**Rainbow Valley Newsletter – April 2021**

Hey Rainbow Valley,

Hope everyone has had a great April and is enjoying the freedom that comes with things opening up these past couple months!

Valley Youth is still waiting on recruitment for the worker that will run Rainbow Valley program and events. In the meantime, I wanted to send out some opportunities for you all to get involved and stay connected.

1. **MidSumma Festival activations across Moonee Valley**

As you may know, Midsumma is Australia's premier queer arts festival. The 2021 festival was postponed from its usual summer dates due to COVID-19 and is currently taking place in over 100 different venues across Melbourne and wider Victoria. As part of the 2021 Midsumma celebrations Council will be hosting a range of activations (in addition to the rainbow lighting of the Clocktower) across Moonee Valley.

**Loveheart** Dancers Roving Performances - Saturday 1 May - 10am to 1pm - Essendon North business precinct
On Saturday 1 May the Loveheart Dancers will be bringing their high energy dance routines to the Essendon North business precinct. This colourful dance troupe celebrates love in all its diversity and will be sure to get local shoppers dancing along.

**Drag Queen Storytime** - Monday 3 May - 10.30am - Avondale Heights Library
Drag Queen Lady Diamond will be visiting the Avondale Heights Library for a morning of stories and songs that aim to inspire young readers, while spreading a message of equality and appreciation of diversity.

**Drag Queen Sing-A-Long** - Saturday 22 May - 11am - Clocktower Centre Café
Some of Melbourne's favourite Drag Queens will host an interactive morning of family-friendly drag performances in the Clocktower Café

**Midsumma Pride March 2021** - Sunday 23 May 2021
Officers are coordinating an invitation for Councillors, staff and the broader community to attend the Pride March which is a few weeks outside of Midsumma Festival 2021 dates (19 April - 5 May 2021).

2. I**DAHOBIT** (International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia) is coming up on Monday 17 May! If you’re planning something in Moonee Valley to celebrate, we’d love to hear about it! Send an email to us at youth@ valleyyouth.org.au and visit <https://www.idahobit.org.au/> for more info and free toolkits.



3. **Headspace** is running a project called Rainbow Bridges, which looks at the mental health support seeking experience for young people who are LGBTIQA+ but also from a culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and invites young people to participate in a series of focus groups.
 **Location:** Sunshine & Werribee
[**More info**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ckathleend%5CDocuments%5CRainbow%20Valley%5C%E2%80%A2%09https%3A%5Cheadspace.org.au%5Cheadspace-centres%5Csunshine%5Crainbow-bridges-stories-from-the-lgbtqia-and-cald-intersection%5C) and **how to sign up**: [https://form.jotform.com/210627260275855](https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/bhzSCnx1YoFYvKRfNCVUM?domain=form.jotform.com)

4. LGBTQIA+ **Safe TALK and ASIST** **workshops by** **LivingWorks Australia** – 3 Hour Suicide First Aid training, free to LGBTIQ people living, working or studying in north west Melbourne.
When: Dates in early May (see attached)
Where: Footscray & Melbourne
**To sign up** email: renee.tsatsis**@**livingworks.com.au

5. ***Take Up Space* project -** *Take Up Space*empowers young refugee and migrant and LGBTQIA+ people in Melbourne’s West to have greater control over their mental health & wellbeing.

Through extensive community consultation we are seeking to understand the lived experiences of this audience and identify how their mental health and sexual & reproductive health needs have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In doing so, the project will promote the voices of young people and encourage them to #TakeUpSpace! We would love it if you could complete [**this short survey**](https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/Ex_oCP7LM9SxWPDfz9ulA?domain=surveymonkey.com) to help us reach as many friends in the West as possible and promote young people’s voices. Oh, and did we mention you’ll go in the draw to win some exciting prizes?!

Other programs
There are other local LGBTQIA+ youth programs you may like to get involved in including [QSpace](https://www.rainbownetwork.com.au/directory/qspace) in Glenroy and [Crystal Queer](https://brimbankyouth.com/programs/crystal-queer/) in Sunshine. QSpace meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month and Crystal Queer meets every second Thursday from 4-6pm.

Don’t hesitate to get in touch if you’ve got any questions.

Please let me know if you would like to be removed from this email list.

Warm regards,
 Kathleen

P.S. As usual, remember that you can reach out to us if you require any wellbeing support by emailing youth@mvcc.vic.gov.au or fill in a request for support here: <https://valleyyouth.org.au/support/> and a staff member will be in touch.  If you need urgent support please contact the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800 or access help online at <https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/connect-with-a-clinician/>