



Photo courtesy of The Riverine Herald

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

List of all the upcoming dates to put in your calendar so you don't miss a thing!

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## MIGHTY MURRAY PADDLE

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation, local schools, regional partners and NSW Police, team up for the MMP 2025.

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## WOMEN'S ART PROGRAM

Held on every Tuesday, the Njernda Women's Art Program provides a creative space for the community.

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## Celebrating Sopheia!

Young Indigenous Year 12 student Sopheia Ketteridge has reached a life-changing milestone on her journey to independence.

Sopheia's mother reached out to Njernda Koori Kid Engagement Worker, Nicole Cooper to make sure her daughter had professional guidance to prepare for her probationary license.

Nicole connected Sopheia with the CCLN L2P program, which linked her to a local driving instructor. Through several lessons with RAV Driving School, and with the support of CCLN, Sopheia was able to build the confidence and skills she needed most. The program worked flexibly around her VCE studies, ensuring lessons were scheduled after school hours.

Thanks to Sopheia's dedication and the encouragement of her family, community, and support programs, she has now achieved her probationary license.

Congratulations Sopheia on this incredible milestone!

# NJERDA MEDICAL UPDATE

As we near the end of a productive year, the Medical Department is pleased to share an update on the work, achievements, and improvements made across our team. It has been a year marked by professional development, stronger networks, increased clinical activity, and continued dedication to delivering quality care for our community.

Throughout the year, several staff members completed important cultural training to strengthen our service delivery. Denise, Colleen, Rebecca and Vivianne successfully completed the National Cultural Educators Cultural Mentors Network program.

In addition, Margaret represented our team at the KMS Gathering at VACCHO, while Kim and Sarah attended the CATSINaM Regional Congress Meeting, continuing to build valuable professional and cultural networks that support our ongoing work here at Njernda.

Clinically, we have seen a notable increase in Health Assessments and GP Management Plans (GMPs). This rise reflects both our community's commitment to preventative healthcare and the growth of our medical workforce, including an increase in the number of doctors available throughout the year.

To support these improvements, Judith has been working on the introduction of two new software systems (Best Practice and Automed). These tools will help streamline appointments, enhance record management, and improve the overall efficiency of our services.

The annual Health Assessment Draw has now began and will close on 14th of December. The winner will be announced on Friday 19th of December. Community members who have not yet completed their Health Assessment are encouraged to book one before the closing date for the chance to **win a \$100 Wish gift card.**

Overall, this has been a strong year for the Medical Department, made possible by the hard work and teamwork demonstrated across all roles. We thank everyone for their commitment and look forward to building on this positive momentum in the year ahead.



# MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM HACC/CHSP

- Men's Bowls Day at the Echuca Bowls Club on 24th October was a great success, with plenty of laughs and friendly competition.

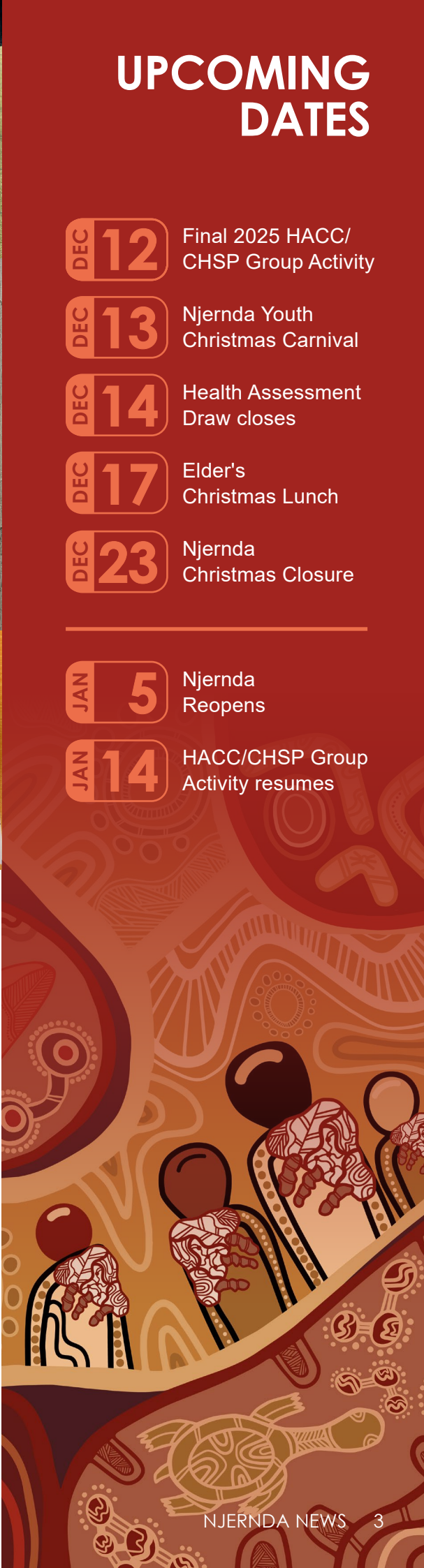
- Staff attended the Elder's Summit in Melbourne on 28th & 29th October, gaining valuable insights and connections to better support our community.

We continue to offer our Wednesday and Friday Groups for both HACC and CHSP clients, providing regular opportunities for social connection and wellbeing. If you would like to join group, please get in contact to find out if your eligible.

We also have a couple of exciting new activities are also in development. Stay tuned!

# UPCOMING DATES

- DEC 12 Final 2025 HACC/CHSP Group Activity
- DEC 13 Njernda Youth Christmas Carnival
- DEC 14 Health Assessment Draw closes
- DEC 17 Elder's Christmas Lunch
- DEC 23 Njernda Christmas Closure
- JAN 5 Njernda Reopens
- JAN 14 HACC/CHSP Group Activity resumes





# EARLY YEARS AWARDS

Emma Taylor and Auntie Colleen Day were selected as finalist for the Victorian 2025 Early Years awards under Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd Best Start is a program run by local communities. It helps improve early childhood services by focusing on Aboriginal culture, identity, and self-determination.

The category they were nominated for - 'Improving access and participation in Early learning'. This award recognises one or more early childhood services and/or organisations that are taking action to promote access, ongoing participation and engagement in early learning, particularly for families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage.

Presented by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, in partnership with Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative, Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative, Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative, Njernda Aboriginal Cooperation and Dandenong & Districts Aborigines Cooperative Ltd.

The Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL) helps lead six Aboriginal Best Start sites. Best Start is a program run by local communities. It helps improve early childhood services by focusing on Aboriginal culture, identity, and self-determination.

VACSAL has worked with Best Start since it began in 2002. They give advice on what works to help more Aboriginal children go to kindergartens, Supported Playgroups, and Maternal Child Health services. They also help make sure these services make them feel welcomed, respected and safe.

VACSAL works with other groups to keep Aboriginal culture strong in the early learning centres they support. Their work is helping children go to early learning services, supporting families to connect with services, and fostering strong cultural identity amongst Aboriginal children

This event was held on Thursday 6th November in Melbourne .



# MIGHTY MURRAY PADDLE

Thank you to all our sponsors listed below and a big shout out to the Njernda Team for entering! We had 40 young people entered in the Njernda Team, which was made up of Warma (20 people), BDAC (10 people) and Deni (10 people).

The Murray Marathon program bring together youth from across the Bendigo, Echuca, and Deniliquin regions to take part in a journey of culture, connection, and collaboration.

In partnership with NSW Police, schools, and community organisations, this initiative has strengthened relationships and inspired positive pathways through education, culture, and leadership.

The Paddle started on Monday 17th November in Yarrowonga, and finished up on Friday 21st November in Koondrook, with Wednesday 19th being 'be seen, be bright' Day, which encouraged some fun costumes! The paddle equalled 415kms, and Njernda fundraised for 'Black Dog Institute' to support better mental health.







## Congratulations Neha!

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation are proud to congratulate Neha Kaur on graduating as a CPA Certified Practising Accountant. Neha is part of the Finance team at Corporate Services. Well done Neha!



# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF BERRIMBA

On Saturday 22nd November, the Berrimba Childcare Centre celebrated our 40 year anniversary. This event was hosted at the Moama Bowling Club from 6pm until 9.30pm.

This milestone event allowed all past and present staff and children who attended Berrimba (or formally known to mob as "Playgroup") to commemorate a wonderful and iconic anniversary with a free 2-course meal which included a photo presentation that reflected the fight for equality to open first Aboriginal Childcare centre in Echuca, located upon the Wollithica country of the Yorta Yorta Nation.

This event reflected upon the legacy of two foundation members Aunty Valarie Mitchell and Aunty Melva Johnson. These two elders, along with the local aboriginal women of the community were champions, and advocates for creating change amongst the local Childcare system.

Additional staff and community members were also recognized as key contributors towards the establishment, operations and management who supported all local Aboriginal women within Echuca and surrounding districts to provide a culturally safe space for Koori women and children.

"Berrimba was originally established to support Koori mums to provide culturally safe and culturally appropriate childcare of all babies and children".

It was during the everyday services where multifunctional care services also allowed Koori mums to reenter the workforce as full-time, part-time or casual staff, support other families who had limited or not access to other mainstream childcare services, some only offering one or two Koori kids access to their childcare services, kindergartens and/or afterschool care. Berrimba achieved this goal.



Our teams are taking a short break over the Christmas and New Year period. Our services will be closed from Wednesday 23 December 2025, and we will be reopening on Monday 5 January 2026.

If you're a patient at our medical clinic, please remember to check your scripts to ensure you have plenty to last you over the holidays. Patients are urged to book now if they need a prescription or a check up before our closure period.

For any urgent medical care during our closure period, please call 000 or visit the Echuca Regional Health emergency department.

There are also mental health services available, including 13YARN - which can be contacted on 13 92 76 or at [13yarn.org.au](http://13yarn.org.au) - and Lifeline, which is at [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au) or on 13 11 14.

We hope you have a safe and happy holiday, and we will see you in the new year!





This program is available for our local  
aboriginal women ages 16 years and over.

# Woman's Art Program

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We are offering a holistic approach to alternative therapy, particularly for those seeking creative and expressive outlets for managing stress, anxiety, or other mental health challenges.

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**Program to be on a Tuesday,**

"Art is how we tell our stories without words"



Come along and enjoy some relaxing time with our lovely art teacher, Narges.

**PROGRAM RUNS FROM:**  
12:00PM - 2:00PM

Lunch is provided. Please contact staff below if transport is needed.

If you have any dietary requirements, please contact Alkira Hearn below before the day.



**EVERY TUESDAY**



**TIMES**  
12:00PM - 2:00PM

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED,  
PLEASE CONTACT NJERENDA  
STAFF BELOW:**

**Alkira Hearn** - 0457 975 150

**Jameena Jackson** - 0419 280 349

**LOCATION:**

**YOUTH AND WELLBEING UNIT:  
59 MCMILLAN ROAD, ECHUCA**

## WOMEN'S ART PROGRAM

Our Woman's Art Program has been thriving, with an amazing turnout of 4–10 women joining each week. The sessions provide a warm, welcoming space for Aboriginal women to connect, create, and unwind together. Led by our talented art teacher, Narges, participants explore creative expression as a form of healing and storytelling.

Each Tuesday, (last sessions was on Wednesdays) the group gathers from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at the Youth and Wellbeing Unit at 59 McMillan Road, Echuca for art, laughter, and community connection, with lunch provided.

### Key Highlights

- Consistent attendance of 4–10 women each week.
- A safe, creative space for women to express themselves and connect.
- Guided by art teacher Narges.
- Lunch provided – time to sit, share, and build community bonds.
- Positive feedback and growing interest in the sessions.
- Program held every Tuesday, 12–2 PM, at 59 McMillan Road, Echuca.





JOIN US FOR A CHRISTMAS PARTY!



*Elder's  
Tingle &  
Mingle*

**Date:** Wednesday, 17th Dec  
**Time:** 11:30am – 2:00pm  
**Venue:** Moama RSL

*Compulsory RSVP*

Transport is available upon request and will be provided by Njernda or the Club Bus.

Please note that guests must be present on the day to receive their gift. Compulsory RSVP by Monday 8 December, for door registration, lunch, and gifts.

No registration = no entry, due to Club requirements. Also advise any dietary requirements upon RSVP.

All RSVPs must be made via Medical Reception.  
 We look forward to celebrating the festive season together!

NJERNDAYOUTH SERVICES  
PRESENTS..

# CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL

SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER  
 LOCATION : ECHUCA EAST SCHOOL  
 TIME : 11AM - 2PM

Come celebrate Christmas with us! There will be...

- Food Trucks
- Rides
- Fun Activities
- Santa Claus

Contact Information  
5481 0630

## CHRISTMAS TREE PRESENT COLLECTION

COME TO SANTA'S WORKSHOP AT  
 NJERNDAS YOUTH & WELLBEING  
 BUILDING TO COLLECT YOUR  
 PRESENTS!!

WHERE: 59 MCMILLAN RD, ECHUCA

COLLECTION TIMES:  
 TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 8.30AM - 4.30PM  
 WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 8.30AM - 4.30PM  
 THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 8.30AM - 4.30PM

PLEASE NOTE: PRESENTS MUST BE COLLECTED ON THE DATES PROVIDED - WE WILL NOT HOLD ANY AFTER THOSE DATES.

**Njernda**  
Aboriginal Corporation

Contact Information  
5481 0630

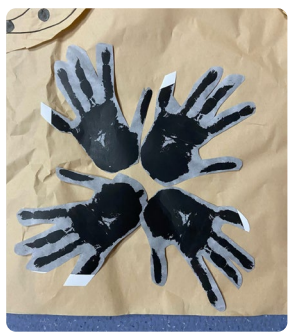
## KKE ART PROJECT WITH HEADSPACE

We are excited to share that we had the official unveiling of our community art project 'One headspace, many communities', on Friday 5th December with Echuca Headspace.

This project began at the start of 2025, and it is now time to celebrate the incredible young people who have been involved. Over the six-week program, they demonstrated hard work, commitment, and creativity, and we are proud to showcase their achievements.

We would like to also acknowledge Bunnings, Donchi's, and Anita from Echuca Engineering for their generous contributions to this project.

A big thank you to Njernda Family Services for their financial support in bringing this project to life.



**Njernda**  
Aboriginal Corporation

*Keeping our community strong*

## 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](http://naccho.org.au)

**WellMob**  
[wellmob.org.au](http://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](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

**Kids Helpline (24/7)**  
**(For 5-25 yrs)**  
 1800 551 800  
[kidshelp.com.au](http://kidshelp.com.au)

**Lifeline (24/7)**  
 13 11 14  
[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

**Mensline (24/7)**  
 1300 78 99 78  
[mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

**Headspace**  
**(for 12-25 yrs)**  
 1800 650 890  
[headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)

**13YARN (24/7)**  
 13 92 76  
[www.13yarn.org.au](http://www.13yarn.org.au)

**Beyond Blue (24/7)**  
 1300 224 636  
[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)





## We are hiring

- Health & Ageing Services Manager
- Youth & Well-being Services Manager
- Corporate Receptionist
- Early Years Manager
- Kinship Care/Case Contracting Worker
- Accreditation Coordinator



### 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

Family Services - 03 5481 0620

Berrimba Childcare - 03 5481 0640

Corporate Office:  
51-55 Heygarth St, Echuca

[www.njernda.com.au](http://www.njernda.com.au)

