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An illustration at the top of the page shows a young girl with dark skin and pigtails, wearing a blue dress, standing next to a large, green, blob-like character with eyes and arms. They are both enclosed in a yellow, cloud-like shape. The background is a textured purple.

Jeshali Beats the Blob!



by women &
children from
Wellsprings
for Women

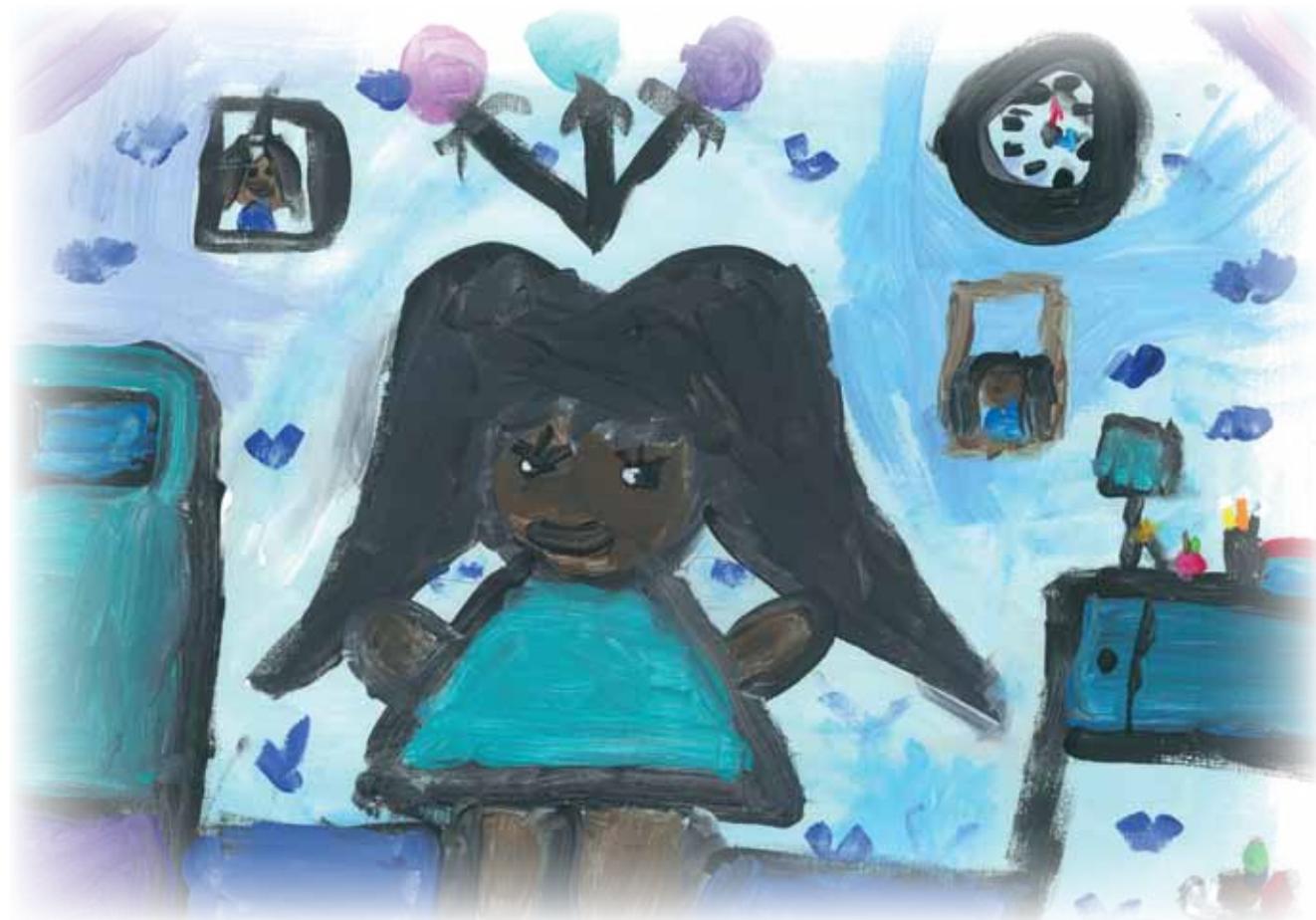


Veshali beats the Blob was written for children from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to support the Victorian vaccination program and encourage COVID-safe behaviours. In March 2022, women and children from migrant and refugee communities illustrated the images published in this book. This was done with assistance from Creative Art Therapy Australia; a not-for-profit agency that provides support through person-centred, practice-based creative art therapies for those living through adverse life experiences.

Veshali Beats the Blob!

by women & children
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Veshali is excited about school tomorrow. She can't wait to play with her friends and learn new things from her teachers.



The night before school, Veshali has a spooky dream.
In her dream, she is visited by a blob.

“Ummm, who are you?” she asked.

“I am Mr COVID Blob. I am a tiny germ, so tiny that you can only see me with a microscope.” Mr Blob coughed and spluttered, then continued, “I travel around the world, from person to person, through coughs, sneezes, and touch. I like to hide in places, like toys, phones, door handles, tables, and hands. If people touch these things and then touch their eyes, mouth, or nose, I can sneak inside and make them sick.”

“Yuck! Stay away from me you evil germ!” Veshali shouted.



The next morning Veshali decided that she was going to make sure her friends at school did everything they could to stop Mr COVID Blob. At breakfast, she asked her parents for helpful tips and tricks that she could share with her Classmates.



When Veshali arrived at school, she was so happy to see her friends again. But then she thought about Mr COVID Blob coming to her school and ruining their fun. Veshali got to work and began sharing her tips with everyone.



Tip #1:

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds. When washing your hands, you can pretend that is your birthday. Sing Happy Birthday twice to know how long to keep washing.



Tip #2:

Cover your nose with a tissue when you sneeze.

Cover your mouth with your elbow when you cough. That will help block the germs from spreading onto other surfaces.

You can also wear a mask in places where there are lots of people.



Tip #3:

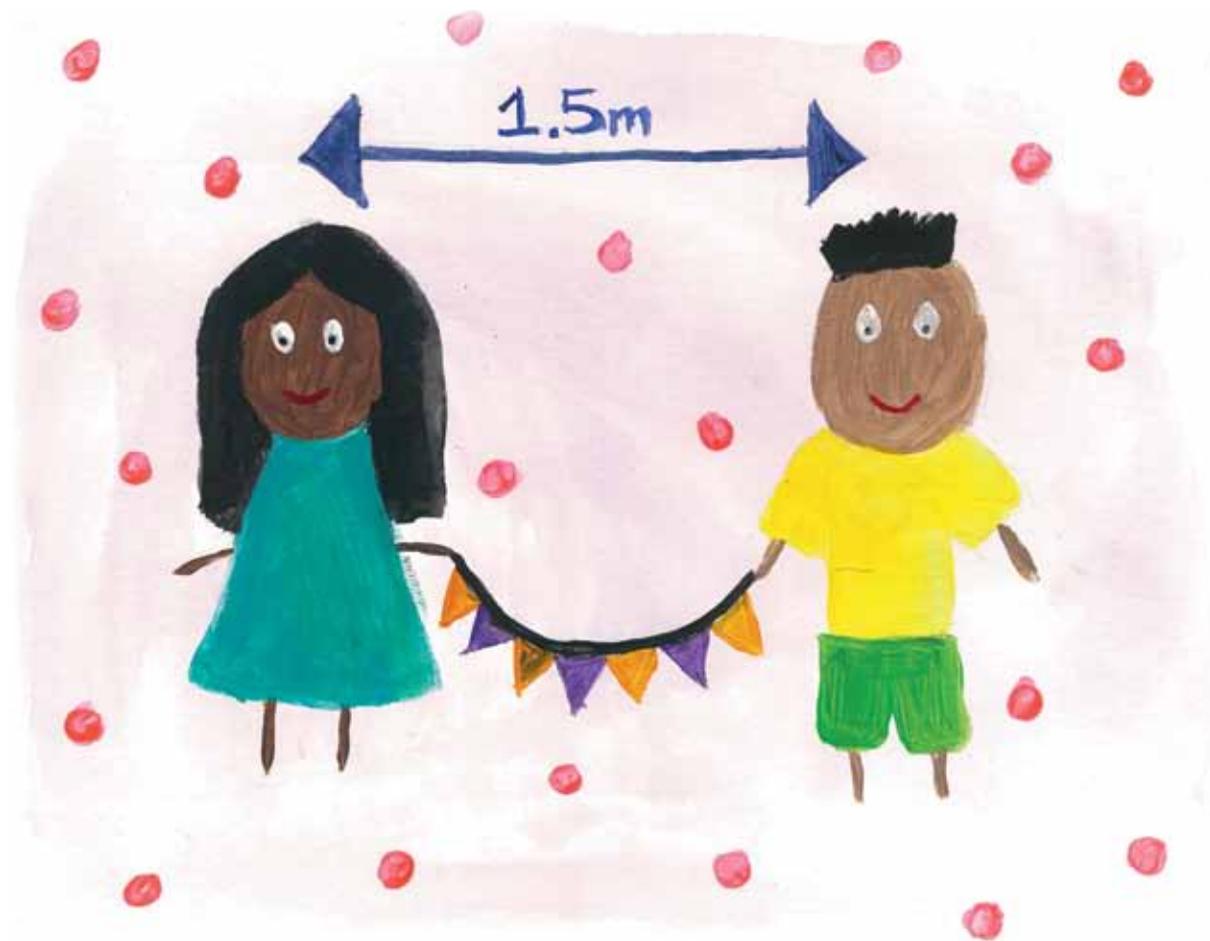
Try not to touch your eyes, mouth, or face.

This will stop germs from getting inside
your body.



Tip #4:

Keep 1.5 meters away from your friends, and people in your community. This is called social distancing.



Veshali's friends were happy that she was helping them stay safe. But one of her friends told her that she was missing one important tip....

"What about getting vaccinated?" asked her friend.

Veshali didn't know much about vaccinations.

She knew they were needles, and that she had some when she was a baby, but she didn't know there was one for COVID-19.



When Veshali got home, she asked her parents about vaccinations.

“A vaccine is a special type of medicine that can stop people from getting very sick.” Veshali’s mum explained. “They give it to you in a needle”.

“Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?” Veshali asked.

“Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and will not only protect you but also the people around you, like your grandma and grandpa, who are very old.”



Veshali wanted to know how vaccines work, so together with her parents, they researched some more information on the computer.

HOW DO VACCINES WORK? Vaccines teach your body how to fight illness using your immune system.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE? In Australia, scientists have tested vaccines many times to make sure they are safe. They would not be given to children if they were not safe!

After all their research, and talking with their doctor, Veshali's parents booked her in for a vaccination.



Veshali took a few of her favourite toys to the vaccination clinic in case she got scared. Veshali was surprised by how cool the clinic looked. It was like an enchanted forest, and it didn't feel scary at all.



When her name was called, Veshali felt a bit nervous, but she remembered all the reasons why getting vaccinated was a good idea. “I’m getting vaccinated to keep myself, my friends, my family, and my community safe – especially people who could get very sick, like my grandparents.”



Veshali bravely walked up to the kind nurse.
The nurse told Veshali that it would feel like a little
pinch. In just a moment, it was over, and Veshali
smiled knowing that she had to come back in a few
weeks for her second dose. She wasn't scared at all!



As she was leaving the clinic, the kind nurse gave her a special icy pole treat because she was so brave!



Lying in bed that night, Veshali remembered her dream about Mr COVID Blob. Resting her head on the pillow she thought about all the hard work she had done to protect her friends, family and community. Veshali fell fast asleep knowing that if she kept following her special tips, she would help to keep everyone safe. And the best part was.... she wasn't scared of Mr COVID Blob anymore!



Wellsprings for Women is a women's only not-for-profit organisation that provides a range of programs and services that support and build women's capabilities, self-determination and health and wellbeing. We operate in Dandenong, and outreach to Casey and Cardinia. We use a trauma-informed, intersectional approach to our work which is underpinned by community development principles, human rights, and gender equality.

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For more information about COVID-19, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au or call the 24/7 Coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398. If you need an interpreter, call TIS National on 131 450.

For further support during this time, call Wellsprings for Women on **(03) 9701 3740**, or visit us at 79 Langhorne Street, Dandenong, 3175.

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