



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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MEET OUR BERRIMBA KINDER TEAM

A little bit about some of our brilliant kinder team members.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST GRADUATES!

Hard work, heart and 18 months - congratulations to our graduates!

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Meet Montana!

Montana is a proud Muthi Muthi, Latje Latje and Byeellee woman, born and raised in Robinvale and now calling Echuca home for the past 12 years - where she's raising her two beautiful kids and putting down deep roots in the community.

As a family member of those impacted by the Stolen Generation, this role is deeply personal to Montana. She applied for the 'Bringing Them Home' position because family means everything to her, and being able to help others reconnect with family, find their identity and heal is something she takes real pride in.

In this role, Montana supports Stolen Generations survivors and their families through activities and social and emotional wellbeing, to walk alongside our mob with compassion, care and lived understanding.

When she's not supporting others, you'll find her satisfying that sweet tooth, keeping things clean and tidy, or being there for friends and family.

We are so glad to have Montana as part of the Njernda and look forward to the difference she will make.

KMART AND STARS FOUNDATION LAUNCH

A landmark partnership between Kmart Group and the Stars Foundation is creating new pathways from education to employment for First Nations and Torres Strait Islander young women across Australia.

Building on more than ten years of collaboration, the formal partnership will scale education-to-employment opportunities nationally for First Nations young women.

Kmart Group has already achieved Indigenous workforce participation of 4.5% across Kmart and Target, exceeding the national population rate - and this partnership expands that commitment further.

The Stars Foundation currently mentors and empowers over 4,300 First Nations girls and young women across 80 programs in partner schools nationwide.

Results are already coming through, with one Stars Program participant set to begin a management role at Kmart in Western Australia.

From March 2025, Kmart Group and Stars Foundation will expand store-based relationships, deliver workshops through Stars Programs, and equip store leaders to better support First Nations young women and girls in their communities.

Stars Foundation CEO Andrea Goddard said supporting First Nations young women into employment strengthens not just individuals, but families, communities, and future generations. A deadly outcome for mob right across the country.



ON COUNTRY WITH AUNTY CHERYL

Njernda Family Services staff, children and carers recently spent a deadly day on Yorta Yorta country, guided by Aunty Cheryl Bourke from Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative in Mooroopna.

The day began with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, before the group got hands-on making emu feather and gumnut necklaces and exploring traditional artefacts. Aunty Cheryl then brought history to life, sharing the story of the Cummeragunja Walk Off and the founding of Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, before leading the group on a walking tour through Rumbalara, taking in current services, the old shacks and concrete houses, and finishing with the iconic Flats Walk.

It was a powerful day of learning, connection and culture, and Njernda is grateful to Aunty Cheryl and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative for so generously welcoming us onto country and sharing their knowledge.

UPCOMING DATES

JUN 8 King's Birthday Holiday
All services closed

JUN 11 Batja Yorta Itjumatj
Healthy Brother

JUN 24 Centrelink Outreach
At Family Services

JUN 29 Koorie Youth Health & Wellbeing Camp
29th June - 1st July

JUL 5 NAIDOC WEEK
5th July - 12th July

JUL 10 NAIDOC closure day
All services closed

GROWING MORE THAN JUST VEGGIES!

Eleven young mob from Njernda have come together to design, build, and grow their very own veggie garden at the Njernda Youth Hub, and the results are deadly!

Led by Njernda's Youth and Wellbeing team, the project was co-designed by 11 young people aged 12–19, with young people driving every decision around the garden's purpose, design, and use. The mob took initiative early, approaching Bunnings for support, securing donated timber to build two planter boxes, and spending time researching seasonal produce and managing their own budget.

More than just a garden, the project incorporates traditional Aboriginal knowledge about native plants, bush food, and sustainable practices - empowering young people to take an active role in their community while strengthening cultural identity and wellbeing. A huge shoutout to Nadine and the Youth team for making it happen, and to Bunnings for their generous support. Watch this space!



help our children DREAM BIG!



Donations are now being accepted through our website (or the QR code) to help fund additional resources for the Berrimba Childcare Centre.

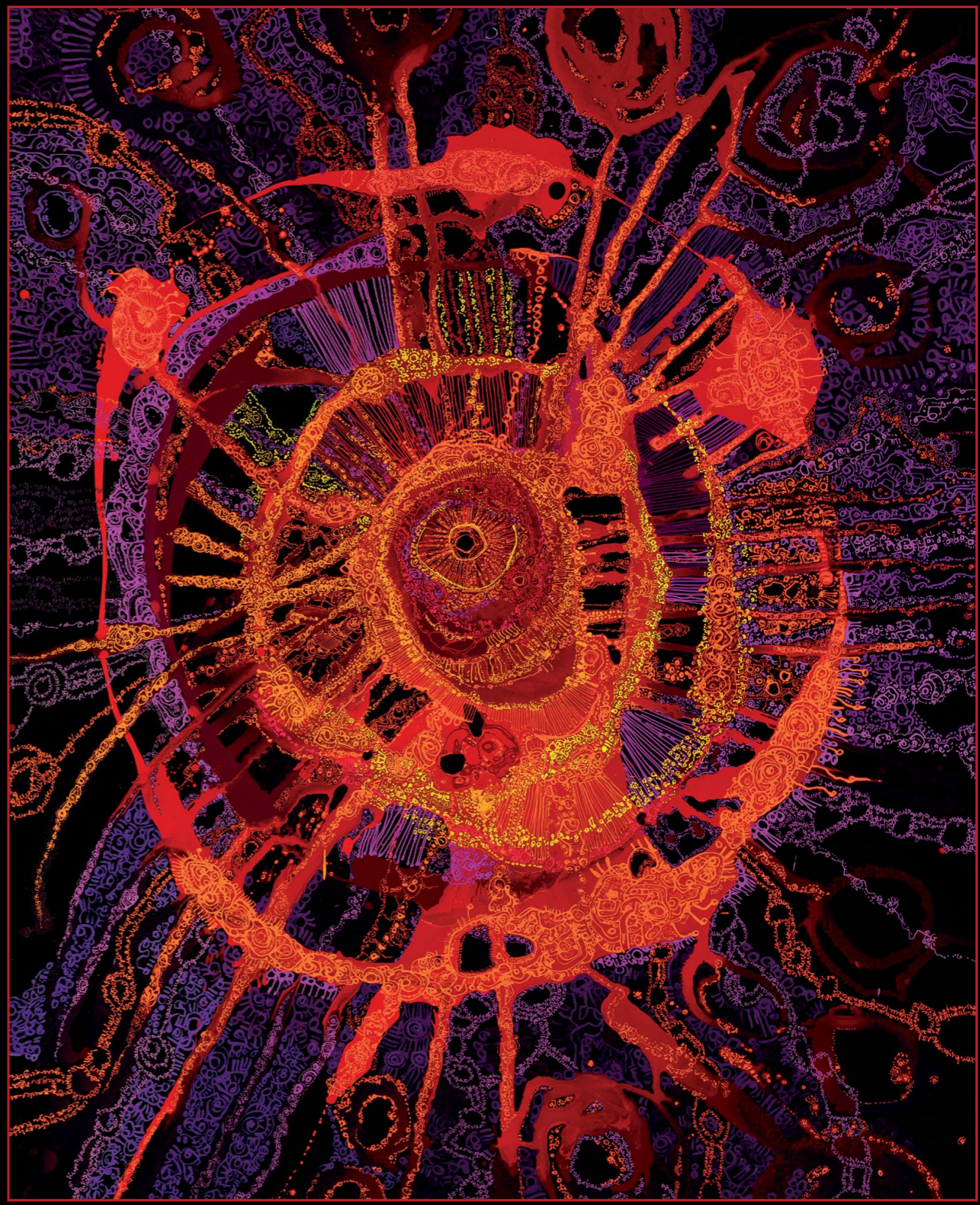
Help us continue the 'forever learning' journey for our community-led education.



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
KOORIE YOUTH HEALTH & WELLBEING CAMP
 JUNE 29TH - JULY 1ST
 LOCATION: FOUR POST DENILQUIN
 AGES: 12 - 17 YEARS OLD

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL - LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE REGISTER BEFORE JUNE 12TH
CONTACT RECEPTION 5481 0630

THIS CAMP IS AN ALCOHOL, SMOKE, VAPE & DRUG FREE EVENT



CELEBRATING 50 NAIDOC WEEK

NAIDOC WEEK 50 YEARS DEADLY 5-12 JULY 2026

Paralpi by Zaachariaha Fielding

Paralpi extends Zaachariaha's acclaimed Inma series and reflects a deeply cultural and immersive narrative grounded in Country. The artwork depicts the sounds of Paralpi, a significant place just outside Mimili on the eastern APY Lands in South Australia. As Zaachariaha describes, Paralpi is a place where people come to embrace and celebrate children, where they are taught by Elders to move and mimic their Clan emblem – for Mimili, this being the maku (witchetty grub).

#NAIDOC2026 #FIFTYEARSDEADLY #NAIDOCWEEK

facebook.com/NAIDOC @naidocweek @naidocweek

Aboriginal Flag designed by Mr Harold Thomas. Torres Strait Islander Flag reproduced by kind permission of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, designed by the late Mr Bernard Namok.

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR 715 HEALTH CHECK THIS YEAR?

Our Njernda Medical Centre team are encouraging all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mob to book in for a 715 Health Check - a comprehensive assessment designed to keep our community strong and healthy.

A 715 Health Check is a free, thorough health assessment available to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It covers everything from physical health and chronic disease to mental health and preventive care, and you should be having one every 9–12 months.

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre is a registered 715 Health Check provider. Booking is easy. Simply call us on (03) 5481 0600 or visit njernda.com.au to make an appointment.

Looking after your health is one of the most deadly choices you can make - for yourself, your family, and your community. Don't put it off!

For more information on 715 Health Checks, visit deadlychoices.com.au/health-checks



MEET THE KINDER TEAM

YVONNE MCKENNER

I have returned to Berrimba as Bush kinder Teacher in 2025; I have worked with children for 34 years now in many kindergartens locally love to bring out the best in every child and helping them to reach their full potential. As an aboriginal woman I know what barriers children face.

I love to support indigenous children and families giving them the skills and confidence for their future.



NARJIG DAY- BURNS

What I love about working and being at Berrimba is that it has always been a safe place for myself and community.

I myself was a Berrimba child spent my years growing up at Berrimba in the after school program as well as the holiday program. I now am a cultural advisor/assistant educator that works within all the rooms especially the Bush kinder space and holiday program.

So not only is it safe for our children but safe for our staff and community. I have consulted on and off over the years teaching culture and dancing.

About 7-8 years ago I decided to study Cert III in early childcare. I may cut my work load down over the years but I don't see myself leaving Berrimba.



ANNA GORDON

I have worked in early childhood education for just over 8 years, with the past 3 years being at Berrimba. Working at Berrimba has been an incredibly rewarding experience and has strengthened my passion for supporting children, families, and the wider community.

I value being part of a service that is deeply connected to community and committed to nurturing and empowering the next generation of children within our local Aboriginal community.

Being part of such a unique and inspiring centre brings me a great sense of pride, and I feel truly privileged to work alongside our future generation of strong, proud community leaders each day.



CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

On Thursday 21 May, Njernda came together to celebrate as 18 staff and community members graduated with a Diploma of Community Services, the culmination of 18 months of hard work and dedication.

The graduation ceremony was held at The Wren Courtyard in Echuca, bringing together graduates, family and partners in training for a proud and joyful celebration. Speeches were delivered by 'Partners in Training' and Maria Isgro, who also played a key role in pulling the day together. It was a wonderful reminder of what our mob can achieve when we back ourselves and each other. This qualification will strengthen the skills and knowledge our team brings to the community every single day.

Congratulations to Maria Isgro, John Mitchell, Denise Barwick, Brody Atkinson, Colin Atkinson, Jennine Atkinson, Lilly Dodds, Nicole Cooper, Stuart Day, Earl Handy, Janelle Handy, Vanessa Handy, Mariah Johnson, Patricia McGrath, Joanne McGrath, Maddison Naismith, Chloe Priestley and Lani Taga.

We are so proud of each and every one of you!



STRONGER TOGETHER: NJERENDA'S ALL STAFF INSERVICE

In May, the Njernda mob gathered for our All Staff Inservice, two full days dedicated to growing together, strengthening our culture, and reaffirming our commitment to community.

Day one was beautifully opened by Ps Neva Takele, Pastoral Care Support Worker from our Corporate Services team, with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, setting a grounded and culturally strong tone for everything that followed. A special thank you also goes to Kate Glenie, Policy Officer at Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group, who helped structure the day and shape the agenda.

Staff from across all teams came together to reflect on the achievements of the past year, sharing what they're most proud of delivering for our community. CEO John Mitchell led the conversation around Njernda's Strategic Plan, with staff contributing ideas and thinking about how their work connects to our bigger vision for the future.

Meena Singh, Former Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, led sessions exploring what it truly means to work within an Aboriginal

Community Controlled Organisation, not just as a job, but as a calling and a deep commitment to community. Anna Webb, leadership coach and facilitator, guided staff through meaningful conversations around communication and how we show up for each other with care and honesty.

A highlight of the two days was a hands-on introduction to AI led by Andrew Gargiulo from Accelerate AI Partners, building staff skills and confidence with new technology that can support the work we do for mob. The program also made space for self-care and reflection, and wrapped up with a shared vision for a future Njernda Hub, a space that reflects who we are and serves our community well.

A special mention goes to the littlest members of the mob who joined us on the day - the babies were definitely the stars of the show and a beautiful reminder of why we do this work!

It was a deadly two days, and we're grateful to everyone who came with open hearts and good energy. Watch this space as we carry these conversations forward into 2026!



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



RECONCILIATION WALK

On Friday 29 May, hundreds of students and community members came together in Echuca for the 2026 Community Walk for Reconciliation, rallying around this year's Reconciliation Week theme, 'All In'.

The morning began in front of Njernda Aboriginal Corporation on Hare St with a traditional Smoking Ceremony led by Uncle Rick Ronnan, with a didgeridoo performance by Narjiic Day-Burns setting the tone for the morning. The crowd then walked the length of the Hare St shopping strip towards the Aquatic Reserve, with flags, handmade banners and signs carried proudly along the way.

At the Aquatic Reserve, student representatives took to the microphone to introduce the morning's speakers, including our very own Njernda CEO John Mitchell, Echuca College principal Jessica Sargeant and Campaspe Shire Mayor Daniel Mackrell. Each speaker reflected on the dedication of the young leaders who made the day so special, and what being 'All In' truly looks like in our community.

The event wrapped up with Echuca College's band performing for the crowd, as students danced and celebrated together. It was a powerful reminder that reconciliation is shared work, and our community showed up beautifully for it.



HEARD ABOUT 20% OFF YOUR REGO BUT NOT SURE IF IT APPLIES TO YOU? HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.



- You must apply, it's not automatic.
- Claim for up to two vehicles per person.
- The vehicle must be registered in the claimant's name.
- Eligible vehicles include cars, utes, vans, motorcycles, scooters and light trucks.
- Pay your registration in instalments? You are eligible.
- Sole trader - vehicle registered in your name, you are eligible.
- Only the current owner can apply.

Applications are open now through Service Victoria until 31 July. Check your eligibility and apply at: service.vic.gov.au/services/registration-rebate





We are hiring!

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

