



VILLAGE NEWS

We believe 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.

THIS ISSUE

▶ Transitions Campaign

The Transitions Campaign was launched with our partner Early Childhood Education and Care services on April 6th 2023. This phase is focusing on school enrolment.

▶ Connected Beginnings

We welcomed our new Connected Beginnings Community Development Officers, Ebony and Monica. They hit the ground running with Yerrabi Yurwang's first community event, Yuma Day. The event saw around 400 people (families and community members) attend.

▶ Belconnen Directory

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Belconnen Child and Family Program and Service Directory. Inside the Directory you will find child and family information on free services and programs that operate across ACT, with a particular focus on Belconnen.

▶ In the Spotlight

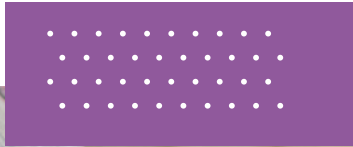
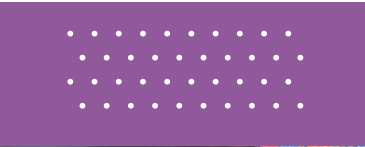
This section puts a spotlight on selected services, programs, apps and timely reminders about key events for families in relation to early years.

NEIGHBOUR DAY 2023

On the 27th March, Village held its first Neighbour Day event. Neighbour Day is about building social connection within our communities. The event was an opportunity for Village to bring together Belconnen families to engage with services and connect.

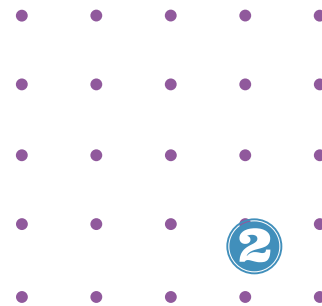
Fifteen families attended, joining in Libraries ACT Giggle and Wiggle session and enjoying live music from Monica Harland and her band.

A big thank you to all the services who participated in the event: Yerrabi Yurwang Child and Family Aboriginal Corporation, The Y Holt Early Learning Centre, Libraries ACT, Capital Region Community Services, Mosaic Baptist Church, UnitingCare Kippax, A Goodstart In life, HIPPY and ACT Education Directorate.



Engaging families and services

NEIGHBOUR DAY 2023

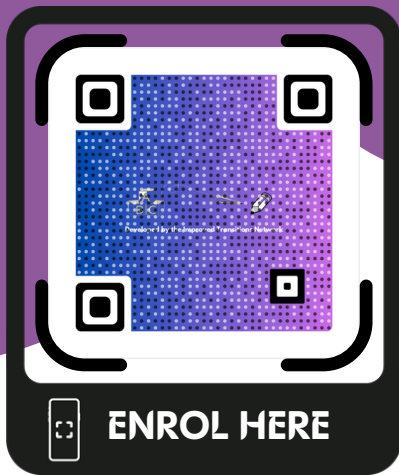




IMPROVED TRANSITIONS TO SCHOOL PROJECT

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

Scan the
QR Code
to Enrol
Online



Each month across 2023 our partner ECECs and preschools will be delivering the campaign to their families. The campaign includes a series of short videos, flyers and posters. Educators and teachers will also be provided with additional information relating to the topics. We launched phase 1 in early April with our introductory and enrolment themed videos and related resources.

The resources are hosted on our website and will be available to anyone to use. Take a look at what we have created so far.

Thank you to our critical friends who have provided content, ideas, insights and feedback on the resources so far. Our critical friends currently include the Village Transitions Network (partner Belconnen schools and ECECs), Yerrabi Yurwang, West Belconnen Child & Family Centre, ACT Education, A Good Start in Life, University of Canberra, EACH, UnitingCare Kippax and Community Services Directorate.

For more information on the campaign contact Village@kippax.org.au

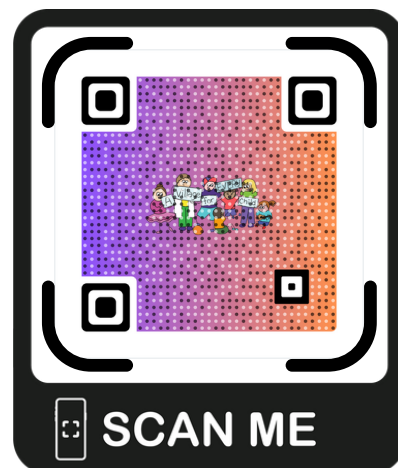
[Read more](#)

Transitions Campaign

With government school enrolment opening in late April, Village and its team of critical friends (community, community organisations, schools, ECECs and the ACT Government) have been busy developing the resources for the first phase of the Transitions Campaign. The campaign is about improving transitions for children and families into formal schooling. Feedback from ECEC Educators, schools and ACT Education told us that improving parent, family and ECEC Educators knowledge and capacity was an important first step.

By providing a targeted campaign, delivered through Village partner ECECs and preschools, families and Educators will receive key information across three focus areas:

- ✓ Improving families understanding of the enrolment process
- ✓ Improving families understanding of child development
- ✓ Improving families understanding of transitions



Scan to
access
enrolment
resources



BETTER DATA PROJECT



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.

Developing the community profile continues to bring challenges, raise questions and promote interesting discussion. Of critical importance is understanding what people want to know and what data and information will help inform Village and others supporting children and families in the Belconnen community.

Village held a workshop in March to explore who the users of the project might be and understand how they would use it. The workshop identified key user groups, including a wide range of community and government services, child and family, early childhood education and care services, community groups, advocates and sporting groups. They noted that the profile could be used to complete a needs analysis of the community, to identify particular demographics, target and tailor programs, reduce program/service duplication, empower community members, provide insights for collaboration, data for grant applications and potential funding allocation. This information will further support the content and design of the community profile.

A vital part of ensuring that Belconnen's children are happy and healthy is to listen to and work with the local community. Over the coming months, Village will be launching Community Conversations. These conversations will be focused on engaging with Belconnen residents to ask them about what they want for children in Belconnen. Village is working closely with its Connected Beginnings Partner, Yerrabi Yurwang to develop sets of questions that capture the information needed to understand community priorities and what actions can be taken to improve outcomes now and into the future. A recent workshop was held with Village partners to review and refine the questions and inform the development of the community conversation approach.

We will be reaching out to partners and others in Belconnen to support these conversations.

For more information or if you are interested in being involved, please contact Bailey on bailey@kippax.org.au



IMPROVED SERVICE AND SCHOOL CONNECTIONS WITH FAMILIES PROJECT

The Improved Service and 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, parents' knowledge of child development and positive parenting practices will also improve.

Imagination Library

Village is pleased to announce that it will be supporting the development of a proposal for Imagination Library in the Canberra community. Canberra and Tasmania are the only jurisdictions in Australia not to have this program operating, so this is a very exciting first step.



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

In March, Leo Krikmann from United Way Australia was invited to present on Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Across Australia, Imagination Library is having great success in engaging more children and families in reading and developing a lifelong love of learning.

"The wonderful thing about this program is that it not only supports improved literacy and family connection outcomes, but creates the opportunity to engage families in wrap around services and activities that enhance their experience. Some examples of this may include activities in libraries using the Imagination Library books, links to services, programs or playgroups and the opportunity to form connections between Imagination Library families" Participant



There has been considerable interest in this program and a lot of support from a range of stakeholders to get it off the ground. Funding permitted, it is hoped that Evatt primary school can pilot a three year program to engage the Evatt and McKellar community, linking them into their Family Connect program. A second proposal, funding permitted, is to run a pilot in the Kippax area, partnering with a range of stakeholders to deliver the program with coordinated wrap around services and activities.

This group will be coming together to develop a proposal over the coming weeks. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact village@kippax.org.au

[Read more](#)

Family Connect and co-locating at Evatt

In early April, Evatt primary school launched their Family Connect program. This program is the inspiration of Evatt Primary School and is a new community initiative located at the school. The model aims to improve outcomes for children and their families by bringing together early years learning, education, wrap-around health and community services – all under one roof. The Collective at Evatt forms part of Family Connect and involves community services co-locating at Evatt on a weekly basis to connect, collaborate and support the delivery of targeted and coordinated services that meet the needs of the local community.

[Read more](#)



Artwork by Chern'ee Sutton



Village and Yerrabi Yurwang Partnership



Featured left to right: Monica, Lee-anne, Megan, Sarah, Bailey and Dorji. Absent: Elena and Ebony

In late 2022 Village, as part of UnitingCare Kippax (UCK) and Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation (Yerrabi) established a Connected Beginnings 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). Yerrabi and Village have commenced their regular meetings to develop their joint work plans and strengthen the collaboration.

The two Community Development Officers, Ebony and Monica, started in January and hit the ground running with Yuma Day.

The event saw around 400 people (families and community members) attend. There were a range of services and supporters including; West Belconnen and Gungahlin Child and Family Centre, Belconnen – A Village for Every Child, Child Development Services, UnitingCare Kippax, The “Y” (YMCA), CatholicCare/Marymead, Australian Federal Police, their Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Constable Kenny Koala, ACT Education, ACT Fire and Rescue, ACT Ambulance Service, and Project Dust.

It was a privilege to have in attendance, Yerrabi’s Patron and most Senior Ngunnawal Elder, Aunty Agnes Shea along with Minister Rachel Stephen Smith, Minister for Health, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Children, Youth & Families. We would like to pay respects and acknowledge the sad loss of Aunty Agnes Shea OAM, who as well as an esteemed and highly respected Ngunnawal elder, was also one of Yerrabi Yurwang’s strongest advocates.





OTHER ACTIVITIES

Directory Launch



The Directory was developed in response to feedback from schools, ECEC's and service providers who spoke to the challenge of finding services and programs to refer children and families to.

We will be converting this directory to an online platform on the Village website with an interactive search function over the coming months. Look out for updates on this.

In the meantime, you can access the PDF version of the Directory below.

[Read more](#)

BELCONNEN CHILD AND FAMILY PROGRAM AND SERVICE

DIRECTORY



belconnenvillage.com.au

Inside the Directory you will find child and family information on free services and programs that operate across ACT, with a particular focus on Belconnen.

2023



Community Forums with the Southside Initiative

Village and the Southside Initiative have partnered to support each other's work and combine efforts where there is value across the whole Canberra community. Village is really pleased to be joining in the delivery of the quarterly Southside Initiative forum series by offering parallel forums in Belconnen for the northside community.

The second Southside Initiative forum will focus on the information for and about primary schools and will be held on Monday, 5th June from 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm at Richardson Primary School.

Village will be partnering with the Belconnen Network Coordinator to deliver a similar school focused Forum in Belconnen on Wednesday 14th June, 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm. So watch this space for details on where this event will be held.

The Southside Initiative was developed late last year as a collective community response to the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). The 2021 AEDC data shows a steady increase in the number of Canberra children, and in particularly children in the more southern suburbs, being identified as developmentally vulnerable across one or more of the 5 AEDC domains.

The Southside Initiative aims to develop a community driven approach to better reach and support vulnerable children 0-8 years and their families. It will also focus on keeping the AEDC conversation alive between stakeholders which include Government, community organisations, schools and early childhood services.

The Southside Initiative is a joint collaboration between YWCA Canberra, Woden Community Service, Community Services #1 and Communities at Work.

Keep an eye out for more information on these forums via CD Net and other networks.

Contacts for Southside Initiative

- ✉ david.wild@ywca-canberra.org.au
- ✉ Penny.Stott@wcs.org.au
- ✉ romney.kelly@communityservices1.org
- ✉ catherine.jones@commsatwork.org

Contacts for Belconnen Events

- ✉ village@kippax.org.au



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Early Learning Connection

Early Learning Connection is led by Baringa Early Learning Centre in partnership with the University of Canberra, Canberra Institute of Technology, Early Childhood Australia and early learning centres in the ACT. 'Early Learning Connection is a flexible career pathway in early childhood education for women in the ACT and Capital Region. It offers financial assistance to study and work in our amazing sector while being mentored and coached'.

[Read more](#)



ACT DFV Group for Children and Mothers

The Australian Childhood Foundation is piloting a support group in Canberra for children aged 5-12 years and their mothers who have experienced domestic and family violence. They will be running two groups (North and South Canberra) in Terms Two and Three 2023.

[Read more](#)



Road to Health Workshops

UnitingCare Kippax are running a free Childhood Development Workshop for carers / parents of a child between pre-birth and 5 years old on May 2, 2023.

[Read more](#)



Parent and Carer Support Groups and Programs

To find out about upcoming parent programs for term 2.

[Read more](#)



OUR PARTNERS

We would like to thank the ongoing commitment and contributions from all our partners, together we are working towards better outcomes for our children

