



Lucy and Shianne prepare to go out for a surf on the last day of the Swell Mamas' Mothers of Preschoolers Program run at Sandy Point.

Mamas surfing at Sandy Point to continue

MOTHERS of Preschoolers (MOPs), who have been participating in the Swell Mama's program are keen to keep surfing into the future.

The MOPs met for the last session of a six week program on Friday at Sandy Point.

For the last session, 15 women and their children attended.

The feedback from the sessions was overwhelmingly positive with plans to continue the program.

Many of the MOPs are first time surfers and have loved being able to get in the water while their children are minded by other mothers.

"I've been waiting all my life to go surfing," one 'Mama' Anna-Maree said, "and I saw this as an opportunity to do this in a supportive friendly environment."

The MOPs program was run by Lucy Cousens, Geraldine Archibald, Anne Gleeson and Emma Hassett of the Swell Mamas Inverloch program.

"It's been a great program," Geraldine said. "There are very enthusiastic

women with lots of children!

"The women have demonstrated their prowess in the water, as some, though they have never surfed before, stood up and rode the wave on their first session."

Sandy Point women are keen to resume the program locally - meeting each week at the Sandy Point beach.

Shianne Murray, program coordinator at the South Gippsland Hospital says the program is "looking for ways to keep women connected and maintain access to this activity.

"We desperately need some wetsuits and a surf board to start us off!"

The Sandy Point program will run in the same manner as the Inverloch Swell Mama program, with women meeting for hot chips after their surf rather than a cuppa before.

In all, 20 women and their children have participated in the MOPs program, which was funded through the Bendigo Bank and YMCA Splash program with Surfing Victoria, Foster Hospital and Swell Mamas.