

Neighbour Day 2020 independent evaluation shows importance of annual campaign

Relationships Australia's campaign, [Neighbour Day 2020, has been independently evaluated by the Australian National University](#), and has been shown to have had a direct effect on improving social capital and inclusion in neighbourhoods during the height of the COVID-19 nationwide lockdown. The report also shows that participants felt that their involvement with Neighbour Day 2020 improved their physical health and mental health.

"Neighbour Day 2020 fell amidst the backdrop of COVID-19 restrictions, which has provided us with a unique insight into the effect of these restrictions on Australians relationships' with their neighbours, as well as outcomes at an individual level", said Mr Nick Tebbey, National Executive Officer of Relationships Australia.

Findings illustrate that those involved in Neighbour Day 2020 reported strong identification with their neighbours, which, in turn, led to better mental wellbeing, reduced loneliness and greater neighbourhood support. Those who made contact with their neighbours were less likely to identify as lonely and more likely to report high levels of mental wellbeing.

The report has found that compared to last year's responses, this year's participation was significantly less about having fun and meeting new people, and showed an increase in the desire to show support for others and connect with the more vulnerable members of community. Participants in 2020 were more likely to endorse the potential benefits both for individual and community wellbeing. There was also an increase in participants citing improved individual mental health, and a desire to engage with Neighbour Day 2020 because of their need to feel safe and supported.

"This evaluation highlights that being involved in Neighbour Day 2020 has led to greater neighbourhood satisfaction. In particular, people said that their involvement in Neighbour Day 2020 helped them create stronger communities", said Mr Tebbey.

The report illustrates that new connections formed during Neighbour Day 2020 will help foster stronger relationships among neighbours well beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

"At the conclusion of the Neighbour Day 2020, 91% of respondents said they planned to have ongoing contact with their neighbours", said Mr Tebbey. The Neighbour Day campaign supports people to do this through a selection of resources, including COVID-safe ideas for maintaining neighbourly connections.

"A significant feature of Neighbour Day 2020 was the shift towards virtual and other forms of connection in lieu of traditional face-to-face contact. We have been inspired by the resilience and creativity of the Australian community, and celebrate the important role this has played in maintaining social connection and support through what has been a difficult and uncertain time" said Mr Tebbey.

Given these exciting results, Relationships Australia will continue to promote the importance of social connection throughout the year, and today is launching a nationwide video competition to capture the collective wisdom of the nation to inspire social connection and to increase awareness of the importance of taking creative steps in an effort to reduce loneliness and increase community well-being. For more information on the video competition, which runs from 1 to 28 October 2020, and to enter, visit www.neighbourday.org.

[Relationships Australia](#) is the home of [Neighbour Day](#), and believes that healthy and safe relationships are a crucial foundation for the well-being of all Australians. We offer a range of mental health, counselling and dispute resolution services to individuals and families across more than 100 sites nationally.

Media contact: Kathleen Caller M: 0416106612 E: kcaller@relationships.org.au

Release date: Thursday, 1 October, 2020