



## Media Release

Thursday 8 September, 2024

### IRL Sunday Campaign to Combat the Loneliness Epidemic

A new campaign, IRL Sunday encourages all Australians to get together in real life to combat the loneliness epidemic. On Sunday 8th of September people across Australia will get together to have fun, raise awareness and money for the thousands of young people experiencing vulnerability. This fun campaign, run by Edmund Rice Community Services asks Australians of all ages, to arrange a catch-up, in real life for a great cause. There'll be barbeques, picnics, beach walks, brunches, park cricket matches and everything in between.

With almost 1 in 3 (32%) Australians reporting feeling loneliness, connecting with others has never been more important.[1]

Edmund Rice Community Services, the charity running IRL Sunday, provides much-needed programs and initiatives to Australia's young people. Many of the children and young people who participate in Edmund Rice Community Services programs are some of the most vulnerable in our society. Many are in out-of-home care, are refugees, or are asylum seekers.

It's free to host an IRL Sunday get-together with lots of great resources available online. People can register to host an event, donate online, or find out more at [www.irlsunday.org.au](http://www.irlsunday.org.au).

Edmund Rice Community Services Executive Director, Andrée Brown says 'IRL Sunday encourages all Australians to connect for a purpose. IRL Sunday is a day for all Australians to spend time with their loved ones, connecting face to face for a great cause.'

Ms Brown further said 'sadly, many of the people we support have experienced adversity or trauma in their young lives. Money raised from the IRL Sunday campaign will help them experience safety, connection and belonging.'

'Many of us say we'll catch up with our friends and family in real life but are too busy to do so, for the young people we support it's not always possible for them to create such connections. At Edmund Rice Community Services, we address the impact of trauma, isolation, and loneliness on young people – the IRL Sunday campaign supports us to continue that work.' Ms Brown said.

#### **About Edmund Rice Community Services [\(ERCS\)](#)**

ERCS is a national community services organisation whose vision is to create communities where people thrive and belong. Through many programs and initiatives, ERCS delivers positive impact through social connection, resilience, and individual and community empowerment. We aim to address the impacts of trauma, isolation, and loneliness on the young people we walk alongside.

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