



Neighbour Day turns streets into communities

Getting together with the people next door, across the street ... or on the next farm ... on Sunday 29th March 2009 is the first step towards turning your street into a community, says Neighbour Day founder Andrew Heslop.

"Since Neighbour Day began in 2003 it has been the catalyst for closer, friendlier relationships between neighbours right across the country," Andrew said.

"New friendships have formed and old acquaintances renewed, driven not just by residents but by councils and shires who have been active supporters by facilitating street parties, community festivals, displays and launches along with other local events.

"Neighbours have celebrated by holding barbeques in their front gardens, organised games of street cricket, held morning teas and even launched cake baking and gardening competitions!

"It's amazing to think how a simple idea in a Letter to the Editor seven years ago has motivated Australians to become more involved with their community.

"Knowing the people who live around us creates a sense of belonging. It makes us feel safe and secure because we're reassured by the familiar faces and voices of people we trust and respect. When we know our neighbours we feel part of a community – and strong communities are essential to raising a family.

"Plus when we know our neighbours we're comfortable about asking them for help or advice. In the city that can mean borrowing a whipper snipper or helping to change the battery in a smoke alarm. But in the country it can mean the difference between life and death during a bushfire or other emergency when it's critical to warn of approaching danger.

"Knowing how and where to contact your neighbour in the bush is essential because it's their help which may be vital to defending life or property before the emergency services arrive," said Andrew.

Neighbour Day has five principal aims –

1. Strengthen communities and build better relationships with the people who live around us.
2. Create safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.
3. Promote tolerance, respect and understanding.
4. Break down community barriers.
5. Protect the elderly, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

How to get involved -

Participating in Neighbour Day is easy and free. 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.

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What to do

On Sunday 29th March 2009 -

- ✓ 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.

For more information visit www.neighbourday.org



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