



We respectfully inform readers that this newsletter contains images of individuals who are now deceased. These images may cause sadness or emotional discomfort for some readers.

UPCOMING DATES

Keeping you upto date with all of our events to put into your calendar for 2026.

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WARMA BASKETBALL CARNIVAL RESULTS

Deadly efforts from both of our Under 12s boy and girl teams!

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STRONG ROOTS, SAFE FUTURES

With Yolanda Finette, proud Yorta Yorta woman and holistic life coach.

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Welcome back, Tegan!

We're pleased to welcome Tegan back from maternity leave, since 2nd of March.

Tegan has stepped into the role of Acting 'Bringing Them Home' worker, working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30am to 4:30pm.



She's looking forward to reconnecting and working alongside everyone at Njernda again, and we're so excited to have her back on the team.

Welcome back!

Congratulations Khayla!

Please join us in congratulating Khayla Chester on her appointment as Youth and Wellbeing Coordinator, here at Njernda.

We are pleased to support her as she takes this important next step in her career.



Khayla commenced in the position on 23rd of March, and we look forward to the fresh perspective and commitment she brings to the team.

Well done Khayla!

WOMEN'S ARCADIA FISHING DAY

Five women from community joined three staff members for a relaxed and meaningful day out on Country at the Arcadia Native Fish Hatchery.

Led by staff members Alkira Hearn and Montana Handy, the group came together for a day of fishing, connection and shared experiences. The atmosphere was calm and welcoming, with plenty of laughter, storytelling and time to yarn.

A BBQ lunch was enjoyed together, with everyone gathering to cook, eat and connect. Surrounded by bushland and nature, the day offered a chance to slow down, reflect and strengthen bonds in a supportive women's space.

It was a special day that left everyone feeling grounded, connected and grateful - one that will be remembered by all who attended.



DUNYUK WOKA MEN'S FISHING GROUP

Njernda's Social, Emotional & Wellbeing Unit recently brought men together through the Dunyuk Woka (to fish on Country) Fishing Group, creating a strong and welcoming space for connection and wellbeing.

Held on Country every second Friday, we provided an opportunity for Aboriginal men to come together, yarn, share a few laughs and enjoy fishing in a relaxed environment. Everyone was able to take part and enjoy the time outdoors.

The group focused on more than just fishing. It was about building connections, supporting one another and strengthening a sense of community. Being out on Country, surrounded by nature, created a calm and grounding atmosphere that allowed participants to unwind and connect in a meaningful way.

With equipment, lunch and transport provided, it was accessible and inclusive, making it easier for men to attend and be part of the experience.

The Men's Fishing Group was a positive and memorable day, reinforcing the importance of connection, culture and our community.

UPCOMING DATES

Easter School Holiday Program

APR 14 Youth Fishing Day (limited spots)

APR 16 Youth Ten Pin Bowling (Shepparton)

APR 17 Youth Art Day

APR 20 Sheriff visit at Youth and Wellbeing

APR 22 Auskick Registration

APR 29 Home Ownership Community Event

MAY 13 Koorie Youth Summit (13-15 May)

WOMEN'S ART CLASS

Our Women's Art Class for 2026 commenced on Tuesday, 10th of February and will run for 12 weeks, with sessions held every Tuesday from 11:30am to 1:00pm.

The program offers a relaxed and supportive space to yarn, unwind, and explore creativity alongside our talented art teacher, Narges.

We began the session by sharing a feed together before settling into the art class. With everyone already familiar with the group and session, participants jumped straight in, giving it a go and growing even more confident in their artwork.

The atmosphere was calm and welcoming, and it was wonderful to spend time together, sharing yarns and enjoying each other's company.



DJIRRA'S DILLY BAG PROGRAM

In March, Montana, Alkira, Rowena Rose and Harmony Rose attended Djirra's Dilly Bag program together. The Dilly Bag is a culturally grounded, on-Country program that brings Aboriginal women together to connect, share stories and strengthen wellbeing through culture and community. The program also supports women to draw on cultural strength, reduce social isolation and build confidence.

The program provided a safe and supportive space to build connections, reflect on healthy relationships and learn more about available supports. Attending together made the experience especially meaningful, allowing for shared learning and connection with other Aboriginal women.

We are very thankful to Djirra for reaching out and giving us the opportunity to attend. It was a rewarding and empowering experience, and one we would gladly participate in again in the future.



Echuca Community Information Session: Pathways to Home Ownership

Join us for an informative community session about home ownership options and pathways. Lunch will be provided.

When: 29 April

Time: 10:30am – 3:00pm

Where: Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
103-107 Hare St, Echuca

Come along to learn more about:

- AHV's Renter Home Purchase Program
- Homes Victoria's First Peoples Home Ownership Grant
- Home loan options through IBA and NAB
- General information about home ownership pathways

AHV's Housing Pathways team will be on hand to answer questions and provide support. For questions, please email homebuyer@ahvic.org.au

RSVP here:



WARMA BASKETBALL AT VACSAL CARNIVAL

Over the March long weekend, our Warma Under 12 Girls and Under 12 Boys teams proudly represented our community at the VACSAL Basketball Carnival.

Throughout the entire tournament, both teams demonstrated great determination, teamwork and sportsmanship as they competed against strong teams from across Victoria. Their positive attitude and commitment on and off the court truly reflected the values of Warma and our community.

We are extremely proud to share that both teams progressed through pool matches and finals to reach the semi-finals of the carnival. Unfortunately, they fell just short of securing a place in the grand final, but their effort, resilience and perseverance across the weekend were nothing short of exceptional. Reaching semi-finals at such a highly competitive carnival is a significant achievement and something every player should be incredibly proud of.

A heartfelt thank you to the players for their dedication, the coaches for their guidance and encouragement, and the families and supporters who travelled, cheered and supported the teams every step of the way. Your support plays a vital role in creating these opportunities for our young people.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Treaty for generously sponsoring our Warma uniforms. Your support allows our teams to represent Warma with pride, unity and confidence both on and off the court.

We are incredibly proud of how our young people represented themselves, Warma and our wider community throughout the carnival. The future is bright, and we can't wait to see what they achieve next!



WINYANBOGA AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

Our *Winyanboga* women's group continues to provide a welcoming and supportive space for women to come together, connect and share. The group will be running for a few more weeks, with sessions held every Wednesday. We encourage women to attend, have a yarn, and enjoy time with one another in a relaxed and respectful environment.

Earlier this month, we were also proud to celebrate *International Women's Day* on 8 March, recognising the strength, achievements and contributions of women in our community and beyond. The day was a wonderful opportunity to come together, reflect, and celebrate the important role women play in families, culture and community life.





ANNOUNCING TRANSITION INTO A NEW ROLE!

My name is Lani Taga (*Hudson*), and I am a proud Kamilaroi, Yorta Yorta woman.

After several years working in SAAP (*Housing*), I have now stepped into the Aboriginal Unborn Practitioner role. While leaving SAAP is bittersweet, the relationships and lessons shared with our Mob experiencing homelessness and assisting with housing support will always stay with me.

In my new role, I'm honoured to support Families as they prepare to welcome new Boori's and walking alongside them through pregnancy and the first few months of life.

I look forward to advocating for our Families and continuing to serve Community with care, connection, and commitment.

Lani Taga, Unborn Boori Gana Practitioner at Family, Healing and Support Services

Welcome Jessica!



Jessica Smith, Family Safety Coordinator at Family, Healing and Support Services

"I'm Jess, I'm a proud Yorta Yorta woman, born and raised in Echuca, where I've lived for most of my life. I'm also a proud mum to three beautiful children who are my world. Outside of work, I love spending quality time with my children and cooking for my family.

I've worked with Njernda on and off since 2012 in a variety of roles. I'm excited to now step into my new role as Family Safety Unit Coordinator, I have wanted a wrap around Family Violence team for our community for a long time and was over the moon when it was developed this year.

Family violence work is my passion, and I've been in this field for over five years, bringing both lived experience and education to the role. I'm committed to focusing on therapeutic healing responses, strengthening families, and working in preventative ways to create long-term change for community. My goal is to one day work myself out of a job, to see our community safe, strong, and free from violence.

I'm proud to be part of Njernda and to continue walking alongside our community."

WOMEN'S ART CLASSES

THIS PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE FOR LOCAL ABORIGINAL WOMEN AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER

Our Women's Art Class is back every Tuesday. Come along and enjoy a safe, relaxed space to yarn, unwind, and get creative together with our lovely art teacher, Narges.

EVERY TUESDAY
LUNCH IS PROVIDED

TIMES
11.30am - 1.00pm

YOUTH AND WELLBEING UNIT
59 MCMILLAN ROAD, ECHUCA

CONTACT DETAILS

Alkira Hearn - 0457 975 150

Montana Handy - 0409636235

Jameena Jackson - 0419 280 349

STRONG ROOTS, SAFE FUTURES

Njernda Family Services recently hosted an online CarerKafe session for our carers titled *Strong Roots, Safe Futures: Keeping Aboriginal Children Connected to Culture*. The session was presented by Yolanda Finette, a proud Yorta Yorta woman and award-winning holistic life coach, consultant, and wellbeing facilitator.

The session created a thoughtful space for learning, reflection, and discussion, with a strong focus on the importance of cultural connection for Aboriginal children in care. Yolanda spoke about culture as a source of strength, identity, and belonging, and highlighted the vital role carers play in nurturing and protecting this connection.

A key focus of the session was the role of Cultural Support Plans. Cultural Support Plans are essential tools that help ensure Aboriginal children are supported to stay connected to their culture, family, community, and Country while in care. These plans are living documents developed in partnership

with the child, their family, community members, Aboriginal organisations, and carers. Their purpose is to uphold each child's cultural rights and support their wellbeing, identity, and sense of belonging.

Yolanda emphasised that cultural connection goes beyond attending events or activities. It is about the relationships, storytelling, language, everyday experiences, and creating opportunities for children to feel proud of who they are and where they come from. Strong Cultural Support Plans reflect the unique identity of each child and support meaningful connections to mob, Elders, and community.

Carers play an important role in bringing Cultural Support Plans to life which includes supporting participation in cultural events, acknowledging significant dates, encouraging conversations about culture, incorporating cultural learning into daily routines, and creating safe spaces where children feel comfortable asking questions and exploring their identity.



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

If you're feeling no good or need some extra support, yarning about how you're feeling with someone you trust can help.

You and your loved ones can also find support through your local Aboriginal Medical Service or one of these crisis and support services:

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and Aboriginal Medical Services in each state and territory.
naccho.org.au

WellMob

wellmob.org.au

Brother to Brother

24-hour Crisis Line for Aboriginal Men
1800 435 799

Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)

1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Kids Helpline (24/7)

(For 5-25 yrs)

1800 551 800
kidshelp.com.au

Lifeline (24/7)

13 1114
lifeline.org.au

Mensline (24/7)

1300 78 99 78
mensline.org.au

Headspace

(for 12-25 yrs)

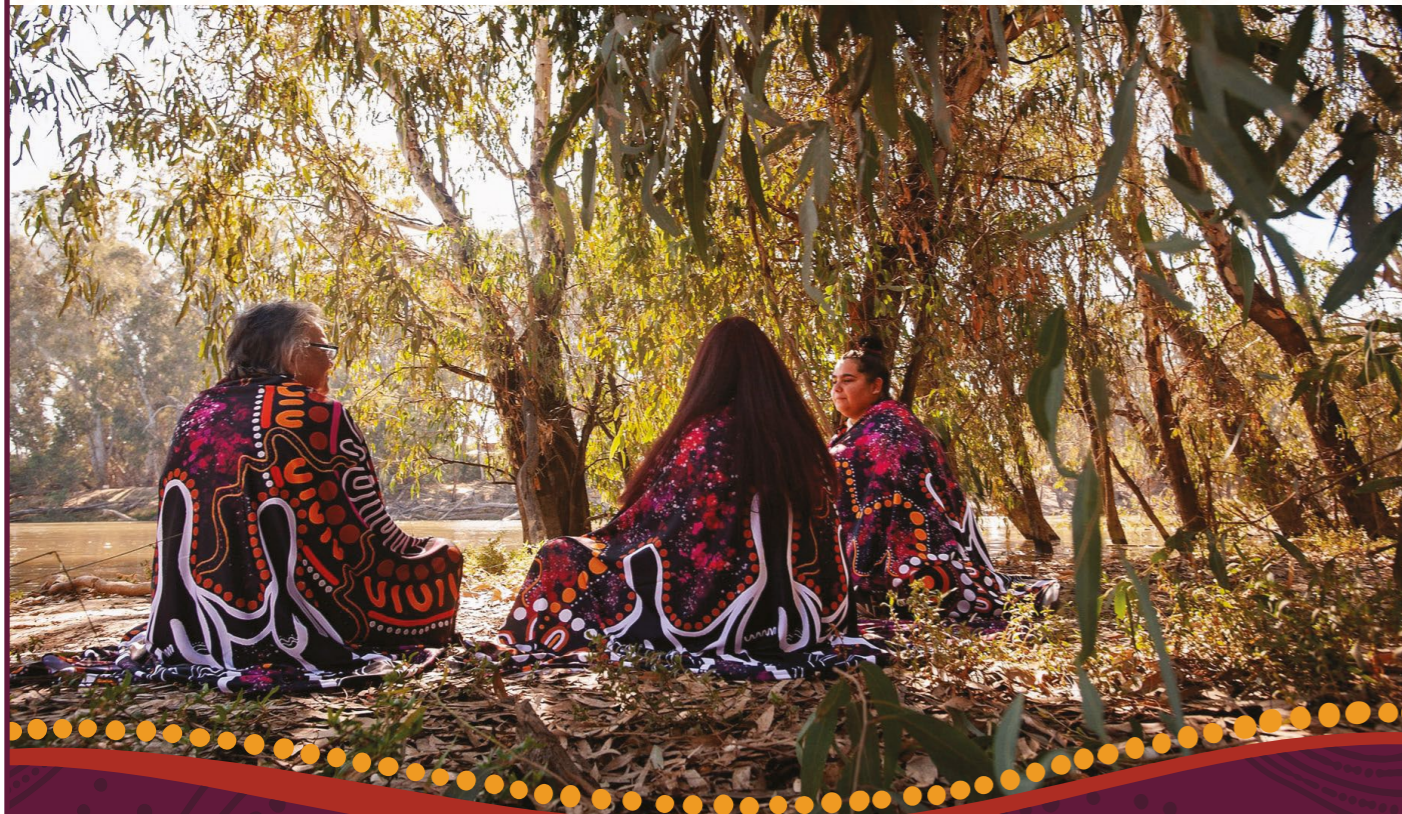
1800 650 890
eheadspace.org.au

13YARN (24/7)

13 92 76
www.13yarn.org.au

Beyond Blue (24/7)

1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au






membership drive Join the Njernda Community!

APPLY NOW

To join the Njernda community, simply download the membership form on our website, or come by the Corporate Office to pick up a copy.

Applications can then be forwarded to Therese at our Corporate Office - ThereseS@njernda.com.au

Membership benefits

-  **Housing eligibility** - community must be a Njernda member to apply for housing opportunities.
-  **Newsletter subscription** - keep upto date with community news.
-  **Member events** - invites to Njernda events throughout the year.






COME & TRY

WARMA TURTLES
AUSKICK AND SUPERKICK

2026 NAB AFL AUSKICK AND SUPERKICK REGISTRATION SESSION

Wednesday 22nd April 2026
Echuca East Recreation Reserve
4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Everyone registered will be invited to play at half time at the MCG
Essendon vs Richmond - Dreamtime Game

SLEEP WELL HABITS

To celebrate World Sleep Day 2026, the World Sleep Society advocates for the theme "Sleep Well, Live Better," emphasizing that sleep is a pillar of health as vital as nutrition and exercise. Here are key habits to adopt for better sleep quality and quantity:

1. Build a Consistent Schedule

- **Fixed Wake-Up Time:** Wake up at the same time every day, including weekends, to support your body's internal clock.
- **Sleep Duration:** Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep each night to allow full restorative sleep cycles.

2. Optimise Your Environment

- **Bedroom Sanctuary:** Keep your room cool (around 18°C), dark, and quiet. Use blackout curtains, earplugs, or white noise if needed.
- **Association Matters:** Use your bed only for sleep and intimacy. Avoid work or screens in bed to strengthen sleep cues.

3. Establish Pre-Sleep Rituals

- **Wind-Down Routine:** Begin relaxing activities 30–60 minutes before bed, such as reading, a warm bath, or mindfulness.
- **Digital Curfew:** Switch off electronic devices 30–60 minutes before sleep, as blue light can suppress melatonin.

4. Manage Daytime Behaviours

- **Morning Sunlight:** Get at least 15 minutes of outdoor light soon after waking to reset your body clock.
- **Diet & Stimulants:** Avoid heavy meals 2–4 hours before bed, limit caffeine 6 hours before sleep, and avoid alcohol near bedtime.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Daily physical activity supports better sleep; finish vigorous exercise 2–3 hours before bed.

5. Handle Wakefulness Mindfully

- **The 20-Minute Rule:** If you can't fall asleep, leave the bed and do a quiet activity in dim light until sleepy.
- **Manage Worry:** Schedule worry or journaling time earlier in the day to prevent racing thoughts at night.



We are hiring

- Family Safety Intake Worker
- Koorie Supported Playgroups Facilitator (Yarka Yaka Daya)
- Youth Worker
- Health and Ageing Services Manager
- Receptionist (Corporate Services)
- Early Years Manager



CURRENT VACANCIES

Find all our current vacancies on our website or via the Seek website.

Njernda
Aboriginal Corporation

Medical Centre - 03 5481 0600

Youth & Wellbeing - 03 5481 0630

Corporate Services - 03 5481 0610

Families, Healing and Support - 03 5481 0620

Berrimba Childcare - 03 5481 0640

Corporate Office:
51-55 Heygarth St, Echuca

www.njernda.com.au

