

Celebrating Welcoming Week in Community Hubs



**WELCOMING
WEEK**



**Welcoming
Australia**

2024 WELCOMING WEEK RESOURCE

1	Introduction
2	Why Welcoming Week?
3	Examples of potential events
4	Case Study: St Brendan's Community Hub, Queensland
5	Case Study: St Brigid's Community Hub, South Australia
6	Next Steps

www.welcomingweek.org.au

for more resources and to register an event for
Welcoming Week 2024!

INTRODUCTION

Community Hubs: Building Social Cohesion in Australia

Community hubs are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds, particularly mothers with pre-school children, come to connect, share, and learn. They play a vital role in fostering social cohesion and inclusion in Australia.

The National Community Hubs Program (NCHP) model is a proven place-based and people-centred way of building connections and social and economic capital within culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Hubs are embedded in primary schools and help bridge the gap between families and the wider community. They connect families with each other, with their school, and with local services and support. There are 98 active Community Hubs across Australia.

Welcoming Week

Welcoming Week is an annual campaign and celebration showcasing communities striving to be more welcoming places for all, including migrants, refugees, people seeking asylum, international students, and the entire community. We acknowledge that Welcoming Week events in Australia will be hosted on the unceded lands of First Nations and recognize the generosity and important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the work of Welcoming Australia and Welcoming Week.

Through Welcoming Week, organizations and communities bring together neighbours of all backgrounds to build strong connections and affirm the importance of building welcoming and inclusive communities for our shared future.



WHY WELCOMING WEEK?

Synergy Between Community Hubs and Welcoming Week

The 2024 Welcoming Week theme, [#WhatBringsUsTogether](#), is a moment to consider and celebrate the work of advancing a welcoming Australia that happens in communities across the country every single day. In a time of escalating global uncertainty and division, we believe it's crucial to intentionally carve out moments to share "What Brings Us Together".

Whether through shared meals, sports, music celebrations, art exhibitions, storytelling circles, cultural exchanges, or community service projects, we look forward to seeing the creative ways communities celebrate Welcoming Week. By bringing us together to celebrate our shared humanity, we can advance a more inclusive and welcoming Australia where everyone can belong, contribute, and thrive.

There is a natural connection between the goals of Community Hubs and the values of Welcoming Week. Both aim to create welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environments for all community members.

In 2023, [St Brigid's School Community Hub in SA](#) and [St Brendan's Community Hub in Queensland](#) hosted successful Welcoming Week events - they've shared their experience to help other Community Hubs host their own events this year!

We're delighted to share our Welcoming Week Community Hubs Resource to help Community Hubs join the Welcoming Week movement in 2024.

There is a natural synergy between the values of Community Hubs and Welcoming Week: building and sharing places where everyone belongs.

EXAMPLES OF EVENTS



Morning or Afternoon Tea



Chalk Drawing or Mural Painting



An "Open Hub" Morning or Afternoon



Music Sessions



Art and Craft Sessions



Storytelling and Book Sharing



Sports and Games



CASE STUDY

St Brendan's Community Hub, Queensland
Cate Gilpin and Bahareh Dibidan

What did you do for Welcoming Week 2023?

At our regular playgroup we invited the wider community to attend for a special 'welcoming morning'. My husband came along to play guitar, and we sang songs with the kids, and read stories about making people feel welcome and included.

Then we had a group morning tea, and everyone brought food that was special to them. There were delicious Sri Lankan curries, Persian sweets, a Macedonian vegetable dish, a beautiful chicken dish from Papua New Guinea, and I made scones.

What resources did you need?

We really didn't need many resources extra to what we already have access to as part of the Community Hub. We utilised the community hub space, which included a kitchenette with basics such as tea, coffee, and milk, and a play area for the kids. We accessed a small grant through Children's Week to cover any additional costs for food and beverages for extra guests. The key resource was the community coming together.

Who was involved?

Bahareh as the Community Hub Leader, the principal and some of the school community, Cate as the volunteer playgroup coordinator, and the families that attended the playgroup.



CASE STUDY

St Brendan's Community Hub, Queensland
Cate Gilpin and Bahareh Dibidan

How does the community get involved? (both in planning and preparation, as well as the events themselves)

We really tried to make this as easy as possible for the community to be involved, with minimal additional demands on them. We asked our community to invite others to come along, and to bring some food to share if they had capacity to.

Other than that, the Community Hub Leader and play group coordinator organised all the elements of the day. We could've asked the community to do more, but we were really aware that the playgroup community are juggling a lot with small children, so we wanted to make it really easy for them to attend and participate.

Why did the Community Hub join Welcoming Week celebrations?

Cate made the initial suggestion that the Community Hub get involved because of her role with Welcoming Australia. There was strong interest from Bahareh as Hub Leader, and take-up from the community, because the hubs are so focused on making people feel welcome and included.

Why are Welcoming Week events particularly successful/impactful in this environment?

I think these kinds of very community-based, small, focused events are the building blocks for making people feel welcome. It's not that this one event was hugely impactful, but it was a celebration of the community we had created at the hub, and the friendships, supports, and services that made people feel welcome.



CASE STUDY

St Brendan's Community Hub, Queensland

Cate Gilpin and Bahareh Dibidan

How did you promote Welcoming Week and the events/activations?

We promoted it through the Hub Facebook page, through the Teams group chat we created for community, and through the school community.

What has worked well?

Keeping it simple, making it very child friendly, building on an existing program.

What would you do differently?

More lead time would've been positive, giving us the opportunity to invite more service providers and connections to attend. We will be able to build on this initial event for this year and future Welcoming Week events.



What has community feedback for the events been?

The community who attended loved the day and raved about it.



Can other community hubs considering hosting Welcoming Week events contact you for more information?

Of course!

Cate Gilpin: Cate@welcoming.org.au

CASE STUDY

St Brigid's Community Hub, South Australia Bonnie Creek

What did you do for Welcoming Week 2023?

We put on a hub "open morning". Our community hub was open for a few hours and people were invited to see our hub/participate in a chalk mural, take home some free things, and have some morning tea together.

What resources did you need?

I supplied a selection of morning tea snacks and hot drinks, paid for a chalk artist to come and be part of the day, had some free items that we had collected over the year to then give away (such as clothes, shoes, kids toys, miscellaneous items, activities for children (bubbles, sandpit).

Who was involved?

Community hub staff, an external chalk mural artist, staff from local organisations, and participants of the community.

How does the community get involved?

For this one I did the planning by myself, and the community got involved by coming along, joining the activities and in completing the chalk mural.



CASE STUDY

St Brigid's Community Hub, South Australia Bonnie Creek

Why did the Community Hub join Welcoming Week celebrations?

The motivations behind Welcoming Week fit exactly what the community hub's vision is. A welcoming space for communities to come, particularly migrant communities. Also, it was the first year of me being in the role of community hub leader and I was really keen to get the word out about our hub and what we do.

Why are Welcoming Week events particularly successful/impactful in this environment?

From what I've seen there are a lot of people looking for ways to connect and for kid-friendly spaces they can take their children to during the day.

How did you promote Welcoming Week and the events/activations?

We promoted it through our Facebook page, Welcoming Australia's Facebook page, through the school's newsletter and parent communication app. We also promoted through the hub including talking to people who are attending the programs and through the local community centre's notice boards.



CASE STUDY

St Brigid's Community Hub, South Australia
Bonnie Creek

What has worked well?

Having a flexible activity meaning that people could come when suited and leave when suited during a specific timeframe. There was also a set activity that went on for the whole time that they could be a part of if they wanted.

Families really appreciated the chance to sit down, have some morning tea, and chat with each other.

What would you do differently?

Probably have a few more activities/games set up for children, or even adults. Jenga, something like that.



What has community feedback for the events been?

The community members who came along said they really enjoyed it and found it relaxing and engaging.



Can other community hubs considering hosting Welcoming Week events contact you for more information?

Yes, absolutely.

Bonnie Creek

Community Hub Leader

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NEXT STEPS

What's Next?

1. Gather your community together and plan an event for Welcoming Week
2. Register your event at www.welcomingweek.org.au
3. Download welcome signage from the website to share at your event
4. Promote and invite your community to join you!
5. Contact us if you have any questions or need support to plan and promote your event

And finally, keep Celebrating Welcoming All Year!

By continuously engaging in welcoming activities, community hubs can continue to foster inclusion and build stronger, more cohesive communities year-round.

www.welcomingweek.org.au

for more resources and to register an event for Welcoming Week 2024!

Have more questions?

Contact Kate Leaney:

kate@welcoming.org.au or 0411 712 930