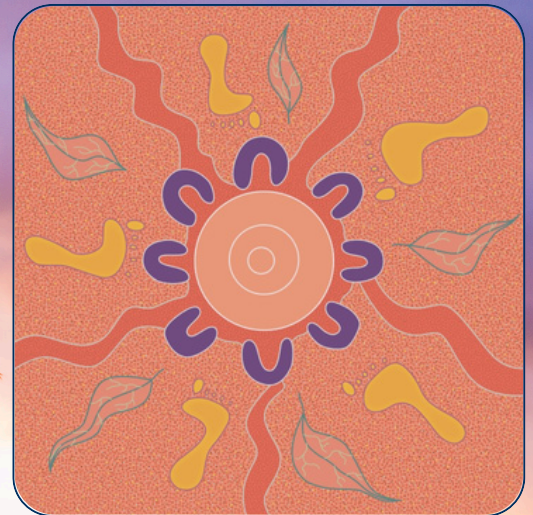




Village News



Artwork by Ngunnawal Art

THIS ISSUE

▶ Village at the Early Years Forum

Village was honored to be invited to present at the first 2025 meeting of the Early Years Working Group - a cross-government group focused on improving outcomes for children and families in the ACT.

▶ Imagination Library Kippax Expands to More Families

Village is excited to announce the expansion of the Imagination Library Kippax Pilot to include two additional suburbs - Charnwood and Dunlop.

▶ Play Focus Area

Play Working Group has been actively discussing ways to enhance play opportunities in the community.

▶ Outreach Focus Area

Outreach Working Group has been actively exploring initiatives to expand community engagement and enhance accessibility to essential services.

▶ Connections Focus Area

Connections is running a series of workshops to strengthen relationships - between families, between families and services, and between services themselves.

Village Reviving Community Engagement Through Local Events

A Village for Every Child (Village), has been actively participating in community events over the past few months, reinforcing our commitment to fostering strong connections, engagement, and support for families in Belconnen. By attending and contributing to these events, Village continues to create opportunities for families to connect, access support services, and enjoy meaningful experiences together.

Strengthening Connections through community events

Village has taken part in various activities that align with its core mission - supporting children and families through Play, Connections, and Outreach.



The recent events Village attended

16
JAN

WATER FUN HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Organised by Yerrabi Yurwang, this holiday program provided children with a fun-filled day featuring water fights, kiddy pools, misting tents and slip-and-slide activities.

Each of these events provided a platform for Village to engage with families, share information about available support services, and reinforce the importance of early childhood development through interactive and engaging experiences.

23
JAN

BOORIS CONNECTIONS HOLIDAY PROGRAM

An event for First Nations children and their friends/families, building Booris connections through traditional games, live music, ochre face painting and cultural yarns.

Reviving Village's momentum

Village and Collaborative partners are dedicated to reigniting the collective impact work and ensure that families are aware of the support available to them. By participating in these events, Village is not only strengthening relationships with local families but also demonstrating our commitment to creating a well-connected and supportive environment for children to thrive.

1
FEB

GINNINDERRY'S SUMMER PARTY IN THE PARK

Held at the Paddys Park, this event brought the community together for a day of fun, connection and engagement.

As Village continues to grow and evolve, these community interactions serve as a vital step in ensuring that every child in Belconnen has access to the resources, connections, and opportunities they need for a best start in life. Stay connected with us as we continue working towards a brighter future for every child in our community.

12
FEB

MEET & GREET GATHERING AT FLOREY PRIMARY SCHOOL

An opportunity for parents to connect with each other and the school, as well as learning more about external support services in the Belconnen area.

1
MAR

WEST BELCONNEN SPORTS FAIR

Encouraging active play and social connection through various sports activities.

15
MAR

YERRABI'S YUMA DAY

A celebration of community spirit, culture, and collaboration at Yerrabi Yurwang



Village at the Early Years Forum

Village was honored to be invited to present at the first 2025 meeting of the Early Years Working Group - a cross-government group focused on improving outcomes for children and families in the ACT. The working group includes representatives from Community Services Directorate, ACT Health, Canberra Health Services, Education Directorate, and Transport Canberra and City Services, making this an incredible opportunity to showcase Village's work and its impact in Belconnen.

Being invited to speak at this forum is a testament to the work Village and collaborative partners have accomplished together and the ongoing commitment to this work. It highlights the growing recognition of our role in strengthening early childhood support systems. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with government agencies and community partners to ensure every child in Belconnen has the best possible start in life.

Key Highlights from the Presentation:

Our Collective Impact Approach

How Village brings together families, services, and community organisations to create lasting change.

Strategic Alignment

The ways in which Village's work supports key government strategies, including the Best Start Strategy and Set Up for Success.

Focus Areas

An overview of the three key areas guiding Village's work: Play, Connections, and Outreach

Imagination Library Kippax Pilot

The success of our book gifting program, which has delivered over 2,400 books to 125 families.

ADHD Action Group & Early Years Community of Practice

How these initiatives are supporting families and professionals in the early years space.

Next Steps: Guiding Village for the Next Four Years

Village is working on the Next Steps 2024-2028 document—a roadmap for the next four years that will guide our work in creating stronger support networks for children and families in Belconnen. This document outlines our strategic direction, priorities, and commitments to collaboration and collective impact.

Some of the key highlights:

Vision & Purpose

Ensuring all children in Belconnen thrive - physically healthy, emotionally resilient, socially connected and fully prepared for lifelong learning and growth.

The Next Steps document is currently under review by the Village Leadership Group. Once approved, it will serve as the foundation for all Village initiatives moving forward.

Collective Impact Approach

Strengthening collaboration between families, community services, and government agencies to drive meaningful change.

Strategic Priorities

Focus on Play, Connections, and Outreach as key areas to support early childhood development and community engagement.

Governance & Structure

Defining the roles of the Leadership Group, Working Groups, and backbone team to ensure effective implementation.

Next Steps & Milestones

Establishing clear goals, actions, and evaluation measures to track progress and impact.



Imagination Library Kippax Pilot Expands to More Families in Belconnen

Village is excited to announce the expansion of the Imagination Library Kippax Pilot to include two additional suburbs - Charnwood and Dunlop. This means even more children in Belconnen will now have access to free books delivered to their homes each month, inspiring a love for reading from an early age.

Growing the reach of early literacy since its inception, the Imagination Library Kippax Pilot has provided books to families in Holt, MacGregor, Higgins, and Latham, supporting early literacy development and school readiness. Thanks to a generous \$5,400 funding boost from Canberra Mothercraft, we are now able to extend this program to children in Charnwood and Dunlop.

Canberra Mothercraft previously donated \$5,400 to sponsor 25 children for two years and is supporting this cause once again. We extend our heartfelt thanks for their continued commitment to early literacy.

Why Early Literacy Matters?

Reading from a young age builds essential language skills, strengthens parent-child bonds, and lays the foundation for lifelong learning. By ensuring families have access to books at home, we are helping children develop key literacy skills before they start school, setting them up for future success.

As at March 2025, we have donated over 2,400 books to 155 children in 125 families. This milestone reflects our dedication to ensuring every child in Belconnen has access to the joy of books.

Families with children aged 0-3 in the eligible suburbs are encouraged to sign up for the program and receive a free book each month. This is an opportunity to bring the joy of reading into homes and give children the best possible start in life.

Sign up today. Email us at village@kippax.org.au to enroll your child and start receiving free books. Let's continue working together to inspire a love for reading in our community.

Strengthening support systems for children in Belconnen

ADHD Action Group

The Action Group wish to expand to include more organisations and individuals with lived experience. This will help ensure informed, community-driven decisions that improve ADHD support for families. Discussions are also underway to revise meeting frequency and explore flexible participation options to maximise engagement and impact.

Early Years Community of Practice

Following the feedback from the end-of-year survey on the need for a cross-sector CoP, the group is revamping to better align with the community needs. We are expanding membership to include network coordinators and service providers, ensuring the CoP fills existing service gaps and builds stronger collaboration.



Focus Area One



Advancing Childhood Development in Belconnen

At Village, we know that Play is essential for a child's early development. Play fosters creativity, social skills, and cognitive growth, forming the foundation for lifelong learning. Our Play Working Group brings together key organisations to champion the importance of Play and develop collaborative initiatives that benefit children and families in Belconnen.

Our Play Working Group has been actively discussing ways to enhance play opportunities in the community. Key initiatives include:

National Families Week 2025

Plans are underway to celebrate this event with a family-friendly play experience coinciding with UnitingCare Kippax's Market Place. This will provide families with a chance to connect through fun and engaging activities.

Early Learning Matters Week 2025

This year's theme, 'Play Matters,' reinforces our commitment to highlighting the role of play in early childhood. We are exploring the possibility of hosting a forum for educators in collaboration with the ACT Education Directorate.

As our Play Working Group continues to grow, we are excited about the opportunities ahead to enhance play experiences for children in Belconnen.

Each of our Play Working Group members brings a unique perspective and expertise to support children's play experiences:

ACT Education Directorate (Early Childhood Projects)

Ensuring play-based learning is integrated into early education settings, promoting quality early learning experiences for children.

ACT Playgroups

Providing safe and inclusive playgroups for families to connect, share experiences, and support their children's development through play

Abilities Unlimited Australia

Advocating for accessible and adaptive play opportunities for children of all abilities, ensuring inclusivity in play environments.

Capital Region Community Services (CRCS)

Offering diverse play-based programs and initiatives that promote social inclusion and community engagement.

Cerebral Palsy Alliance

Supporting children with disabilities through play-based therapy and tailored activities that enhance mobility, socialisation, and engagement.

Ginninderry

Designing community spaces that encourage outdoor and nature-based play, fostering creativity and exploration in children.

Kippax Kids

Promoting intergenerational play, bridging the gap between generations and creating stronger connections through shared play experiences.

Tiny Teach

Bringing play-based learning into homes and communities by empowering parents and caregivers with creative and educational play ideas.



Focus Area Two



Outreach

Building Community Connections

At Village, Outreach is dedicated to increasing access to vital resources and support services for families in Belconnen. By fostering meaningful connections between families, schools, and community organisations, we aim to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Our Outreach Working Group has been actively exploring initiatives to increase community engagement and enhance accessibility to essential services. Key discussions and potential projects include:

Schools as Community Hubs

Establishing schools as central support points where families can access information, services, and programs in a familiar and welcoming environment.

Home Interactive Programs

Developing initiatives that empower families to engage in learning and development activities at home, strengthening early childhood experiences and parental support networks.

Our Outreach Working Group is proud to collaborate with key organisations that share the commitment to breaking down barriers and ensuring that every family in Belconnen has access to the resources and connections they need.

Florey Primary School

Creating a strong school community where families feel supported, nurturing engagement in early learning and student development.

Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) Belconnen

Providing home-based learning programs that equip parents with the skills and confidence to support their child's early education journey.

KidSafe ACT

Advocating for child safety by delivering programs and resources that help families create safer home and play environments.

Kingsford Smith School

Reinforcing the role of schools as community hubs by providing families with access to education and support services.

Libraries ACT

Enhancing literacy and learning opportunities through accessible library programs and resources tailored for children and their families.

MyTime

Offering support for parents and carers of children with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or developmental delays, providing a space to connect and share experiences.

Strathnairn School

A new ACT public school being built with a strong emphasis on community engagement and supporting families in the Belconnen region.

The Smith Family

Supporting children's education through targeted programs that break the cycle of disadvantage and ensure every child has access to learning opportunities.

Woden Community Services

Delivering diverse family support initiatives, including parenting programs and early intervention services that promote well-being and resilience.

YWCA Canberra

Empowering women, children, and families through programs that promote education, leadership, and community engagement.



Focus Area Three



Connections



Developing Connections Through Workshops

Connections focus area is evolving to better support families with children aged 0–5. Instead of a Working Group, Connections is running a series of workshops to strengthen relationships – between families, between families and services, and between services themselves. These Workshops create space for real conversations, allowing families and services to share experiences, learn from each other, and build stronger support networks.

Upcoming Workshop

04 APR | Supporting Your Child's Transition to Preschool

1000 – 1200 HRS

UnitingCare Kippax, Cnr of Hardwick Cres & Luke St. Holt, ACT 2615

Are you preparing your little one for preschool? Join our next workshop to learn more about your role as a parent or carer in supporting your child's transition to preschool.

Presenters

The Preschool Pathways Partners, a team of four teachers who work as pedagogical coaches supporting educators in government preschools and in early childhood education and care services.

What to expect?

- ✓ Practical strategies
- ✓ Information about play-based learning and its benefits
- ✓ Some fun myth-busting around preschool misconceptions
- ✓ Access to helpful resources & info packs (for in-person attendees)
- ✓ Enjoy refreshments & a relaxed chat with our presenters

Register here

<https://tinyurl.com/transitiontopreschool>

Register over phone @ 02 6254 1733 or email village@kippax.org.au

Past Workshop

18 FEB | Supporting Your Child's Transition to School

This was the first in a series of workshops under our Connections Focus Area, designed to strengthen support networks for families and equip them with practical knowledge.

The session was attended by 10 families, all eager to learn how to best support their child's transition to school. The presenters were Warrick Eppelstun, HIPPY-Belconnen Coordinator, UnitingCare Kippax and Maureen Howe, Community Coordinator, Florey Primary School.

Thank you to our presenters and all the families who joined us. [Read more here...](#)

18 MAR | Parenting with Confidence: Safety & First Aid for Kids

Our Parenting with Confidence workshop was a huge success, with over 56 registrations. On the day, we had 22 parents (8 children) attend in-person, and 10 parents joined online.

Our presenters, Natalie Hood from Kidsafe ACT and Lucas Hayden from Royal Life Saving Society ACT, shared practical knowledge and answered many parent questions. It was a highly engaging session, with lots of interest in making homes, travel, and play areas safer for children.

Attendees received helpful information packs and had the chance to connect over refreshments after the session. Thank you to everyone who joined us.

[Read more here...](#)



Village Resources



Child Development Resource Pack

A community centered, collaboratively designed child development resources for families and services. These resources were developed in response to a need identified by the community through our extensive engagement across the early years sector.

<https://belconnenvillage.com.au/child-development-resources/>

[Click here to download](#)



School Transitions Resource Pack

The Transitions Campaign provides information about the public-school enrolment process, priority enrolment areas, local public schools and resources on preschool pathways, transitions, Koori preschool, supports for parents, disability information, financial and resource assistance and learning supports.

<https://belconnenvillage.com.au/transitions-campaign/>

[Click here to download](#)



Early Years Resource Pack

This pack contains resources produced by Village and partner organisations including the Education Directorate and Community Services Directorate, Australian Early Development Census team. The resources aim to support children and families before formal schooling in areas of child development and transitioning to school. They have been collated for Early Childhood Education and Care Services.

<https://belconnenvillage.com.au/early-years-resources/>

[Click here to download](#)



Our Partners

Acknowledgement of country

A Village for Every Child would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we live and work, the Ngunnawal people. We pay our respects and celebrate their ongoing cultural traditions and contributions to this region. We also acknowledge elders, past and present, as well as the children because they are our future.

Village is proud to have partnered with Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation to deliver the Commonwealth Government's Connected Beginnings Program 2022–2023. We deeply value the opportunity to work closely with Yerrabi Yurwang to support the self-determination of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. We look forward to continuing our partnership.

Acknowledgement of participating organisations

The collective achievements of Village would not have been possible without the continued commitment and in-kind contributions from all the people and organisations, including our funders who are proud to have been part of creating the conditions for children to thrive in Belconnen.



Canberra Health Services



ACT Health

