

Celebrating Neighbour Day as a Council

Last Sunday in March



Message from our National Executive Officer – Nick Tebbey

This Neighbour Day, Relationships Australia is reaching out to everyone across the nation to promote sustainable, respectful relationships and social connections. Loneliness and social isolation continue to affect the health and wellbeing of Australians, and we need your help to shift the tide.

Neighbour Day is Relationships Australia's social connection campaign that encourages people to reach out and make sustainable connections with those around them (including online). Neighbour Day connects people and communities across Australia - one relationship at a time.

Research shows that communities where people know each other have better mental health, are safer, and are more resilient.

Connecting with people outside of your family and friends is important for tackling Australia's loneliness crisis. Neighbour Day research has found that identifying strongly with multiple groups (such as neighbours, volunteering groups, sports etc.) was protective against loneliness and mental ill-health, and that connecting with your community improves your perception of your relationships with your family and friends ([Cruwys et al. 2020](#)).

Councils play such an important role across Australian communities. Neighbour Day provides an opportunity to increase social connection and the building of respectful relationships across the communities you represent.

I invite you to participate and celebrate the 20-year anniversary of Neighbour Day. **Together, we can help address loneliness across the country.**

The Neighbour Day website has lots of information and [free resources](#) to assist with your engagement with this important opportunity.

I hope to see your council represented this Neighbour Day.

Kind Regards,

Nick

Nick Tebbey

National Executive Officer Relationships Australia

Neighbour Day: Connecting Communities for 20 years



The importance of Councils/Shires

Relationships Australia recognises that Councils and Shires are strong supporters of Neighbour Day and are integral to the success of the movement. The local partnerships that councils form have real power to affect change in the wellbeing of our community.

Councils and Shires in every state and territory utilise Neighbour Day as a tool to promote and catalyse social connection in their communities, with many weaving Neighbour Day into their March calendars. They use promotion and engagement to draw people together to celebrate community connection at events they, local businesses and their constituents' host, both in the lead up to, and on the day.

Local Governments are at the frontline of community development and wellbeing in Australia. We hope that Neighbour Day serves as a helpful resource in your toolkits. We welcome your feedback and advice to improve the support and resources we offer.

The benefits of Neighbour Day

The Neighbour Day campaign has been independently evaluated since 2018 and been proven to affect change in the following areas:

Connected communities

Neighbour Day increases people's sense of neighbourhood identification, satisfaction and belonging.

This creates connected communities where:

- 80% say their neighbours have been a source of support during the pandemic*

All Australians are supported to achieve positive and respectful relationships

Neighbour Day promotes the importance of respectful relationships and support individuals, communities, workplaces and governments to champion this message.

- 85% said they got to know their neighbours/community better because of their involvement in Neighbour Day*; and
- 99% continue these relationships beyond the day*

These tangible feelings of support lead to changes in mental health and wellbeing.

Improved mental health and wellbeing

Identifying with multiple communities creates localised support networks. In times of physical distancing this is especially important. After Neighbour Day:

- 63% report improvement to their mental health*
- Despite the ongoing climate crisis and pandemic, participants report sustained and significant reductions in loneliness*

*For more information see our [research page](#).

Easy Neighbour Day Ideas for Councils



Print Neighbour Day posters and display them in council buildings; libraries; community halls; child and family health, youth and senior citizens centres and other council premises.



Register your promotion and/or event(s) on the Neighbour Day web site at neighbourday.org



Access Resources Check out the new Neighbour Day free resources in our downloads section



Distribute Neighbour Day calling or connection cards to all council services and libraries for residents to collect and use.



Subscribe to the Neighbour Day enews 'Verandah' and share with your community for great neighbourly information and ideas.



Support and inspire residents to host their own Neighbour Day events with promotion, ideas, council approvals, equipment or other encouragement.



Align existing council events with Neighbour Day, including events that are held before, or on or after the official day!



Get Social The official theme for Neighbour Day 2022 is Neighbour Day: Connecting Communities for 20 Years. You can check out our socials assets in the free council downloads.



Talk about Neighbour Day in council publications, e-newsletters, local newspapers, the Mayor's column and social media. Highlight Neighbour Day activities at community meetings, networks or groups focused on developing stronger communities and connected neighbourhoods. Perhaps the Mayor could be the local Neighbour Day Ambassador!

[For further ideas on how to celebrate, click the Ideas button](#)

What other Councils and Shires have to say

“Making friends in your community can help alleviate feelings of isolation and can also help you feel safer in your neighbourhood. There are so many positives to getting to know your neighbours, and there’s no better time to get started than this Neighbour Day.”

[Councillor Mooney, City of Townville website]

“While Neighbour Day is celebrated annually on the last Sunday in March, there is no need to wait until then to experience the feel good feeling and the many other benefits of being neighbourly.”

[City of Adelaide website]

“Brimbank City Council supports Neighbour Day as it helps us create a welcoming community where everyone feels safe, connected and there’s strong relationships between neighbours.”

[Very Neighbourly Organisation, Brimbank City Council - ND website]

“The City of Cockburn (WA) creates opportunities for the Cockburn community to get to know their neighbours and build strong, vibrant and connected communities.”

[Very Neighbourly Organisation, City of Cockburn – ND website]

“Shellharbour City Council celebrates good neighbours and good relationships to promote and encourage social connection within local communities.”

[Very Neighbourly Organisation, Shellharbour City of Council – ND website]

“Liverpool City Council is proud to join the ‘Very Neighbourly Organisation’ network and to be part of the Neighbour Day initiative, led by Relationships Australia. Very Neighbourly Organisations encourage residents to connect with others who live in their neighbourhood, particularly those who may be isolated or vulnerable. Council believes in the importance of social connection as a means of combating isolation, depression and loneliness.”

[Very Neighbourly Organisation, Liverpool City Council website]

To keep everyone safe, keep abreast of the current public health advice relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and local restrictions.

