

STREET BY STREET

Information for Participants



OUTLINE

In every street and neighbourhood, there is an isolated elderly person, and a person living with a disability, and a new settler wanting to communicate and develop connections with locals.

And in every street and neighbourhood, there are people wanting to make connections with others and offer support in simple and practical ways.

Street by Street is a national neighbourhood support program that links people who live in the same street or nearby. The focus is on practical helping tasks which can relieve isolation and make the difference between someone remaining in their own home or needing to move into more supportive accommodation.

Tasks include:

- Taking the bin in and out
- Hanging washing
- Getting a few items from the shops
- Getting mail from the letter box
- Looking after pets during absences or illness

We would like to hear from individuals and organisations around the country interested in participating in rolling out *Street by Street* on a national scale.

Community centres, service clubs, neighbourhood houses, community health centres, scout and guide groups, and voluntary associations are some of the organisations that we hope will participate in auspicing a local *Street by Street* initiative.

Where two or more residents in a street are known to be in need of regular practical support from neighbours, an auspicing group will distribute a flyer in that street, inviting neighbours who wish to lend a hand to make contact, attend an information session, and begin connecting up.

Our goal is **100** auspiced *Street by Street* groups by the end of 2011. And **1000** by 2012.

Street by Street is a project of the Community Building National Network, directed by a National Steering Group. It is auspiced by the Centre for Civil Society.

We invite your participation.

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HOW DOES IT WORK?



Street by Street begins when two or more residents in a street are known to be in need of regular practical support from neighbours. This need will be known by, or communicated to, an *auspice group* which will take the initiative in initiating and coordinating the linking up of neighbours with these residents.

An *auspice group* may be a community centre, a service club, a health centre, a scout or guide group, a sporting club, a church or a voluntary association.

Or an *auspice group* can be an informal group of two or more residents. The families of residents may initiate an auspice group if they wish.

The auspice group will distribute a flyer in a street, inviting residents who wish to lend a hand to make contact and attend an information session.

The information session will outline the purpose of the linking up, establish some simple rules, and provide details of an external contact person to whom residents may make contact for advice. There is no reporting or documentation of activity undertaken. Periodic telephone or meeting contact between the auspice group and the neighbours may be undertaken as the auspice group sees fit.

Social connection through practical tasks

Our focus is on linking up for the purpose of undertaking practical tasks. Social connections do not come easily or automatically, especially across boundaries of age or language or culture. **Street by Street** does not set out to engineer social connections. It aims to help residents in a street or neighbourhood to break the ice and assist neighbours with practical tasks. If social connections follow between residents, that is great, but these cannot be anticipated or orchestrated. The social connections are a matter between the individuals concerned. The role of **Street by Street** is to help residents to make the initial contact. After that, it is up to them.

Neighbours not volunteers

Participants in a **Street by Street** link-up are not volunteers, they are people in a voluntary relationship with their neighbours, as neighbours. Because they are not volunteers, an auspice group is not expected or required to assume liability for the activities of neighbours.

The aim of **Street by Street** is to recover the practice, and art, of neighbourliness. We don't want to surround this activity with rules and regulations, nor do we want to subject participants to the usual procedures that volunteers in formal organizations are subject to.

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GETTING STARTED

Auspice Groups

Any community organization or two or more residents in a street or neighbourhood may initiate a **Street by Street** link up.

1. The first step for the group or residents is to express their interest through the online form at <http://www.civilsociety.org.au/StreetbyStreet.htm>
2. A discussion will take place with a member of the National Steering Group about their knowledge of the street (s) or neighbourhood(s) in question, their knowledge of residents in need of regular practical support from neighbours, and their capacity to act as an auspice group and observe the simple rules of **Street by Street**.
3. This auspice group will then proceed to initiate and coordinate the linking up of neighbours with these residents.
4. The *auspice group* will have access to a web space where information and experiences may be shared. A comprehensive **Street by Street** map of Australia will be built up indicating areas of coverage.
5. State and territory coordinators will be appointed to work with the National Steering Group to oversee the process of extension throughout Australia.

Residents

Residents will be given a contact number that they may call in the event of any problems that may arise.

How big is a street or neighbourhood?

There is no specification as to the size of a Street by Street link up in terms of area or numbers of participants, but as a rule of thumb, links between people should be within walking distance.

Protocols

Street by Street is a very simple program that aims to re-kindle links between neighbours that might once have formed spontaneously but which, in our day and age, require a little facilitation. It is our intention to run **Street by Street** as a simple informal network, operating on a very large scale across Australia.

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NATIONAL STEERING GROUP

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Lexie Cook, Suncare Community Services QLD

Sally Karambetsas, Villa Maria VIC

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Cassandra Sheppard, Mantle Housing Limited QLD

David Hill, PATH Governance Group ACT

Marja Rouse, Parent ACT

Robyn McKay, LINC (Living in Networked Communities) CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn ACT

Heidi Day, Peckys Ltd NSW

Barbara Jackson, Montmorency Community Group VIC

Lauren Davies, Aftercare Complex Services - Tirrikee NSW

Glennis Ford, CW ADFQ Alcohol and Drug Services QLD

Kelly O'Brien, Toorak Secondary College VIC

Sancha Donald, Accessible Arts NSW

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Register your interest: <http://www.civilsociety.org.au/StreetbyStreet.htm>

Further information:

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