

Relationships Australia's update on Neighbour Day activities in response to COVID19 [as at 20 April 2021]

Every day is neighbour day.

Relationships Australia acknowledges that right across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt the lives of Australians. We are in the middle of a worldwide pandemic and the strength we draw from each other, from our relationships and our wider communities, has never been more important. Changing conditions, and new directives from government, have necessitated ongoing shifts in the way we interact.

We acknowledge the sacrifices made by the incredible people who work in 'frontline and essential services' across the country, putting themselves at risk each day, to keep us all safe. In addition, to everyone else juggling life and the impacts of the pandemic during this uncertain time, be it work (or no work), school, family, your relationships, we acknowledge your hardship.

Neighbour Day 2022 will take place on Sunday 27 March, providing all Australians with an opportunity to recognise the strength we draw from our communities, and to continue to build creative connections within neighbourhoods and wider communities. We can't yet predict what those celebrations and opportunities will look like, but we do know that it is as important now as ever that we all take steps to make sustainable and safe connections with those around us. Relationships Australia firmly believes in the power of the Australian community to support its most vulnerable, to tackle loneliness, and to work together to ensure healthy and safe relationships throughout the pandemic and beyond.

As the country continues to manage periods of isolation, physical distancing measures and a re-think of how we operate our day-to-day lives, we want to remind everyone of the importance of social connections and support. Every day is neighbour day and this current crisis provides good reasons (even opportunities) to expand our connections and understanding of community and 'neighbours'.

We stress the importance of following government requirements and guidelines that are designed to stop the spread of COVID-19 and recommend that people make themselves aware of the public health

authorities' advice. Visit <https://www.health.gov.au/> to stay up to date and informed, so that you can keep yourselves and your neighbourhood healthy.

Also consulting the World Health Organisation's guidelines and the advice of Australia's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and each respective state and territory's CMOs will help people make informed decisions.

The impacts of COVID-19 on our lives and livelihoods and on people's relationships may be felt for years to come.

Relationships Australia continues to provide services and supports across Australia and we encourage anyone who needs support or assistance to make use of services where necessary. You can find links to our services [here](#).

The official annual Neighbour Day celebration is a catalyst to encourage people across all communities to build and strengthen their social connections throughout the year. While getting together physically may still not be safe in many places around Australia, we encourage everyone to be creative and find other ways to connect and engage with their neighbours and communities on a regular basis.

Relationships Australia has published a range of opportunities to make [#CreativeConnections](#) on the [Neighbour Day website](#) and will continue providing ideas and tips on Neighbour Day social media channels to help people create connections that do not necessarily require neighbours to engage in person, to help support you to connect and stay connected, every day of the year.

We encourage building positive and sustainable social connections, in whatever form best suits individuals and the communities of which they are a part.

From the Neighbour Day team at Relationships Australia