



**in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic**

**Special Report 2020**



**Australian  
National  
University**

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## 1.2 Acknowledgements

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We are grateful for the generous participation of over 400 Neighbour Day survey respondents across two time-points.

## 1.3 Report Date

10 August 2020

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## 2 Executive Summary

An evaluation of the Neighbour Day Campaign 2020 (NDC 2020) was conducted in collaboration between Relationships Australia and researchers at the Australian National University. A two time-point quantitative study of Neighbour Day participants was conducted. Surveys were administered pre-event (200+ respondents) and post-event (200+ respondents), with 97 respondents providing complete data at both time-points).

Unlike previous years, this year, the culmination of **NDC 2020, Neighbour Day itself, occurred during a global pandemic (29 March 2020)**. At the time of writing in early August, the novel coronavirus had infected almost 20 million people worldwide and over 730,000 people had died. Australia reported its first case of COVID-19 in late January 2020, and case numbers accelerated to an initial peak in mid-late March. The Australian government's response to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus involved unprecedented international and state border controls and escalating restrictions on social gatherings. By late March, and coinciding with Neighbour Day, all Australians were encouraged to stay home unless it was absolutely necessary to go out.

It was under these exceptional circumstances that this longitudinal evaluation of NDC 2020 was conducted. The first time-point took place in early March, before most Australians had modified their normal behaviour and expected the Neighbour Day Campaign to run as normal. The second time-point took place throughout April, a month marked by growing optimism that Australia was "flattening the curve". However, many people were experiencing significant financial hardship and personal uncertainty due to the restrictions and the looming global recession.

**Findings** revealed that from early March – April 2020, respondents reported:

1. A decreased sense of mental wellbeing
2. An increased sense of loneliness; and yet
3. An increased sense of neighbourhood satisfaction.

In April, during lockdown restrictions, we found that:

4. Greater neighbourhood identification was associated with better mental wellbeing.
5. This occurred in part due to greater perceived access to neighbours' support and reduced loneliness.
6. Multiple groups identification was positively associated with mental wellbeing.
7. This occurred in part due to greater perceived access to support from family & friends and reduced loneliness.

We also found that especially during this period of crisis, survey respondents saw the importance of connecting with neighbours for the benefit of their community, and individual, wellbeing. Respondents described using a myriad of **creative ways to connect through virtual or not-in-person means** that complied with official guidance on social

gathering restrictions. Compared to 2019, people reported that getting involved in Neighbour Day was less about having fun and meeting new people, and more about reaching out to support neighbours in the pandemic situation as well as perceived benefits for one's own wellbeing.

There are three key **recommendations** from this report:

1. **Continue to promote the importance of social connection with neighbours throughout the year.** Despite the personal burdens and sacrifices of unprecedented lockdown measures, there was evidence from respondents of their solidarity with their local community. Ongoing NDC promotion throughout the year would be ideal during these uncertain times to support sustained community connection.
2. **Continue to promote creative ways to connect with neighbours until the end of the pandemic.** Continual promotion of creative and safe ways to connect with and support others will have benefits for both community and individual wellbeing.
3. **Increase awareness of the importance of connecting with multiple groups.** Increase awareness of the importance of group-based connection for mental wellbeing. Positive sources of group connection include, but are not limited to, neighbourhood groups.

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### 3 Introduction

#### 3.1 Preamble

**“This is a question of solidarity.** This cannot be solved by WHO alone, or one industry alone. It requires all of us working together to ensure all countries can protect the people who protect the rest of us.” *Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, media briefing, 3rd March, 2020.*

“(O)ur goal is to get through this together and by following common sense rules, and doing the right thing, that's how we slow the spread of this virus and **that's how we save lives.**” *Prime Minister Scott Morrison, statement on new national restrictions, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.*

**“We are all in this together.** The virus threatens everyone.” *António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, 23th April, 2020.*

#### 3.2 Inception

Neighbour Day was founded in Melbourne, Australia in March 2003 by Andrew Heslop after the remains of an elderly woman were found inside her suburban home. It was the widespread local and national media interest and coverage following the discovery of Mrs Elsie Brown that prompted Mr Heslop to suggest a ‘National Check on Your Neighbour Day’ in a letter to the editor of The Melbourne Age in 2003. Mr Heslop managed Neighbour Day with his own and in-kind resources until he handed over responsibility for Neighbour Day to Relationships Australia on 1 January 2014; he continues as Founder and Ambassador for Neighbour Day.

#### 3.3 Relationships Australia

Relationships Australia <http://www.relationships.org.au> is a leading provider of relationship support services for children, adults, couples, families and communities. It is an Australian, community-based, not-for-profit organisation with no religious affiliations. Services are for all members of the community, regardless of religious belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle choice, cultural background or economic circumstances.

Services around the country include counselling, family dispute resolution and mediation, family violence services, mental health services, and a range of family and community support and education programs. Relationships Australia is a federation of service providers in each Australian state and territory, with their national office based in Canberra.

Relationships Australia utilises Neighbour Day as a community development tool to positively influence individual and community wellbeing. It operates as the backbone support organisation within a collective impact style framework (Kanier & Kramer, 2011).

Successful collective impact initiatives typically have five conditions: (a) a common agenda; (b) shared measurement systems; (c) mutually reinforcing activities; (d) continuous communication; and (e) backbone support organisations (Kanier & Kramer, 2011:36-41).

Whilst Neighbour Day is not a formalised collective impact program, these conditions serve as a useful framework in guiding Relationships Australia to collaborate with others to achieve its social impact objectives.

As a key and practical demonstration of its organisational values in action, Neighbour Day as a public awareness campaign provides Relationships Australia with the ongoing opportunity to highlight the importance of healthy relationships for all aspects of life and community. In particular, it highlights the impact of healthy relationships on mental health and the benefits of healthy relationships to Australia as a whole.

### 3.4 Neighbour Day Campaign

Neighbour Day is a year-round grass roots community development campaign that aims to increase individual and community social connections, foster healthy relationships, reduce loneliness and promote social inclusion. The culmination of the Neighbour Day Campaign is celebrated on the last Sunday in March every year, with the aim of fostering strong personal connections that last year-round. People are encouraged to connect with their neighbours and the members of their local communities.

The Campaign relies on three key elements. These are:

- a stakeholder management framework;
- tools and materials to support Neighbour Day events and platforms; and
- a communication campaign.

Stakeholder relationships are central in building the reach of the Campaign with both formal and informal relationships forged and maintained with suitably aligned organisations and individuals, internal and external to Relationships Australia. The stakeholders provide grassroots networks, which the Campaign utilises year-round to extend its national footprint.

These relationships are prioritised and maintained to increase the awareness of Relationships Australia and Neighbour Day, and the links between them, and to facilitate community engagement where messages about healthy relationships and mental health are spread widely in an informative, celebratory, and accessible way.



The Campaign's external stakeholder framework includes Neighbour Day Ambassadors, Very Neighbourly Organisations (VNOs), local champions, businesses, government and community organisations. In turn, the stakeholders utilise Neighbour Day as a mechanism to catalyse action within their communities of interest.

### 3.5 Background: Neighbourly actions in a pandemic

A significant body of scientific evidence suggests that Neighbour Day may support individual and community wellbeing. People who have neighbours they can count on, and whom they trust, tend to report better health outcomes and personal safety (Stafford, De Silva, Stansfeld, & Marmot, 2008; Ziersch, Baum, Macdougall, & Putland, 2005). There are also benefits to neighbourly connection that extend not only to individuals, but also to whole communities. For instance, neighbourhood social cohesion is associated with a cleaner neighbourhood environment (e.g., presence of litter) and reduced crime (e.g., property damage; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997).

Recently, researchers have argued that the benefits of neighbourhood connection are best understood as part of a broader evidence base that has demonstrated the role of social identities (the sense of self-definition that we derive from social groups) in protecting our health (for a review, see Haslam et al., 2018). A person can incorporate their neighbourhood as an important part of their identity (e.g., "we Curtin residents"; "we Melburnians"). Two recent Australian studies found that neighbourhood identification attenuates the deleterious effects of low neighbourhood socioeconomic disadvantage on mental wellbeing (Fong, Cruwys, Haslam, & Haslam, 2019a; 2019b). This accords with international evidence that neighbourhood identification is protective of mental wellbeing in the general population (McIntyre, Wickham, Barr, & Bentall, 2017).

In 2019, ANU and Relationships Australia evaluated Neighbour Day and found that taking action was associated with an increased sense of neighbourhood identification. This, in turn, led to increased social cohesion, decreased loneliness and improved wellbeing. More than six months after Neighbour Day, respondents were follow-up and these benefits were found to be sustained over time (Cruwys, Fong, Robinson, & Mance, 2019).

The 2020 Neighbour Day Campaign occurred in the context of unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances of a global pandemic. Australia had, at the time of writing, been one of the more fortunate countries relatively less affected by the novel coronavirus in the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 10 August 2020, Australia had 21,084 confirmed cases and 295 deaths ([www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)). Together with closing its international borders to non-residents and non-citizens, mandatory 14-day quarantine for returning Australians, extensive testing, and contact tracing, Australian authorities implemented a progressive series of physical distancing and lockdown measures beginning in March 2020 to control the spread of the virus.

Are neighbourly actions important in the context of this kind of crisis? Extensive research has shown that **under emergency and disaster situations, it is often the case that**

**people experience an emergent common identity.** People, even strangers, can bond through shared adversity and show solidarity through a sense of shared fate (Drury, Cocking, Beale, Hanson, & Rapley, 2005; Drury, Brown, González, & Miranda, 2016; Jetten, Reicher, Haslam, & Cruwys, 2020). This emergent sense of a shared identity acts as a *resource* that leads to all kinds of other positive outcomes: cooperation with authorities, helping, and resilience.

Research provides consistent evidence that **feeling connected with multiple groups, such as with friendship and/or family groups, is beneficial for wellbeing particularly when going through a stressful life change or situation** (Jetten et al., 2015; Steffens et al., 2016). Research also shows that **shared identity is the means to access social support** that is perceived as beneficial and shapes helping behaviour (Haslam, O'Brien, Jetten, Vormedal, & Penna, 2011; Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005). Moreover, social support is most effective when identification between recipient and social support provider is shared (Jetten, Haslam, Haslam, Dingle, & Jones, 2014). Therefore, people who identify strongly with multiple groups and their neighbourhood will be better protected in their mental wellbeing. This is particularly true in an emergency situation, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, because it provides the means to access support from people that matter.

**Crisis or emergency situations, such as a pandemic, can therefore have paradoxical effects on wellbeing.** On the one hand, a shared threat and the need for a collective response paves the way for people to feel a sense of solidarity, which is protective (Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009). At the same time, however, several aspects of the response to pandemic – such as restrictions on social gatherings, and the forced closure of businesses – are likely to have a negative effect on personal wellbeing. For example, one Australian study with 4000 people conducted by the CSIRO (Brindal, 2020) found that the COVID-19 lockdown has negative consequences on people's emotional wellbeing and health-related behaviours such as increased snacking and junk food consumption. Similarly, another large UK study (N=2,254) showed that while the majority of people were complying with official guidance to stay home, the toll of staying in lockdown resulted in higher levels of loneliness and alcohol consumption (Duffy, 2020). Most research on the psychological impact of COVID-19, however, lacks high quality data from the same participants prior to the pandemic. It is a considerable strength of our two time-point survey that we have this data.

### 3.6 The present evaluation

At the outset of this research program, we sought to build on the 2019 evaluation and investigate whether taking part in the Neighbour Day Campaign (NDC) enhanced participants' mental wellbeing, reduced loneliness, and increased satisfaction with neighbourhood from baseline. Given the extraordinary and developing circumstances, it gradually became clear in mid-March (to the researchers, Relationships Australia, and to Neighbour Day hosts) that many traditional Neighbour Day events would be unsafe or even in breach of new restrictions. In anticipation of these challenges for face-to-face

connection, Relationships Australia swiftly provided information about a range of helpful yet safe and responsible ways to connect with neighbours on its website, newsletter mail-list, updated COVID-19 safe resources and via social media channels in their promotion of NDC 2020. These resources emphasised that **social distancing does not mean social disconnection** (see Figure 1 for an example). The second survey was also revised to ensure that it was appropriate for this changing context (details described in the Method section below).

Given that a key goal of NDC is to connect people, with long-term goals of building neighbourhood social capital and social inclusion, our research goal remained to assess whether hosting a Neighbour Day event or taking action of any form (no matter how small or virtual), had benefits for (1) wellbeing; (2) loneliness; and (3) neighbourhood satisfaction. We anticipated that perceived social support would be particularly important for wellbeing during lockdown and physical distancing measures. Based on previous research (Haslam et al., 2011; Levine et al., 2005) we conducted two serial mediation models to test whether the benefits of neighbourhood identification for wellbeing occur via its effect on loneliness and perceived access to relevant social support. Specifically, these two models examine the pathways between (a) neighbourhood identification, support from neighbours, loneliness and mental wellbeing and (b) multiple groups identification, support from family and friends, loneliness and mental wellbeing.



Figure 1. Revised Neighbour Day messaging in the context the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 4 Evaluation methodology

### 4.1 Purpose

As in previous years, the aim of this report was to evaluate the impact of hosting or taking action during the Neighbour Day Campaign 2020 (**NDC 2020**) on a range of short, medium, and long-term outcomes. These outcomes are a subset loosely drawn from Relationships Australia's Program Logic Framework (see Appendix A).

The **short-term outcomes** are focused around Relationship Australia's goals of increasing knowledge and awareness of their organisation. Specifically: (a) to increase knowledge and awareness of Relationships Australia as the home of Neighbour Day; and (b) to increase knowledge and awareness of Neighbour Day and its relationships to individual, family and community wellbeing; and (c) increased support of Neighbour Day from individuals and organisations. Our measures were:

- Usefulness of promotional materials
- Top 3 promotional materials and resources
- Promoting awareness of Relationships Australia
- Respondents' affiliation (e.g., with a community organisation)

The **medium-term outcomes** are focused around Relationships Australia's goals to achieve behaviour change and long-term sustainability. Specifically: (a) to increase contact between neighbours and community participation; and (b) to increase capacity in hosting events. Our measures were:

- Estimated reach
- NDC 2020 by planned venues
- Private vs. public events
- NDC 2020 by action type
- Intended future contact with neighbours
- Benefits of participation

The **long-term outcomes** are focused around Relationships Australia's goals of building social capital and social inclusion in neighbourhoods. Specifically: (a) to increase social capital; and (b) to improve social inclusion; and (c) to ensure that the Campaign is sustainable. Given that many aspects of daily life have been impacted by COVID-19 such as the ability to attend social gatherings, the key goal of this external evaluation was to understand whether taking action was protective of wellbeing and enhanced perceptions of the neighbourhood. Our measures were:

- Sense of mental wellbeing
- Feelings of loneliness
- Perceptions of neighbourhood satisfaction
- Sense of neighbourhood identification

- Sense of multiple groups identification
- Support from neighbours
- Support from family and friends

To gauge the sustainability of the Campaign, we measured:

- NDC participation in previous years
- Intended future NDC participation

## 4.2 Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study (Protocol: 2019/132) was obtained through the Human Research Ethics Committee at the ANU.

## 4.3 Method

The pre- and post- event survey data was collected via the Relationships Australia website. Members of the public and event registrants accessed the survey either through the website or via a link sent to them by email from a 'friends of Neighbour Day' mailing list. Given that visitors to the website accessing Neighbour Day resources were likely to be planning events or taking action, they were invited to participate in the nationwide pre-event survey through pop-up links and a perma-link on the webpage's side bar. In the pre-event survey, respondents who were also interested in participating in the post-event survey were asked to provide their email address. Participation in both surveys was voluntary (for the timeline, see Figure 2).

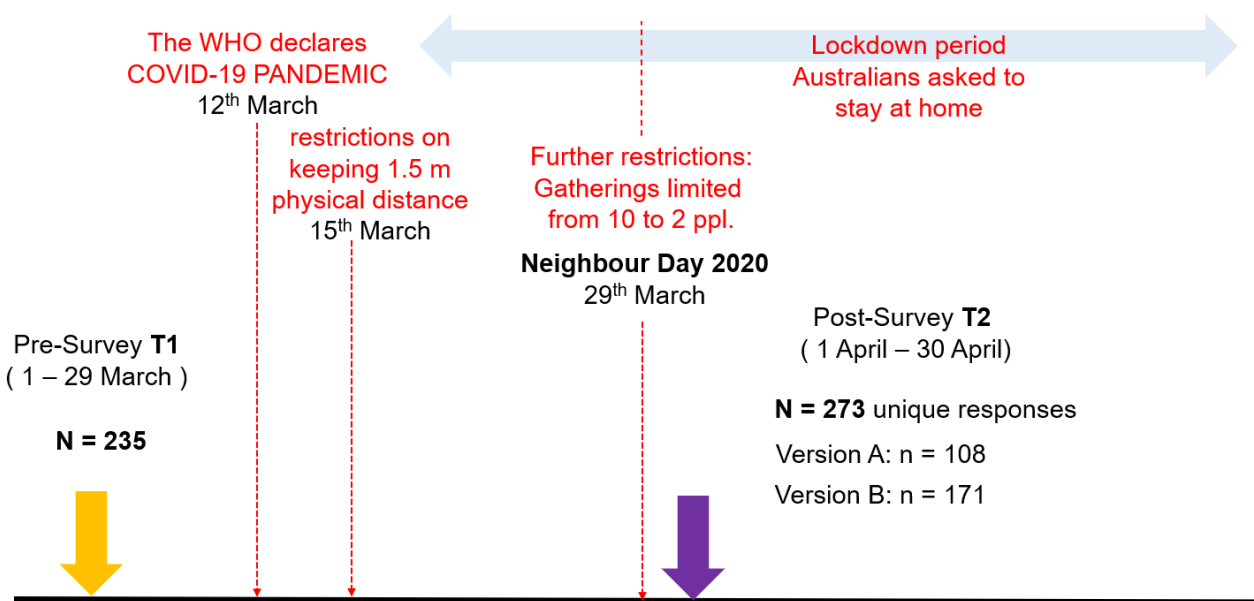


Figure 2. Timeline of NDC 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the rapidly evolving COVID-19 context after the launch of the pre-survey, this year two distinct versions of the post-survey were designed (Version A: *postponed or cancelled; could not take action* and Version B: *took action of some form*). This was to recognise that it would be difficult for many of our participants to host traditional Neighbour Day events pending further restrictive physical distancing guidelines limiting the number of people allowed to gather socially.

This year, 235 people responded at Time 1 (T1) and 273 unique responses were collected at Time 2 (T2) in the two post-event surveys.

#### 4.3.1 Pre- and Post- event surveys

The pre-event survey at T1 (Appendix B) was administered *before* hosts took action or organised an NDC 2020 event (1-28 March). 92.7% of respondents at T1 responded before March 12<sup>th</sup>, the day the WHO declared that COVID-19 was a pandemic, with 81.3% of the sample responding between March 2-3<sup>rd</sup>.

One week after Neighbour Day, which occurred on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 2020, all respondents who provided their contact details in the pre-event survey were sent an email with links to access the two post-event surveys (Appendix C: Version A and Appendix D: Version B). They were asked to fill in only one of the two versions. Respondents' email addresses were used to link their T1 and T2 survey responses. Only responses which could be reliably linked to their T1 survey response (n=97) were included for longitudinal analyses. Duplicate survey entries were excluded.

#### 4.3.2 Survey incentives

Participants went into a prize-draw to win one of two \$200 Bunnings vouchers. Winners were randomly chosen from all those who completed either the pre- or post- event survey. T1 responders were also invited to win one of 150 x \$30 shopping e-vouchers by being the first to complete a T2 survey.

### 4.4 Respondents characteristics (at T1)

#### 4.4.1 Respondents per state

Respondents at T1 described 235 separate Neighbour Day 2020 events being planned across 177 Australian suburbs. NDC 2020 event registrations came from all states and territories in Australia except the Northern Territory. Participation in Queensland (QLD) was relatively higher by population in comparison to New South Wales and Victoria, which are more populous states (see Figure 3a) and also had the highest COVID-19 case numbers in March 2020.

Several factors may contribute to this high level of NDC participation in QLD. A growing number of QLD councils are actively engaged in NDC, promoting it within their Local Government Areas (often with incentives to support participation) and have developed a direct relationship with the Campaign organisers. Additionally, Lendlease (communities) have been engaged with, and assisted by, the Campaign since 2014. The NDC was piloted in specific Lendlease communities in QLD (2015) and has more recently expanded

to include other Lendlease communities in other states. They offer local support and incentives to residents to encourage participation in Neighbour Day. A NDC workshop in Brisbane in late November 2019 with councils, NGOs, community groups, QLD Police and business may also have positively impacted participation in QLD.

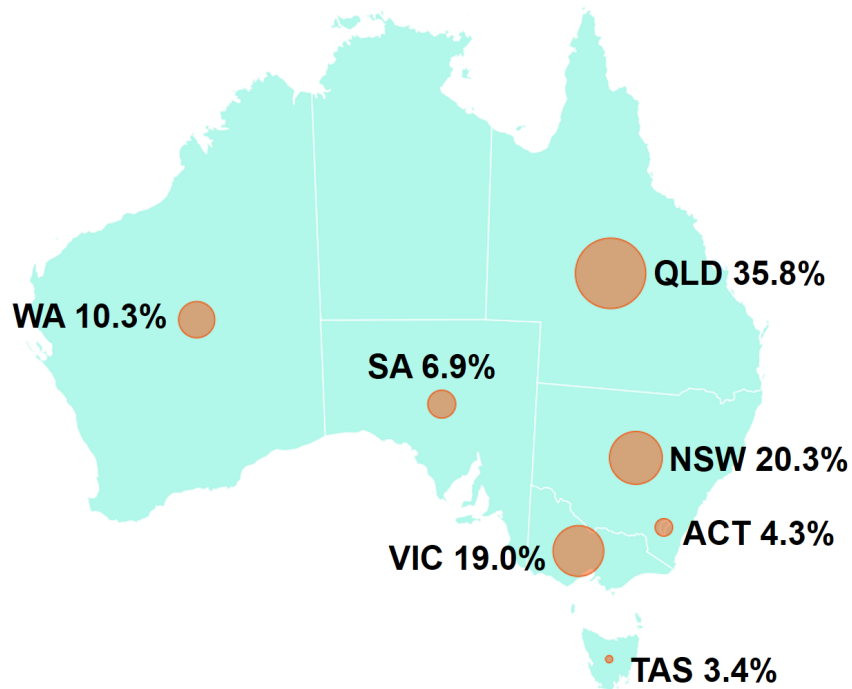


Figure 3a. Neighbour Day registration by State/Territory at pre-event (N = 235, in 177 suburbs).

Postcode data revealed that respondents of NDC 2020 came from all across Australia, but mostly in different postcodes to respondents in the NDC 2019 evaluation (see Figure 3b and 3c).



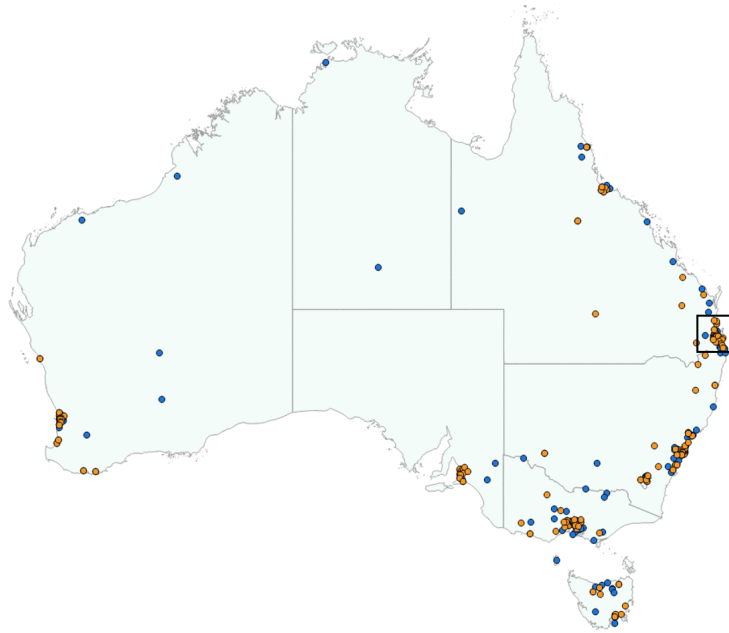


Figure 3b. NDC 2019 locations across Australia (blue dots); NDC 2020 locations (orange dots).

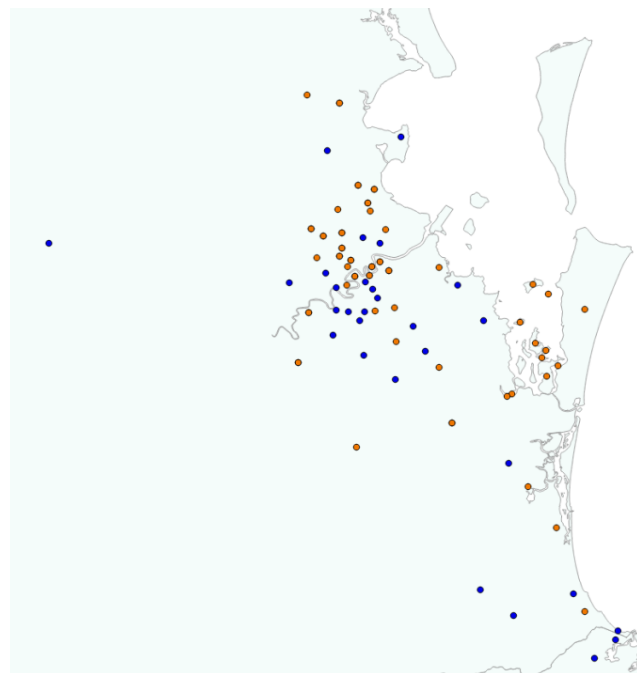


Figure 3c. Detail of map of South East Queensland, which was one of the most active Neighbour Day regions, showing that Neighbour Day events tended to be held in different suburbs to last year.

Note. NDC 2019 locations (blue dots); NDC 2020 locations (orange dots).

#### 4.4.2 Respondents socio-demographics

The average age of respondents (at T1) was 48.42 years; 78.9% were female. About half of all respondents were tertiary educated (54.1%). This suggests that tertiary educated people were overrepresented among hosts, as the national share of people who hold a bachelor's degree or above in 2017 is 27%. The majority of respondents were in full-time



employment (40.1%) and a further 31.3% were employed part-time. A large proportion of respondents identified “White or Caucasian” (83.5%) as their ethnic background. The majority of respondents (71.6%) lived in a two-parent household with child(ren) under 18 years old or were couples with no children at home. The majority of respondents lived in detached houses (73.5%), with 18.4% residing in townhouses and units/apartments. Two-thirds of respondents indicated they had lived for less than 10 years in their neighbourhoods, with 8.6% having lived there for less than one year.

#### 4.4.3 Socio-demographics compared to 2019

Overall, at T1 the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample were comparable to last year’s pre-event sample. Noteworthy in the 2020 sample was that older adults (70+) were somewhat more likely to participate than in 2019 (11.1% versus 4.7%;  $\chi^2(5)=10.99$ ,  $p=.052$ ). People who live alone were also more likely to participate than in 2019 (18.1% versus 10.3%;  $\chi^2(5)=180.88$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The overlap of these two groups was larger in 2020 and substantial: 44% of participants aged 70+ lived alone in the 2020 sample, compared with 14.3% in 2019.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Short-term outcomes

#### 5.1.1 Usefulness of promotional materials

Respondents (at T2) were asked to indicate the way(s) that they intended to promote their NDC 2020 event (see Figure 4). Of those who promoted an event, the most popular methods were through face-to-face interactions (24.9%), posting on Facebook (20.0%) and by invitation (15.6%). Other methods included radio announcements, newspaper advertising, promotion on digital screens at Council libraries and mobile phone SMS messages.

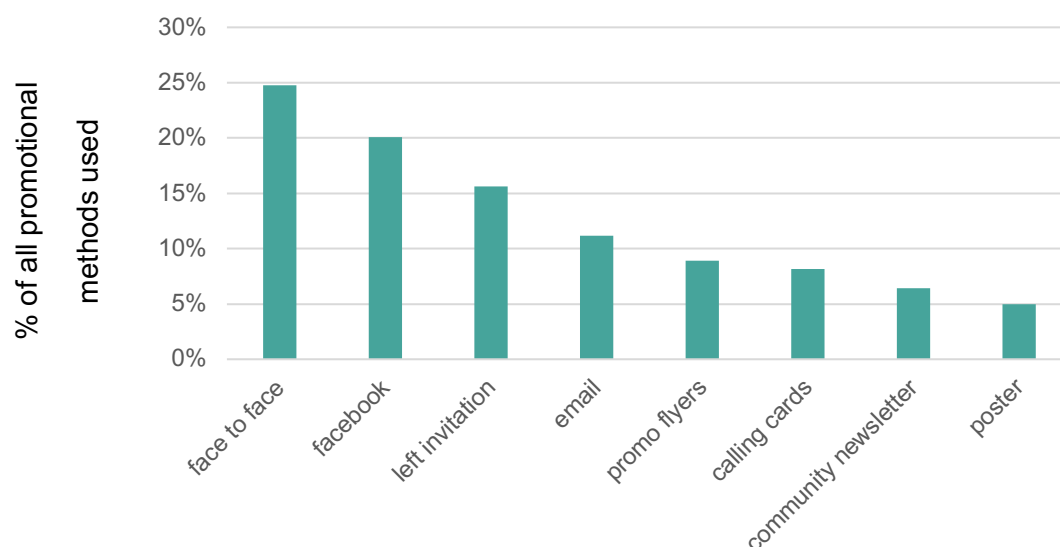


Figure 4. Promotional materials used (post-event).

### 5.1.2 Top 3 promotional methods and resources

Respondents (at T2) were asked to rank the top three most successful ways of promoting their NDC 2020 event (see Figure 5). The top three methods selected were face-to-face interactions, via Facebook and via a left invitation.

1	Face to Face
2	Facebook
3	Invitation
4	Cards
5	Email
6	Flyers
7	Newsletter
8	Poster

Figure 5. Rank order of most successful promotional materials used (post-event).

Respondents (at T2) were asked to rank the top three most useful online resources to help with planning their NDC 2020 event (Figure 6). The top three methods chosen were invitations, How to Neighbour Day, and calling cards.

1	Invitations
2	How to Neighbour Day
3	Calling cards
4	Social Media
5	Posters
6	Neighbour Day graphics
7	How to for hosts
8	Flyers
9	Selfie and event signs
10	How to for Councils
11	How to social media
12	Ecards
13	Name tags
14	Colouring in page
15	Media Template
16	Certificate of Recognition
17	How to for the workplace

Figure 6. Rank order of most useful online resources (post-event).

### 5.1.3 Promoting awareness of Relationships Australia

Similar to last year, the majority of participants (84.6%) indicated that they had 'some' or 'no knowledge' of Relationships Australia prior to their participation in Neighbour Day 2020. By comparison, a much smaller proportion (15.4%) indicated that they had a lot of

knowledge. This suggests that NDC 2020 promotional activities increased awareness of Relationships Australia among a majority of respondents.

#### 5.1.4 Respondents' affiliation

Similar to the 2019 figures, most respondents were acting as individuals (71.1%), with a small number acting as community groups (19.6%) such as local community centres.

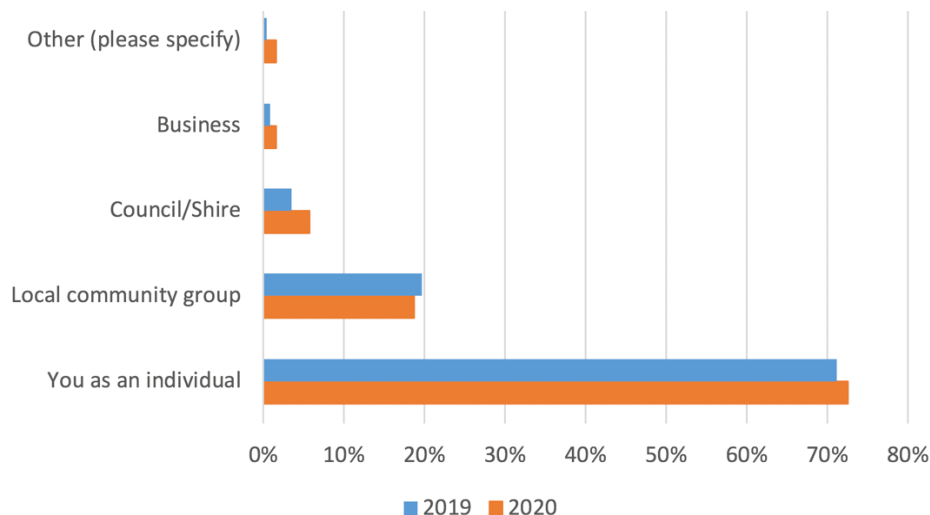


Figure 7. Respondents type (%) (post-event).

## 5.2 Medium-term outcomes

### 5.2.1 Estimated reach

The Neighbour Day Campaign is a community-led initiative, and as such it is difficult to accurately quantify the exact number of NDC 2020 events that were held and to infer the resulting total number of people who attended registered events. Despite (or perhaps because of) the unusual circumstances under which the NDC 2020 occurred, a greater level of engagement with the Neighbour Day website was observed than in previous years, including an increased number of unique downloads of resources. Indeed, based on this level of engagement, we can estimate that had NDC 2020 been able to proceed as planned, the expected participation numbers across Australia were likely to be approximately **324,000** people (see Appendix E for estimation method). This represents an **increase of 11.48%** from the reach of NDC 2019 of the number of people who would have attended, hosted or taken action in either registered and *non-registered* events in 2020.

Of those who reported that they did manage to take action of some form, the majority (81.7%) indicated that their reach tended to be on a smaller scale and between 1-20 people. These smaller events are likely due to the COVID-19 physical distancing and lockdown restrictions, resulting in the cancellation or postponement of the majority of planned events (e.g., BBQs and other food sharing activities, street parties) – see Section 5.2.3 for more details. A small percentage of respondents managed to reach a larger number of people by leaving connection cards, care packages or using social media (see Figure 8).

The majority (55.9%) indicated that the number of people they reached matched their expectations, and understandably 28.0% indicated that they reached fewer than expected. Only 10.2% reported that their reach was greater than anticipated.

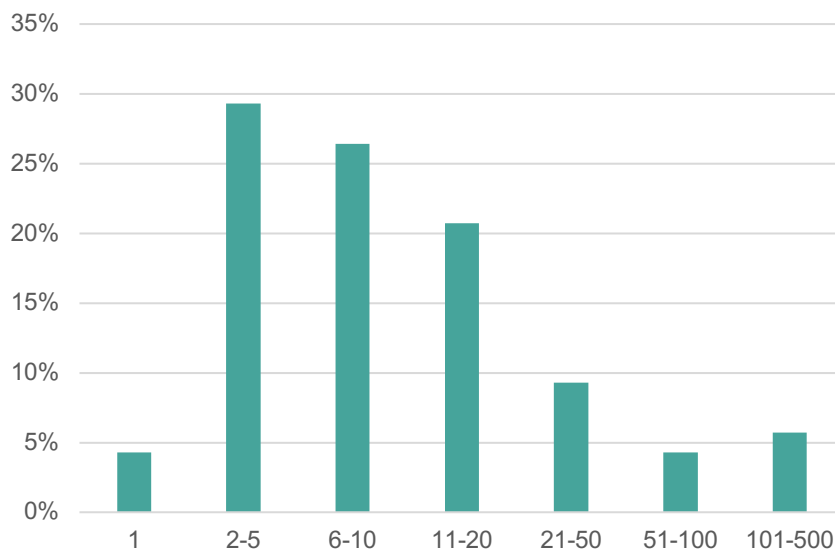


Figure 8. NDC 2020 action reach from 1 person to 101-500 people.

#### 5.2.2 NDC 2020 by venue

Similar to 2019, of those who managed to host an in-person event of some form (n=79), the majority (46.8%) were mainly held outdoors (at home out in the garden) or in a neighbourhood greenspace (31.6%). See Figure 9.

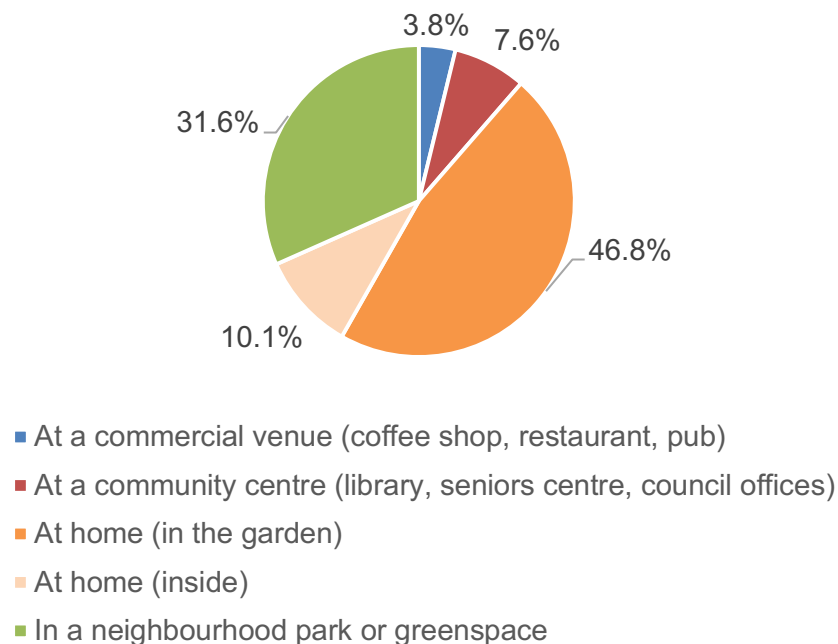


Figure 9. Venue of NDC 2020 events.

### 5.2.3 NDC 2020 by action type

In anticipation of government restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19, this year the category 'saying hello to a neighbour' was included in the survey as a new (in-person) form of taking action. Indeed, results showed that saying hello or a visit to neighbours were the most common forms of in-person actions taken during NDC 2020. Similarly, the survey response options in the virtual and not-in-person categories were also expanded this year. Apart from social media and left connection cards, new forms of actions included were: creating or maintaining a chat group, online meetings and running errands or doing a favour for a neighbour.

**In-person actions.** Unlike 2019, where BBQ or events around sharing food were the most common in-person actions, this year these did not go ahead (although they were planned at T1). Some participants, however, still managed to host an in-person gathering while observing physical distancing restrictions e.g., having over the fence get-togethers or sitting out in the driveway or taking turns to tend a community garden. Of those who planned a gathering event but had to postpone or cancel (N=107), 16% managed to take an alternative or 'creative' form of action using face to face, not-in-person, and virtual means in order to comply with social gathering restrictions.

**Not in-person and virtual actions.** Compared to last year, taking action via social media increased, while usage of left connections cards remained the same. Respondents also did favours for neighbours, held online gatherings and created chat groups. See Appendix F for a full list of creative forms of action taken during NDC 2020.

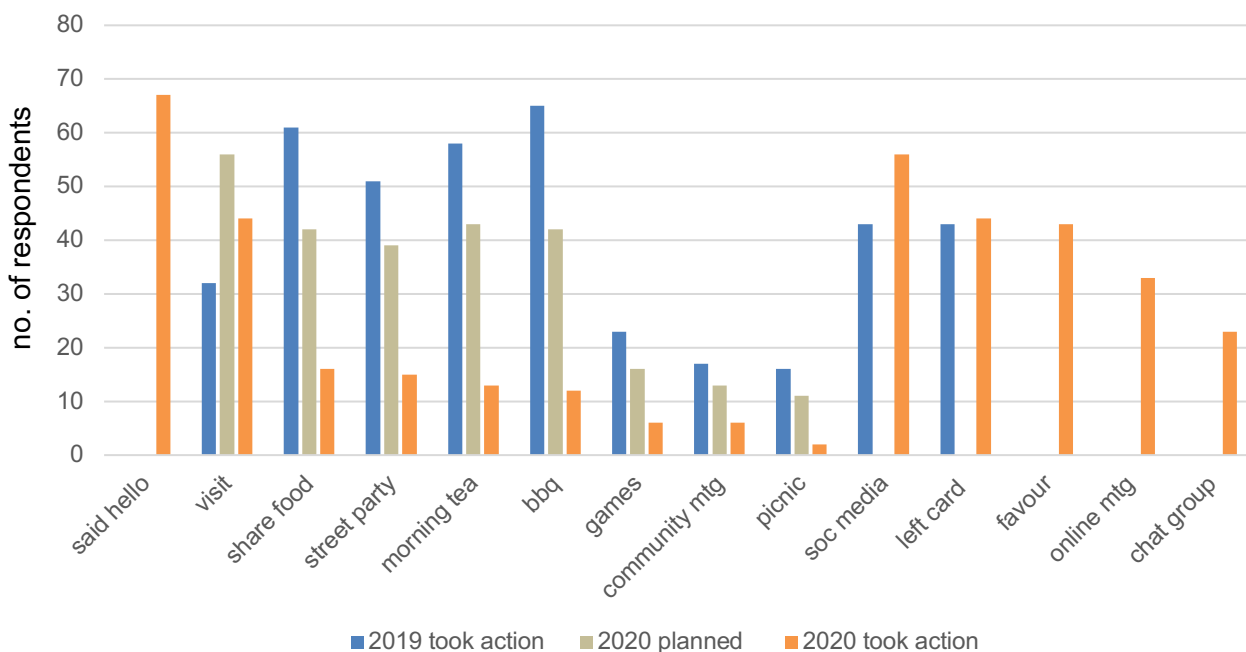


Figure 10. Comparison between 2019 and 2020 of event/action type (at T2).

#### 5.2.4 Intended future contact with neighbours

The great majority of respondents (90.7%) indicated that they planned to maintain ongoing contact with their neighbours and people in their local community. A small percentage indicated that they were unsure (8.9%) and yet a smaller percentage indicated they would not (0.4%). Of those who intended to do so, they planned to have more regular visits (28.5%) and get-togethers (26.5%) in the future (see Figure 11).

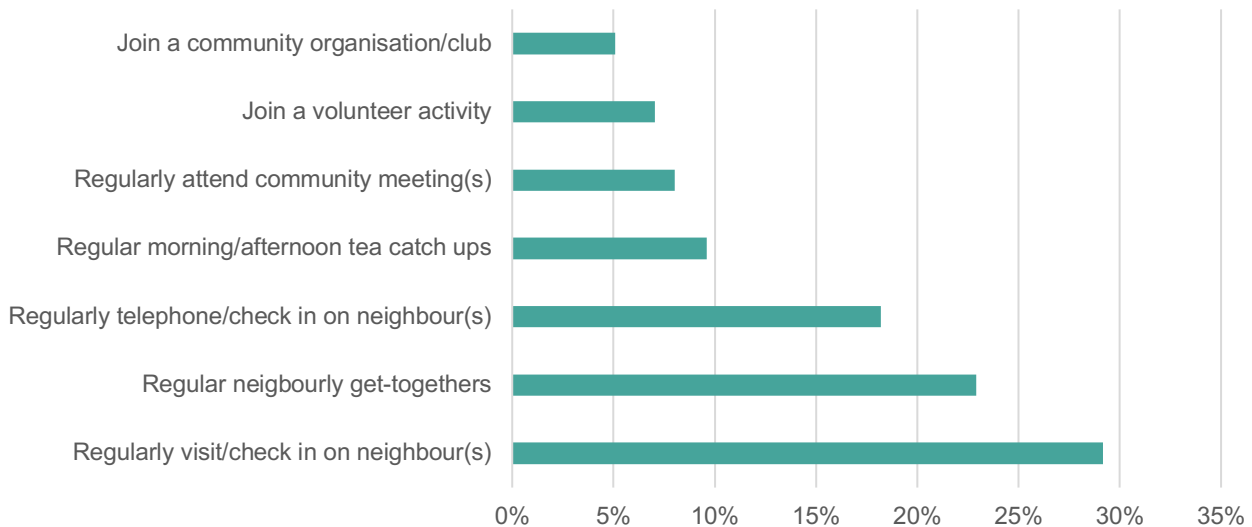


Figure 11. Ways in which respondents plan on connecting with neighbours in future.

#### 5.2.5 Benefits of participation

Respondents considered a range of potential benefits of taking action or hosting an event during NDC 2020, either for themselves personally or for their neighbourhood community (see Figure 12). Interestingly, compared to last year's responses, this year's participation was significantly less about having fun and meeting new people,  $\chi^2=9.45(1)$ ,  $p=.002$ .

Participants in 2020 were more likely to endorse the potential benefits of participating in Neighbour Day *both* for individual (i.e., physical health,  $\chi^2=4.21(1)$ ,  $p=.040$ ; mental health,  $\chi^2=14.22(1)$ ,  $p=.001$ ; feelings of safety or support,  $\chi^2=14.22(1)$ ,  $p=.001$ ) and community wellbeing (i.e., help create a strong community,  $\chi^2=5.07(1)$ ,  $p=.024$ ; show support for others / check in on neighbours,  $\chi^2=7.64(1)$ ,  $p=.006$ ; connect with elderly / vulnerable people,  $\chi^2=8.60(1)$ ,  $p=.003$ ).

Notable differences between last year and this year was of the increase in participants citing benefits of NDC 2020 participation for individual mental health, and the need to feel safe and supported. Compared to last year, there was a stronger desire to provide and show support for neighbours and elders/vulnerable people.

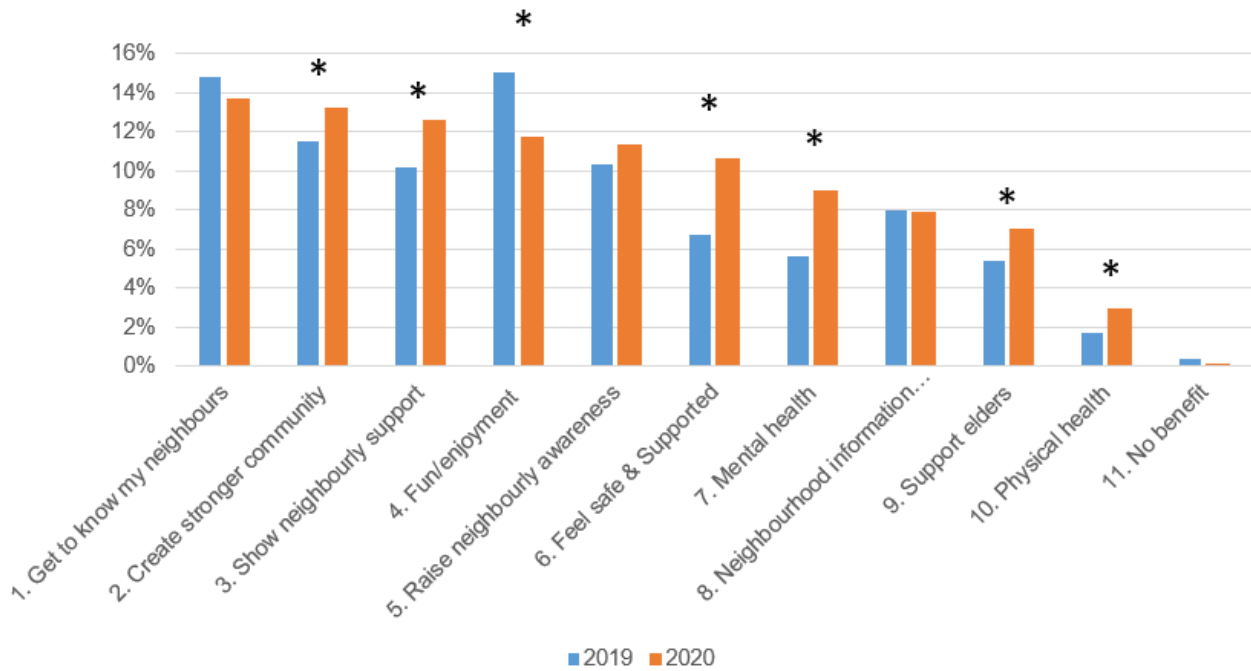


Figure 12. Perceived benefits of participating in NDC 2020 compared to NDC 2019.

Note. \* Significant difference at  $p < .05$

### 5.3 Long-term outcomes

#### 5.3.1 Sense of mental wellbeing

Respondents were asked to rate their wellbeing on a validated five-item scale (e.g., have felt cheerful and in good spirits; Heun, Bonsignore, Barkow, & Jessen, 2001) on a scale of 1 (at no time) to 6 (all of the time). There was a significant decrease in mental wellbeing from T1 ( $M_{T1} = 4.32$ ) to T2 ( $M_{T2} = 4.10$ ),  $t(95)=2.51$ ,  $p=.013$ , see Figure 13.

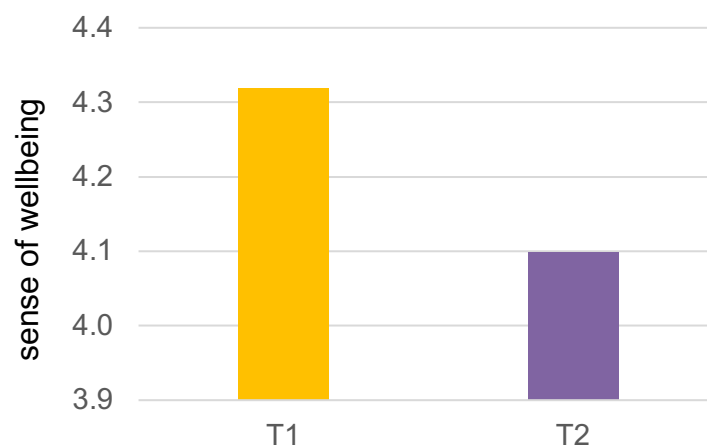


Figure 13. Significant decrease in mental wellbeing at T2.

#### 5.3.2 Feeling of loneliness

Respondents were asked using a 3-item validated scale to what extent they agree with statements such as 'how often do you feel isolated from others?' (Russell, 1996). There

was an increase in participant's sense of loneliness from T1 ( $M = 1.59$ ) to T2 ( $M = 1.68$ ) though this was not significant,  $t(93) = -1.80$ ,  $p = .076$  (see Figure 14).

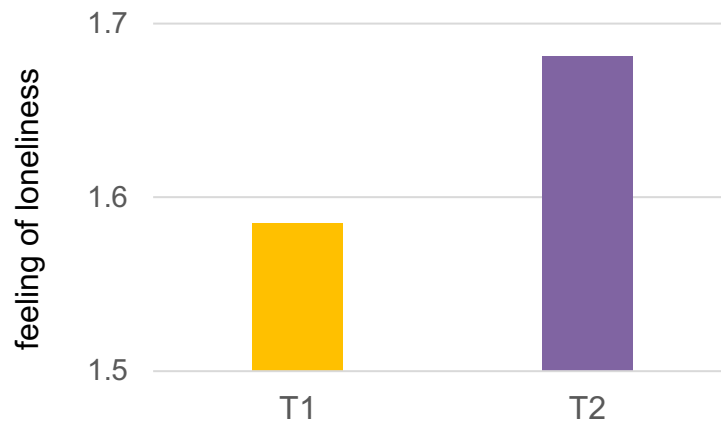


Figure 14. Significant increase in loneliness at T2.

These results are consistent with other nationwide data and highlight the negative impact of COVID-19 lockdown and travel restrictions on population wellbeing (Brindal, 2020; Duffy, 2020). However, we also found evidence of an increased sense of satisfaction with their neighbourhood.

### 5.3.3 Neighbourhood satisfaction

Respondents were asked to rate on a single item measuring the extent to which they were satisfied with their neighbourhood on a scale from 1 to 7, a higher score indicating higher levels of satisfaction. A paired samples  $t$ -test revealed that there was a significant change in participants' neighbourhood satisfaction from T1 ( $M = 5.70$ ) to T2 ( $M = 6.01$ ),  $t(96) = -3.26$ ,  $p = .002$  (see Figure 15).

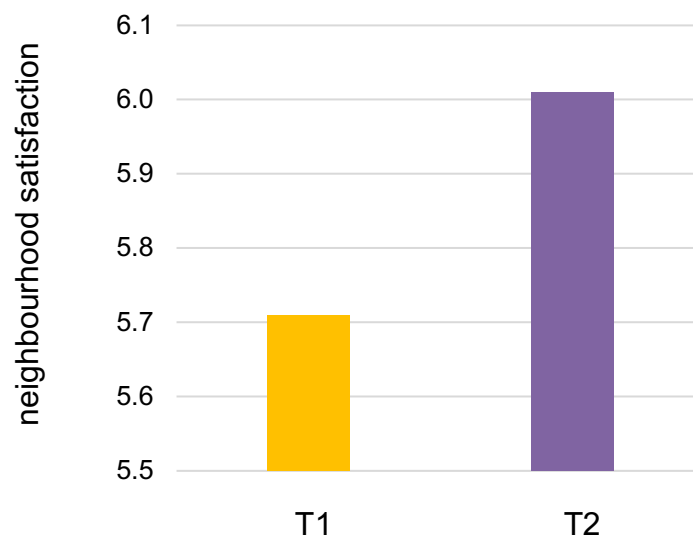


Figure 15. Significant increase in neighbourhood satisfaction at T2.



The reduced sample size of registrants at T1 this year limited our statistical power to compare between the group of people who did take action versus those who did not. Respondents ( $n=68$ ) who did manage to take some form of action (compared to those who could not,  $n=29$ ) reported a lower negative impact on wellbeing and loneliness at T2, although this was not a statistically significant difference.

#### 5.3.4 Neighbourhood identification

Compared to last year's participants ( $M = 5.54$ ) this year's participants reported significantly stronger identification with their neighbourhood at T1 ( $M = 5.81$ ),  $t(506.72) = -2.87$ ,  $p = .004$ . As in 2019, respondents reported an increase in neighbourhood identification from T1 ( $M_{T1} = 5.96$ ) to T2 ( $M_{T2} = 6.03$ ). However, this change was not statistically significant in 2020, probably because of the smaller longitudinal sample size this year.

#### 5.3.5 Neighbourhood identification and wellbeing in lockdown

The relationship between neighbourhood identification and mental wellbeing was not direct – it was via two significant indirect pathways in the serial mediation model (see Figure 16). Neighbourhood identification at T2 was positively associated with feeling supported by neighbours, and this, in turn, was associated with lower loneliness and higher wellbeing.

This means that stronger neighbourhood identification tended to be associated with higher levels of perceived support from neighbours ( $b = .88$ ,  $p < .001$ ). When people perceived greater levels of neighbourly support, they were less likely to report loneliness ( $b = -.08$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and more likely to report high levels of mental wellbeing ( $b = -.49$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Once these indirect pathways were included in the statistical model, the direct pathways from neighbourhood identification to loneliness ( $p = .086$ ) and wellbeing ( $p = .410$ ) were no longer significant, which suggests that it has its effects *via* the increased availability of neighbourly support.

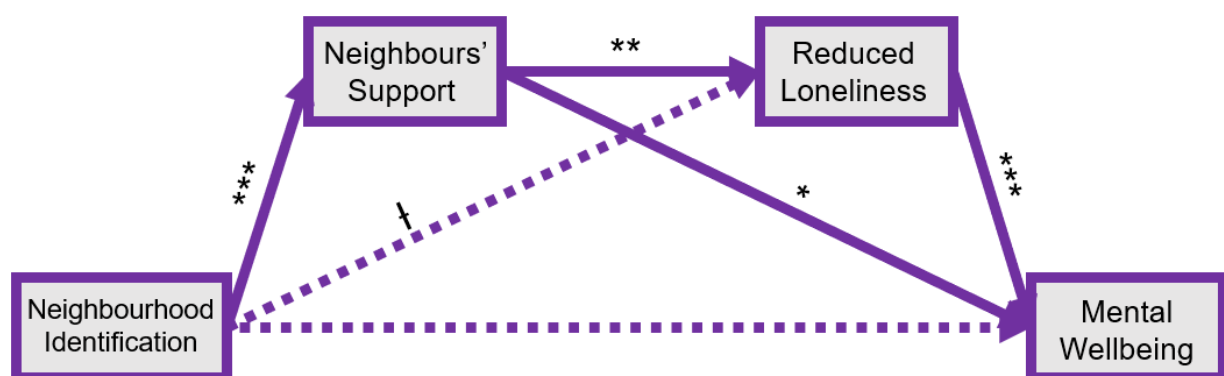


Figure 16. The relationship between *neighbourhood identification* at T2 and *mental wellbeing* via *neighbours' support* and *loneliness*.

Note. Indirect effects were significant: (1) Neighbourhood identification > neighbours' support > wellbeing,  $\gamma = .09$ ,  $SE = .05$  bootstrapped 95% Confidence Intervals CI [.01, .20].

(2) Neighbourhood identification > neighbours' support > loneliness > mental wellbeing,  $\gamma = .03$ ,

SE=.02 bootstrapped 95%CI [.003, .06].

\*\*\* =  $p < .001$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \* =  $p < .05$ , † =  $p < .10$

### 5.3.6 Identifying with multiple groups predicted wellbeing in lockdown

Identification with multiple groups at T2 was positively associated with feeling supported by family and friends, and this, in turn, predicted lower loneliness and higher wellbeing. All paths were statistically significant indicating that all variables are associated (see Figure 17). The indirect effects of the serial mediation model were significant for all three pathways.

This means that identifying strongly with multiple groups was protective against loneliness ( $b = -.08$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and for mental wellbeing ( $b = .19$ ,  $p < .001$ ) in part because it led to greater perceived availability of support from family and friends ( $b = .14$ ,  $p = .014$ ). However, unlike in the analysis above, this was not a full mediation – the direct pathways between multiple group identification and loneliness and wellbeing were still significant once support from family and friends was taken into account.

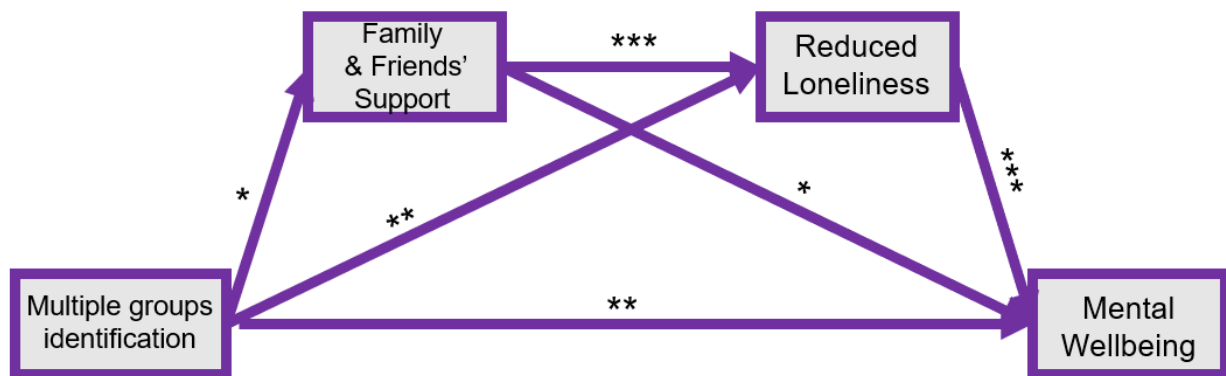


Figure 17. The relationship between *multiple groups identification* at T2 and *mental wellbeing* via *family and friends' support* and *loneliness*.

Note. Indirect effects were significant: (1) Multiple groups identification > family and friends' support > wellbeing,  $\gamma = .02$ , SE=.01 bootstrapped 95% CI [.02, .11].

(2) Multiple groups identification > family and friends' support > loneliness > mental wellbeing,  $\gamma = .01$ , SE=.01 bootstrapped 95%CI [.001, .02].

(3) Multiple groups identification > loneliness > mental wellbeing,  $\gamma = .04$ , SE=.02 bootstrapped 95%CI [.01, .07].

\*\*\* =  $p < .001$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \* =  $p < .05$

### 5.3.7 NDC participation in previous years

While 46.2% of respondents indicated that 2020 was their first time hosting or taking action as part of the NDC, the rest had participated in prior years (see Figure 18). A smaller percentage of the sample (24.4%) indicated that they had participated once before. These figures suggest that the Neighbour Day Campaign is gaining both substantial interest among those who are new to the event, as well as retaining some respondents from prior years ensuring the Campaign's sustainability into the future.

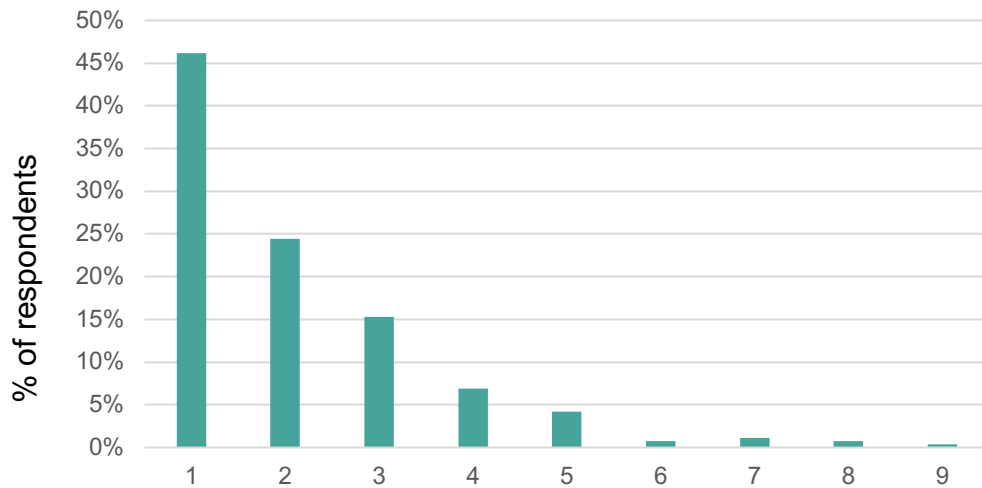


Figure 18. Number of years that participants had engaged with the Neighbour Day Campaign.

### 5.3.8 Intended future NDC participation

The majority of participants (85.2%) at T2 indicated that they would be interested in promoting and/or hosting a Neighbour Day event and/or undertaking a neighbourly action in future, while 13.7% indicated they were unsure. Only a very small proportion of participants (1.1%) indicated that they would not be interested again. Similarly, the majority of participants (91.9%) felt that Neighbour Day was a useful tool to assist people to connect with their neighbours, with only a small fraction (7.7%) who were unsure and an even smaller fraction (0.4%) who felt Neighbour Day was not useful to them. This provides evidence that NDC has future sustainability.

## 6 Discussion

*The short-term outcomes* of Relationships Australia's Neighbour Day Campaign that were within the scope of this report were threefold: (a) increased knowledge and awareness of Relationships Australia as the home of Neighbour Day; (b) increased knowledge and awareness of Neighbour Day and its relationships to individual, family and community wellbeing; and (c) increased support of Neighbour Day from individuals and organisations. We found positive evidence for all three of these outcomes. For example, the great majority of respondents surveyed at T2 reported having had little or no prior knowledge of Relationships Australia.

*The medium-term outcomes* of Relationships Australia's Neighbour Day Campaign that were within the scope of this report were twofold: (a) increased contact between neighbours and community participation; and (b) increased capacity in hosting events and taking action. While most of the events or actions were undertaken by private individuals, similar to last year's figures, almost one third of the events or actions were held by organisations, councils and community groups. This sizeable proportion of non-individual and better-resourced public entities suggest increased capacity in reach.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation many of the planned events were curtailed. Yet despite the unprecedented challenges faced by everyone, our respondents still saw the value in reaching out to neighbours to offer a helping hand where they could. The changes between 2019 and 2020 response patterns in the reasons given for NDC 2020 participation highlight the perceived value that participating brings to respondents in this time of crisis. Our results indicated that the most important perceived benefits gained from Neighbour Day Campaign involvement this year were both community-level outcomes such as building a stronger community *as well as* perceived individual health benefits such as mental wellbeing and feeling supported.

*The long-term outcomes* of Relationships Australia's Neighbour Day Campaign that were examined in this report were threefold: (a) to increase social capital; (b) to improve social inclusion and social connection; and (c) to ensure that the Campaign is sustainable. We further explored whether participation in NDC 2020 enhanced individual wellbeing and neighbourhood satisfaction.

In utilising a pre- and post- survey design, this evaluation report found evidence that participants reported changes from respondents' pre-event levels of (1) sense of mental wellbeing, (2) feelings of loneliness. This is consistent with other studies showing the devastating impact of lockdown on wellbeing (Brindal, 2020; Duffy, 2020). However, consistent with a positive impact of the Neighbour Day Campaign, we found an increase in neighbourhood satisfaction between T1 and T2; and that social identification with neighbourhood and multiple groups was the means to accessing relevant social support from neighbours, family, and friends. This support, in turn, was associated with lower loneliness and higher wellbeing during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results of this report indicated that the vast majority of respondents are likely to continue contact with neighbours and participate in future Neighbour Day Campaign events. Our figures showed that over half of respondents took part in Neighbour Day Campaign events in preceding years, suggesting that the Campaign is sustainable both in terms of retention and attracting new hosts.

Our findings indicated that respondents' sense of mental wellbeing decreased and loneliness increased. However, the unprecedented circumstances of the pandemic have made social gatherings challenging. Under such conditions, this evaluation of the Neighbour Day Campaign means that our findings may not generalise to normal circumstances. Furthermore, due to the smaller sample at T1 than in previous years, and the fact that this study covered only a two-month period, it is difficult to assess accurately the benefits to wellbeing of taking action versus not taking action and infer long-term effects of Neighbour Day Campaign participation. Nevertheless, it was clear that respondents reported benefits associated with neighbourhood connections and activities, including reduced loneliness and greater mental wellbeing in the stressful context of lockdown.

## 7 Conclusion and recommendations

The aim of the Neighbour Day Program is to promote the Neighbour Day Campaign as a vehicle to encourage people to connect with their neighbours and communities with the overall aim of improving individual, family and community wellbeing.

This evaluation provides evidence that Neighbour Day is achieving some of its long-term outcomes, such as generating growing interest from the public as seen in the increased number of downloads. Furthermore, the evaluation confirmed the perceived importance of social connection with neighbours, despite the risks involved during a pandemic. During lockdown restrictions, people who were strongly identified with their neighbours, or with multiple groups more generally, tended to report less loneliness and better mental wellbeing. These effects were partly attributable to a greater sense of support available to them from neighbours, family, and friends.

This evaluation demonstrated that, even, or perhaps especially, during the extreme circumstances of a pandemic lockdown, the Neighbour Day Campaign was an effective tool for individuals, communities and organisations to facilitate connection, despite an obvious need to recalibrate plans and implement creative forms of connection. There was also some indication that the majority of this year's respondents planned to continue to remain in contact with neighbours and people in their local community. In terms of the Program's sustainability, there was strong evidence that the Neighbour Day campaign is able to attract new recruits as well as retain a very high percentage of respondents (approximately 45%) from previous years.

The key recommendations from this report are three-fold:

1. **Continue to promote the importance of social connection with neighbours throughout the year.** Despite the personal burdens and sacrifices of unprecedented lockdown measures, there was evidence from respondents of their solidarity with their local community. Ongoing NDC promotion throughout the year would be ideal particularly during these uncertain times to support sustained community connection.
2. **Continue to promote creative ways to connect with neighbours until the end of the pandemic.** Continual promotion of creative and safe ways to connect with and support others will have benefits for both community and individual wellbeing.
3. **Increase awareness of the importance of connecting with multiple groups.** Increase awareness of the importance of group-based connection for mental wellbeing. Positive sources of group connection include, but are not limited to, neighbourhood groups.

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## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Appendix A | Relationships Australia Neighbour Day Campaign Program logic

#	Short-term outcomes (change in knowledge, skills, awareness and motivation)	Medium-term outcomes (Change in behaviour or practice)	Long-term outcomes (environmental, economic or social changes)
1	Increased knowledge and awareness of Relationships Australia as the home of Neighbour Day	Increased contact between neighbours and community participation	Increased social capital
2	Increased knowledge and awareness of Neighbour Day and its relationships to individual, family and community wellbeing	Increased commitment of the Relationships Australia federation to Neighbour Day	Social inclusion
3	Increased support of Neighbour Day from individuals and organisations	Increased in-kind and financial support from external stakeholders	Improved physical and mental wellbeing
4	Increased media engagement	Increased capacity in hosting events (less input required over time)	Neighbour day campaign is sustainable.
5	Increased confidence in the community in hosting a Neighbour Day event	Strategic relationships developed with relevant organisations as a result of Neighbour Day	
6	Stakeholder needs are understood		
7	Neighbour day is aligned with current and future business		
8	Internal and external champions knowledgeable and supported to facilitate Neighbour Day engagement		



## 9.2 Appendix B | Pre-event registrants survey

1. At your 2020 event or activity, approximately how many people do you plan to invite, or expect to engage with?

- a) 1
- b) 2-5
- c) 6-10
- d) 11-20
- e) 21-50
- f) 51-100
- g) 101-500
- h) 500+
- i) NA

2. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) I feel a part of my local community
- b) I identify with (the people in) my neighbourhood
- c) I see myself as a resident of this neighbourhood
- d) I am pleased to be a neighbourhood resident
- e) I have strong ties with other residents in this neighbourhood
- f) I identify with other residents in this neighbourhood
- g) I am satisfied with my neighbourhood

3. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(very unsafe to very safe)

- a) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood at night
- b) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood during the day

4. Please rate on how much you agree with the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) People around here are willing to help their neighbours
- b) People in this neighbourhood can be trusted
- c) People in this neighbourhood generally do not get along with each other
- d) This is a close-knit neighbourhood
- e) People in this neighbourhood do not share the same values

5. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood
- b) I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years
- c) I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighbourhood

6. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me.
- b) If I need advice about something, I could go to someone in my neighbourhood
- c) I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood
- d) I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood

7. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)  
I often feel very lonely

8. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(strongly disagree to strongly agree)  
hardly ever some of the time often  
How often do you feel that you lack companionship?  
How often do you feel left out?  
How often do you feel isolated from others?

9. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(hardly ever to often)

I have felt cheerful and in good spirits  
I have felt calm and relaxed  
I have felt active and vigorous  
I woke feeling fresh and rested  
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

10. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:  
(no time at all to all of the time)

11. What ideas do you have about how to engage more people in Neighbour Day?

12. Please tell us a little bit about where you live:

What best describes where you live?  
I live in a ..... (please tick one)

- a) house
- b) townhouse
- c) units/low rise apartments
- d) high-rise apartment (more than 4 storeys)
- e) rural property or farm
- f) Other (please specify)

13. What is the name of your suburb?

14. What is your postcode?

15. How long have you been living in your neighbourhood?

- a) Less than 6 months
- b) 6-12 months
- c) 1-2 years
- d) 2-5 years
- e) 5-10 years
- f) 10+ years

16. On average how wealthy do you consider the people in your neighbourhood compared to the rest of your city/regional area?

17. Please rate on a scale from 1 to 10.  
(where 1 star represents the least wealthy and 10 stars represents the wealthiest people in your city)

18. Please tell us a little bit about yourself:  
Please indicate your gender:

female male other

19. How old are you?

20. What is your current living situation?

- a) living alone
- b) couple with no children under 18 living at home
- c) couple with at least 1 child under 18 living at home
- d) single parent with at least 1 child under 18 living at home
- e) living with housemates
- f) Other (please specify)

21. What is your highest level of education?

- a) Less than Year 12
- b) Year 12 Certificate
- c) Certificate or vocational diploma
- d) some university
- e) Completed a Bachelor Degree
- f) Completed a Master/Doctorate Degree

22. What is your current employment status?

(you can select more than one answer)

- a) Full time employed
- b) part time employed
- c) student
- d) retired, carer/parent
- e) disability pension
- f) not currently working

21. What is your ethnicity?

- a) White/Caucasian
- b) Asian
- c) Middle Eastern/Arabic
- d) Indigenous Australian
- e) Mixed/Other

Email Address

Phone Number

22. At Relationships Australia, we want to make Neighbour Day the best it can be. To help us understand what worked well and less well for you, we'd like to contact you again after Neighbour Day to participate in another short survey. The first 150 people to complete it will earn \$30! If you are willing to help us with this research, please provide your contact details below. This information will be stored securely and not linked to your responses in the survey. It will not be used for any other purpose except to (1) contact you about the follow-up survey, and (2) contact you if you win one of two \$200 Bunnings vouchers in the prize draw.

### 9.3 Appendix C | Post-event survey: Version A

1. In what years have you promoted Neighbour Day in your neighbourhood or community?  
(you may choose more than one):

- a) 2020
- b) 2019
- c) 2018
- d) 2017
- e) 2016
- f) 2015
- g) 2014
- h) Other (please specify)

2. Could you tell us why you decided not to or could not host or take a neighbourly action on Neighbour Day?

(Select the answer that best applies)

- a) I could not find a place to host an event
- b) I was too busy
- c) Didn't get enough interest
- d) I didn't know how
- e) The event was postponed due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions
- f) The event was cancelled due to COVID-19 gathering
- g) restrictions
- h) Other (please specify)

3. If you had plans to host an event or take a neighbourly action but it was postponed or cancelled, which of the following would you have done?

- a) I didn't have any plans
- b) Morning/Afternoon teas
- c) BBQ
- d) Street party
- e) Bring plate/shared food
- f) Picnic
- g) Games
- h) Visited neighbour(s)
- i) Leave a connection or calling card
- j) Community meeting
- k) Post a message on social media
- l) Other (please specify)

4. Was your planned Neighbour Day promotion, event and/or neighbourly action done by:

- a) I did not plan an event
- b) You as an individual
- c) Council/Shire
- d) NGO
- e) Local community group
- f) Business
- g) Other (please specify)

5. Was your planned promotion, event or neighbourly action?

- a) Open to the public
- b) Private/invitation only
- c) Other (please specify)

6. If you started to promote your event, by what means did you use? (you may choose more than one)

- a) I didn't promote an event
- b) Face to face invitations
- c) Invitation left
- d) Promotional flyers
- e) Calling or connection cards
- f) Poster
- g) Email
- h) Facebook
- i) Community newsletter

7. Will you promote and/or host a Neighbour Day event or undertake a neighbourly action again or in future?

Yes No Maybe

8. Which Neighbour Day online resources were useful? (please select your top three)

- a) Posters
- b) Invitations
- c) Connection/Calling cards
- d) Ecards
- e) Promotional flyers
- f) Name tags
- g) Selfie and event signs
- h) Certificate of recognition
- i) Colouring in page
- j) Media template
- k) How to Neighbour Day
- l) How to for hosts
- m) How to for Councils and Community Organisations
- n) How to for the Workplace
- o) How to social
- p) Social media channels e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- q) Neighbour Day graphics e.g. Very Neighbourly tips, We feel better when we belong etc.
- r) I did not use any online resources
- s) Other (please specify)

9. What do you think the potential benefits are of promoting and/or hosting a Neighbour Day event in your neighbourhood/community, and/or undertaking neighbourly action?

- a) I will get to know my neighbours/community
- b) Raise awareness of the importance of neighbours
- c) Fun/enjoyment/socialise/celebrate
- d) Show support for others / check in on neighbours
- e) I will be able to connect with elderly / vulnerable people
- f) Improved mental health
- g) Improved physical health
- h) Feelings of safety/support
- i) Opportunity to learn and discuss what is happening in my neighbourhood
- j) Help create a strong community
- k) I will not benefit
- l) Other (please specify)

10. Is Neighbour Day a useful tool/mechanism to assist people to connect with their neighbours?  
Yes No Maybe

11. Are you planning on maintaining ongoing contact with your neighbours/community?  
Yes No Maybe

12. Provide example(s) (you can select more than one option)

- a) Regularly visit/check in on neighbour(s)
- b) Regularly telephone/check in on neighbour(s)
- c) Joined a volunteer activity
- d) Regular morning/afternoon tea catch ups
- e) Regular neighbourly get-togethers
- f) Regularly attend community meeting(s)
- g) Joined a community organisation/club
- h) Other (please specify)

13. Do you use the Neighbour Day values and messages in the other community activities you are involved in?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I'm not involved in community activities

14. How much did you know about Relationships Australia before participating in Neighbour Day compared to now?

- a) A lot
- b) some
- c) A little
- d) Nothing

15. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- a) I feel a part of my local community.
- b) I identify with (the people in) my neighbourhood.
- c) I see myself as a resident of this neighbourhood.
- d) I am pleased to be a neighbourhood resident.
- e) I have strong ties with other residents in this neighbourhood.
- f) I identify with other residents in this neighbourhood.
- g) I am satisfied with my neighbourhood.
- h) I belong to lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- i) I join in the activities of lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- j) I am friendly with people in lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- k) I have strong ties with lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).

16. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(very unsafe to very safe)

- a) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood at night.
- b) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood during the day.

17. How safe or unsafe do you feel while doing the following things?

(very unsafe to very safe)

- a) interacting with people I know (family, friends, colleagues)
- b) interacting with people who are strangers and acquaintances
- c) interacting with people in my neighbourhood
- d) interacting with people at the shops
- e) interacting with people on public transport

- f) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood during the day

18. Given the COVID19 situation, please tell us how safe or unsafe you feel while doing the following activities:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) If I had to self-isolate, I feel I could rely on my friends and family for support.
- b) If I had to self-isolate, I feel I could rely on my neighbours for support.
- c) If I had to self-isolate, I feel there would be no one close I could turn to for support.

19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) It really bothers me when people sneeze without covering their mouths.
- b) If an illness is 'going around', I will get it.
- c) My past experiences make me believe I am not likely to get sick even when my friends are sick.
- d) I have a history of susceptibility to infectious diseases.
- e) In general, I am very susceptible to colds, flu, and other infectious diseases.
- f) I am more likely than the people around me to catch an infectious disease.
- g) I am unlikely to catch a cold, flu, or other illness, even if it is going around.
- h) It does not make me anxious to be around sick people.
- i) My immune system protects me from most illnesses that other people get.

20. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) People around here are willing to help their neighbours.
- b) People in this neighbourhood can be trusted.
- c) People in this neighbourhood generally do not get along with each other.
- d) This is a close-knit neighbourhood.
- e) People in this neighbourhood do not share the same values.

21. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood.
- b) I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years.
- c) I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighbourhood.
- e) The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me.
- f) If I need advice about something, I could go to someone in my neighbourhood
- g) I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood
- h) I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood

22. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

I often feel very lonely

23. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) hardly ever some of the time often
- b) How often do you feel that you lack companionship?
- c) How often do you feel left out?
- d) How often do you feel isolated from others?

24. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(hardly ever to often)

- a) I have felt cheerful and in good spirits
- b) I have felt calm and relaxed
- c) I have felt active and vigorous
- d) I woke feeling fresh and rested
- e) My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

25. What other feedback would you like to give us to improve Neighbour Day?

We would like to thank you very much for completing our surveys and giving us feedback on how we can make Neighbour Day even better.

The first 150 participants who took part in our first survey Neighbour Day 2020 will receive a \$30 shopping e-voucher. Please enter below the same email address that you used in that first survey. (This should be the same email address to which the link to this survey was sent.)

Everyone else may enter into the prize draw to win one of two \$200 Bunning e-voucher by providing their contact details.

Thank you again from the Neighbour Day Team.

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Contact details



## 9.4 Appendix D | Post-event survey: Version B

1. In what years have you promoted Neighbour Day in your neighbourhood or community?

(you may choose more than one):

- a) 2020
- b) 2019
- c) 2018
- d) 2017
- e) 2016
- f) 2015
- g) 2014
- h) Other (please specify)

2. What day or days did you celebrate or undertake neighbourly actions for Neighbour Day 2020?  
(you may select more than one option)

- a) Sunday March 29 2020
- b) Other (please specify)

3. Given the circumstances of the COVID19 pandemic, any small gesture or neighbourly action is important especially this year. How did you celebrate Neighbour Day? You may select more than one option.

- a) Morning/Afternoon teas
- b) BBQ
- c) Street party
- d) Bring plate/shared food
- e) Picnic
- f) Games
- g) Visited neighbour(s)
- h) Left connection or calling card
- i) Community meeting
- j) Posted a message on social media
- k) Started a neighbours chat group
- l) Said hello to a neighbour
- m) An online gathering
- n) Did a favour for a neighbour
- o) Other (please specify)

4. Was your Neighbour Day promotion, event and/or neighbourly action done by :

- a) You as an individual
- b) Council/Shire
- c) NGO
- d) Local community group
- e) Business
- f) Other (please specify)

5. Was your promotion, event or neighbourly action?

- a) Open to the public
- b) Private/invitation only
- c) Other (please specify)

6. At your 2020 event or activity or neighbourly action, approximately how many people attended/participated/were engaged with?

- a) N/A
- b) 1
- c) 2-5
- d) 6-10
- e) 11-20
- f) 21-50
- g) 51-100
- h) 101-500
- i) 500+

7. The turnout at my Neighbour Day event was

- a) Much less than expected
- b) Slightly less than expected
- c) What I expected
- d) Slightly more than expected
- e) Much more than expected
- f) NA

8. How did you promote your event? (you may choose more than one)

- a) Face to face invitations
- b) Invitation left
- c) Promotional flyers
- d) Calling or connection cards
- e) Poster
- f) Email
- g) Facebook
- h) Community newsletter
- i) I didn't promote an event

9. What was the most successful form of promotion? (please rank in order of usefulness)

- a) Face to face invitations
- b) Invitation left
- c) Promotional flyers
- d) Calling or connection cards
- e) Poster
- f) Email
- g) Facebook
- h) Community newsletter
- i) I did not use these resources

10. Which Neighbour Day online resources were useful? (please select your top three)

- a) Posters
- b) Invitations
- c) Connection/Calling cards
- d) Ecards
- e) Promotional flyers
- f) Name tags
- g) Selfie and event signs
- h) Certificate of recognition
- i) Colouring in page

- j) Media template
- k) How to Neighbour Day
- l) How to for hosts
- m) How to for Councils and Community Organisations
- n) How to for the Workplace
- o) How to social
- p) Social media channels e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- q) Neighbour Day graphics e.g. Very Neighbourly tips, We feel better when we belong etc.
- r) Other (please specify)

11. Will you promote and/or host a Neighbour Day event or undertake a neighbourly action again?

Yes No Maybe

12. Everyone does Neighbour Day in their own way. What were the benefits of promoting and/or hosting a Neighbour Day event in your neighbourhood/community, and/or undertaking neighbourly action?

- a) (you may choose more than one):
- b) I got to know my neighbours/community
- c) Raise awareness of the importance of neighbours
- d) Fun/enjoyment/socialise/celebrate
- e) Show support for others / check in on neighbours
- f) I was able to connect with elderly / vulnerable people
- g) Improved mental health
- h) Improved physical health
- i) Feelings of safety/support
- j) Opportunity to learn and discuss what is happening in my
- k) neighbourhood
- l) Help create a strong community
- m) I didn't benefit
- n) Other (please specify)

13. Is Neighbour Day a useful tool/mechanism to assist people to connect with their neighbours?

Yes No Maybe

14. Are you planning on maintaining ongoing contact with your neighbours/community?

Yes No Maybe

15. How will you maintain connections with your neighbours and people in your local area since Neighbour Day?

- a) Regularly visit/check in on neighbour(s)
- b) Regularly telephone/check in on neighbour(s)
- c) Joined a volunteer activity
- d) Regular morning/afternoon tea catch ups
- e) Regular neighbourly get-togethers
- f) Regularly attend community meeting(s)
- g) Joined a community organisation/club
- h) Other (please specify)

16. How much did you know about Relationships Australia before participating in Neighbour Day compared to now?

- a) A lot
- b) some
- c) A little
- d) Nothing

17. If you hosted an event, where did you host your Neighbour Day event?

- a) At home (inside)
- b) At home (in the garden)
- c) In a neighbourhood park or greenspace
- d) At a community centre (library, seniors centre, council offices)
- e) At a commercial venue (coffee shop, restaurant, pub)
- f) I did not host an event
- g) Online methods/telephone/other (please specify)

18. Was this where you had planned to host it?

- a) Yes
- b) No (please specify)

15. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- a) I feel a part of my local community.
- b) I identify with (the people in) my neighbourhood.
- c) I see myself as a resident of this neighbourhood.
- d) I am pleased to be a neighbourhood resident.
- e) I have strong ties with other residents in this neighbourhood.
- f) I identify with other residents in this neighbourhood.
- g) I am satisfied with my neighbourhood.
- h) I belong to lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- i) I join in the activities of lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- j) I am friendly with people in lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).
- k) I have strong ties with lots of different groups (outside my neighbourhood).

16. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(very unsafe to very safe)

- a) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood at night.
- b) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood during the day.

17. How safe or unsafe do you feel while doing the following things?

(very unsafe to very safe)

- a) interacting with people I know (family, friends, colleagues)
- b) interacting with people who are strangers and acquaintances
- c) interacting with people in my neighbourhood
- d) interacting with people at the shops
- e) interacting with people on public transport
- f) I feel safe being outside and alone in my neighbourhood during the day

18. Given the COVID19 situation, please tell us how safe or unsafe you feel while doing the following activities:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) If I had to self-isolate, I feel I could rely on my friends and family for support.

- b) If I had to self-isolate, I feel I could rely on my neighbours for support.
- c) If I had to self-isolate, I feel there would be no one close I could turn to for support.

19. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) It really bothers me when people sneeze without covering their mouths.
- b) If an illness is 'going around', I will get it.
- c) My past experiences make me believe I am not likely to get sick even when my friends are sick.
- d) I have a history of susceptibility to infectious diseases.
- e) In general, I am very susceptible to colds, flu, and other infectious diseases.
- f) I am more likely than the people around me to catch an infectious disease.
- g) I am unlikely to catch a cold, flu, or other illness, even if it is going around.
- h) It does not make me anxious to be around sick people.
- i) My immune system protects me from most illnesses that other people get.

20. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) People around here are willing to help their neighbours.
- b) People in this neighbourhood can be trusted.
- c) People in this neighbourhood generally do not get along with each other.
- d) This is a close-knit neighbourhood.
- e) People in this neighbourhood do not share the same values.

21. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) I feel like I belong to this neighbourhood.
- b) I plan to remain a resident of this neighbourhood for a number of years.
- c) I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this neighbourhood.
- d) The friendships and associations I have with other people in my neighbourhood mean a lot to me.
- e) If I need advice about something, I could go to someone in my neighbourhood
- f) I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve my neighbourhood
- g) I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighbourhood

22. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- a) I often feel very lonely

23. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- b) hardly ever some of the time often
- c) How often do you feel that you lack companionship?
- d) How often do you feel left out?
- e) How often do you feel isolated from others?

24. Please rate on how much you agree with each of the following statements:

(hardly ever to often)

- a) I have felt cheerful and in good spirits
- b) I have felt calm and relaxed
- c) I have felt active and vigorous
- d) I woke feeling fresh and rested
- e) My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

30. What other feedback would you like to give us to improve Neighbour Day?

We would like to thank you very much for completing our surveys and giving us feedback on how we can make Neighbour Day even better.

The first 150 participants who took part in our first survey Neighbour Day 2020 will receive a \$30 shopping e-voucher. Please enter below the same email address that you used in that first survey. (This should be the same email address to which the link to this survey was sent.)

Everyone else may enter into the prize draw to win one of two \$200 Bunning e-voucher by providing their contact details.

Thank you again from the Neighbour Day Team.

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

## 9.5 Appendix E | Calculation of projected participation numbers NDC 2020

### Method used to estimate participant numbers

X=number of unique downloads (from the Neighbour Day website)

Y=average number of people that attended each event as reported in by respondents in the post survey in 2019.

X x Y= Total participant numbers

Therefore, if NDC2020 events had gone ahead as planned in early March:

$$7902 \times 41^* = 323,982$$

An 11.48% increase from the NDC2019 estimate of 290,608.

State & Territory participation is extrapolated from the geo-location data from the downloads using the respective percentages per state and territory from that report i.e. not the actual numbers (as these will vary from the total download figure).

For example: If QLD is 35% of total unique downloads - therefore 35% of 7,902 (total unique downloads)

$$2,765 \times 41^* = 113,365$$

\*Average event size for NDC2019, since actual numbers for NDC2020 were substantially curtailed by lockdown regulations.

## 9.6 Appendix F | Creative ways of taking action on Neighbour Day 2020

Virtual	Not in person (left something / did a favour)
Call a neighbour	"Bear Hunt" for children
Posted on social media	Boredom/Educational Packs
Launch social media group	Buddy program for elderly
Connected through 'group messenger' chats	Chalk art on driveway/footpath
Texted the nearby neighbours	Created an art display at our local sign
Started a Facebook group and Website	Delivered and received care packages, including cards for kids.
Virtual Morning Tea	Exchange of unwanted kitchen appliances
	Formed a volunteer group to walk dogs
	Goods exchange
	Held colouring/poetry competition for school children
	Helped an elderly neighbour's yard
	Left "Bags of Hugs," a present, "Appreciation Notes," hand sanitiser, home baked goods, contact details, treat bags, toilet roll, letters
	Made artwork for neighbouring housing building
	Neighbour propagation seed planting and sharing
	Ran errand for a neighbour
	Set up a shopping service for neighbours
	Started a 'Random Acts of Kindness' program.