BUSH NIPPERS: An evaluation of the effectiveness of the current Nippers program and the potential for application in a regional (inland and pool) setting – Year 1
Acknowledgements

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Nipper Education Program, or Nippers, is a water safety skills and education program that introduces children aged 5 to 14 years to lifesaving. Nippers programs are delivered at all 57 lifesaving clubs and surf lifesaving clubs (LSCs/ LSCs) across Victoria throughout summer. The program is about children participating in safe, fun and organised activities in a beach environment; preparing them to be future lifesavers.

The Nippers program content was recently revised in the Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide for the 2018/19 season. Recent state government funding has been provided to increase the capacity and coverage of Nippers programs across Victoria, including a proposal that the program be adapted for provision in regional communities, including inland areas, known as 'Bush Nippers'.

This research forms part of the Public Water Safety Initiative. The Public Water Safety Initiative is funded by the Victorian Government. Life Saving Victoria (LSV) is working closely with The Department of Education and Training (DET) on the implementation of this initiative.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the project is to determine the feasibility of developing a Nippers program in regional Victoria, particularly in inland waterways and regional pools, and with the intention of increasing the coverage of Nippers programs across the state.

Specific objectives over the two-year project are to:
1. Review the current Nippers program and the potential to adapt the program into a regional setting;
2. Determine the effectiveness of the current Nippers program in Victoria; and
3. Determine the effectiveness of the new Bush Nippers program in inland regions.

This report summarises the findings from Year 1 (2018/19), which addresses objectives 1 and 2.

METHOD

A summary of Year 1 evaluation methods for objectives 1 and 2 is provided in Table 1 (page 3).
FINDINGS

1. Review of the current Nippers program in Victoria

A review of sport and aquatic education participation and alignment of the current Nippers program to the curriculum was conducted. Whilst there is relatively high participation in aquatic education and aquatic sports in Victoria, participation in lifesaving sports is low; and while participation in Nippers is increasing, lifesaving pathways are not as widely available state-wide.

Table 2 provides an overview of Victorian children’s sport, aquatic education and lifesaving program participation.

Exploration of participation barriers found clear similarities across sport and aquatic education, including cost of programs and transport, cultural, time and geographical considerations, other commitments and long term disengagement. Aquatic initiatives experience additional obstacles, including perceptions that swimming and lifesaving education participation is short-lived (for children); lack of access to suitable locations; risk perceptions; and a lack of understanding of the broader importance of learning swimming and water safety skills.

With swimming and water safety education compulsory in the Victorian Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum, a modified Nippers program designed for schools, regardless of their proximity to the coastline, is a potentially valuable initiative for meeting curriculum requirements, in addition to providing students with vital lifesaving skills and knowledge that may one day save a life. The Nippers program aligns with physical curriculum elements (Moving the body/ Understanding movement) as well as encouraging proactive health promotion approaches (Being healthy, active and safe). This is demonstrated throughout the Nippers learning outcomes for each year level. However, there is a lack of social health determinants specified in the Nippers learning outcomes. While these aspects may be an incidental benefit of the Nippers program, they are not explicitly described in the learning outcomes, and so there is a lack of clarity for anyone unfamiliar with Nippers.
Table 1 Summary of Year 1 Bush Nippers evaluation methods for objectives 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Evaluation methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Objective 1 – Review of the current Nippers program and the potential to adapt the program into a regional setting.** | Literature review: Focussed on prior work into the provision of sport, aquatic education and lifesaving programs for school-aged children.  
Stakeholder consultation: Included face-to-face interviews conducted with key LSCs and aquatic industry stakeholders, to determine indicative interest of schools/ regional communities in a Nippers product; and identify potential barriers.  
Barriers to participation were reviewed, along with the potential differentiation or value-add of a Nippers program in regional areas (including alignment to the Victorian Curriculum). |
| **Objective 2 – The effectiveness of the current Nippers program in Victoria.** | Program review:  
The program was reviewed in Year 1 via:  
- Records kept by the Age Manager or equivalent person conducting the Nippers program;  
- One-on-one interviews with Age Managers of Under 9 and Under 12 groups and/or Junior Coordinators;  
- Post-program group questionnaire of nippers to measure key learning, satisfaction, barriers to participation and intended pathways in lifesaving; and  
- Focus groups or one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders such as parents and Junior Coordinators.  
Study setting and sample:  
- Five LSCs participated in the evaluation: two bay clubs, two surf clubs and one inland club.  
- Two age groups were the focus of the study: Under 9 (Year 2/3 of school), and Under 12 (Year 5/6).  
- Target number of children: 100 children per age group (50 from bay clubs, 50 from surf clubs, and all from the inland club). |

Table 2 Sport, aquatic education and lifesaving program participation by Victorian children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Aquatic education</th>
<th>Lifesaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Swimming is the most popular extra-curricular activity for Victorian children (male and female, based on minimum participation rates of at least once per year) (Sport Australia, 2018).  
Regional Victoria has a higher participation rate for club-based sport than Metropolitan areas (21% compared to 14%) (Sport & Recreation Spatial, 2018). | The number of Victorian government primary schools administering swimming lessons increased from 91% in 2017 to 97% in 2018, following an increase in state government funding (Department of Education and Training [DET], 2019).  
In 2017/18, 18,336 school students took part in LSV's Open Water Learning Experience (OWLE) program, including delivery in partnership with YMCA Victoria camps (LSV, 2018b). |
2. The effectiveness of the current Nippers program in Victoria

a. The development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge of nippers

Table 3 describes Age Manager, niper and parent perspectives on the development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge of nippers.

| Table 3 Age Manager, niper and parent perspectives on lifesaving, water safety, survival skills and knowledge |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| **Age Managers**                                    | **General**                                    | **Inland club perspectives**         |
| • For Under 9, 72% of content was covered across the four LSCs that completed the skills checklist. |                                             | • The inland club placed greater emphasis on developing lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge, over competition-based activities. They developed their own inland water safety content as this is not currently included in the Nippers resource. |
| • For Under 12, 69% of content was covered across all five LSCs. |                                             | • Several skill areas are less applicable to inland locations and could be modified, including ‘Our beach environment’ and ‘Surf conditions and hazards’. |
| • Nippers participants learnt a range of lifesaving and water safety skills, however this varied greatly by club. |                                             |                                           |
| **Nippers**                                        | **General**                                    | **Inland club perspectives**         |
| Key learnings were:                               |                                             | • Nippers described one thing they would tell a friend or family member to do to be safe around the water at their club: |
| • How to use a Nipper board (21%);               |                                             |   • Inland club, “check for dangers” (29%). |
| • General water safety knowledge (19%); and      |                                             | Only the inland club rated dry practical skills as important learning outcomes. Inland nippers appeared to be more concerned with the safety elements than coastal nippers. |
| • How to be safe at the beach/river (15%).      |                                             |                                           |
| Nippers described one thing they would tell a friend or family member to do to be safe around the water at their club: |                                             |                                           |
| • Surf and bay clubs: “swim between the red and yellow flags” (55% surf; 42% bay). |                                             |                                           |
| **Parents**                                       | **General**                                    | **Inland club perspectives**         |
| Parents valued the Nippers program highly, stating that it developed their children’s water safety awareness and was good practice in open water environments under qualified supervision. |                                             | • Inland club parents reported their children learned about water and river safety and First Aid techniques. |
| • Surf club parents commented on the competitive events (either for or against competitiveness), giving new things a try and gaining competence in the surf. |                                             |                                           |
| • Bay club parents referred more to learning about water safety and using the beach equipment, teamwork and the social aspects. |                                             |                                           |
b. The impact of involvement on nippers, their families and the community

Involvement with Nippers on any level (whether participating, supporting or facilitating) had positive impacts overall. Table 4 describes the impacts of Nippers program involvement on nipper participants, their families and the wider community by Age Managers, nippers and parents.

Table 4 Perspectives on the impact of involvement on nippers, their families and the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on nippers</th>
<th>Impact on families</th>
<th>Impact on community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The overarching positive impacts on children were making friends; learning water safety skills; and having fun.</td>
<td>• Lasting connections are formed and maintained each season. Retention of families year-on-year helps strengthen club profiles and connection to community. Whole families reap the social benefits of Nippers.</td>
<td>• Enhanced community spirit and strong volunteer support are vital for Nippers program sustainability. Nippers teaches the important role volunteers play in the community. The number of nippers is growing faster than the uptake of volunteer support. More effort required to engage and include new members and those with less experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nippers developed confidence and improved social skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inland nippers are seeking carnival and development camp opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parents of children in Under 12 referred to competitive parents affecting their child’s enjoyment by pressuring them to win.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Image of children running on the beach](image-url)
c. Facilitators and barriers to participation

Table 5 summarises the key facilitators and barriers to participation in the Nippers program, by all clubs and specific considerations for the inland setting. It also provides suggested solutions based on evidence from the Age Managers, parents, the literature and internal expertise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Suggested solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| All clubs | • Creating a fun, social, active atmosphere.  
• Engaged parents and club members help to run the program and motivate nippers.  
• Convenient location.  
• Flexibility with content and delivery.  
• Over half of all nippers would like to be a lifesaver and patrol the beaches/river when they are older.  
• The most common parent facilitators to participation in Nippers across all clubs were:  
  1. Family involvement (81%);  
  2. Program location (79%); and  
  3. Health and fitness (62%). | • Continued volunteering commitment by the same families puts pressure on these families.  
• Lack of clear information on pathways for those wanting to become more involved (e.g. parents becoming coaches).  
• Administration and communication issues.  
• Overly competitive atmosphere at some clubs can deter participation.  
• Accommodation impacts (cost and limited availability).  
• Lack of cultural diversity at many clubs.  
• Barriers for nippers included: lack of interest, other sports or interruption to holiday time.  
• Whilst uncommon, the main factors that made attendance difficult for parents were:  
  1. Other commitments (21%); and  
  2. Lack of interest (9%). | • Promote benefits of participation, particularly to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people with different physical abilities.  
• Provide pathways from aquatic facilities to LSCs to attract new members and ensure nippers meet the minimum skill requirements.  
• Support parent transition to volunteering.  
• Provide pathways for lifesaving development following Nippers.  
• Ensure a good balance of competition and fun, and adapt to suit each group.  
• Educate families about the full scope of Nippers and lifesaving to encourage ongoing participation.  
• Add inland water safety and scenarios to the Nippers resource.  
• Organise additional activities to minimise wait times; especially with large groups.  
• Include variety and fun in each session rather than repetition (aside from necessary revision of key concepts). |
| Inland    | • Partnerships with coastal clubs, to provide support, share ideas, lend equipment, provide accommodation, etc.  
• Freedom to vary program according to weather.  
• Fostering community connection and cohesion.  
• River safety is reassuring for parents.  
• Coaches work with the same nippers each year – deeper sense of belonging.  
• 100% of inland nippers wanted to continue next year, mainly due to the learning and social aspects.  
• 93% of nippers would like to be a lifesaver and patrol the beaches or river when they are older. | • Lack of volunteers as the number of nippers is outgrowing the current volunteer base.  
• Lack of opportunities for adolescents (and associated difficulty with member retention in these years).  
• Differences in competencies and/or small numbers of children in the same age group.  
• Nipper Education Program content has a coastal focus, sometimes not relevant to the river environment.  
• Lack of funds for nippers to attend development camps. |
WHAT THIS MEANS

The present review (Year 1) indicated that the provision of a Nippers program in regional Victoria, particularly in inland waterways and regional aquatic facilities, is a feasible option for increasing the coverage of Nippers programs across the state. The program effectively fosters the development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge among participants.

Keys for the ongoing success of the Nippers program include:
- A strong volunteer support base;
- Active use of the Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide to deliver comprehensive lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge;
- Including variety and fun in each session; being flexible to meet the interests of a variety of nippers, and minimising waiting times;
- A focus on inclusion;
- Visibility in schools and the local community; and
- Providing clear pathways for lifesaving development and opportunities.
Adapting the Nippers program for a regional (inland and pool) setting

In its current iteration, the Nipper Education Program is designed specifically for coastal environments. Despite this, the nippers and their parents involved in the inland program were the most satisfied of all clubs included in this evaluation.

Table 6 describes the recommendations derived from this evaluation, to facilitate delivery of a Nippers program to a broader range of inland waterways and regional pools.

Table 6 Key recommendations for the delivery of a regional (inland and pool) Nippers product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program content</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure existing programs and resources are utilised where suitable to ensure efficiency in program design.</td>
<td>1. Engage schools by demonstrating the links between the Nipper Education Program content and the Victorian HPE Curriculum. Nippers can be promoted as an extension activity to achieving the competencies of the Victorian Water Safety Certificate.</td>
<td>1. Promote the Nippers program via the methods known to be most effective in the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Include content on lifesaving, living and recreating safely around inland waterways and swimming pools.</td>
<td>2. Engage aquatic facilities by demonstrating the opportunities to supplement existing swimming and water safety programs (i.e. swimming lessons) with a community-focused lifesaving program. Additionally, this can maintain children’s engagement with aquatic facilities and demonstrate pathways to employment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Depending on numbers, children might be grouped by their level of experience and confidence, rather than by their age.</td>
<td>3. Promote lifesaving as the inclusive, welcoming place it is designed to be, particularly to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people with different physical and mental abilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Include physical activity content related to the sport discipline of pool lifesaving instead of (or in addition to) surf lifesaving (e.g. throw rescues, tows and CPR).</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Include Royal Life Saving – Australia (RLSA) community awards, such as the Rescue and Bronze strands in place of traditional surf lifesaving awards and pre-requisites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Collaborate with Starfish Nippers to ensure resources are inclusive and suitable for children with disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Include elements of community service and volunteering in a regional pool setting (e.g. creating campaigns, working with vulnerable groups, preparedness).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Partnerships

1. Establish partnerships between existing coastal clubs and new regional program locations (e.g. aquatic facilities and schools), to provide support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resourcing</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Establish links with local caravan and camping parks to promote Nippers to holiday makers with children.</td>
<td>2. Utilise existing partnerships with aquatic facilities and aquatic management groups to provide collective support for regions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop partnerships with local amenities, e.g. aquatic facilities, during cooler months.</td>
<td>3. Utilise existing local community swimming, water safety and lifesaving ambassadors (individuals) to create local links and champion change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use local or high-profile sports stars to highlight the life skills and pathways Nippers can provide.</td>
<td>4. Use local or high-profile sports stars to highlight the life skills and pathways Nippers can provide.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Resourcing**

1. Review Age Manager requirements and scope opportunity for utilising existing instructor awards.
2. Scope options for ‘train the trainer’ models with local regional champions.
3. Engage LSV to provide additional training (including engaging and upskilling parent volunteers), supervision and access to equipment as required.
4. Actively seek grant funding for factors including equipment, travel to development camps and the provision of training.

**Retention**

1. Provide clear pathways for lifesaving development and opportunities for youth once they turn 15 or develop an extension program for teenagers.
2. Build an interconnected surf sport pathway from Nippers to the elite to increase membership and retention.
3. Ensure systems and processes for the registration, tracking and monitoring of Bush Nippers participants and instructors are in place.
BACKGROUND

The Nipper Education Program, or Nippers, is a water safety skills and education program that introduces children aged 5 to 14 years to lifesaving. Nippers programs are delivered to members at lifesaving clubs (LSCs) across Victoria throughout the warmer months annually. The program is about children participating in safe, fun and organised activities in a beach environment, preparing them to be future lifesavers (Life Saving Victoria [LSV], 2018a).

All of Victoria’s 57 LSCs offer Nippers, including 56 which are located on the Victorian coastline and one club which is Australia’s only inland lifesaving club (Mildura). Volunteer members commit their time to educating children about lifesaving. Age Managers within each club are trained and responsible for the delivery of the program. The Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide (LSV, 2018a) provides Age Managers with detailed lesson plans for each age group, from Under 6 to Under 14. However, the style of delivery, format and timing of sessions, and interests and experience levels of nippers in the program vary between each club.

Junior development in lifesaving began in the 1960’s and these activities have developed over time. Revisions to the program have been made based on feedback, consultation and contribution from clubs and Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) branches. Changes in lifesaving culture, community expectations and member expectations have also influenced the development of Nippers.

The most recent revision to the program in Victoria occurred in 2017/18 and the updated Nippers resource was released for the 2018/19 season. More recently, state government funding has been provided to increase the capacity and coverage of Nippers programs across Victoria, including a proposal that the program be adapted for provision in regional communities, including inland areas, hence the name ‘Bush Nippers’.

Updates to the Nipper Education Program as well as the proposed new Bush Nippers program, provide an opportunity to ensure evidence-based, effective content and delivery methods. This research forms part of the Public Water Safety Initiative. The Public Water Safety Initiative is funded by the Victorian Government and LSV is working closely with the Department of Education and Training (DET) on the implementation of this initiative.
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the project is to determine the feasibility of developing a Nippers program in regional Victoria, particularly in inland waterways and regional pools, and with the intention of increasing the coverage of the Nipper Education Program across the state.

Specific objectives over the two-year project are to:

1. Review the current Nippers program and the potential to adapt the program into a regional setting.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the current Nippers program in Victoria, in particular:
   a. The development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge of nippers (as per specified learning outcomes);
   b. The impact of involvement on nippers, their families and the community; and
   c. Any facilitators and barriers to participation.
3. Determine the effectiveness of the new Bush Nippers program in inland regions, in particular:
   a. The development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge of nippers (as per specified learning outcomes);
   b. The impact of involvement on nippers, their families and the community;
   c. Any facilitators and barriers to participation; and

This report summarises the findings from Year 1 (2018/19), which addresses objectives 1 and 2.
METHOD

Objective 1 – To review the current Nippers program and the potential to adapt the program into a regional setting.

The review of the current Nippers program included a literature review and stakeholder consultation. The literature review focussed on prior work into the provision of sport and aquatic education programs for school-aged children, with a particular focus on surf lifesaving. Facilitators and barriers to participation were reviewed, along with the potential differentiation or value-add of a Nippers program in regional areas (including alignment to the Victorian Curriculum). Areas covered included:

- Analysis of existing research on sport and aquatic education program participation;
- Analysis of existing lifesaving-specific research;
- Analysis of current sport or aquatic education programs being offered for children aged 5-13 years in regional areas of Victoria; and
- Alignment to the Victorian Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum.

The stakeholder consultation component included face-to-face interviews conducted with key LSC and aquatic industry stakeholders to determine:

- Interest of schools/ regional communities in a Nippers product;
- Any potential barriers to participation.

In Year 2, further consultation will be undertaken with additional key community (schools, aquatic facilities, councils, sporting clubs etc.), LSC and water safety stakeholders to further this evidence base and determine:

- Interest of regional schools in a Nippers product;
- Who would run a Nippers program in regional areas; and
- Adaptability of the developed resource for children with special needs.

An interview question set was developed to elicit responses regarding the above points from the perspective of those that currently (existing LSCs) or potentially (schools or other community groups in regional areas) provide the program. The interviews were also used to determine any potential improvements to service provision.
Objective 2 – To determine the effectiveness of the current Nippers program in Victoria.

The effectiveness of Nippers in coastal and inland regions was evaluated, specifically:

a. The development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge of nippers;
b. The impact of involvement on nippers, their families and the community; and
c. Any facilitators and barriers to participation.

Study setting and sample
Evaluation of the current Nippers program took place across five LSCs, including: two bay clubs, two surf clubs and one inland club. Two age groups were the focus of the study. These were selected to align with key ages in the Victorian Curriculum:

- Under 9 (Year 2/3 of school); and
- Under 12 (Year 5/6).

Target number of children:

- 100 children per age group (50 children from bay clubs and 50 from surf clubs were required for statistical comparisons, all inland nippers were required, noting that due to low numbers, statistical comparisons would not be possible).

Level of attendance throughout the program were assessed via records kept by the Age Manager or equivalent person conducting the Nippers program.

Program review
The program was reviewed in Year 1 via:

- Records kept by Age Managers or equivalent persons conducting the Nippers program.
- One-on-one interviews with Age Managers of Under 9 and Under 12 groups and/or Junior Coordinators.
- Post-program group questionnaire to measure children’s key knowledge/ learning, enjoyment, satisfaction, barriers to participation and intended pathways in lifesaving.
- Focus groups or one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders such as parents and Junior Coordinators.
REVIEW FINDINGS

1. Review of the current Nippers program

Participation in sport and aquatic education programs

An extensive review of sport and aquatic education participation and alignment of the current Nippers program to the curriculum was conducted. Table 1 describes the level of participation in sport, aquatic education and lifesaving programs among Victorian children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Aquatic education</th>
<th>Lifesaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 680,000 Victorian children aged 5-14 years are estimated to have participated in organised sport at least once in 2017/18 (Sport Australia, 2018).</td>
<td>An LSV study conducted on the swimming ability of Victorian children reported that teachers estimated over 25,000 students left primary school with insufficient knowledge to handle threatening circumstances in and around water (Birch &amp; Matthews, 2014).</td>
<td>In 2017/18, 18,336 school students took part in LSV's Open Water Learning Experience (OWLE) program, including delivery in partnership with YMCA Victoria camps (LSV, 2018b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport participation rates are highest among children aged 5-14 years in Victoria, compared to other age groups. VicHealth-funded research estimated that 62% of 5-9 year olds and 70% of 10-14 year olds participated in organised sport in 2016. Participation rates drop significantly after age 15 (Sport &amp; Recreation Spatial, 2018).</td>
<td>Between July 2014 and December 2016, an estimated 47,500 children aged 2-15 years attended private swimming lessons in Victoria (Pidgeon et al, 2018).</td>
<td>11,127 children participated in Victorian Nippers programs across the 57 LSCs in 2017/18 (LSV, 2018b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Victoria has a higher participation rate for club-based sport than Metropolitan areas (21% compared to 14%, respectively) (Sport &amp; Recreation Spatial, 2018).</td>
<td>The proportion of Victorian government primary schools administering swimming lessons increased from 91% in 2017 to 97% in 2018, following an increase in state government funding (Department of Education and Training [DET], 2019).</td>
<td>SLSA’s Sporting Schools (initiated by Sport Australia) program, READY. SET. RESCUE., is designed to help Australian school kids stay active, healthy and learn how to stay safe at the beach. LSV’s OWLE program is the Victorian endorsed SLSA Sporting Schools program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming is the most popular sporting activity for 6-13 year old children in Australia, with an estimated 48% participation rate, or almost 1.2 million, based on 2014 data (Roy Morgan, 2017). This is followed by soccer (46%) and cycling (37%).</td>
<td>181 licensees delivered Royal Life Saving Australia's Swim and Survive swimming and water safety education program to Victorian children in 2017/18 (LSV, 2018b).</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Current aquatic education programs for Victorian children

Current aquatic education programs for children aged 5-13 years being delivered in regional Victoria were determined via meetings with key stakeholders. The review identified 13 programs from seven providers, in addition to the many swim schools that deliver swimming education to children via school-organised lessons or private lessons. A detailed list of the current offerings is provided in Appendix A. This includes the delivery environment (host organisation, region, location) and format (practical- or theory-based), time considerations (duration, time of year), participation levels and whether they link to the Victorian Curriculum.

The review identified a gap in the provision of ongoing and engaging water safety education to Victorian children, including a lack of year-round community lifesaving programs on offer for regional children. There are currently no programs that provide pathways from swimming lessons to other aquatic activities including lifesaving, which extend children’s knowledge to open waterways.

Insights into the elements contained in successful, ongoing programs interstate and internationally may assist in directing future program development and implementation.

Barriers to participation in sport and aquatic education

Sport Australia (previously known as the Australian Sports Commission) listed the common barriers to participation in sports by Australian secondary school students (Year 7-9) in the report, Addressing the decline in sport participation in secondary schools: Findings from the Youth Participation Research Project (Australian Sports Commission [ASC], 2017). Table 2 compares the barriers outlined by the report, with common barriers to participation in aquatic education. There is clear overlap in terms of barriers present for participation in sports and aquatic education. Aquatic education poses additional barriers, which include access to aquatic locations, risk perceptions and a lack of understanding of the broader importance of learning swimming and water safety skills for personal survival.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport participation barriers within the school setting</th>
<th>Aquatic education participation barriers within the school setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Loss of interest – Year 9 students are at particular risk. | Loss of interest:  
  - Loss of interest by students and/or lack of parental buy-in;  
  - Schools' lack of interest or capacity to deliver (e.g. cost, lack of qualified staff, crowded curriculum); and  
  - Lack of opportunities or promotion of existing opportunities for older students. |
| Competing extra-curricular commitments. | Competing extra-curricular commitments:  
  - Other school commitments; and  
  - Decrease in the number of children accessing learn-to-swim lessons, particularly during school years, due to the perception that schools always cover aquatic education and children therefore do not need to undertake extra-curricular swimming or water safety activities (RLSSA, 2012; RLSSA 2018). |
| Long term disengagement from sport:  
  - Those who have never connected with sport, never develop sport habits as part of their everyday lifestyle. | Long term disengagement from aquatic education can occur, particularly if that school lacks someone to drive a program, does not offer any swimming and water safety initiatives or only offers short-duration activities. |
| Education and awareness of the benefits of sport:  
  - When HPE theory is not taught (or inadequately so), the benefits of sport are not always made aware to students. | Education and awareness of the benefits and importance of swimming and water safety skills and knowledge:  
  - Schools may lack awareness, capacity or interest in offering aquatic opportunities, e.g. swimming lessons, lifesaving programs, Nippers, survival swimming, open water learning experiences; and  
  - Lack of consistent messaging on the wider health benefits of aquatic recreation, e.g. mental health, social impacts, physiological benefits (RLSSA, 2018). |
| Injury:  
  - Students with previous injuries tend to be increasingly cautious. | Perception of heightened risk associated with aquatic activities:  
  - Risk avoidance, rather than risk management;  
  - Perception of aquatics being too risky; and  
  - Possibility of physical or emotional injury (fatal drowning at worst) (Matthews et al, 2016; RLSSA, 2012). |
| Confidence:  
  - Mixed abilities at schools, those with lesser skills tend to lose confidence and therefore engagement. | Confidence:  
  - Optional/ opt-in offerings often mean the students who would benefit most from aquatic education miss out (e.g. CALD and low socioeconomic status; and  
  - By adolescence, students may have developed body awareness issues and/or a fear of the water (Amateur Swimming Association [ASA], 2013; RLSSA, 2018). |
| Cultural barriers:  
  - Mixed gender sports can be uncomfortable and intimidating;  
  - More of an issue for females than males;  
  - Sport programs during religious observation times, e.g. Ramadan; and | Cultural barriers:  
  - Children from CALD and Indigenous backgrounds are underrepresented in learn to swim programs and often do not achieve the benchmark levels until an older age (RLSSA, 2012);  
  - Mixed gender sports can be uncomfortable and intimidating; |
| Wearing religious coverings, e.g. Hijab. | More of an issue for females than males;  
| | Sport programs during religious observation times, e.g. Ramadan; and  
| | Wearing religious coverings, e.g. Hijab. |

**Gender:**
- Respective genders preferring ‘traditional’ gender-specific sports at some schools, alienating those who wish to try something outside of the school culture norm;  
- Females participating in male dominant sports increasing; and  
- Using ‘sporty’ role models to encourage participation and culture change.

**Gender:**
- Some cultural and religious groups require females and males to be separated in aquatic environments; and  
- Restrictions around dress in the water, particularly for females. Progress is being made to develop appropriate swimwear for females.

**Weather:**
- Weather and unpredictable conditions, particularly for outdoor activities; and  
- Drop in participation in cooler months (Term 2 and Term 3).

**Weather:**
- Weather and unpredictable conditions, particularly in open water e.g. weather, waves and sea level (Higgerson et al, 2015; Matthews et al, 2016); and  
- Drop in participation in cooler months (Term 2 and Term 3).

**Familiarity with the sport:**
- Students prefer to stick with a sport they’ve been playing for years rather than transition to new sports.

**Familiarity with the sport:**
- Whilst swimming is one of the most popular sports among Australian children, lifesaving sport is far less familiar or not available (Roy Morgan, 2017; RLSSA, 2012; RLSSA, 2018).

**Barriers faced by the school they attend:**
- Lack of facilities, sport opportunities;  
- Budget restrictions;  
- Teacher/ coach inexperience; and  
- Lack of investment in innovative and sustainable initiatives.

**Barriers faced by the school:**
- Cost of lessons/ pool entry and lack of ongoing funding;  
- Access to qualified swim teachers and pool space;  
- Cost of transport;  
- Crowded curriculum or difficulty aligning existing programs to the curriculum;  
- Inflexibility of duration and frequency of sessions within a program; and  
- Children living in remote areas often have reduced access to safe, well-supervised facilities and qualified swim teachers (Birch & Matthews, 2014; Matthews et al, 2016; RLSSA, 2012).

**Sport participation barriers external to the school setting**
- Transport;  
- Cost;  
- Time commitments;  
- Other siblings;  
- Conflicting sports;  
- Not valuing sport/ prioritising other pursuits, e.g. academics; and  
- Too much pressure placed on their child to perform.

**Aquatic education participation barriers external to the school setting**
- Distance to waterways/ aquatic facilities;  
- Transport;  
- Time commitment;  
- Cost of lessons/ pool entry/ membership;  
- Other commitments;  
- Lack of interest, buy-in or prioritisation – more than 50% of children leave programs at age 5 years;
| Perception that competition and perfect stroke technique are more important than survival skills, rescue skills and water safety knowledge; and | Limited access:  
- Regional and remote areas;  
- Long travel times, minimal facilities, financial difficulties; and  
- Only mainstream activities available. |
|---|---|
| Lack of year-round facilities and pool space (Birch and Matthews, 2014; Matthews et al, 2016; RLSSA, 2012; RLSSA 2018). | Skill competence for competition:  
- Many aquatic sports become too competitive or don’t allow for a range of skill levels and abilities;  
- Lack of options for non-competitive, social, game-based aquatic education and sport;  
- Lack of program flexibility, e.g. content, time, location; and  
- Lack of promotion of lifesaving and aquatic industry employment pathways (RLSSA, 2018). |
| Perception that aquatic education does not have to be ongoing:  
- Usual length of time in formal swimming lessons is 19–22 months (RLSSA, 2018). | Conflict between in-school and out-of-school competition:  
- Fear of injury can cause skilled players to solely commit to just one avenue of sport (school or community). |
| Increasing time demands for extra-curricular activities:  
- Increasing amount of involvement in other activities, e.g. socialising, paid work, farm work, household duties. | Students only participating in annual, usually brief, school aquatic education programs – no continuation outside of school swimming setting (Personal Communication, LSV Swim and Survive Think Tank participant, 2019). |
| Changing sports:  
- Already committed so changing can be a difficult transitioning. | Cultural:  
- Cultural and religious – such as language barriers, a lack of water safety as a priority in the home country; and  
- Lifesaving sport is a heavily Caucasian demographic – less inviting for multicultural Australians, especially newly arrived. |
| Limited access:  
- Regional and remote areas;  
- Distance to waterways/ aquatic facilities;  
- Shortage of relevant programs, partly due to fewer qualified teachers than in metropolitan and suburban areas; and  
- Lack of year-round facilities and pool space (Birch and Matthews, 2014; Matthews et al, 2016). | Skill competence for competition:  
- Difficult to join an established team because of underdeveloped skills in specific sports. |
| Changing sports:  
- Additional stigma that swimming lessons are only for young children (RLSSA, 2018). | Conflict between in-school and out-of-school competition:  
- Fear of injury can cause skilled players to solely commit to just one avenue of sport (school or community). |
| Limited access:  
- Regional and remote areas;  
- Distance to waterways/ aquatic facilities;  
- Shortage of relevant programs, partly due to fewer qualified teachers than in metropolitan and suburban areas; and  
- Lack of year-round facilities and pool space (Birch and Matthews, 2014; Matthews et al, 2016). | Students only participating in annual, usually brief, school aquatic education programs – no continuation outside of school swimming setting (Personal Communication, LSV Swim and Survive Think Tank participant, 2019). |
| Cultural:  
- Cultural and religious – such as language barriers, a lack of water safety as a priority in the home country; and  
- Lifesaving sport is a heavily Caucasian demographic – less inviting for multicultural Australians, especially newly arrived. |
Alignment to the Victorian HPE Curriculum

With swimming and water safety education compulsory in the Victorian HPE Curriculum, a modified Nippers program designed for schools, regardless of their proximity to the coastline, is a potentially valuable initiative for meeting curriculum requirements, in addition to providing students with vital lifesaving skills and knowledge that may one day save a life. There is also the potential to attract a broader range of children to lifesaving in the longer term, by demonstrating the range of pathways available from lifesaving sports (beach and pool lifesaving disciplines) through to lifeguarding at their local pool, beach, or inland waterway. Table 3 outlines the alignment of the Nipper Education Program learning outcomes for Under 9 and Under 12 (LSV, 2018a) to the Victorian HPE Curriculum (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority [VCAA], 2015). The Nippers program aligns with physical elements (Moving the body/Understanding movement) as well as encouraging proactive health promotion approaches (Being healthy, active and safe). This is demonstrated throughout the Nippers learning outcomes for each year level.

However, there is a lack of social health determinants specified in the Nippers learning outcomes. The VCAA Curriculum has a strong focus on the social aspects of physical education (such as developing networks and working together), as well as creating a supportive and understanding environment to discover emotions and feelings within sporting activities. While these aspects may be an incidental benefit of the Nippers program, they are not explicitly described in the learning outcomes and so there is a lack of clarity for anyone unfamiliar with Nippers. There is also potential for the Nippers program to encompass further learning aspects related to sexual education (e.g. effects of puberty on performance; respectful relationships, boundaries and consent) and drug and alcohol education (e.g. effects of medication and alcohol on coordination and risk perception).

Table 3 Alignment of the Nipper Education Program learning outcomes for Under 9 and Under 12 to the Victorian HPE Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victorian HPE Curriculum content</th>
<th>Nipper Education Program learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Under 9 – Surf Aware Two</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal, Social and Community Health</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being healthy, safe and active</td>
<td>Introduction to life saving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Examine how success, challenge and failure strengthen personal identities</td>
<td>• Know the way around the club and the beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore strategies to manage physical, social and emotional change</td>
<td>• Identify the lifesaving club as a welcoming place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe</td>
<td>• Identify the five beach safety tips using the F.L.A.G.S acronym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing</td>
<td>• Understand and demonstrate the SunSmart practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety network</td>
<td><strong>First Aid</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify people in their own Personal Safety Network who they can ask for help</td>
<td><strong>Drug and alcohol education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify dangerous animals at the beach and basic First Aid treatments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Play it safe in the water | • Recognise and understand the red and yellow flags  
• Understand and describe when and how to dial '000' in an emergency  
• Demonstrate knowledge of signals  
• Identify the types of waves  
• Recognise the dangers swimmers can be exposed to with a changing tide  
• Understand how rips are formed, what they look like, and how to avoid them |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing</td>
<td><strong>Nil</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Describe factors that can positively influence relationships and personal wellbeing  
• Investigate how emotional responses vary in family situations and in friendship groups  
• Discuss and interpret health information and messages in the media |
| Contributing to healthy and active communities | **Introduction to life saving** |
| • Describe strategies to make the classroom and playground healthy, safe and active spaces  
• Participate in outdoor games and activities to examine how participation promotes a connection between the community, natural and built environments, and health and wellbeing |
| Moving the body | **Education/ Surf Skills** |
| • Practise and refine fundamental movement skills in different movement situations in indoor, outdoor and aquatic settings  
• Perform movement sequences which link fundamental movement skills  
• Practise and apply movement concepts and strategies |
| • Develop an understanding of lifesaving in Australia  
• Our beach environment  
• Recognise the diverse human and marine communities that make up a beach ecosystem. Recognise the environmental impact they can have on the beach  
• Identify dangers at the beach  
• Identify different safety signs on the beach and their meaning |
| Beach sprints and relay | • Attempt or perform standing start technique for beach sprints |
| • Attempt or perform basic running technique on sand |
| • Attempt or perform diving for a flag  
• Attempt or perform jump turn technique  
• Attempt or perform beach flag start  
• Enjoy participating in a run-swim-run  
• Attempt or perform diving under waves  
• Complete an Ironman/ Ironwoman  
• Aquacameron  
• Enjoy participating in an Aquacameron  
• Attempt or perform rolling under a wave  
• Attempt or perform buoy turn |
### Understanding movement
- Examine the benefits of physical activity and physical fitness to health and wellbeing
- Combine the elements of effort, space, time, objects and people when performing movement sequences

### Eat, drink, exercise
- Recognise the importance of hydration, nutrition and exercise as part of participating in Nippers

### Learning through movement
- Adopt inclusive practices when participating in physical activities
- Apply innovative and creative thinking in solving movement challenges
- Apply basic rules and scoring systems, and demonstrate fair play when participating

### As per ‘Moving the body’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 6</th>
<th>Under 12 – Surf Smart One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal, Social and Community Health</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being healthy, safe and active</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore how identities are influenced by people and places</td>
<td>• Develop an understanding of lifesaving in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investigate resources to manage changes and transitions associated with puberty</td>
<td>• Identify the lifesaving club as a welcoming place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investigate community resources and strategies to seek help about health, safety and wellbeing</td>
<td>• Identify and demonstrate the SunSmart guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing</td>
<td>• Identify what skin cancer is and what causes it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Aid</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques</td>
<td>• Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the role of the body’s circulatory system, skeletal system, respiratory system and nervous system</td>
<td>• Identify the role of the body’s circulatory system, skeletal system, respiratory system and nervous system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand how the body’s major organs systems relate to First Aid scenarios</td>
<td>• Understand how the body’s major organs systems relate to First Aid scenarios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the principals of DRSABCD</td>
<td>• Identify the principals of DRSABCD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognise and manage basic patient management techniques</td>
<td>• Recognise and manage basic patient management techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our beach environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the four different types of rips</td>
<td>• Identify the four different types of rips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify how to use rip currents to assist in surf swimming and rescues</td>
<td>• Identify how to use rip currents to assist in surf swimming and rescues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal safety network</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand the rights and responsibilities as a member of SLSA and LSV</td>
<td>• Understand the rights and responsibilities as a member of SLSA and LSV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing
- Practise skills to establish and manage relationships
- Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour, relationships and health and wellbeing
- Recognise how media and important people in the community influence personal attitudes, beliefs, decisions and behaviours

### Becoming a lifesaver
- Recognise the different types of communication used in a beach environment
- Identify why communication is an important skill for a lifesaver

### Contributing to healthy and active communities
- Investigate the role of preventive health in promoting and maintaining health, safety and wellbeing for individuals and their communities
- Explore how participation in outdoor activities supports personal and community health and wellbeing and creates connections to the natural and built environment
- Investigate how celebrating similarities and differences can strengthen communities

### Our beach environment
- Understand how weather can affect both the beach environment and the beach user
- Identify natural and man-made causes of erosion and their impact on the beach environment
### Movement and Physical Activity

**Moving the body**
- Practise specialised movement skills and apply them in different movement situations in indoor, outdoor and aquatic settings
- Design and perform a variety of movement sequences
- Propose and apply movement concepts and strategies

### Surf Skills

**Beach sprints**
- Develop a beach sprint arm and leg drive technique

**Beach run**
- Complete a 1km beach run and demonstrate pacing

**Beach flags**
- Identify different beach flag race strategies

**Run-swim-run**
- Complete a run-swim-run

**Wade**
- Attempt or perform diving under waves

**Surf race**
- Complete an Ironman/ Ironwoman

**Aquacameron**
- Perform Aquacameron relay race transitions

**Tube rescue**
- Recognise a rescue tube and what it is used for

**Board race**
- Attempt or perform rolling under a wave

**Board relay**
- Attempt or perform buoy turn

**Board rescue**
- Attempt or perform changeover techniques in a board relay

**Run-swim-run**
- Complete a run-swim-run

**Wade**
- Attempt or perform diving under waves

**Surf race**
- Complete an Ironman/ Ironwoman

**Aquacameron**
- Perform Aquacameron relay race transitions

**Tube rescue**
- Recognise a rescue tube and what it is used for

**Board race**
- Attempt or perform rolling under a wave

**Board relay**
- Attempt or perform buoy turn

**Board rescue**
- Attempt or perform changeover techniques in a board relay

### Understanding movement
- Participate in physical activities designed to enhance fitness, and discuss the impact of regular participation on health and wellbeing
- Manipulate and modify the elements of effort, space, time, objects and people to perform movement sequences

### Learning through movement
- Participate positively in groups and teams by encouraging others and negotiating roles and responsibilities
- Apply critical and creative thinking processes in order to generate and assess solutions to movement challenges
- Demonstrate ethical behaviour and fair play that aligns with the rules when participating in a range of physical activities

As per ‘Moving the body’
Preliminary indications of interest in a Bush Nippers product

A feasibility study of surf lifesaving programs in Australian schools identified that to be successful, a school-based lifesaving program needs to: “focus on the fun and social nature of surf lifesaving, rather than competition; be inclusive, promote equal treatment and focus on fun and participation, regardless of skill level and ability; provide flexibility of attendance and time commitment; and promote opportunities for lifesaving membership by understanding the needs of children and the areas that may attract them to surf lifesaving” (Matthews et al., 2016: 5). This indicates significant scope for Nippers-style education programs to be integrated into the school curriculum or be made available externally for children living in regional areas to access via a local aquatic facility, swimming club or community group.

In addition to the Age Manager interviews that were conducted with the five participating clubs (detailed below in section 2), five attendees of LSV’s Nipper Education Resource and Nipper App. sessions in March and April 2019 were invited to provide input on the value of introducing a Bush Nippers product for regional settings. A number of parents attending their child’s program supported the concept, as highlighted through unstructured one-on-one discussions on the beach (n=14). The response was overwhelmingly positive, particularly because of the water safety skills and knowledge the program can deliver to participants and the overall value people place on Nippers for their children. Further discussion on the opportunity to adapt the Nippers program to a regional setting in inland waterways and aquatic facilities is discussed in section 2.

Key points

• Parents of nippers strongly supported the development of a Nippers product for regional areas.
• Whilst much of the current content is relevant for children in regional areas, some could be modified to suit inland waterways.
• Establish partnerships between existing coastal clubs and new regional clubs, to provide support, translate the resources, share ideas, lend equipment etc.
• New programs must appeal to parents, children and schools. “If no kids have gone through Nippers before, they won’t talk to their mates about it”.

AGE MANAGER AND PARENT PERSPECTIVES

• “Giving the opportunity to inland kids to learn these skills is so important, especially if they come down to the beach for a holiday.” – parent
• “[Kids] should know what to look out for, when they go camping to inland waterways.” – Age Manager
2. The effectiveness of the current Nipper program in Victoria

This section describes the analysis into the effectiveness of the current Victorian Nipper Education Program. The overall response rate to the surveys was 62% of children enrolled and 44% of their parents.

Demographics
The breakdown of children in the Nippers program is presented in Table 4.

- The two surf clubs had a much larger combined number of members enrolled in the Under 9 and Under 12 age groups (n=192) than the bay two bay clubs (n=73) and the inland club (n=14). Across both age groups, 53% were female.
- Across surf and bay clubs, 150 Under 9’s and 170 Under 12’s were surveyed. Nippers of both age groups in the inland club were surveyed together because they participated as one group in the Nippers program.
- The parent survey represented 122 children (69 in Under 9 and 52 in Under 12), of whom 54% were female and 32% had been involved in Nippers for 3-4 years, followed by 28% involved for 1-2 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Children enrolled Estimate from enrolment numbers U9 U12</th>
<th>Children surveyed Age group U9 U12 Both</th>
<th>Total Age group All U9 U12</th>
<th>Parent survey Gender F M</th>
<th>Years in Nippers program First year 1-2 years 3-4 years 5+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surf</td>
<td>93 99</td>
<td>58 61 -</td>
<td>92 53 39 50 42 14 22 29 27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>34 39</td>
<td>17 24 -</td>
<td>21 14 7 10 11 5 5 9 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>9 5</td>
<td>- - 14</td>
<td>9 2 6 7 2 1 7 1 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136 143</td>
<td>75 85 14</td>
<td>122 69 52 67 55 20 34 39 29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. The development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge

Nipper Education Program skills checklist

Age Managers from four of the five clubs completed a checklist of which learning outcomes from the updated Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide (LSV, 2018a) were covered during the season, and explained why some content was not covered. All Age Managers found the updated resources useful and easy to follow. In the 2019/20 season, it is hoped that after a year in circulation, additional activities will be utilised by Age Managers to increase the variety of the sessions.

Under 9

- For Under 9, 72% of content from the Junior Coordinator Guide was covered across the four clubs. Beach flags, first aid, beach sprints and relays and beach safety tips the only four items (out of 16) covered by all clubs.
- The Aquacameron and board race were the least used because Age Managers felt the children were too young. See Appendix B: Nippers skills checklist summary for full details.

Under 12

- Overall, 69% of content from the Junior Coordinator Guide was covered by all clubs in Under 12 (Appendix A). All clubs covered the following seven of the 20 learning outcomes: introduction to lifesaving; our beach environment; sun safety; beach sprints; beach flags; run-swim-run; and Ironman/ Ironwoman.
- Learning outcomes that were only covered by half the clubs were: personal safety network; surf conditions and hazards; First Aid; beach run; surf race; Aquacameron; board race and board rescue.
- No clubs provided content on the human body.
- Knowledge-based topics were reportedly not covered if the they had been addressed in the younger age groups or because the Age Managers were unaware that specific topics were part of the program.

INLAND CLUB PERSPECTIVES

Several skills in the current Nipper Education Program are less applicable to inland areas and could be modified, including:
- Our beach environment
- Surf conditions and hazards
Age Manager perspectives
The knowledge and skills taught during the Nipper Education Program varied greatly by club, environment and age group, as outlined in Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Lifesaving skills</th>
<th>Water safety and survival skills and knowledge</th>
<th>Delivery focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surf</td>
<td>Lifesaving skills were heavily covered. Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC) representatives were engaged to deliver Ironman/Ironwoman; Aquacameron; self-management and awareness; and rip education.</td>
<td>Beach awareness is covered at all ages, with swimming between the red and yellow flags and rip currents covered in younger age groups. By Under 11 the focus is on activities and competition.</td>
<td>One club was more competition-focused, with a lower focus on water safety knowledge in Under 9 and Under 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>Lifesaving skills, competition skills – previous season had lots of focus on CPR and First Aid.</td>
<td>Water/beach awareness, including hazard perception, e.g. rocks, how to be safe and have fun, sun protection, looking out for each other, wave knowledge.</td>
<td>These clubs tended to place more focus on developing water safety knowledge and reasoning behind learning certain skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>Introduced the qualifying swim in 2018/19 season and this exposure was a positive teaching and learning experience.</td>
<td>Safety is the top priority for the river environment. All water safety learnings are reinforced each session. Lower focus placed on rip currents and beach awareness, rather, river safety and awareness are key areas.</td>
<td>The inland club placed greater emphasis on developing water safety knowledge, over competition-based activities. They developed their own inland water safety content as this is not currently included in the Nippers resource.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nipper perspectives
- Every nipper surveyed indicated they had learned something new about lifesaving, water safety and/or survival skills. Overall, the main thing they learned during the program was how to use a Nipper board (21%); general water safety knowledge (19%) and how to be safe at the beach (or river for inland nippers; 15%). Only the inland club rated dry practical skills as key learning outcomes. The top three responses for each club type are outlined in Table 6.
- Nippers were asked to describe one thing they would tell a friend or family member to do to be safe around the water at their club. Surf and bay clubs said, “swim between the red and yellow flags” (55% surf; 42% bay); whereas the most common answer for inland nippers was, “check for dangers” (29%).
Table 6 Key learnings around lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge by nippers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surf</th>
<th>Inland</th>
<th>Parent perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 20% - Being safe at the beach</td>
<td>• 57% - How to use a Nipper board</td>
<td>The main factors parents felt their children had learned from the program related to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 17% - How to use a Nipper board</td>
<td>• 14% - Being safe at the river</td>
<td>• Water and surf safety knowledge;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 11% - Swimming, diving, wading</td>
<td>• 14% - Dry practical skills (e.g. sprints, signals)</td>
<td>• Confidence and awareness of the risks in the beach environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The social aspect of the program;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 22% - Being safe at the beach</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Children could “have a go” and try new skills and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 20% - How to use a Nipper board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 15% - Other water safety knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. hazard identification, emergency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>response)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent perspectives

- Parents highly valued the Nippers program, stating that it developed their children’s water and surf safety awareness and confidence, provided social benefits, and was a good way to try new skills in the ocean environment under qualified supervision (Table 6).
- According to parents, surf clubs were more likely to focus on the competitive events, giving new things a try and gaining competence in the surf; bay clubs referred more to learning about water safety and using the beach equipment, teamwork and the social aspects; and the inland club reported learning about water and river safety and First Aid techniques.
b. The impact of involvement on Nippers, their families and the community

The Nippers program was demonstrated to have a positive impact on participants.

Age Manager perspectives

Table 7 summarises Age Manager perspectives on the impact of the Nippers program on children, their families and the broader community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Impact on nippers</th>
<th>Impact on families</th>
<th>Impact on community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All clubs</td>
<td>Social benefits for all nippers, including improved confidence in the water and around their club.</td>
<td>Lasting connections are formed and maintained each season.</td>
<td>Enhanced community spirit and strong volunteer support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friendships, especially ‘summer friends’, who look forward to connecting on an annual basis.</td>
<td>Parents also reap the social benefits.</td>
<td>Nippers teaches the important role volunteers play in the community and the impact of being a global citizen and helping others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>Nippers appeared to develop confidence and improve social skills. Nippers are seeking carnival and development camp opportunities.</td>
<td>Nippers “generally love” the program; however, the number of Nippers is growing faster than the uptake of volunteer support.</td>
<td>Continuation of Nippers is crucial for the future of the club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keen to develop links with regional sporting clubs and continue fostering partnerships with coastal LSCs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nipper perspectives

Overall, children across all clubs and age groups enjoyed Nippers. The overarching positive impacts on children were:
- Making friends and meeting new people; learning water safety skills; and having fun.

Nippers were asked whether they liked, disliked or were neutral about specific content in the program, by giving a thumbs-up, thumbs-down or turning their thumb sideways (for a neutral response).

Nippers liked diving under the waves the most, followed by beach flags and using the Nipper boards (Figure 1). The activities the children least enjoyed were learning about first aid and swimming (longer distances in particular).
**Parent perspectives**

Parents noted that the volunteers did an exceptional job of coordinating the program each week. They stated the activities were very well run by volunteers, and that there could be more effort to engage and include the new members and those with less experience. Parents would like more social activities for adults as well. Finally, an emerging theme for parents of children in Under 12 referred to competitive parents and this affecting their child’s enjoyment by pressuring them to win.
c. Facilitators and barriers to participation
Having identified the barriers to participation in aquatic education, it was important to identify and address the facilitators and barriers to participation in the current Nippers program, in order to anticipate some of the barriers that may arise for a Bush Nippers product.

Age Manager perspectives
Table 8 summarises the key perspectives of Age Managers on the facilitators and barriers to participation in the Nippers program. It also provides suggested solutions based on evidence from the Age Managers, the literature and internal expertise.

Table 8 Age Manager perspectives on the barriers and facilitators to participation in Nippers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Suggested solutions by Age Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All clubs</td>
<td>• Creating a fun, social, active atmosphere. “There’s a whole different positive feeling now, because it brings the town to life” – Surf club. • Engaged parents and club members help to run the program and motivate nippers. • Convenient location - proximity to home or holiday accommodation. • Flexibility with content and delivery.</td>
<td>• Continued volunteering commitment by the same families. • Lack of clear information on pathways for those wanting to become more involved (e.g. parents becoming coaches). • Lack of strong administration and communication processes (for all involved – parents, nippers, coaches, Age Managers). • Competitive atmosphere at some clubs unsuitable for all. • Accommodation impacts (cost and limited availability). • Largely Caucasian demographic can be less inviting for multicultural Australians, especially newly arrived. • A lack of swimming ability may prevent people from joining (belief that lifesaving volunteers must be excellent swimmers).</td>
<td>• Promote benefits of participation, particularly to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people with different physical abilities. • Clearly outline what is involved and any fitness requirements. • Provide pathways from aquatic facilities to LSCs to attract new members and help nippers meet the skill requirements. • Support parent transition to volunteering through social involvement and training. • Provide pathways for lifesaving development following Nippers. • Balance the focus on competition and skill development through play. • Educate families about the full scope of Nippers and lifesaving to encourage ongoing participation. • Include inland water safety and scenarios into the Nipper resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>• Partnerships with coastal clubs, to provide support, share ideas, lend equipment, provide accommodation etc. • Ability to vary program structure according to weather. • Fostering community connection and cohesion. • River safety is reassuring for parents. • Coaches work with the same nippers each year – deeper sense of belonging.</td>
<td>• Lack of volunteers as the number of nippers is outgrowing the current volunteer base. • Lack of opportunities for adolescents (and associated difficulty with member retention in these years). • Differences in competencies and/or small numbers of children in the same age group. • Nipper Education Program content has a coastal focus, sometimes not relevant to the river environment. • Lack of funds for nippers to attend development camps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nipper perspectives

Overall, 76% of nippers wanted to participate in Nippers again next year; including 100% of nippers at the inland club. The main reasons for this were because they make friends and meet new people, while learning water safety skills and having fun. Among those who were unsure or did not want to do Nippers again, this was commonly because they were forced by parents to do the program, they were involved in other sports or the program took up too much of their holiday time. Common reasons for intended future participation are included in Table 9.

Table 9 Reasons for intended future participation in Nippers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>I want to do Nippers again because…</th>
<th>I don’t know if I want to do Nippers again because…</th>
<th>I don’t want to do Nippers again because…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surf</td>
<td>Under 9</td>
<td>“It’s fun” “I’m learning how to be safe in the water” “You are with your friends”</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>“There is too much flags” “There is too much sprinting” “I don’t like wearing a wetsuit”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td>“You meet new people and see your friends” “I learn about water safety and being safe at the beach” “Exercising in the holidays and a reason to get up early”</td>
<td>“Way too competitive” “I have to” “It’s not as fun as younger groups”</td>
<td>“My parents say I have to” “It takes up your holiday time” “I want to be safe, but I don’t like Nippers” “The program is too long”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>Under 9</td>
<td>“It’s fun” “We learn and play games” “I want to be a lifesaver”</td>
<td>“I’m doing footy”</td>
<td>&quot;Athletics is better” “The sea is scary” “It takes too much time”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td>“I make friends and learn new skills” “I learn how to rescue people” “I can use the bigger boards”</td>
<td>“I’m choosing between sports”</td>
<td>“I’m starting high school, so I have to focus on that”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>“It’s fun, be with friends” “You learn life skills”</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked what Nippers wanted to do more and less of, the most common responses were:

**We want to do more…**
- Swimming (short distances), diving and wading (20%)
- Nipper boards (19%)
- Beach flags (16%)

**We want to do less…**
- Running on sand for a long distance (14%)
- Swimming (long distances), diving and wading (13%)
Parent perspectives
Parents described facilitators and barriers to participation in Nippers, with the key feedback and suggested solutions are presented in Table 10.

Table 10 Parent perspectives on the barriers and facilitators to participation in Nippers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club type</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Suggested solutions by parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| All clubs | • The most common facilitators to participation in Nippers across all clubs were:  
1. Family involvement (81%);  
2. Program location (79%); and  
3. Health and fitness (62%).  
• U9 also reported family involvement as the main factor (79%), whereas for U12 this was program location (67%).  
• The inland club rated the health and fitness benefits as the biggest facilitators to participation (78%), followed by family involvement (55%). | • Whilst not common, the main factors that made attendance difficult were:  
1. Other commitments (21%); and  
2. Lack of interest (9%).  
• Another factor emerging from general comments referred to the organisation of the program. Including: session and activity length, group sizes, balancing competition and fun. | • Facilitate connection and volunteering opportunities for family members: “For new families have some social activities to make them feel welcome”.  
• Organise sessions to minimise wait times; especially with large groups.  
• Include variety and fun in each session rather than repetition.  
• Ensure a good balance of competition and fun, and adapt to suit each group. |

Intended pathways in lifesaving
Over half of surveyed nippers would like to be a lifesaver and patrol the beaches or river when they are older; including 92% of inland nippers. The main reason for the participants not wanting to be a patrolling lifesaver related to working under pressure and worrying about something going wrong. Also, they did not want to deal with certain injuries or do CPR. However, those that wanted to do it often commented on their family having experience in it and wanting to help people. They also liked the idea of driving the IRBs and wanting to give back to their club. Similarly, parents most commonly saw their child being involved as a patrolling member (57%), followed by an athlete (28%); refer Figure 2.
Figure 2 Parent estimates of child's future involvement with lifesaving
WHAT THIS MEANS

Nippers: a valuable aquatic education and sport program for Victoria

The present review (Year 1) identified indications that the provision of a Nippers program in regional Victoria, particularly in inland waterways and regional aquatic facilities, is a feasible option for increasing the coverage of Nipper programs across the state.

The current Nippers program effectively fosters the development of lifesaving, water safety and survival skills and knowledge among participants. Not only do nippers enjoy being physically active and practicing skills such as short swims, diving, wading and Nipper board skills, they are developing valuable, lifelong water safety skills and knowledge. Age Managers and parents value their children’s participation highly and many anticipate their family’s involvement in their club will continue. This highlights the opportunities that lifesaving provides across education and sport, as well as community service through volunteering, and the social benefits of being connected to a community organisation.

Future implications for the existing Nipper Education Program

Keys for the ongoing success of the Nippers program include:

- A strong volunteer support base. This can be strengthened by supporting and facilitating members’ transition to volunteering through social involvement and training;
- Referring to the Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide to deliver comprehensive water safety and survival skills and knowledge in addition to lifesaving sports;
- Including variety and fun in each session and minimising waiting times by engaging nippers in water safety discussions or practicing skills on the sand;
- Adaptability to meet the interests of all nippers (including competitive and non-competitive);
- Promoting the indirect benefits of involvement in LSCs, including social inclusion, wellness, resilience and confidence;
- Being inclusive clubs that actively welcome families from diverse backgrounds and experience;
- Visibility in schools and the local community; and
- Providing clear pathways for lifesaving development and opportunities beyond Nippers.
While this report contains detailed feedback for improving the current Nippers program, the focus of this report is on development of the Bush Nippers program therefore the following section outlines recommendations for Bush Nippers. Additional feedback on the current program will be available for review purposes outside this report.

It should be noted that although the review of the Nippers program was comprehensive and incorporated feedback from over 300 individuals (Age Managers/ Nippers coordinators, the nippers and their parents), the target of surveying 100 Nippers from the bay clubs was not met (n=41); however, this included every nipper in attendance at these sessions. In addition, two key sources were not accessible following the club visits:

- Under 9 Age Manager interview for one surf club; and
- Under 9 and Under 12 skills checklists for one surf club.

Adapting the Nipper Education Program for a regional (inland and pool) setting

In its current iteration, the Nipper Education Program is designed specifically for coastal environments. Despite this, the nippers and their parents involved in the inland program were the most satisfied of all clubs included in this evaluation. To deliver a Nippers program to a broader range of regional areas, the following recommendations have been derived (Table 11):

**Table 11 Key recommendations for the delivery of a regional (inland and pool) Nippers product**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program content</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure existing programs and resources are utilised where suitable to ensure efficiency in program design (e.g. OWLE programs and the Nipper Education Program: Junior Coordinator Guide).</td>
<td>1. Engage schools by demonstrating links between the Nipper program content and the Victorian HPE Curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Include content on lifesaving, living and recreating safely around inland waterways and swimming pools. For example, river currents, snags, submerged objects, specific rescue techniques, depth changes, environmental implications, pool safety and signage.</td>
<td>2. Engage aquatic facilities by demonstrating the opportunities to supplement existing swimming and water safety programs (i.e. swimming lessons) with a community-focussed lifesaving program and to keep children engaged with the aquatic facility and demonstrate pathways to employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Depending on numbers, children might be grouped by their level of experience and confidence, rather than by their age. Groups could be named after local native river species (e.g. from yabbies for beginners, to Murray cod for the most experienced group).</td>
<td>3. Promote lifesaving as the inclusive, welcoming place it is designed to be, particularly to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people with different physical and mental abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Include physical activity content related to the sport discipline of pool lifesaving instead of (or in addition to) surf lifesaving (e.g. throw rescues, tows and CPR).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Include Royal Life Saving community awards, such as the Rescue and Bronze strands in place of traditional surf lifesaving awards and pre-requisites.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Collaborate with Starfish Nippers to ensure resources are inclusive and suitable for children with disabilities.
7. Include elements of community service and volunteering in a regional pool setting (e.g. creating campaigns, working with vulnerable groups, preparedness).

**Partnerships**

1. Establish partnerships or a buddy system between existing coastal clubs and new regional program locations, i.e. aquatic facilities and schools, to provide support, translate the resources, share ideas, lend equipment etc.
2. Establish links with local caravan and camping parks to promote Nippers to holiday makers with children.
3. Develop partnerships with local amenities, e.g. aquatic facilities during cooler months.

**Promotion**

1. Promote the Nippers program via the methods known to be most effective in the region. It may be word of mouth, social media or flyers distributed at schools and aquatic facilities.
2. Utilise existing partnerships with aquatic facilities and aquatic management groups to provide collective support for regions.
3. Utilise existing local community swimming, water safety and lifesaving ambassadors (individuals) to create local links and champion change.
4. Use local or high-profile sports stars (from surf lifesaving or patrolling, or related sports with common crossovers) to highlight the life skills and pathways Nippers can provide.

**Resourcing**

1. Review Age Manager requirements and scope opportunity for utilising existing instructor awards, i.e. LSV Service Member.
2. Scope options for “train the trainer” models with local regional champions.
3. Engage LSV to provide additional training (including engaging and upskilling parent volunteers), supervision and access to equipment as required.
4. Actively seek grant funding for factors including equipment, travel to development camps and the provision of training.

**Retention**

1. Provide clear pathways for lifesaving development and opportunities for youth once they turn 15, or develop an extension program for teenagers.
2. Build an interconnected surf sport pathway from Nippers to the elite to increase membership and retention.
3. Ensure systems and processes for the registration, tracking and monitoring of Bush Nipper participants and instructors is in place.

**Next steps**

The key focus of Year 2 will be to develop the Bush Nippers program content and determine the effectiveness of the program in regional areas. Prior to the pilot program, further consultation will be undertaken with additional key community, LSC and water safety stakeholders to further this evidence base and determine:

- Interest of regional schools and aquatic facilities in a Nippers product;
- Who would run a Nippers program in regional areas; and
- Adaptability of the developed resource for children with special needs.
REFERENCES


## APPENDIX

### A. Current aquatic education programs offered for children aged 5-13 years in Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host organisation</th>
<th>Program name</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Time of year</th>
<th>Participation or intended audience per annum</th>
<th>Linked to Victorian Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSV**</td>
<td>Nippers</td>
<td>Regional (primarily coastal) and metropolitan (coastal)</td>
<td>Practical and theory</td>
<td>Open waterways – majority bay and surf beaches, and one inland location</td>
<td>1-2 hours per session; intensive or weekly over summer period</td>
<td>Varies between Oct-Mar. Some operate in Dec-Jan only</td>
<td>11,127 in 2017/18</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSV**</td>
<td>OWLE</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Open waterways – school’s local environment; majority at beaches. Can be adapted for delivery at aquatic facilities or dry programming due to weather</td>
<td>Half day (2 hours) or full day (3.5 hours); one-off or 2 sessions</td>
<td>Year-round, primarily Terms 1 and 4</td>
<td>18,336 in 2017/18</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSV**</td>
<td>Sink or Swim</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Theory, with some practical</td>
<td>In classroom, at a local aquatic facility, LSC, or other venue of choice, e.g. school camp</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Year-round, primarily Terms 1 and 4</td>
<td>Intended audience in 2018/19 currently at 21,546</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLSSA</td>
<td>Swim and Survive</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Aquatic facilities, school pools, mobile service to body corporate and private pools</td>
<td>Lessons are usually 30 minutes to 1 hour in duration</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Over 139,200 certificates awarded in Victoria in 2017/18</td>
<td>Yes, for school licensees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing Victoria*</td>
<td>Indigenous Stand Up Paddle-boarding (SUP)</td>
<td>Regional (coastal) and regional (inland)</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Open waterways – majority inland</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Sep. 2018 – May 2019</td>
<td>Intended audience in 2018/19 approx. 600 (including ISP)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing Victoria*</td>
<td>Indigenous Surfing Program (ISP)</td>
<td>Regional (coastal)</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Open waterways – majority beaches</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Sep. 2018 – May 2019</td>
<td>Intended audience in 2018/19 approx. 600 (including SUP)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surfing Victoria</strong></td>
<td>Multicultural Surfing Program</td>
<td>Regional (coastal)</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Open waterways – majority beaches</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Sep. 2018 – May 2019</td>
<td>Intended audience in 2018/19 approx. 100</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RLSSA</strong></td>
<td>Water Smart Award</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Theory, optional practical</td>
<td>Dry program with no practical requirements – can be run anywhere</td>
<td>Minimum 3 hours</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yes – to Australian Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LSV</strong></td>
<td>Everyday Lifesaver App</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Digital (all locations)</td>
<td>40-60 minutes to complete</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aquatics and Recreation Victoria (ARV)</strong></td>
<td>VICSWIM Summer Kidz</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Aquatic facilities, open waterways including coastal (13) and inland (2)</td>
<td>5 x 30 minute lessons over 5 consecutive days</td>
<td>Entire program runs for 3 weeks every January</td>
<td>13,864 enrolments in 2019</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YMCA Victoria</strong></td>
<td>Water Safety Hublet</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Water safety events, community festivals</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Various Swimming Clubs</strong></td>
<td>Squad Swimming</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Aquatic facilities</td>
<td>1-3 hours</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paddle Vic</strong></td>
<td>Flatwater Paddling Experience Program</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Practical, with some theory</td>
<td>Inland waterways</td>
<td>Half day/Full day</td>
<td>Year-round</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Life Saving Victoria, 2018c). **(Life Saving Victoria, personal communications, April 2019).*
## B. Nippers skills checklist summary

### UNDER 9 SKILLS CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge/ skills</th>
<th>Covered</th>
<th>Comments (club type)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>To a degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to lifesaving</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety network</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our beach environment</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat, drink, exercise (physical health &amp; wellbeing and personal safety)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf conditions and hazards</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.L.A.G.S.</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs and signals</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach sprints and relay</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Flags</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-Swim-Run</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wade</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf Race</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquacameron</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board race</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U9 Competition skills evaluation</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/ skills</td>
<td>Covered</td>
<td>Comments (club type)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to life lifesaving</td>
<td>Yes 100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety network</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50% No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To a degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our beach environment</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Safety</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf conditions and hazards</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covered extensively in earlier years; rips discussed as relevant with the nippers in a review of surf conditions for program delivery (SURF CLUBS). Not applicable but do explain river hazards (INLAND CLUB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The human body</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Upcoming, not yet done, First Aid sessions this year focussed on CPR (BAY CLUBS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50% Upcoming (BAY CLUBS). Touched on it in Nippers in one of the sessions (INLAND CLUB).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming a lifesaver</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75% Covered in detail in previous years; this year focussed on CPR (SURF CLUBS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach sprints</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach run</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25% 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach flags</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-Swim-Run</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf race</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironman / Ironwoman</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquacameron</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50% Group is too big (60+) to conduct Aquacameron during sessions; insufficient time and water safety assistants needed to conduct this exercise make it “impossible” (SURF CLUBS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tube rescue</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board race</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25% 25% Like the Aquacameron, the group is too big. The required time and water safety assistants needed to conduct this exercise make it “impossible” (SURF CLUBS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board relay</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board rescue</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50% Not included in 2018/19 but will for 2019/20 for older age groups (SURF CLUBS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U12 Competition skills evaluation</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25% Didn’t realise qualifying swim needed to enter events at other clubs (INLAND CLUB).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>