



## Neighbour Day founder to visit Melbourne

The founder of Neighbour Day, Andrew Heslop, will visit Melbourne on 22/23 March 2008 as part of a national publicity tour to promote the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Neighbour Day on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March.

Founded in Melbourne in 2003 Neighbour Day, which is always held on the last Sunday in March, encourages all Australians to have better relationships with the people next door and across the street.

“Getting together with our neighbours creates vibrant, healthy communities. It breaks down the barriers of loneliness and isolation experienced by the elderly and people who live alone - making our suburbs and towns safer, happier places to live and raise a family,” said Andrew.

“We often forget about those who live around us until we need their help in an emergency or there’s some other problem at home. With increasingly busy lives Neighbour Day brings our focus back home,” he added.

Andrew will be available for interview.

### **GETTING INVOLVED -**

Participating in Neighbour Day is easy because you don’t make a donation, you don’t wear a ribbon and you don’t buy a badge. You don’t even have to register or volunteer or set up a committee.

### **WHAT TO DO -**

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2008 -

- ✓ Say G'day to your neighbours.
- ✓ Make a special effort to introduce yourself to older residents in your street and anyone who lives alone.
- ✓ Leave your mobile and home telephone number for their use in an emergency.
- ✓ Agree to keep in contact.

### **BACKGROUND**

When an elderly woman was found dead in her suburban Melbourne home in 2003 the news of her death created headlines around Australia – she had been forgotten for two years. It prompted Andrew Heslop to propose in a Letter to the Editor a day to check on elderly neighbours and other single people at risk.

In 2006 former UN Secretary-General Mr Kofi Annan pledged the organisation’s support to promote Neighbour Day worldwide. Now steps are in place for it to become an official UN Observance Day which could lead to an International Year of Neighbourliness being declared following ratification by the UN General Assembly.

Key global supporters include also include Prince Charles and former President Bill Clinton.

For more information visit [www.neighbourday.org](http://www.neighbourday.org)

### **FOR MEDIA INFORMATION ONLY**

Andrew Heslop 0404 038 106

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