



A Village for Every Child | Update December 2022

Belconnen - A Village for Every Child believes that by improving collaboration and committing to community engagement, *all children in Belconnen can be physically healthy, socially, and emotionally strong, and ready to engage fully in learning and life.*

What's been happening in A Village for Every Child?

This quarter we gained significant momentum with all three Working Groups and started to implement key activities in each area of focus. We were excited to launch our first Improved Transitions Network meeting, hold our first "Collective at Evatt" and complete the second phase of the Community Profile development.

Over the year we have witnessed significant shifts in members understanding their roles and the work that Village is doing, and we are pleased to see Village reach this new level of maturity. Working in this way often requires people to sit uncomfortably in a state of role ambiguity. The work can be slow as it takes time to build relationships, trust and a shared approach.

As the end of the year approaches, we are able to reflect on all the exciting things that have happened in Village and look forward to a busy 2023. We would like to thank every member of Village and all our supporting 'friends of' for their continued commitment and willingness to work differently and collaboratively in new ways.

What's been going on in the Working Groups?



Improved Transitions to School Working Group

The Improved Transitions to School Working Group is focused on improving relationships between the ECEC sector and schools in Belconnen with members sharing current transition practices and developing shared strategies to support children and their families transitioning from the ECEC service to school.

In this quarter there has been a strong focus on formalising a more structured and streamlined approach to supporting transitions between ECECs and schools for 2024.

One of the critical approaches has been to create the Improved Transitions Network which held its first meeting in November.



We were really pleased with the level of attendance and the incredible energy and engagement by everyone at the meeting. In attendance we had nine staff from six ECEC's and eight staff from six schools. It was an impressive turnout considering the busy time of the year and the challenges of staffing levels. We were grateful for the high attendance rate and look forward to welcoming new schools and ECECs next year. The Network will meet in week 6 of each school term.

Current Improved Transitions Network members	
Schools	ECECs
Florey Primary	Capital Region Community Services (CRCS)
Evatt Primary	CRCS Bruce
Maribyrnong Primary	CRCS Ginninderra
Mount Rogers Primary	CRCS Bruce Ridge
Charnwood-Dunlop Primary	CRCS Belconnen
Kingsford-Smith Primary	Baringa ELC
Macgregor Primary	YMCA ELC Holt
Latham Primary	Sage Education & Childcare
Fraser Primary	

The intention of the Network is to build relationships between ECEC services and schools so that transition ideas, resources and processes can be shared, and that solid partnerships are formed to collaborate across the transition period. The idea is to work smarter, not harder so that by coming together and sharing and supporting each other, the workload can be reduced, but impact increased. The Network will guide, inform and support the implementation of practices and processes that will improve the 2023/4 transitions of the children and families attending the ECECs and schools in the Group.

"After the meeting I felt better connected and heard – network member"

"Collectively we are smarter, we are all very knowledgeable and can leverage the hive mind. There is strength in being vulnerable, let's share and be more open" – network chair

"I appreciated getting together with people who are like-minded, where we all want better outcomes – network member"

Commencing next year the Working Group will be launching an Enrolment, Child Development and Transitions Information Campaign in the partner ECECs. This campaign will provide information about the enrolment process, priority enrolment areas, local schools, child development and the importance of transitions. It hopes to build the narrative around child development (with a particular focus on the areas identified in the AEDC data that children are falling behind in), normalising conversations with families and creating an expectation that sharing information about a child to their school is really important for the child to be effectively supported and transition smoothly.

Village and the Working Group members are really excited about the year ahead.



Improved Service and School Connections with Families

The Improved Service and School Connections with Families Working Group is focused on improving accessibility and relationships with child and family support services, improving collaboration between services, and improving relationships between families and schools before formal schooling begins. In turn it is hoped that, in meeting the above, parent's knowledge of child development and positive parenting practices will also improve.

The highlight for this quarter has been the commencement of the *Collective at Evatt*. This is a holistic place-based initiative operating in partnership with Evatt Primary School to support the education, health and development of children. It involves Village partner services co-locating on a weekly basis at the school and aims to:



- improve accessibility and relationships with child and family support services
- support families to access and receive services in a coordinated, efficient and effective way
- improve collaboration between services and organisations
- enhance community connections and opportunities, and
- overcome barriers to working collaboratively across organisations by challenging existing beliefs, funding and operational systems and processes

It has been operating every Wednesday morning since early November with a number of services from the Working Group coming together. It has been encouraging to see the immediate benefits of this way of working. Information about service provision has been shared more easily and referrals to programs have been more efficient, particularly for the school. Co-locating has also provided an opportunity to share ideas, meet and look at ways to support children and families more effectively and collaboratively.

“Co-locating is very useful. It is so valuable to make these connections and learn about what is in the community for the children and families we work with” – Working Group member co-locating at Evatt

“It was great to meet people that I have heard of through other connections and really connect by talking about what we all do. I think being physically in the same place to talk and exchange ideas is helpful” – Working Group member co-locating at Evatt

The next steps for this group will be to develop a way of sharing information, a shared measurement and learning framework, a more coordinated approach to service and program delivery in the Collective and creating a governance structure for supporting families more effectively when and how they need it.



Better Data Working Group

The Better Data Working Group is focused on developing a Community Profile using data and community consultation that captures and shares the story of families living in Belconnen. The Profile will be a resource for services to use to help direct their efforts, support conversations with community members to identify priorities and help track change over time.

The main focus for this quarter has been finalising the data content for the Belconnen Child and Family Community Profile. In early 2023 the Working Group will be launching the first phase of the Community Profile, providing limited access to service providers and the community to test its usability and effectiveness. During this time, planning for the community engagement roadshows will be underway and shortly afterward, commencing. These roadshows will invite Belconnen residents to learn about the data, reflect on what it is saying and discuss the story that sits behind it. It will also be an opportunity to identify

what their aspirations for children are and where Village and others might focus our next efforts. Look out for more information on this in the new year on our [website](#).



Other News and Projects

The Village Backbone Team welcomed a new Community Development Officer and will be onboarding a new Communications Officer early 2023.

Connected Beginnings

UnitingCare Kippax ([UCK](#)) and Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation ([Yerrabi](#)) have established a collaborative partnership underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Both parties will co-host the Backbone Team with Yerrabi overseeing two Connected Beginnings Community Development Officers (CDOs). The two CDOs will start mid-January 2023.

The Village team will also be supporting Yerrabi as they host **Yuma Day** at the Yarramundi Cultural Centre in Canberra on 21st January 2023. Yuma means 'hello' in the language of the Ngunnawal People, the traditional owners of the lands in the ACT and surrounding areas.



Yerrabi's Yuma Day is a chance for families and their children to come together as a local community at the start of 2023, to say hello! Yuma Day will be filled with children's crafts and activities, including face painting and giveaways. Lots of tucker will be had, including a sausage sizzle, accompanied by live music filling the air; providing those who attend with a unique opportunity to make connections on a personal level as well, and meaningful connections at that.



In the Spotlight

Welcome to our new 'in the spotlight' section! This is where we shine a spotlight on new or existing programs, services, initiatives, activities or resources that support children and families. This quarter we shine the light on Thrivary.

[Thrivary](#)

This new app connects parents, carers and early childhood practitioners to real-time guidance, information and learning on all things related to early childhood development and early intervention (0-8yrs), ensuring every child has every opportunity to THRIVE!

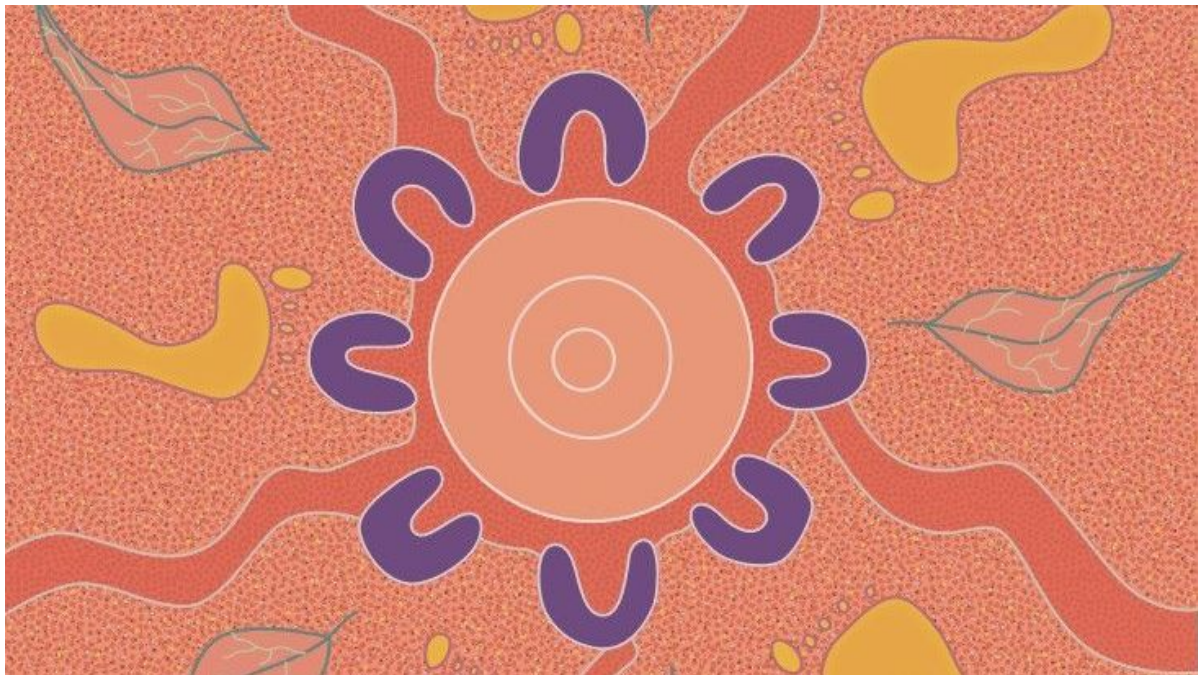


Get Involved

Join a Working Group – We are always on the lookout for new members to join our working groups – from schools, child and family services, ECEC services, community residents and government agencies. If you would like to find out more about this, please get in touch.

About Village

Village believes children are the heart of our community and deserve the best start to life possible. Village is an initiative using a [Collective Impact](#) framework that aims to transform early childhood systems across Belconnen. Village works collaboratively with families, communities, child and family support providers and government agencies to identify and address the issues facing young families. By working together, the community is stronger, more connected and better placed to meet the needs of children and families



Village Members

