I made an awesome group of friends. It's weird to think about but if I hadn't taken that little leap into the unknown with those first hellos, maybe I wouldn't know anyone!

– *Jack (Morwell)*

We want you to say hello.



hello@wearelatrobe.com.au

Ultimately our goal is a relatively simple sounding one, to encourage people to say hello to each other more often. We aim to create a better sense of community and friendliness in the Latrobe Valley, we want the Valley to be a welcoming place for everyone, where your neighbours greet you, and a passer-by on a morning walk gives you a friendly hello on their way past. The whole community benefits, and it's as simple as saying hello.

The deeper meaning behind the Hello Campaign is that we are trying to raise mental health awareness by highlighting the importance of social connections in the Latrobe Valley.

So, get out there, say hello, invite your neighbour for tea, every little action makes a difference, and makes our Valley a more connected place.

We'd also love to hear about the 'helloments' you've experienced in the Valley, so please get in touch, we'd love to have a chat all about it!

:)

**Saying
hello
is easy,
and good
for you
too.**