Inviting elected officials to your Neighbourhood House Week event

Having your local member and/or head of your local Council or Shire visit your Centre is a powerful way to build a relationship and advocate for your organisation. By showing your elected official first-hand the work that you do, how you serve your community, and how their support can support your efforts, you can make a lasting impression. This is your opportunity to shine.

And what better time to invite your elected official than during Neighbourhood House Week, which is designed to showcase and celebrate the great work of Centres right across Australia.

Showcase Your Centre

- Try to organise your event in such a way that your elected official can speak to, and meet with, some of your centre members and visitors.
- Personalise the experience by inviting an individual who has benefited from one of your Centre programmes to share a personal story of how your Centre and the programme has made a positive impact on their life.
- Ask your elected official to say a few words in support of your organisation (you will need to provide him or her with briefing notes about your Centre well in advance)
- Connect the Dots. This is not only an opportunity to showcase your Centre, but to (gently) promote the message that ongoing support from the Local and State Government is vital to ensure your Centre can continue to serve the community into the future.

Things to Remember Before and During the Visit

- What two or three points do you want to drive home with your elected officials? Make sure your promotional materials reflect these points.
- Invite your elected officials as far in advance as possible: they receive many invites every day.
  - Outline the details of their role at the event e.g. will they be speaking? Presenting an award? Meeting participants?
  - Provide your contact details
  - Request that they RSVP to you by a certain date
- Maximise the value of the visit by inviting media to attend the event. Make sure the elected official knows in advance that there will potentially be media representatives
in attendance. Note: media are more likely to attend if they know an elected official will be there – so let them know!

- Arrange to have photographs taken! Remember that you may need to ask people in the photos to sign a consent form so that the photos can be used for publicity purposes.

**Things to Remember After the Visit**

- Send thank you letters, including any press releases, news articles, and photos from the event.
- Share photos and articles via email and through social media.

**The Invitation**

We have included an invitation template for guidance on what information to include in your request to your elected official.