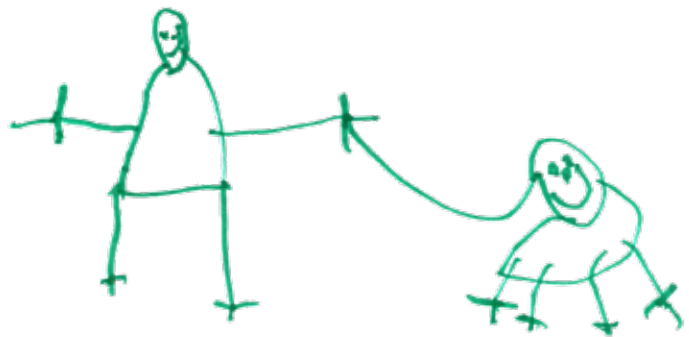


A watercolor illustration of the Earth, showing continents in shades of green and brown and oceans in various blues. Five simple, pink stick figures with round heads are standing on the top edge of the globe. To the right, a yellow, irregularly shaped sign is attached to the globe, containing the text 'THE VOICES OF MALLEE CHILDREN'. The background is a soft, blended wash of purple and blue colors.

THE VOICES OF
MALLEE CHILDREN



In 2019, a group of adults realised that to make where they lived a better place for everyone, they needed to hear the voices of the children who lived there. So they set out, with the help of friends, to ask children aged 3-8, who live in the Northern Mallee, what they did and didn't like, and what they wanted for their future.

This storybook has been produced using the thoughts and illustrations of children who participated and gave us permission to share their creativity with you.

We would like to thank the children who patiently shared their stories with the adults, and the places that helped them:

De Garis Kindergarten
Irymple Kindergarten
Loose Parts Playground
Little Day Out
Playalong
Managatang Kindergarten
Merbein P - 10 College
Mildura Specialist School
Murrayville Kindergarten
Ouyen Kindergarten
Ranfurly Primary School
Underbool Kindergarten



we want them to know we are listening, and are ready to make change.

We hope you are too.



I AM A CHILD OF THE NORTHERN MALLEE,
HERE TO TELL YOU ABOUT ME.
THE THINGS I LIKE, THE THINGS I DON'T,
THE THINGS I WANT TO DO AND SEE.

There are around 4,400 children ages 3-8 living in the Mildura LGA

The Voices of Children project aimed to hear from 375 children

The project heard from over 400 and 375 gave us permission to share their thoughts

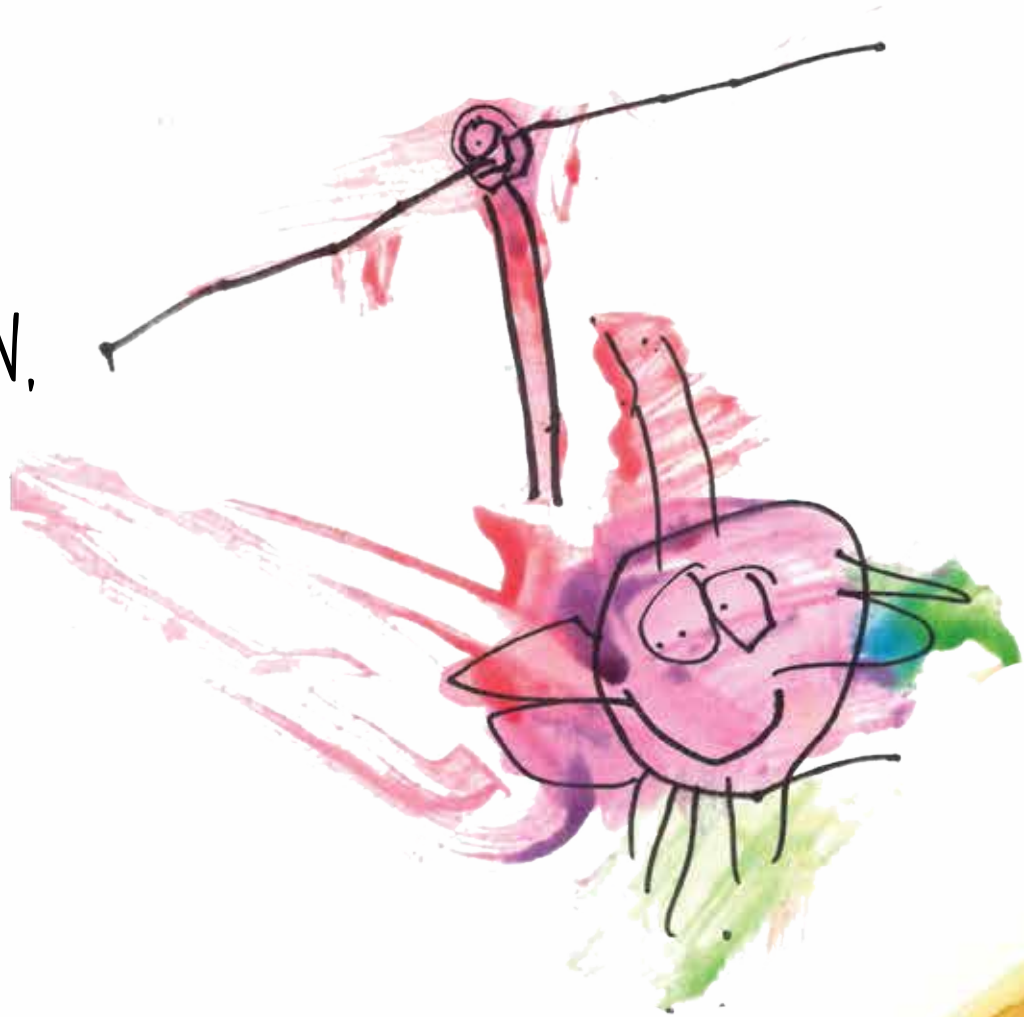
YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MALLEE



I FLY

ON MY

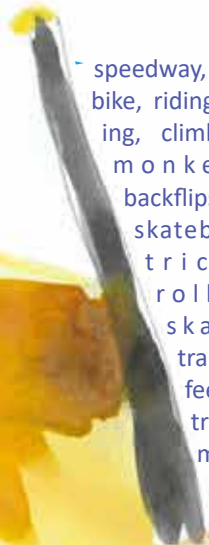
IMAGINATION,



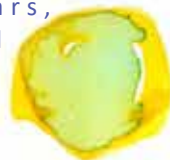
TO PARKS

AND OUTSIDE

SPACES.

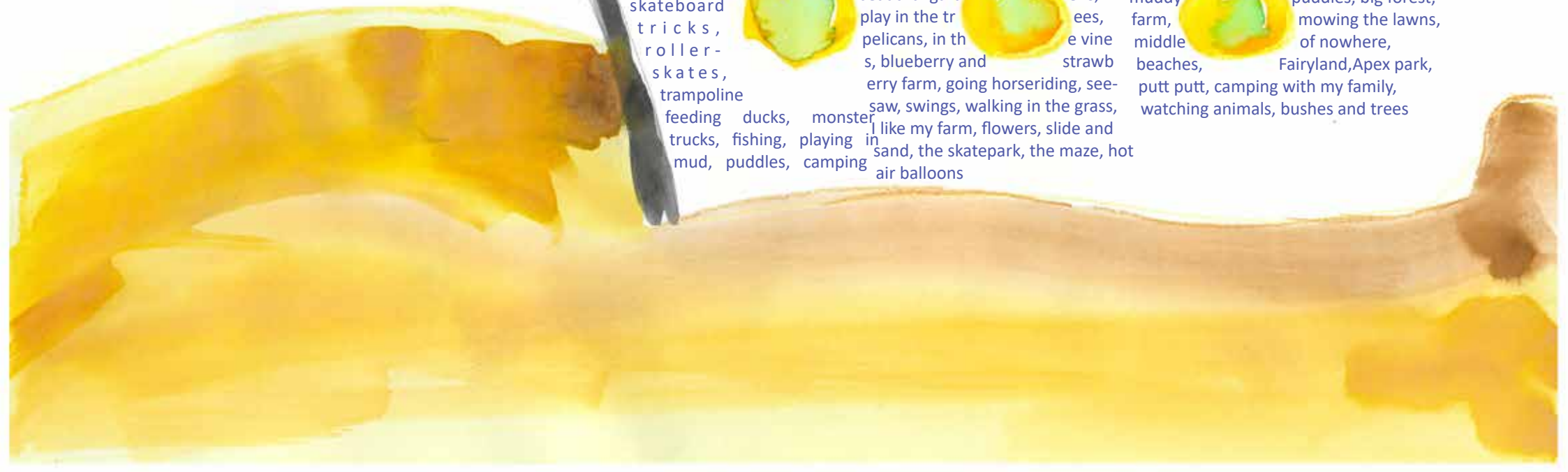


Football, soccer,
the oval, tennis, basketball,
Canoeing, collecting treasure,
speedway, golf, ball games,
bike, riding motorbikes, jump-
ing, climbing, swinging, the
monkey-bars,
backflips and
skateboard
tricks,
roller-
skates,
trampoline
feeding ducks, monster
trucks, fishing, playing in
mud, puddles, camping
air balloons



bird watching, grand views, bushes, lizards,
birds, kangaroos, echidnas, butter
flies, rainbows, parks and playgr
ounds, chook
beautiful gard
play in the tr
pelicans, in th
s, blueberry and
erry farm, going horseriding, see-
saw, swings, walking in the grass,
like my farm, flowers, slide and
sand, the skatepark, the maze, hot

The garden of hope, the
farmer's market, football, cricket, dog
park, mud
kitchen, jumping in
puddles, big forest,
mowing the lawns,
of nowhere,
Fairyland, Apex park,
putt putt, camping with my family,
watching animals, bushes and trees



BY THE WATER WITH MY FAMILY, FRIENDS,

play in the water
I like to splash with my brother
Fishing at the river
I like living with my mum
I like walking my dogs. Horse riding
I like living with my brother
visit Dad's Grandma's house. Playing with my brother

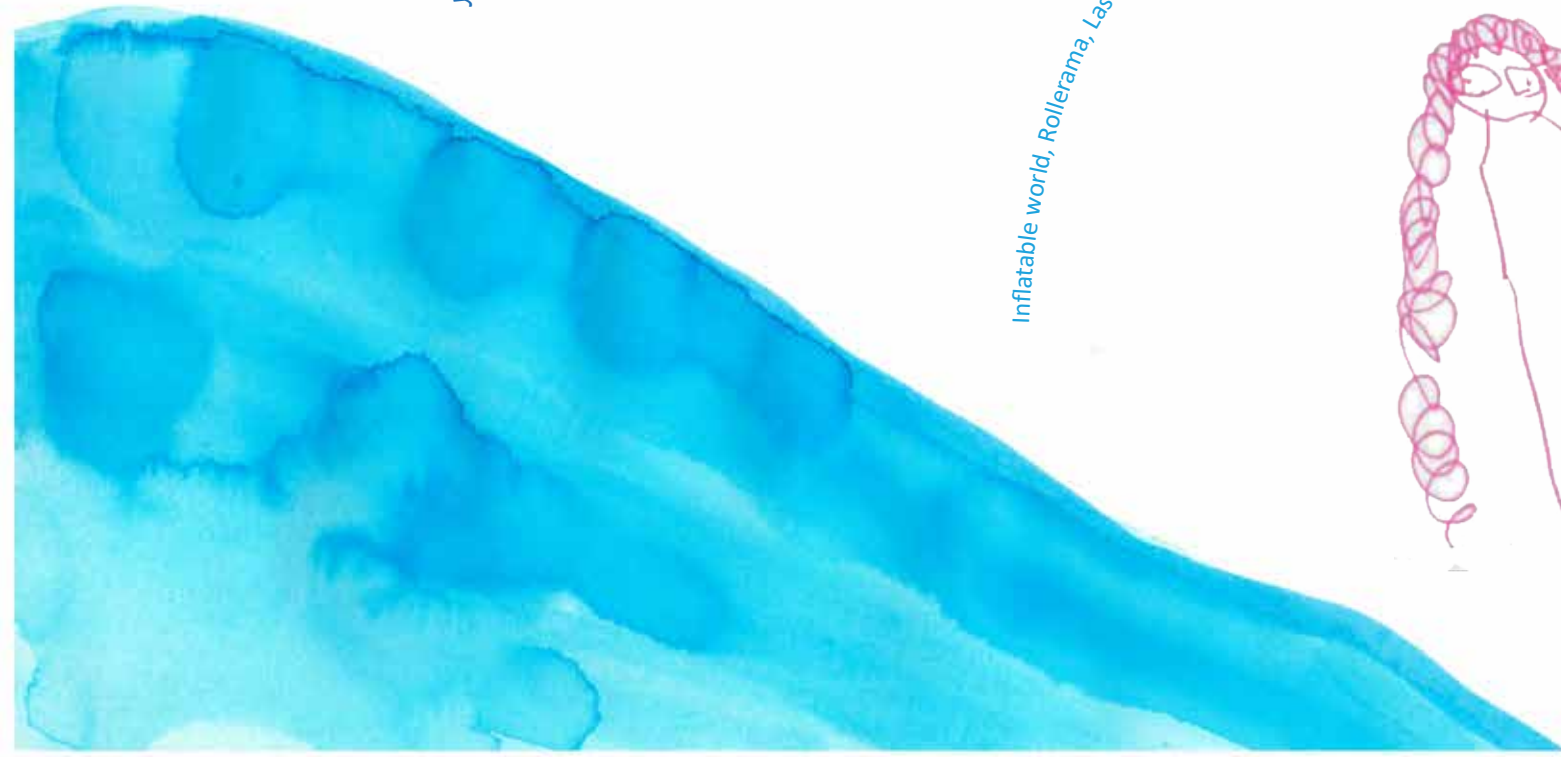


AND PETS ARE SOME

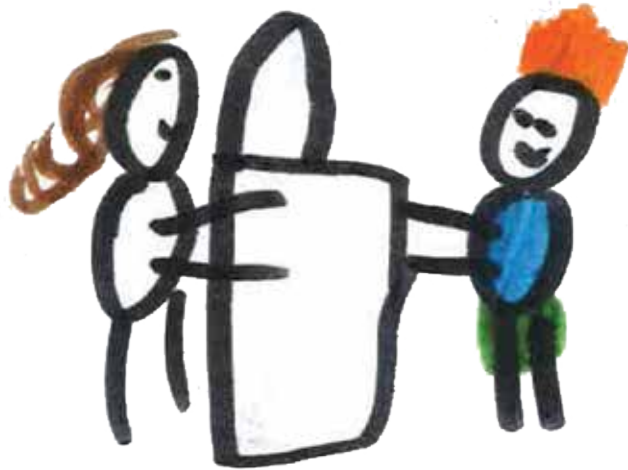
Rockpools
Fishing at the river
Aqua-coaster, waves
Swimming pool, splash park
Lakes, beaches, the river

FAVOURITE PLACES.

Paddlesteamer on the train, or a bus
Jumping castle, bowling
Inflatable world, Rollerama, Laser-force, Cinema

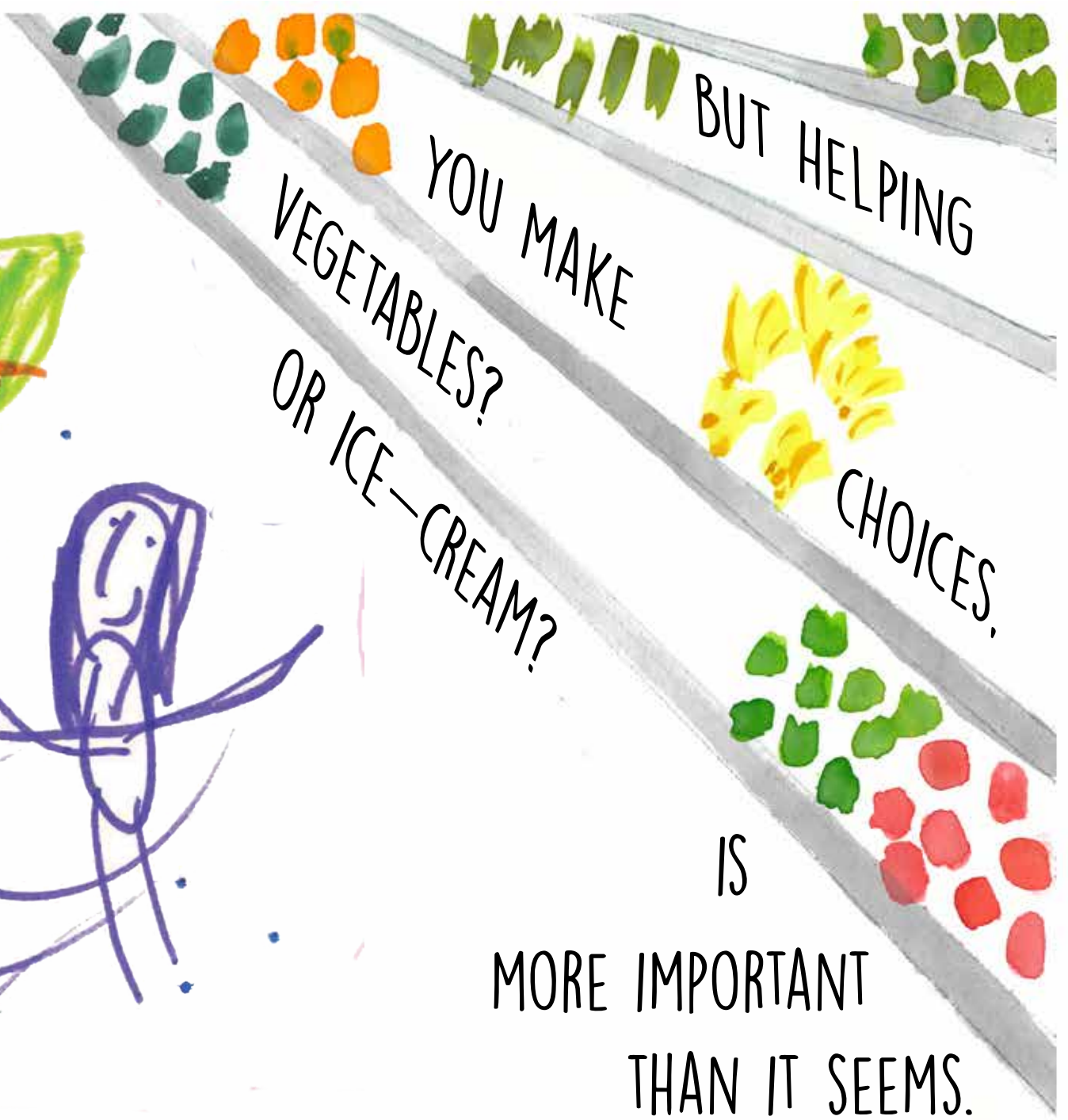


I DON'T ALWAYS ENJOY SHOPPING.



It's
too cold! My legs are
tired. Kmart, Coles, Aldi are
boring. There are no toilets. I don't
like going to shops that have no
toys. I don't like central or the
mall, they are not my favour-
ites.





BUT HELPING
YOU MAKE
VEGETABLES?
OR ICE-CREAM?
CHOICES.

IS
MORE IMPORTANT
THAN IT SEEMS.

SOME WORRIES ARE QUITE BIG.

BUT MOST ARE ORDINARY.



THE THINGS I'D LIKE TO SEE RIGHT NOW, NEED CHANGES SMALL AND BIG.



RAIN FOR RAINBOWS,
FLOWERS, AND MUD,
ARE ALL HIGH ON MY LIST.



I WANT TO TRAVEL ON THE TRAIN.



relax
d o
monk
e y
bars



AND RIDE A UNICORN.



Ballet, football, soccer, rider motorbikes, bird watching, walk by the river with my pet dogs, look after baby leopards, cheetahs and jaguars, go to high-school, walk to school and home by myself, get a massage, stay at home when I feel sick, fossil digger, create a dinosaur, babysitting, get married, have kids, adopt babies, have another sister, move to a bigger house, take out the bins, look after babies, clean rooms, do the dishes, park my motorbike on my bed,

go
shopping,
play switch,
play with
friends

w e a r
clothes to bed,
be an artist,
be a dad

d o
back-flips,
I imagine riding
a unicorn

own pets,
eat all my
veggies, mid-
w i f e



WHILE I AM

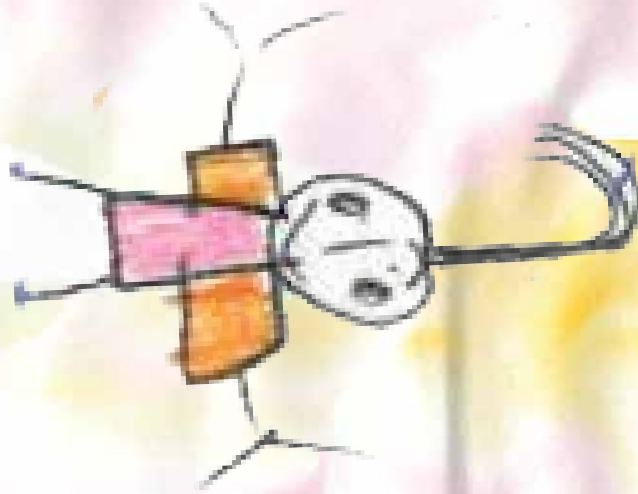
GROWING

BIGGER,

Melbourne, North Pole, Queensland, Sydney, South America, Merbein, Bendigo, Horsham
South America, Mt Everest, Tasmania, New Zealand, Canada, Around the world
Flying around Australia, Aquariums, Harley shops

train stations, police stations, national museums
ride a motorbike through a big forest

To my friend's house, riding a horse, Ninja training
Disneyland, Swan Hill to get my face-painted



MY DREAMS

Gymnastics, watching race-cars on the track, Legoland
Werrimul to be with Nan, go on a big holiday

ARE

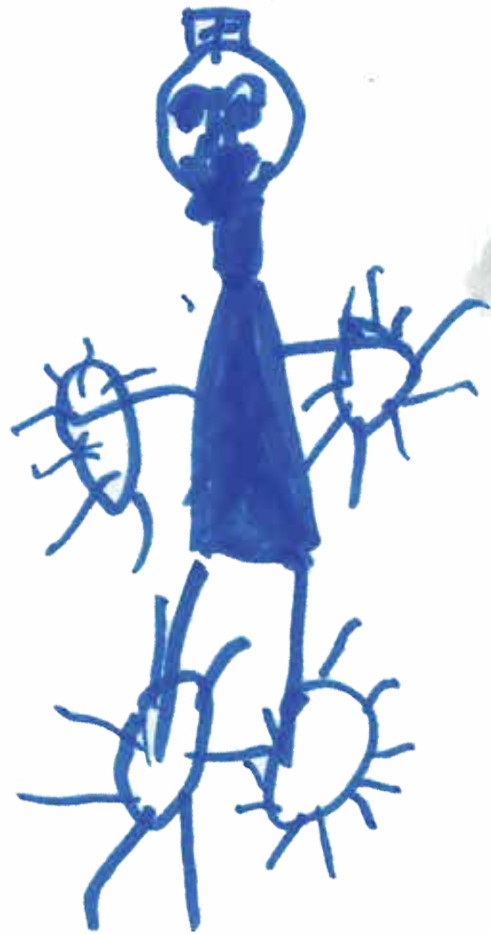
Build my house in the trees
or on the moon

GROWING TOO.

A fashion show
Ferris wheel

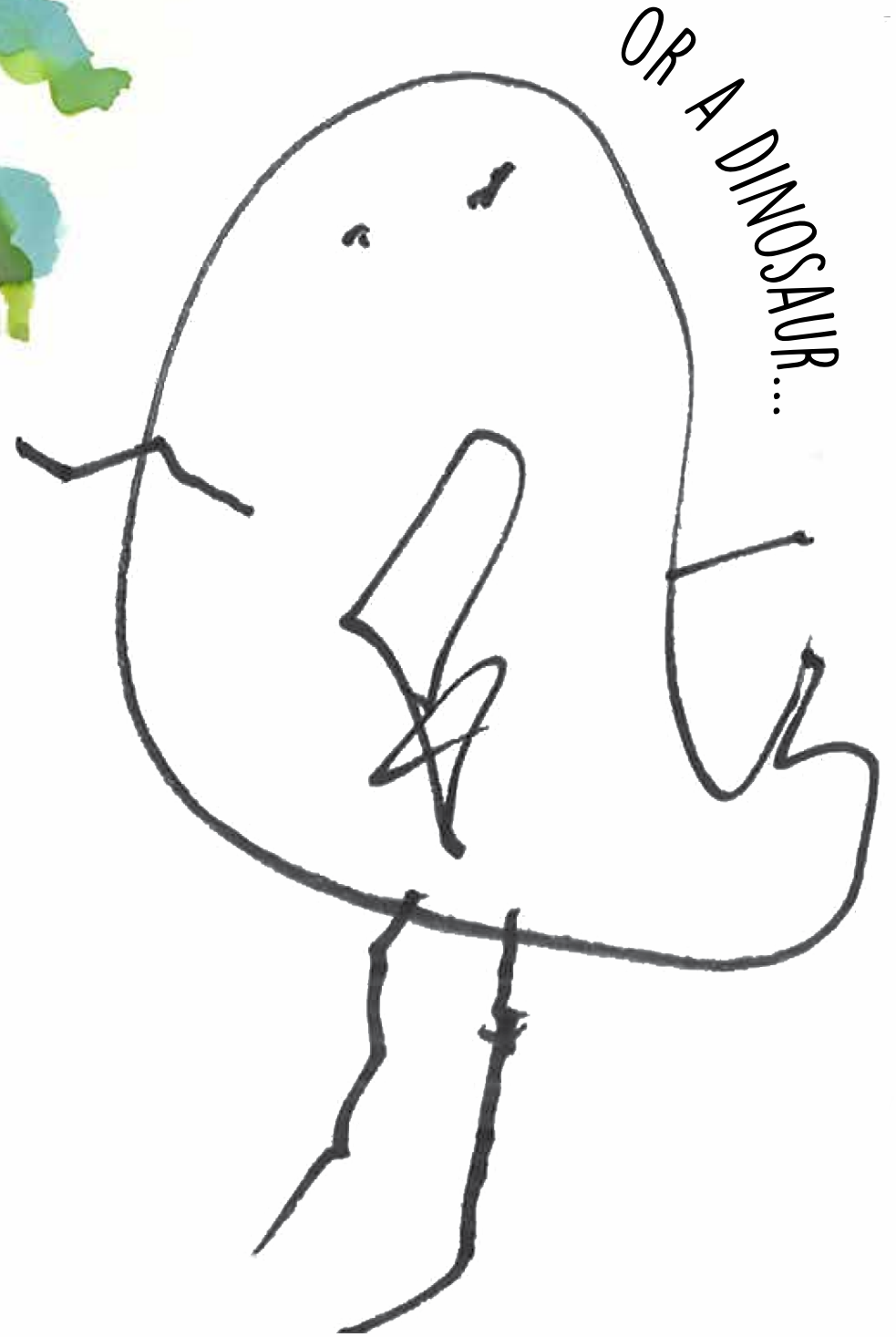


I THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE, THE THINGS THAT I WILL BE AND DO.



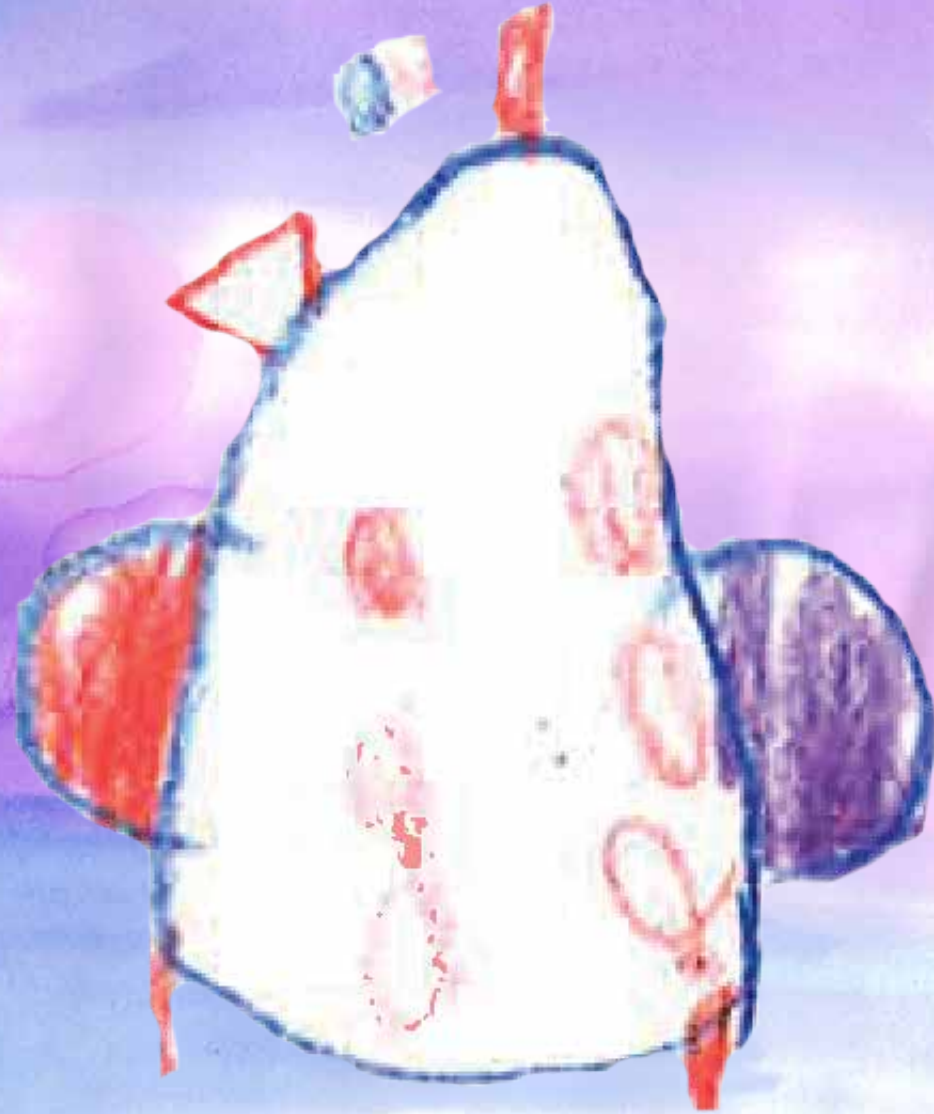
A scientist, driver, delivering food, firefighter, army, police officer, veterinarian, hairdresser, serving people at the register, teacher, train driver, builder, work at the wave pool, at Disneyland, Woodsie's gem shop, shopkeeper, dance teacher, engineer, toy-shop, pet shop, fisherman and mechanic, run a farm, electrician, robotics engineer, business man, sports agent, play AFL footy, winery, nurse, work in the mines, chook farmer, nurse sick animals, billion-arcade, be an office man like dad, drive machines and work at Morellos, garbage babies, work in the garden, fly a plane, in the NBA, cricket player, karate, horse rider, life guard, ice-skater, learn languages, mix two different DNAs together, archaeologist, rich, powerful, gamer, y o u t u b e r

ONE DAY I'LL BE A DOCTOR,



OR A DINOSAUR...

I WANT TO DANCE, LEARN LANGUAGES, BUILD A HOME UP ON THE MOON.



BUT FOR ME TO HAVE THE FUTURE I SEE. I NEED

YOUR HELP TO

MAKE CHANGE

HAPPEN

SOON.

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING
THE WIDE WORLD



ABOUT THE VOICES OF CHILDREN PROJECT

Purpose

The Voices of Children Project 2019 aimed to hear the voices of at least 375 children from the Northern Mallee region, aged 3-8 years, to discover what children do and don't like where they live, learn and play, and what they imagine for their future.

The project has been used to create this storybook, and inform the Best Start to Life Systems Map, and will be used in developing the MRCC Municipal Early Years Plan, and shared back to our community.

What children said, wrote and created has been collated, coded and summarised in order to be used in creating useful tools for our community to use to create change. The following is a brief summary of the project findings and graphs developed using the coded counts of what Northern Mallee children told us.

Summary

Active play, the river and natural environment, certain shops, entertainment, parks, places to eat and time with family are the most popular places for children to go.

Some children don't like sport, entertainment or retail places that are noisy, or seeing rubbish in the natural environment. They don't like long shopping trips because their legs get tired and there are no seats. Some are anxious about visiting health services and the Waves pool. They don't like being places where people are angry and hurt other people. Some don't like long car trips.

Playing in local parks and pools, enjoying the river and bush, playing with mud, doing things together with family, enjoying places with games and entertainment, and having treats are favourite things that children like to do.

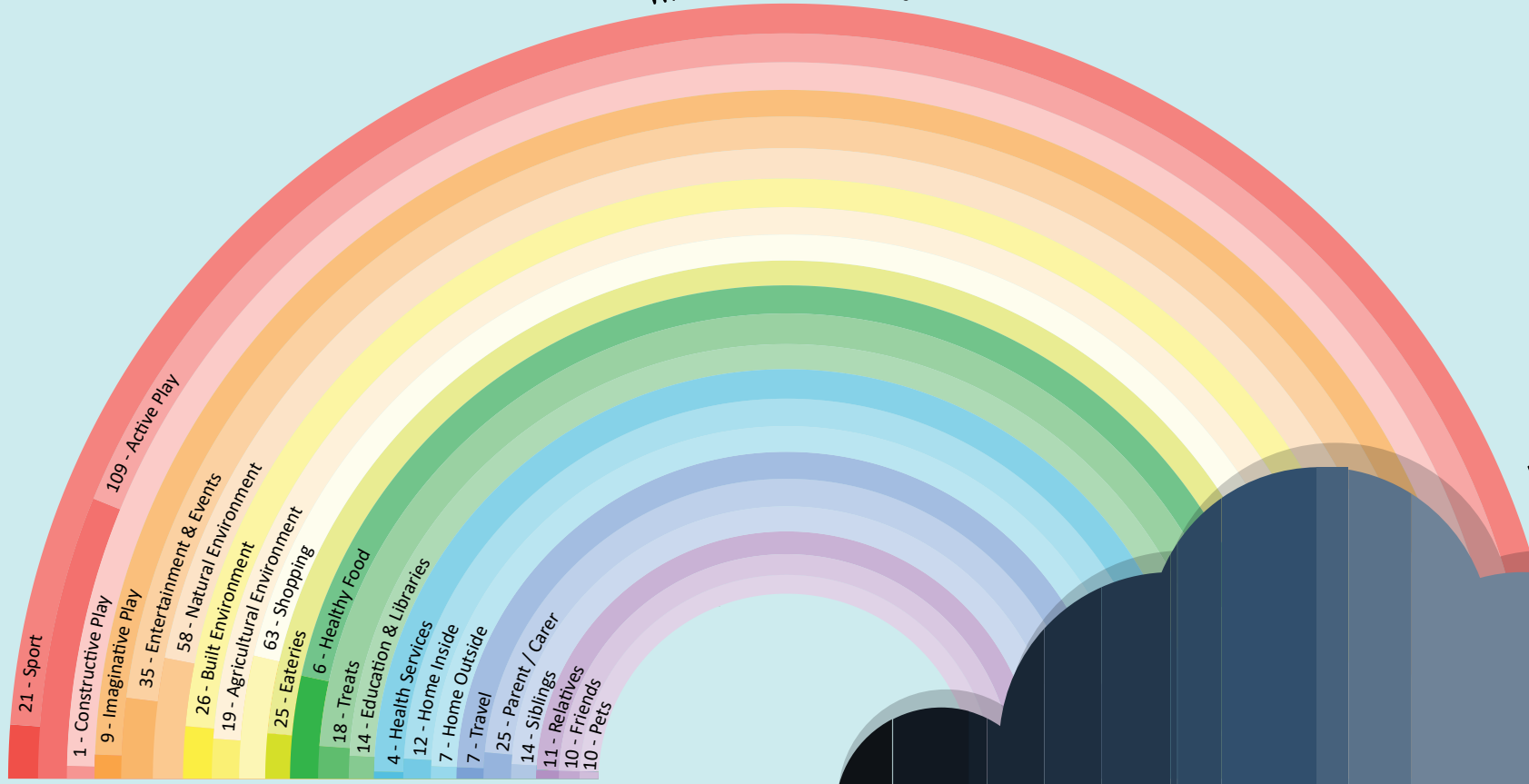
Children aspire to become skilled at sport, engage in active and imaginative play, going to school, have their own ipad, iphone or computer and own a pet. They also aspire to have an occupation

Children's aspiration for an occupation covered a wide range with sport and fitness being the most popular, followed by retail, caring for animals, transport, police and emergency services, raising a family, and fantasy.

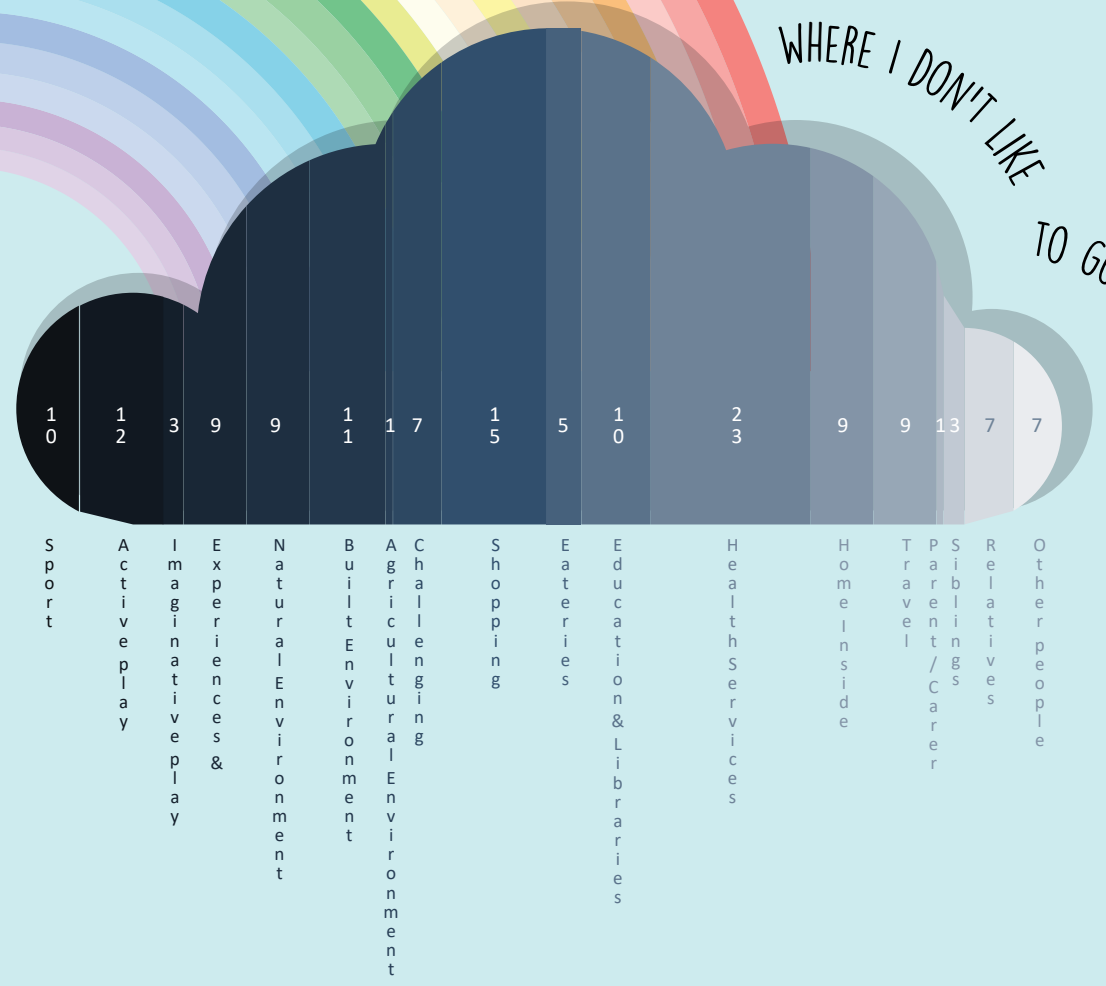
Children look forward, when they are older, to be able to go to school, go shopping, visit parks and pools, traveling to different parts of the country and overseas. They also look forward to going to places for sport and entertainment, museums, and places like Disneyland and Legoland.



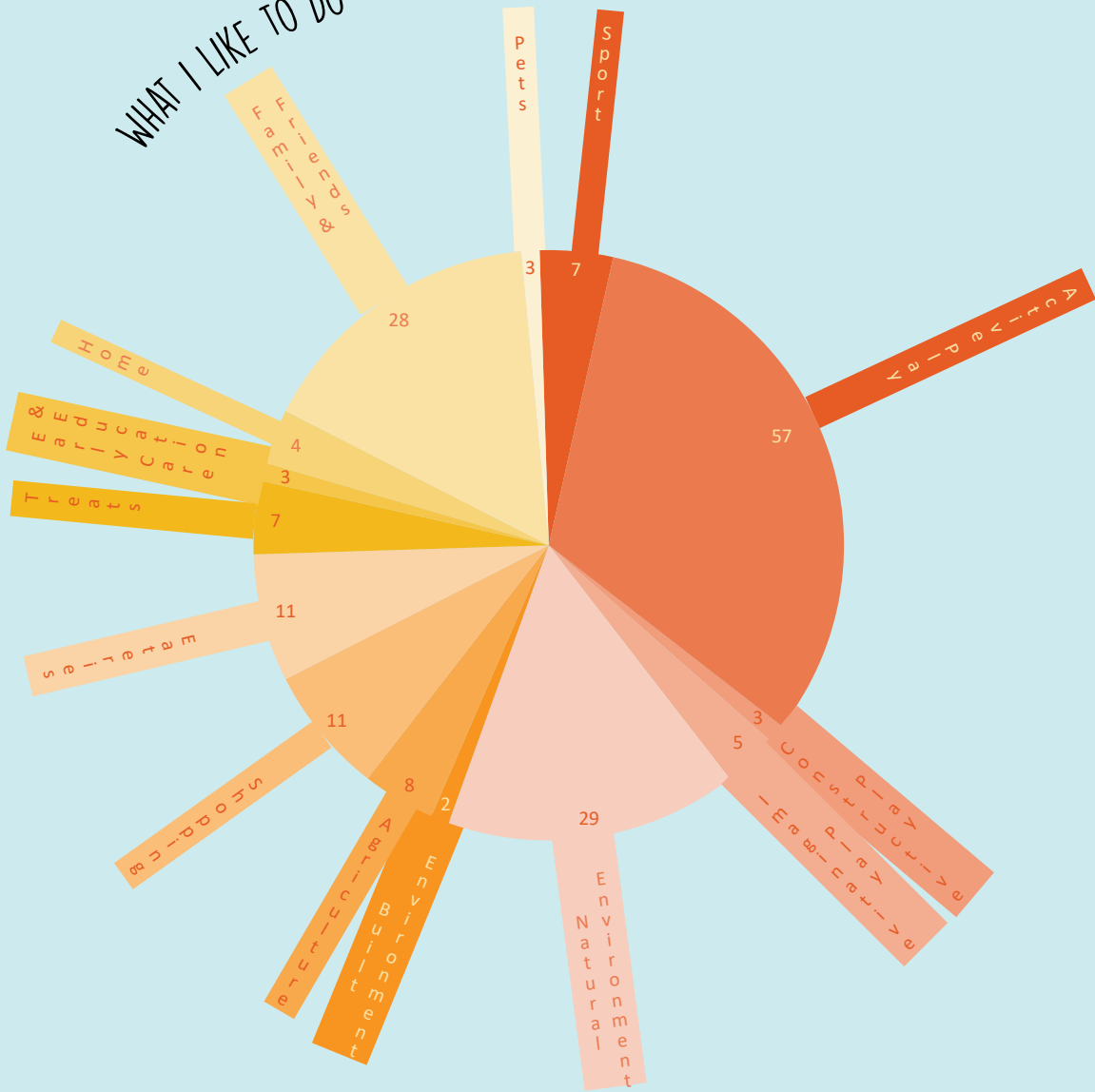
WHERE I LIKE TO GO



WHERE I DON'T LIKE TO GO



WHAT I LIKE TO DO



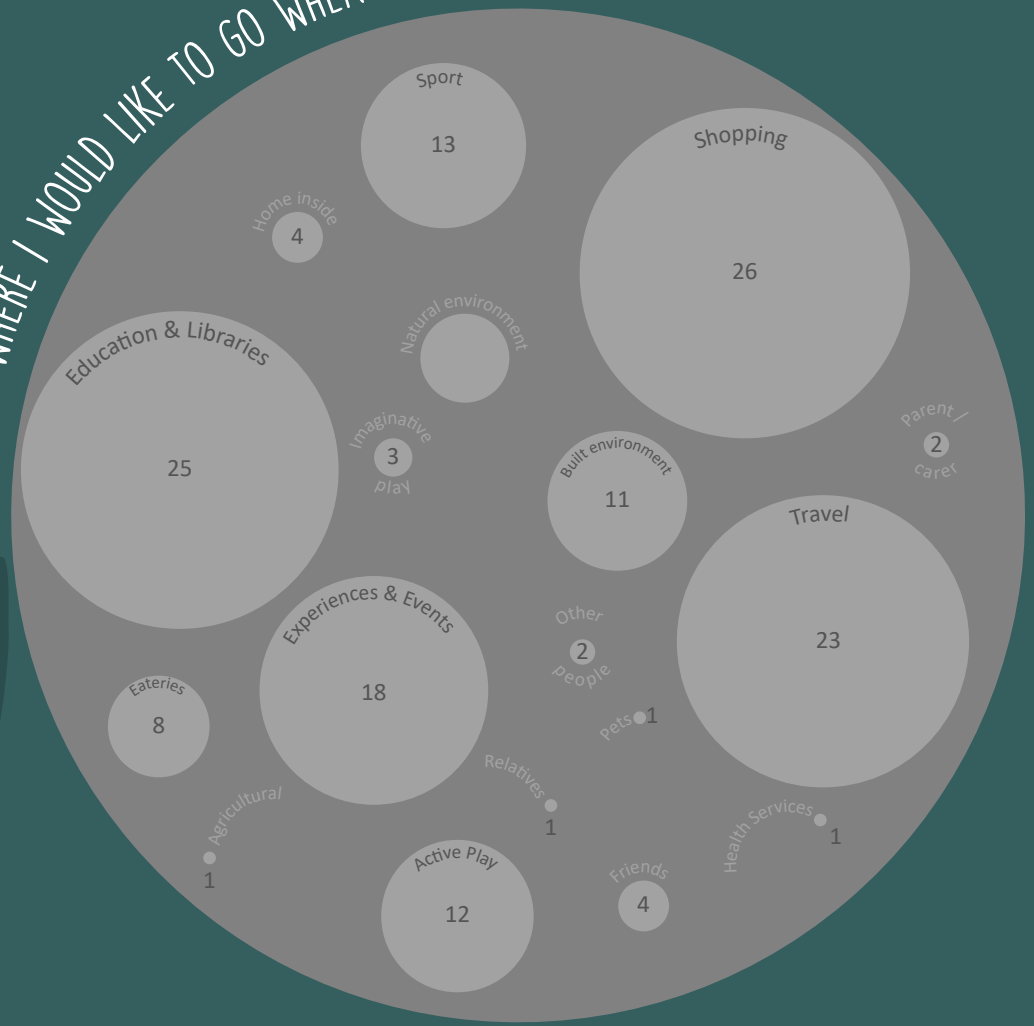
WHEN I GROW UP I WILL WORK IN





WHAT I WANT TO BE, DO OR HAVE
OR HAVE IN MY FUTURE

WHERE I WOULD LIKE TO GO WHEN I AM OLDER



This book was created for our community by Hands Up Mallee using images and information created by local children aged 3-8 years during the Voices of Children Project, and the support of Local Early Childhood Educators and Primary School Teachers.

The Voices of Children Action Team:

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Jane McCracken
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Samantha Dodds

Data from the Voices of Children Theme Team:

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and background illustrations and words inspired by the Voices of children by Lila Wolff



HANDS UP MALLEE