




PROGRESS REPORT 2024


JANUARY - APRIL

BELCONNEN – A VILLAGE FOR EVERY CHILD

All children in Belconnen are physically healthy, socially, and emotionally strong and ready to engage fully in learning and life.

 village@kippax.org.au

 02 6254 1773

 Cnr. Luke Street & Hardwick Cres., Holt, ACT 2615

 belconnenvillage.com.au



1

Prioritising equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

2

Supporting Aboriginal self-determination.

Commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

The Village initiative, including individual Leadership Group and Working Group members, commit to embed the following principles in our work so that they are central to our practice.

3

Listening to and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and responding through designing actions together.

4

Sharing and celebrating together.

5

Working together to share the cultural load.


Village is proud to partner with Yerrabi Yurwang to deliver the Commonwealth Government's Connected Beginnings Program. Together we are strengthening the way we work for self determination of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Collective change only happens because of the contribution and commitment of everyone involved. Village has been proud to work alongside these participating organisations.

Participating organisations



Glossary



ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARACY	Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
Best Start	ACT Government's Best Start For Canberra's Children Strategy
CECA	Childrens Education and Care Assurance
CHS	Canberra Health Service
CRSC	Capital Region Community Services
CSD	ACT Community Services Directorate
CYPS	ACT Child and Youth Protection Services
Imagination Library	Dolly Parton Imagination Library Australia
ED	ACT Education Directorate
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
UCK	UnitingCare Kippax
Village	A Village For Every Child
Yerrabi Yurwang	Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation

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Introduction

This report continues the story of the impact of the Village pilot initiative. It builds on previous progress reports which can be found on the [Village website](#).

The Directorate funded UCK from 2021 to the end of June this year to deliver Village, a pilot place-based collective initiative. At the time of writing, negotiations for future funding are ongoing. Due to the uncertainty of the outcome of these negotiations, the backbone team is submitting this report in addition to the reporting requirements under the current deed agreement to ensure that achievements and learnings are captured.

- ✓ Part one explains Village's achievements over the last three years in the context of the life cycle of similar place-based collective impact projects.
- ✓ Part two records Village's activity from January to April 2024.
- ✓ Part three sets out how and where key projects will be managed to ensure that current work can continue when the future of Village is determined.



Part One: The life cycle of Village

Place-based collective impact projects such as Village undergo natural changes throughout their life cycles. Experience from other similar projects shows that the cycle of action, facilitated by the backbone teams and partners, follows a similar pattern. Depending on what is happening in the local environment, movement through these stages may not be linear. However, the general pattern follows the diagram below, gathering key stakeholders around a particular issue, making sense of what is happening, deciding on an action, and implementing the action.



Initiatives generally follow a similar timeline:

- ✓ Year one – establishment and development of relationships to generate commitment to a shared agenda.
- ✓ Year two – movement to action by the various working groups as they respond to the needs of the local system and families within those systems.
- ✓ Year three – winding up or transitioning of key projects, review, and reflection.
- ✓ Year four and beyond – re-establishing and creating new relationships and preparation for new actions.

Once key projects are complete or transitioned at the end of the third year, there is often a change in the engagement of stakeholders, as commitment of organisations may shift.

Village's establishment phase took longer than anticipated as it was funded just prior to COVID. Village is in year three in the cycle and, as the Clear Horizon evaluation and subsequent reports have shown, the last two years have resulted in momentum and action. Therefore, many of the activities are in the transitioning phase which is expected at the end of year three.

The movement from year three to four is critical to ensure that momentum and commitment from all partners is not lost. The ADHD Action Group and the Early Years Community of Practice are two areas of activity that have strong commitment from stakeholders and examples where external partners are taking leadership.

Uncertainty of ongoing funding arrangements is a key risk at this time in the initiative's life cycle. Conversations began with the funder, in August 2023. UCK and the ACT Education Directorate are currently negotiating a funding agreement for the next four years which will determine the scope and shape of the future of the Village initiative. A renewed funding agreement that provides longer-term certainty will be a catalyst to reset the initiative, review and reflect on the last three years, and re-engage partners to refresh momentum.

At the time of writing this report, there is no funding agreement in place from 1 July 2024. As a result of this uncertainty, several key staff have secured employment and moved on from the Village team. UCK is unable to recruit until there is a funding agreement in place. UCK is unable to ensure that, Village can continue to provide administrative support to current working groups and projects until the end of June.

Part Two: Action to impact

January – April 2024

In this reporting period, several projects were finalised in this period, for example the child development campaign, or moved into ongoing day to day management, for example, Imagination Library. Areas where momentum and activity remain strong include the Early Years Community of Practice and the ADHD Action Group.

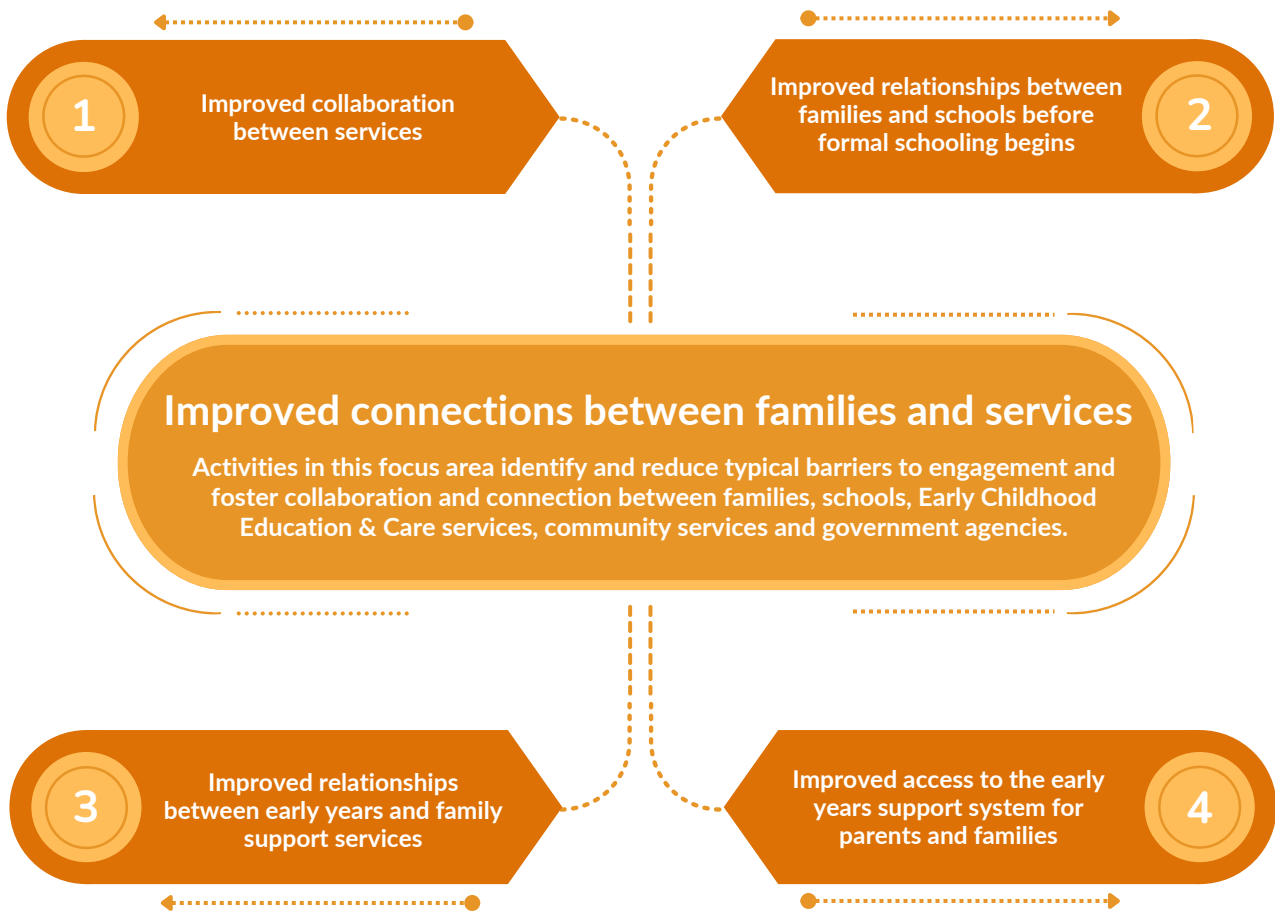
Like previous reports, the diagrams below show the focus areas and objectives. The outcomes of some activities map to more than one focus area. This shows the complexity of the issues that are being targeted. The activity reports are included in the focus area that most aligns with the activity's primary objective. Infographics illustrate the activities and indicators of impact.

Due to uncertainty of funding post June, new or refreshed activities couldn't be activated.

In this period two experienced staff left for more certain employment opportunities. This included the Coordinator, and the original project officer. This is a significant loss of expertise and relationship capital. UCK is unable to undertake recruitment until funding negotiations are finalised.

The initiative's phase and lack of certainty has led to a loss of engagement by partners and other stakeholders, slowing activity and momentum. The remaining team has focused on ensuring that current activities have pathways to continue while funding negotiations and recruitment of staff is finalised.

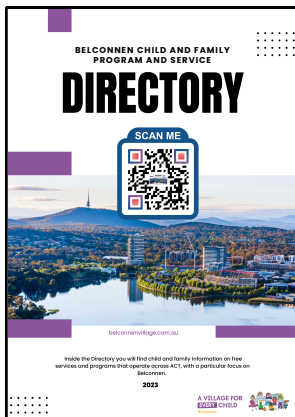
Improved Connections between Families and Services



Village working with ECEC's and schools in Belconnen and beyond.

From the beginning of Village, the backbone team prioritised face to face visits with local ECECs and preschools. This intentional relationship building provided a basis to engage with ECECs. The fruit has been high levels of engagement by early years educators in the development of resources and the community of practice.

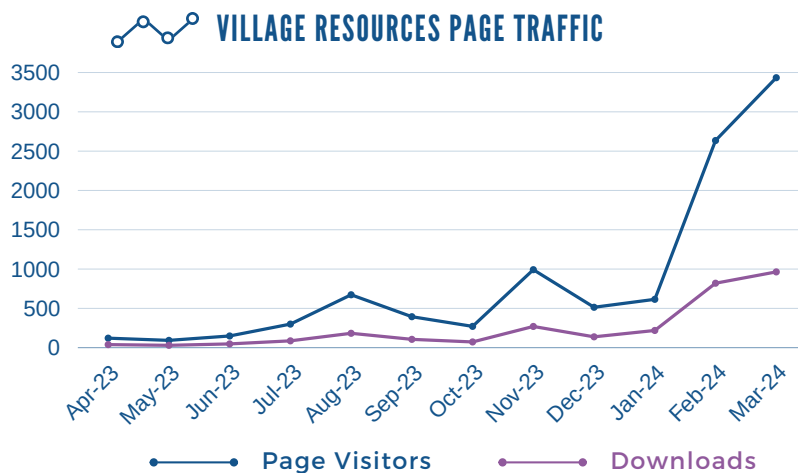
Resources



VILLAGE WORKING WITH ECECs & SCHOOLS

Over **19,700** children in the ACT aged 0-5 (59%) are enrolled in early learning centres. Strengthening the connections and capability of this sector will support these children to be ready to transition to school.

Data as at 30 March 2024

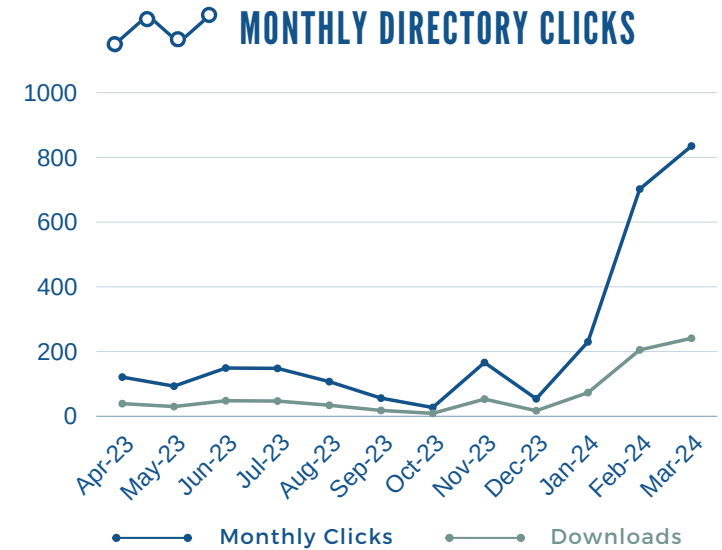


“ *Impact* ★★★★★
An ECEC director noted she has been using the transitions campaign to shift the mindset of her educators, empowering them to contribute to the transition process.
Centre Director
ECEC in Belconnen

Impact ★★★★★
An ECEC educator noted that the day after the network event two of their feeder schools (who also attended) reached out to make connections and set up meetings with the centre.
ECEC Educator
ECEC in Belconnen **”**

VILLAGE MAKING CONNECTIONS CHILD & FAMILY SERVICE DIRECTORY

📅 Data as at 30 March 2024



“ *Impact* ★★★★★

[The Directory] is an excellent resource. Is there one for each area of Canberra? [Has shared with approximately 200 of her staff]

Director
Community Services Directorate

Impact ★★★★★

I noticed your program directory on CD NET I must say, you have done an exceptional job with the document. It's truly impressive!

Community Development Coordinator
Community Organisation

“ *Impact* ★★★★★

It is great to have such a comprehensive list of available services, that must have been a lot of work! I think it will be of great use to educators and frontline workers - the hard part will be getting them to realise it is available and how much it can help them!

Family & Community Liaison Co-ordinator
A Good Start in Life for Young Children

Impact ★★★★★

The directory allowed me to respond to the immediate needs of a family by supporting them to find the services they needed. It is easy to use and has a comprehensive list of programs and services tailored for children and families, all offered at free or low-cost.

Community Development Officer
Community Organisation

The Early Years Community of Practice

Village and partners created the Early Years Community of Practice in response to community feedback, including feedback received by the ACT Government through its consultations with early years practitioners as part of the Best Start for Canberra's Children: The First 1000 Days Strategy development.

In March over 50 people attended the community practice event, part two of a series on understanding behaviour.

Resources

belconnenvillage.com.au/community-of-practice/



THE EARLY YEARS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Data as at 30 March 2024



“ Meeting professionals across a varied range of settings was a highlight. ”

Impact
★★★★★
The whole content of the session was very useful for me, especially the reflection discussions within small groups.
Participant
Courageous Conversations



“ I am now going to focus on strengthening relationships with children and families. ”

Impact
★★★★★
The ability to get some ideas on how to approach families with concerns around children's developmental delays and handouts
Participant
ECEC Teacher



“ It was great to share stories, ideas and daily experiences and network with professionals from various ACT services. ”

Impact
★★★★★
Acknowledgement by Minister Berry and Minister Stephen-Smith that the Community of Practice is meeting actions in the Best Start Strategy, Best Start Interim Action Plan
The First 1000 Days Conference
13 November 2023

ADHD Action Group

Members of the ADHD Action Group continue to have a strong commitment to creating opportunities for action. The following areas of activity respond to the ADHD survey, conducted at the end of 2023:

- ✔ Development of a pathways map and website for families with ADHD related issues. The website is now live, and the pathways map will be presented to families at an engagement workshop in June.
- ✔ Delivery of training for partners on creating workshops and meeting spaces for people who are neurodiverse. This training aimed to build capacity for members of the action group and their organisations and support moving into engagement and co-design with families.
- ✔ Finalisation of the ADHD survey report. The draft report was submitted by ARACY in early December. Feedback from various stakeholders is currently being incorporated. The Action Group is recommending that when finalised, it be released publicly, including being made available to the families that participated in the survey.
- ✔ The University of Canberra is hosting a workshop on ADHD and working with health professionals in June. The workshop responds to the need for more information about how allied health and other professionals are involved in supporting families and children with ADHD.
- ✔ Canberra Health Services partners are leading a community engagement session with families who participated in the survey and indicated that they are interested in being part of further co-design possibilities.

Yerrabi Yurwang has been provided with the data from the survey relating to people who identified as Aboriginal. They are leading work within the Aboriginal community to respond to the findings of the survey and are providing support to families with ADHD through programs such as Connected Beginnings.

Resources

belconnenvillage.com.au/adhd-family-resources/

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Imagination Library is an international community based early literacy program delivered in Australia by United Way Australia. It is a free book gifting program that aims to inspire a love of reading in children. Enrolled children receive a high-quality, age-appropriate book in the mail every month, at no cost. The program also supports parents and carers as their child's first and most important teacher by providing reading tips to facilitate book reading and a shared reading experience. In doing so, parents and caregivers are empowered to actively engage in their children's early learning.

Imagination Library was launched at the end of 2023. The focus of the last few months has been:

- ✓ Continuing to support enrolment of families.
- ✓ Establishing elements of the wrap around service model, including:
 - A story time at Kippax Library to engage families, many of whom have never accessed this service.
 - A pilot 'Village Hub' community corner with enrolling partners to coincide with the story time session.
- ✓ Facilitating relationship building between United Way Australia, the primary partner, and Libraries ACT with the aim of consolidating this partnership and plan for expansion of the pilot to other regions across the ACT.

Resources

belconnenvillage.com.au/imagination-library/





IMPROVING LITERACY FOR CHILDREN IMAGINATION LIBRARY KIPPAX



Data as at 30 March 2024



“ *Impact* ★★★★★

It's meant a lot. We now have a variety of fun books for our little one to read and are fostering a lifelong love for reading (hopefully).

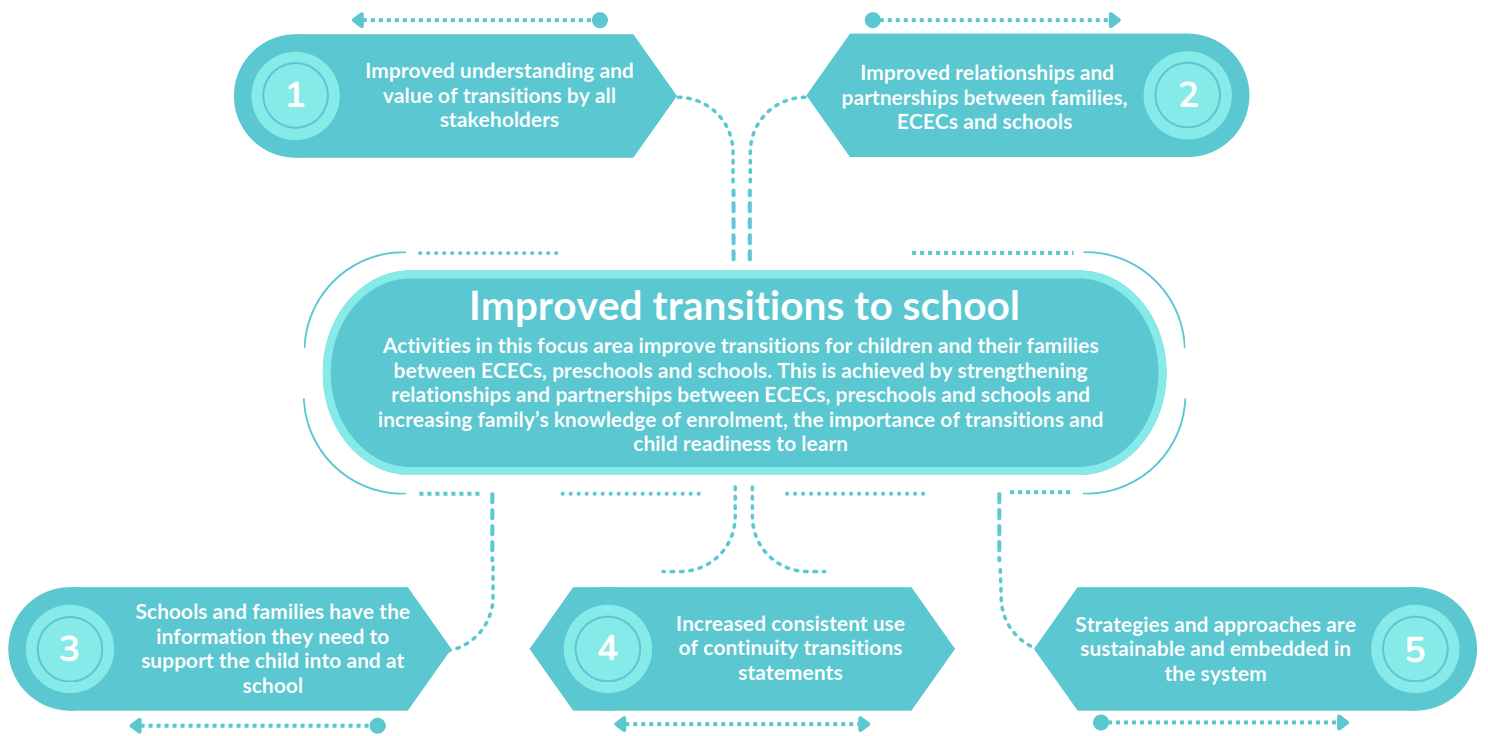
Parent
Imagination Library Kippax

Impact ★★★★★

It has given us the coolest routine. My son loves the books and enjoys reporting the key words. My son has a speech delay and this has helped so much.

Parent
Imagination Library Kippax **”**

Improved Transitions to School



Transitions Campaign

The aim of the Improved Transitions Campaign is to increase the knowledge and understanding of parents, carers, and early years educators about what can support children to be ready to transition into school.

The campaign was designed in response to insights from partner ECECs and schools about the experience of families and the information gaps. There were three phases to the campaign:

- ✓ Child development
- ✓ Enrolment
- ✓ Transitions

In this reporting period Village completed and launched the Child Development suite of resources and relaunched the enrolment video in preparation for school enrolment season. The third phase, transitions, has not yet commenced and would require revitalising the transitions working group post June.

Resources

belconnenvillage.com.au/child-development-resources/

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL SCHOOL ENROLMENT CAMPAIGN

Data as at 30 March 2024



Impact
★★★★★
An increase in schools and ECECs reaching out to each other resulting in collaborating with other staff and making new connections.

Impact
★★★★★
Appreciation that the events provide an opportunity to hear perspectives from and understand the challenges that schools are facing and what their requirements are for transitioning children.

Impact
★★★★★
The opportunity for schools to see and value how much knowledge ECECs have about children transitioning.

Impact
★★★★★
The opportunity for networking and sharing resources, practices that ECECs and schools have introduced to support transitions.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN

Data as at 30 March 2024



Impact
★★★★★
OMG! 88% email open rate is four times higher than the industry average for MailChimp!
Consultant
MailChimp Team

“ The 2024 edition of the Blue Book has been released and I was hoping that the online version would be updated on the Village for Every Child website.

Maternal, Child and Family Health, Canberra Health Services



Impact
★★★★★
A nurse in the maternal child health team noticed the development poster in a child and family centre and contacted Village for 30 copies to display in all maternal and child health clinics across Canberra.

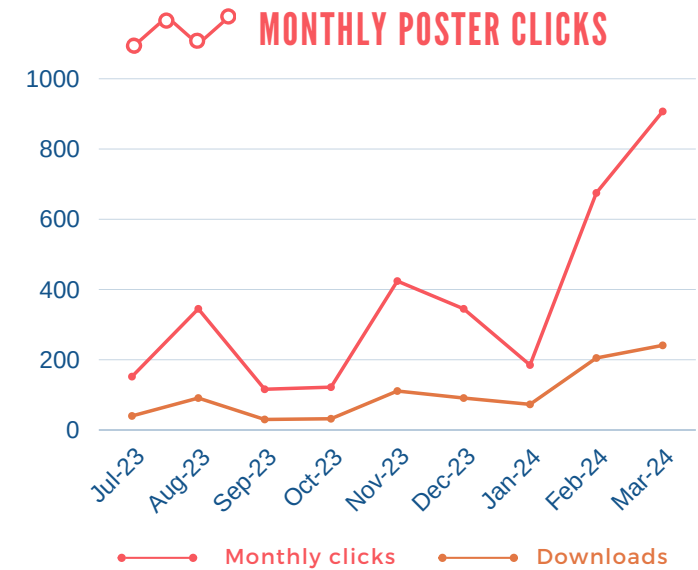
Impact
★★★★★
There is a decline in parental involvement in child development, and we see Village's Child Development Poster as a valuable solution. We plan to feature Village resources in the next parent information session and prominently display them on the centre's walls.
Centre Director
Early Learning Centre

“ *Impact*
★★★★★
Educators at a local ECEC fed back to a Leadership Group member that having the child development poster helped them to educate parents about the Blue Book.

Impact
★★★★★
Families are eager to learn more about child development, and the Village's resources have made a significant impact by addressing real needs for Early Childhood Education Centers, families, and children.
Centre Director
Not-for-profit Organization for Children and Young People

VILLAGE MAKING CONNECTIONS CHILD DEVELOPMENT POSTER

Data as at 30 March 2024



“ *Impact* ★★★★★

I love tracking my children's development through the blue book. It's such a great tool to empower parents and assist communications with health professionals.

Parent
Belconnen Community

Impact ★★★★★

We would love to be able to put [the posters] up in all our clinics across Canberra.

Clinical Nurse
Maternal, Child and Family Health Team

”

“ *Impact* ★★★★★

Families are eager to learn more about child development, and the Village's resources have made a significant impact by addressing real needs for Early Childhood Education Centers, families, and children.

Centre Director
Not-for-profit Organization for Children and Young People

Impact ★★★★★

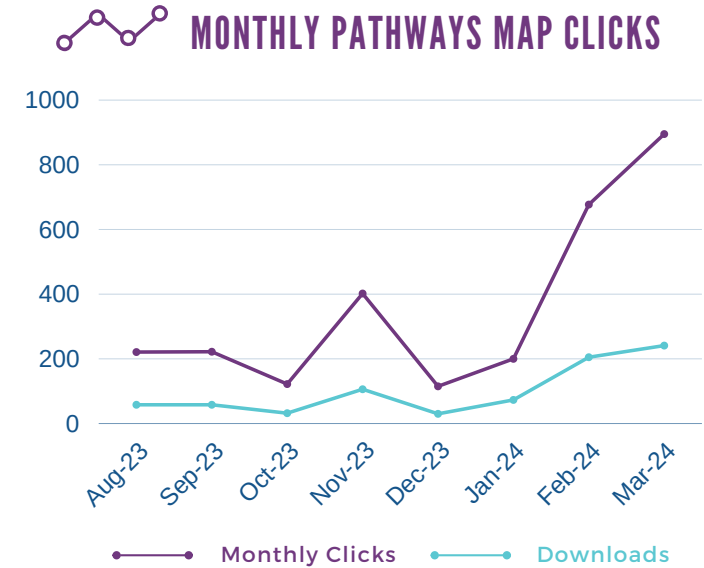
There is a decline in parental involvement in child development, and we see Village's Child Development Poster as a valuable solution. We plan to feature Village resources in the next parent information session and prominently display them on the centre's walls.

Centre Director
Early Learning Centre

”

VILLAGE MAKING CONNECTIONS FAMILY PATHWAYS MAP

Data as at 30 March 2024



“ *Impact* ★★★★★

We are using this in every enrolment pack for new families and every executive teacher in the school has a copy which they were thrilled about sharing with their families

Executive Teacher
Belconnen Primary School

Impact ★★★★★

This is amazing, just amazing, thank you

Doctor
Canberra Hospital

”

“ *Impact* ★★★★★

The First 1000 Days Committee will use Village resources, specifically the Family Pathways Map, Child Development Poster, and Community of Practice Flyer, as part of the collateral pack in the First 1000 Days Conference Showbags.

First 1000 Days Team
Community Services Directorate

Impact ★★★★★

There is a need for better training in identifying early signs of neurodiversity among educators. In the absence of such training, the Family Pathways Map is a valuable resource that can alleviate pressure on educators and facilitate challenging conversations with families when guiding children displaying concerning or challenging behaviors.

Centre Director
Child Care Centre

”

The Transitions Network

The Transitions Network was established to bring together early childhood educators, school, and preschool teachers, fostering connections among the practitioners. The network events enable educators to share how to effectively supporting children and families in transitioning from ECECs and preschools to schools.

It is hoped that this network can support teachers and educators through regular interactions, strengthening connections between schools, ECECs, children and families. This, in turn, aims to create a flexible yet consistent approach for positive transitions in Belconnen.

The March event focused on how the use of the continuity and transitioning statement was used in 2023. Three guest speakers presented their experiences of how they used the statements:

- ✔ An early years educator in an ECEC settings for children transitioning between rooms internally and to school.
- ✔ A preschool teacher in a government preschool setting for children transitioning from preschool into kindergarten on the same campus.
- ✔ A teacher in a government school on how they received and used the information.

Several core transitions working group members have stepped down. While attendance and feedback has been positive, it is not clear at this stage if stakeholders have enough capacity to continue to organise the transition events.

Resources

belconnenvillage.com.au/transitions-network/

VILLAGE STRENGTHENING TRANSITIONS TRANSITIONS NETWORK EVENT

Data as at 30 March 2024



“ This meeting was terrific, well organised and so valuable - thank you ”

“ The best part of the network event was hearing from presenters in different sectors, feedback on transition statements from teachers, and learning from the experiences of ECECs and other schools. Plus, I made some great contacts! ”

“ *Impact* ★★★★★
It was great, I was able to meet teachers from schools I had no connection with and two of them rang me the next day to organise to visit our centre to meet and discuss some of the children transitioning to their school.
ECEC/Preschool Educator

“ *Impact* ★★★★★
This is such a great initiative supporting children and families. I have been using your information sheet outlining local services with our families. It's a great resource and tool to help with those sometimes difficult conversations.
Participant Network Event 4 ”

“ *Impact* ★★★★★
The most useful thing I gained from the network was getting an understanding from schools as to what information would be useful to know in the transition statements and learning that some schools already have social stories established and that we can access them.
ECEC Educator

“ *Impact* ★★★★★
It was a great opportunity to meet with other educators and discuss our students. As an ECEC, I particularly enjoyed hearing the perspectives from the preschool and primary schools.
ECEC Educator ”

Better Data

Community profile

Accessing the right data at the right time and in the right format so that it can be used by partners for decision-making, reporting and eventually evaluation is problematic across place-based collective impact projects.

The effort this reporting period has been focused on quality checking the data in the SEER Data platform and creating a stand-alone community profile document based on the demographic indicators in the platform.

The work has been significant, requiring input from data experts from the Better Data Working Group. ARACY is currently drawing the quantitative and qualitative information from the community conversation process together. The final profile is due in May.

The Village platform, held on the SEER Data site, will remain live under the free subscription model. This will allow any future data developments to access the Village work. However, due to data quality and platform functionality limitations the Better Data Working Group would not recommend investing further in the platform.

Belconnen Child and Family Community Profile

A Village for Every Child



Enabling the conditions for change

Communication

Village's communications have been instrumental to its ability to achieve the breadth of engagement and distribution of products, particularly the campaign materials.

The website is critical and is now the repository of all of the Village artefacts. For future posterity the domain name and website have been paid for until 30 June 2026.



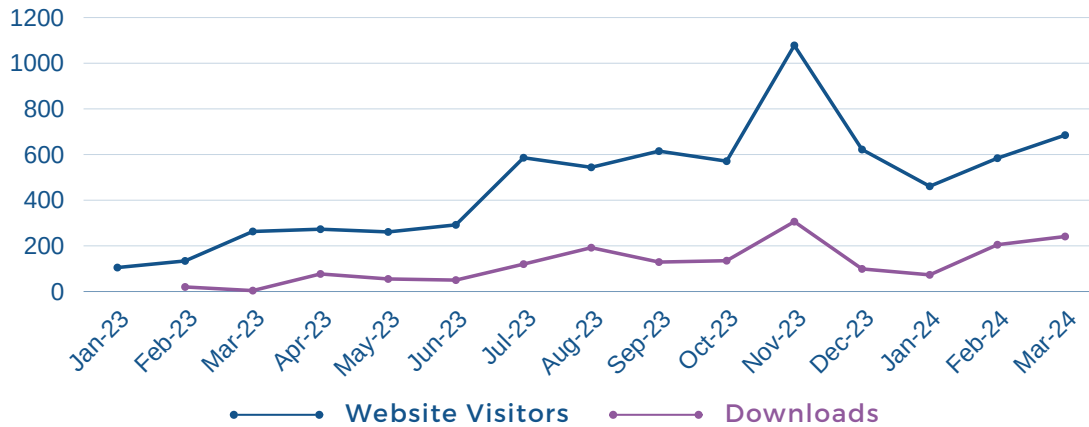
VILLAGE COMMUNICATIONS 2023-2024

Infographic insights that capture the highlights of the Village's strategic communications and accomplishments in 2023-2024

Data as at 30 March 2024



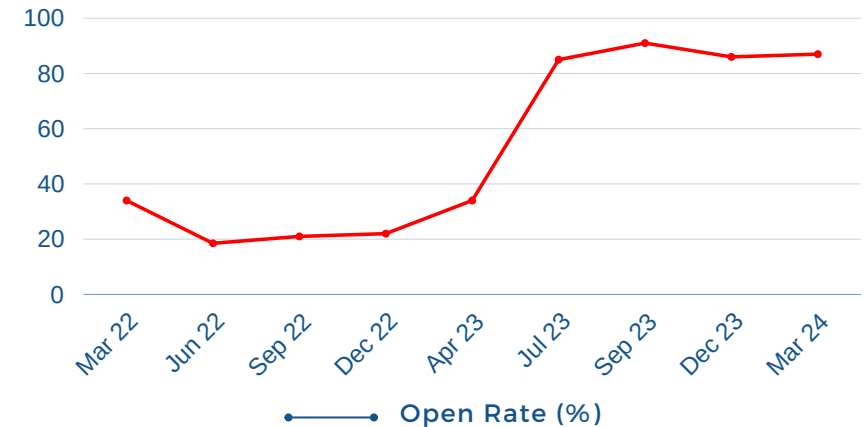
Village Website Stats 2023-2024



Village has done a great job connecting the pieces, identifying those scattered in pockets, and presenting them in a more cohesive way. Village has been able to scale its impact because of being able to connect things outside of Village.

Member, Leadership Group

Village Newsletter Stats 2023



There is so much great information on the Website. Having access to information services (including Health Literacy) was a key need that came out of the community consultation for the Best Star First 1000 days strategy.

Center Director, ECEC in Belconnen

Partnerships

Partnerships evolve during the life of a place-based collective impact initiative. The infographic shows the breadth and depth of engagement that Village has been able to bring together in the last three years. Without this, the legacy pieces such as the enrolment and child development campaigns and Imagination Library would not have been possible.

As highlighted in the evaluation of Village, conducted by Clear Horizon, and submitted to the Education Directorate in July 2023, concerted effort is needed to ensure continuity of commitment within organisations so that there are pathways for new people to become involved as people leave. Organisations and individuals are more likely to continue investment of resources and time when the agenda of the activities of the group aligns with their strategy and work priorities.

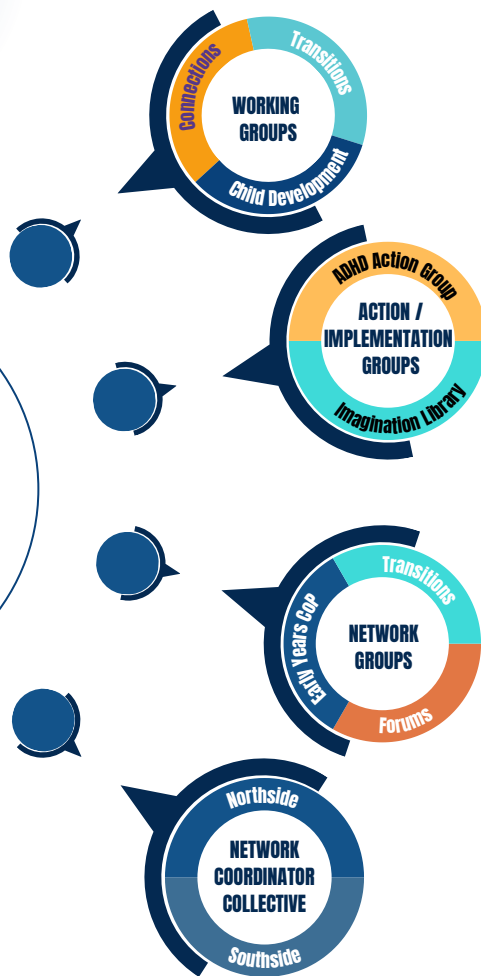
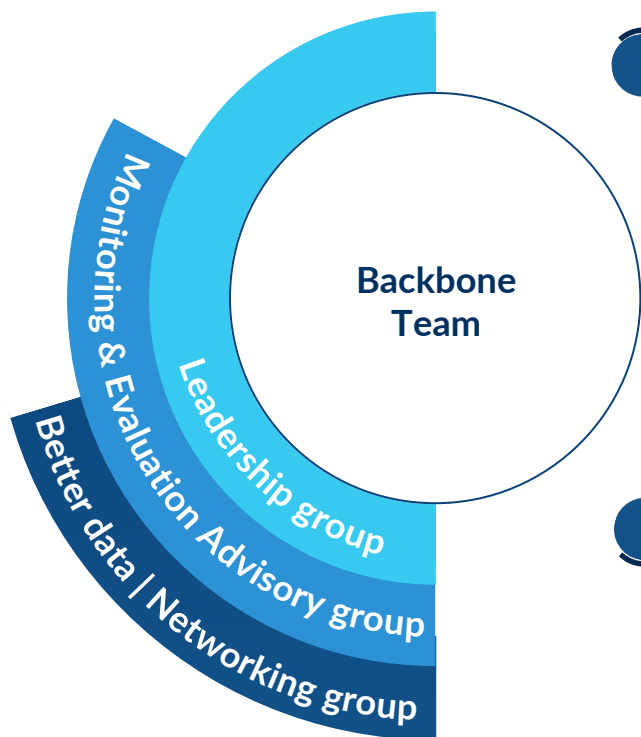
This is true for the ADHD Action Group and the Community of Practice. These two groups are likely to continue beyond June because of the shared commitment and sense of responsibility for the work.

In April, a number of Leadership Group and Working Group members indicated that they are no longer able to continue their involvement due to other commitments and priorities. This is due to various projects being completed and implemented, the ongoing pressures experienced by services on the ground, competing priorities across government, and a lack of certainty about whether Village will continue beyond 30 June 2024.

Re-energising stakeholders to commit to a shared agenda that creates a shared commitment will be a priority for a new backbone team when funding agreements are finalised.

A PLACE-BASED COLLECTIVE IMPACT VILLAGE PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

Data as at 30 March 2024



Part Three: Village activities

April to 30 June 2024

Village and its legacy is in a transition season in the life cycle of place-based collective impact initiatives. Funding uncertainty due to not having a signed finding agreement in place by the end of April and turnover of core staff in the backbone team and in various working groups, has impacted on Village being able to maintain momentum as activities begin to come to an end or ramp up into their next phase.

In light of this uncertainty, the objectives for the next two months are to ensure that:

- ✓ Any activities or programs that have momentum have enough support to continue until the end of June at least.
- ✓ All products remain available or transition to new custodians so that they continue to be utilised.
- ✓ All artefacts can be accessed by the new Village backbone team either within UCK or in another organisation depending on future auspice arrangements.

At its April meeting, the leadership Group affirmed this approach. The tables below show how these objectives will be achieved.

Arrangements have been put in place for the Village website to remain live until the end of June 2026, making all core documents and artefacts available for two years. These documents include progress reports which chronicle the life and learnings of the initiative, resources developed by the initiative, and research reports.

Improved Connections Between Families and Services

Activity	Key stakeholders	May - June	Post June 2024
Community of Practice (CoP)	CRCS and a committed Working Group	Two events planned for 14 May 25 June. Administrative support from Village team.	CRCS network coordinator supporting CoP into the future.
ADHD Action Group ADHD family resources webpage ADHD pathways map	ADHD Action Group and stakeholders with lived experience	Community engagement workshop being planned for June.	Custodians of the pathways and webpage to be found.
ADHD community engagement workshops and community training	Child Family Centre Gungahlin UC Good Start team	Community engagement workshop and allied health seminar being planned for June.	Key partners including Child Family Centres and UC to work with Action Group to decide support for the group beyond June.
ADHD community survey report	ADHD Action Group Education Directorate	Draft report being finalised by Action Group with input from Leadership Group.	Action Group and Directorate of Education to decide how report will be used and distributed.

Improved Transitions to Schools

Activity	Key stakeholders	May - June	Post June 2024
Transition network events	Transitions WG members	Current conversations about whether it is possible to host and plan an event in term two	New leadership will be needed.
Transition Campaign - Enrolment products	Education Directorate	Campaign strategy and supporting documents disseminated and available on Village website	Village to provide products, including design elements to Education Directorate prior to end June
Transition Campaign - Child Development products	Community Services Directorate and Health Directorate	Campaign strategy and supporting documents disseminated. Documents and design elements provided to CSD for First 1000 Days communications projects.	CSD custodian of products.

Imagination Library

Activity	Key stakeholders	May - June	Post June 2024
Transition to a new lead for MOU with United Way Australia	United Way Australia Libraries ACT	Conversations continuing between Libraries ACT and United Way.	New lead organisation in place, if not UCK will remain lead partner with United Way Australia.
Continue implementation for Kippax pilot	Enrolling Partners with support from Libraries ACT and Village until the end of June	Business as usual	Oversight by new lead organisation.
Story time and Village Hub community corner starting at Kippax Library	Libraries ACT	Ready to start Term 2	Families move into universal library service offerings.

Better Data


Activity	Key stakeholders	May-June	Post June
Community profile	ARACY, AEDC ACT Coordinator	ARACY has been engaged to take the data and analysis from the platform to create a community profile against the NEST Domains, with specific reference to the AEDC. ARACY working with AEDC ACT Coordinator to finalise draft document, due mid-May.	AEDC and Education Directorate custodian.





BELCONNEN – A VILLAGE FOR EVERY CHILD

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