



Surf's up: the women of the Swell Mamas, with kids in tow.

Surf opens doors

WOMEN from around South Gippsland are carving up the surf at Inverloch every Friday.

The Swell Mamas group now has more than 90 members, mums and non-mums alike.

Now in its third year, the group is co-ordinated by Lucy Cousens and Geraldine Archibald, with Jess Beachley and Anne Gleeson running the spring program.

The group will soon run its second round of bronze medalion training/accreditation with the Wonthaggi Life Saving Club.

"This is very exciting because it builds the skills, the fitness and community connection of the

group," Ms Archibald said.

"Especially since we live and play on the coast and this training builds community and beach safety."

Through a Community Action Grant, the group funded eight women to complete their Level One in Surf Coaching with Surfing Victoria this year, to mentor other women and create job opportunities.

"Although we are not a surf school, our program mentor and supports women to surf in a stress free, fun and safe environment," Ms Archibald said.

"Six of these women have been employed and completed their surf instructors' 'hours' with the local

surf school."

The group is also working with Bass Coast Shire Council, the Bass Coast Board Riders Club, Phillip Island Nature Park and other community groups to set up the Inverloch branch of the Clean Ocean Foundation.

Swell Mamas have beach and children's activities on the Clean Ocean in Motion Festival on Saturday, October 23 at Rainbow Park, Inverloch.

"It is great to be working with the Clean Ocean Foundation. We are helping to set up world class technologies and community partnerships to monitor and protect our local marine environment," Ms Archibald said.