

Media Release



North West Community Services Celebrates National Neighbourhood Centre Week “Your Place to Connect”

11 May 2026

North West Community Services is proud to join neighbourhood centres across Australia in celebrating National Neighbourhood Centre Week (11–17 May), recognising the essential role neighbourhood centres play in strengthening, supporting and connecting local communities.

Aligned with the 2025 theme “Your Place to Connect,” North West Community Services continues its commitment to building trust, strong relationships and community capacity across the North West Growth Area. Through inclusive, meaningful activities and by amplifying local voices, the organisation responds to emerging needs and fosters a strong sense of belonging.

Neighbourhood centres are far more than places to meet — they are vital community hubs. They reduce social isolation, respond to local challenges, and create opportunities for people to connect, learn and thrive.

Research highlights the significant contribution of neighbourhood and community centres as part of Australia’s social infrastructure, delivering strong social and economic returns and contributing more than \$3 billion annually to the national economy through grassroots, community-led services.

This impact is reflected locally, with North West Community Services offering more than 36,000 occasions of connection over the past year, supporting individuals, families and communities through programs, services and welcoming spaces.

“Whether it’s food relief, disaster support, skills training, mental health and wellbeing programs, aged and disability services, family and youth activities, supporting people through tough times, free events, or simply a welcoming space to connect — neighbourhood centres are helping to build the fabric of our communities,” said Angela Van Dyke, CEO of North West Community Services.

Throughout the week, North West Community Services will be highlighting a range of initiatives supporting vulnerable community members. This includes its emergency assistance and food relief service, which provides vital support to people in need across the region. The service is made possible through the generosity of local businesses, residents, community groups and volunteers who donate essential food and hygiene items and assist in preparing and distributing hampers.

North West Community Services would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank Blacktown Lions Club and Riverstone Baptist Church for their ongoing and significant support over many years.

“Following Jesus calls us to love our neighbours in practical ways. That’s why we’ve partnered with North West Community Services — because they are already serving the Riverstone community with care and excellence. Rather than duplicate their efforts, we’re grateful to support their work, trusting that through this partnership people in need will experience both tangible help and genuine compassion,” said David Sherwood, Riverstone Baptist Church.

Collaboration with local organisations such as Riverstone Baptist Church and Blacktown Lions Club demonstrates the power of strong partnerships in addressing service gaps and meeting community needs at a grassroots level, particularly when public funding is lacking.

A Community Hub for the North West

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“Building a Stronger Community Together”

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North West Community Services delivers a wide range of programs and activities, including:

- Aged care
- Disability services
- Child and family support
- Youth services
- Education, training and employment programs
- Gambling support
- Outreach and disaster support
- Health and wellness activities
- Counselling for children, young people and adults
- Case work
- Volunteer programs

The organisation also provides welcoming spaces for the community, including halls, offices for essential services such as health, domestic violence and legal support, a youth hall, community garden and men’s shed. Its mobile resilience outreach van, “Café Belong,” connects new neighbourhoods through training, employment opportunities, volunteering and social activities.

“We know that locally connected communities build strong relationships and trust — and that trust builds resilience.” said Ms Van Dyke.

North West Community Services remains committed to fostering belonging, meaningful participation and responsive community support — truly building a stronger community together.

National Neighbourhood Centre Week runs from 11–17 May, with more than 1,000 neighbourhood centres nationwide taking part. Community members are encouraged to connect with their local neighbourhood centre and discover Your Place to Connect.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

CENTRE WEEK

11-17 MAY 2026

your place to 
connect

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