

Social Prescribing Initiatives: Guided Park Walks program | Parks Victoria

Service: Guided Park Walks program

Main Component: Park Walks program

Walking is an easy, free, accessible and inclusive form of exercise that has numerous mental, physical and social health benefits. Walking in green spaces such as parks has been demonstrated to provide additional benefits for both the mind and body.

The volunteer-guided Park Walks are a great opportunity for physical activity and social connection in picturesque parks. Park Walks are offered weekly to encourage people to develop a regular walking habit to support their health and wellbeing goals (whether physical or mental health goals or social connection).

Park Walks can be easy, for beginners, or can be a little more challenging to support those who have some previous walking experience. Some walks include a catch up for a cuppa at the beginning or end where there is a café nearby to further support social connection.

Who is this for?: The program targets people who may be at risk of various chronic health conditions to support their physical or mental health and wellbeing and/or develop social connections through walking in nature . It is also aimed at new and/or less active members of the community who have previously not felt safe or skilled enough to walk in parks.

Outcomes: The aim of this mainstreamed program is to increase participation in nature-based walking to support individual and community health and wellbeing. By offering a guided, group walking program those who lack confidence or face social, cultural or physical barriers to visiting parks will be supported to participate.

Organisations-involved: Parks Victoria

Links: <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/healthy-parks-healthy-people/for-health-professionals>

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