



BELONG BLUE MOUNTAINS INC | KATOOMBA NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE (MAIN OFFICE)
a. PO Box 197 • 6 - 10 Station St, Katoomba NSW 2780
t. 02 4782 1117 abn. 59 334 227 797
www.belongbm.org.au

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Neighbourhood Centre welcomes everyone in.

To celebrate National Neighbourhood Centre Week, the Belong Blue Mountains Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre in Blaxland held a community open day on Wednesday welcoming everyone in to connect with each other, enjoy a free sausage sizzle and children's activities, and to meet all of the staff and volunteers who serve the community through the Neighbourhood Centre.

Mick Barrett, the Director of Communities at Belong Blue Mountains said, "We've been renovating the Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre and this was a great opportunity to welcome people in to connect with the new space and connect with each other. Neighbourhood Centres play such an important role as a hub for community activity and support. We hope to see more and more people connecting again through the Centre as we come out of COVID."

The theme for Neighbourhood Centre Week is 'Loneliness: the solution is community'. A global study spearheaded by an Australian loneliness expert Dr Michelle Lim of Swinburne University in Melbourne, revealed that knowing just six neighbours reduces the likelihood of feeling alone and is directly linked to reducing stresses incurred by the coronavirus pandemic.

"We know that one of the most effective ways to reduce loneliness is to find ways for people to connect with their community" said Kath Harrison, CEO Belong Blue Mountains. "This has always been at the heart of what we do at our Neighbourhood Centres. Neighbourhood Centres are not just for people in need of support in a crisis. Neighbourhood Centres are for everyone, in good times as well as the bad."

For Belong Blue Mountains, Neighbourhood Centre Week is also a time to reflect and pay tribute to all of the community workers and volunteers who work tirelessly across the local community service network to make a difference to the lives of people living across the Blue Mountains. "We have a strong and dedicated network in the community sector across the Blue Mountains" Kath Harrison said. "We honour and thank all the community workers and volunteers involved for their hard work and generosity of spirit."

If you would like to find out more about what goes on at your local Neighbourhood Centre, please get in touch with the Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre on 02 4739 1164 or visit www.belongbm.org.au For 24-hour crisis support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14, or 000 in an emergency.

For further media enquires please contact Belong Blue Mountains Director of Corporate & Quality, Peta Williams on 0403 845 330 or email pwilliams@belongbm.org.au



From Left to Right: Peta Williams (Belong BM Director), Trish Doyle MP, Kath Harrison (CEO Belong BM), Warwick Fuller (Belong BM Board Member), Aunty Carol Cooper, Mick Barrett (Belong BM Director), and Barbara Cuthbert (Belong BM Director), at the Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre Open Day.