

Inside Gossip



Spring is the perfect time to celebrate growth, connection and community and here at Kooloorra we are seeing all of these in action.

Kooloorra Community Centre warmly thanks Randwick Council for their ongoing support and partnership. We are especially grateful for the positive outcome of our recent Randwick Club Grants application, which will help us continue delivering programs that strengthen community connections and provide valuable support to local families.

Kooloora Supported Playgroup



Spring is upon us, and what better way to celebrate the season of new beginnings than by coming together at our Kooloora Supported Playgroup! The warmer weather has brought plenty of smiles, laughter, and energy into our sessions, and we are so grateful to see both familiar and new families joining in.

In July, we had the privilege of welcoming Aunty Maxine to our playgroup for NAIDOC celebrations. She shared the beautiful creation story of Tiddalik the Frog — the very thirsty, greedy frog who drank up all the rivers and billabongs. In their desperation, the other animals came together to make Tiddalik laugh, which caused him to release all the water back to the land, creating the freshwater sources we know today. The children (and parents alike!) were captivated by the story, and it was a wonderful opportunity to learn, share, and celebrate culture together.

As much as our playgroup is a space for fun and connection, it is also important to remind everyone that children need to be supervised by their parents or carers at all times. We recently had a few issues where children weren't being adequately looked after. These matters were addressed immediately, and we thank families for their cooperation and understanding. To keep the playgroup safe, enjoyable, and inclusive for everyone, we kindly ask all parents and carers to remain present and engaged with their children during sessions.

Our Supported Playgroup continues to be a place where families can come together to play, learn, and build community connections. With spring in full swing, we look forward to more laughter, learning, and shared moments with all of you.



If you have a child aged 5–14 and live within the local area, we'd love for you to join us at Kooloora Community Centre every Monday from 3:00–5:00pm for our Kids Zone program! This program is a safe, welcoming, and fun space for children to make friends, learn new skills, and enjoy exciting activities. The best part is, it's completely free with no registration fees.

Over the past few weeks, the rainy weather has kept us indoors, but that hasn't stopped the fun! We've been getting creative with new indoor activities. Last Monday, the children made their very own coloured playdough, which was a huge hit. The kids loved mixing, shaping, and playing with their creations. We've also enjoyed plenty of arts and crafts, including painting and bracelet-making. Now that Winter is coming to an end, we're excited to spend more time outdoors again, with plenty of sports and games planned for the warmer afternoons ahead!

Children attending our Kids Zone program get to enjoy:

- Free snacks and a homemade meal
- Homework assistance in a supportive environment
- Fun activities including sports, arts and crafts, and group games

Whether your child loves being active, being creative, or simply spending time with friends, there's something for everyone at Kids Zone.



Vacation Care

The program ran from Monday, 7 July – Friday, 18 July. Our most popular day was a new excursion to Flip Out—somewhere we haven't been before. With 31 children attending, it turned out to be a huge hit. This was followed by an equally popular Raptor Reptiles Day in celebration of NAIDOC Week, where we focused on the cultural significance and connection of different animals to Country.

We were very lucky to have been approved for the Free Education Access Program with the Centennial Parklands Foundation, where we participated in their Campfire Club program, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. It was a very educational experience, with a tour of the parklands and a demonstration on how to make fire using traditional methods. We all enjoyed roasted marshmallows after!

We also introduced Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu to the kids with Gracie Jiu-Jitsu in Botany. It was all fun and games, with lots of self-defence teaching and physical activity—definitely something to help get the kids' energy out! In line with physical movement, we had Street Dance to cap off the program, where we learned cool dance moves and got everyone moving—including the educators!

As part of our initiative to introduce new cultures to the children, we had Italian Day – Bella Italia! We explored the language, food, crafts, and games. The children already have lots of ideas for the next program and the next culture they want to learn about. Pizza Pajama Jam was a classic favourite, and Book Week at Kooloora and Mission: Possible were new ideas we introduced that turned out to be so much fun, they've now been added to our list of in-centre day ideas.

For details regarding the Sept/Oct 2025 program. Head to our website www.kooloora.org or send an inquiry to koolooravacation@outlook.com

Together, we stay committed to our mission:

"To provide 5–14 year olds in the local community with childcare services during the school holidays that are enjoyable, engaging, and safe."





Veged Out for 2025

Above is a beautiful photo of our dedicated volunteers hard at work, preparing bags for Veged Out every fortnight.

🌱 Get Ready for Fresh Fruit & Veggies at a Great Price! 🥕

Only \$15 per bag, filled with a generous mix of fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables. To get started, please provide your full name, phone number, address (for our records only). Once payment is received, your name will be added to the list for the next Veged Out date. Orders close on the Monday before each Veged Out Friday.

📦 Pick-up Info:

- Bags available: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM on the day
- Exact amount appreciated: \$15 per bag
- No deliveries
- Prepayment is required for the next fortnight's order
- Please return your bag for reuse on the following Veged Out day
- Note: Veged Out does not run during school holidays

📅 Remaining Veged Out Dates – 2025:

- August: 1, 15, 29
- September: 12, 26
- October: 24
- November: 7, 21
- December: 5

♥ Thank you for supporting our healthy food initiative! .



Second Bite

At Kooloora Community Centre, we are proud to continue offering Second Bite, a free food program designed to support families and individuals facing the rising cost of groceries. The program provides second grade food that may not look perfect but is still completely good to eat, helping to ease financial pressures while reducing food waste.

Each week, our dedicated team of volunteers and students work hard to make this possible. They spend countless hours sorting donations, packing bags, and ensuring that every bag contains a fair and equal amount of food for our participants.

To ensure the program runs smoothly and fairly for everyone:

- Please avoid lining up at the dorr before 12:45pm. This helps give way to families exiting the Playgroup beforehand and allows our volunteers time to set up properly.
- Limit your visits to 2 times per week. This way, we can distribute bags evenly across the community and ensure more families benefit from the program.
- Be respectful of our volunteers and students. Their time, energy, and dedication are invaluable to making this service possible.

In addition to the food bags, cooked meals are still available every Wednesday, offering another way for the community to access nutritious food.

Best of all, registration is free, and everyone is welcome to join. Whether you are a family, a student, or an individual in need of extra support, SecondBite is here to lend a helping hand.

At Kooloora, we believe that food brings people together, and programs like SecondBite play a vital role in strengthening our community connections. With kindness, respect, and cooperation, we can continue to make sure this program supports as many people as possible.



The program is completely free and led by a dedicated volunteer who guides participants through a series of exercises focused on stretching, balance, and light movement. It's suitable for all fitness levels and designed specifically with seniors in mind.

There's no need to book—just come along.



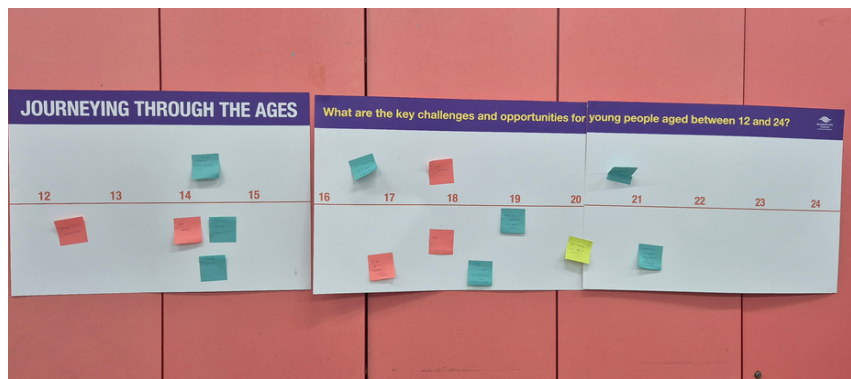
In our English classes, you'll:

- Whether you're just starting out or want to strengthen your skills, these classes are designed to help you feel more independent and confident in your daily life.



Yarning Your Wishes

Last Friday, 8 August 2025, Kooloora hosted Yarning Your Wishes, a meaningful community session led by SESLHD Health in partnership with Randwick City Council and NSW Trustee and Guardian. The event focused on important topics such as legal wills, enduring guardianship, and power of attorney, aiming to empower participants to make informed decisions about their future. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions, share their personal experiences, and receive guidance from knowledgeable professionals who understand the complexities and sensitivities of these matters. The session was offered free of charge, with helpful resources provided to take home, and everyone enjoyed refreshments followed by a delicious lunch. We were delighted to see such a strong turnout from the community, reflecting the value and importance of open, supportive conversations about planning ahead.



Randwick Youth Plan Community Consultation at Kooloora

On Wednesday, Kooloora Community Centre hosted the Randwick Youth Plan Community Consultation. Young people aged 12 to 24 make up just over 17% of the population in Randwick City, and the session provided parents, carers, and community members with an opportunity to share their hopes and ideas for the future of young people in the area.

During the consultation, community members were surveyed about what they see as the key challenges facing youth today. Common concerns raised included peer pressure, alcohol use, and the need for more job opportunities. Alongside these challenges, there was a strong call for more mentoring programs, hands-on job experience, and better access to mental health support services to help guide and empower young people.

The discussions highlighted the community's commitment to its young people and the importance of creating safe, supportive pathways for them to thrive. By sharing their voices and experiences, attendees helped shape future programs and services that aim to make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people across Randwick City.



Kooloorra Celebrates Volunteers Day – Connecting Communities

On Thursday, 22 May, Kooloorra Community Centre proudly celebrated Volunteers Day 2025, a special occasion to honour the incredible contribution of our volunteers who dedicate their time, energy, and compassion to supporting the community.

The event began with a heartfelt Welcome to Country delivered by Aunty Ali Golding, who shared an inspirational speech about the importance of taking care of our land. Her words set a powerful tone for the day, reminding everyone of the deep connection between community, culture, and country.

The celebration was attended by Mayor of Randwick, Dylan Parker, Councillor Noel D'Souza, Councillor Bill Burst, along with community leaders Leki Mafoe and Trina Soulos, who joined us in recognising the invaluable role volunteers play in strengthening our neighbourhood.

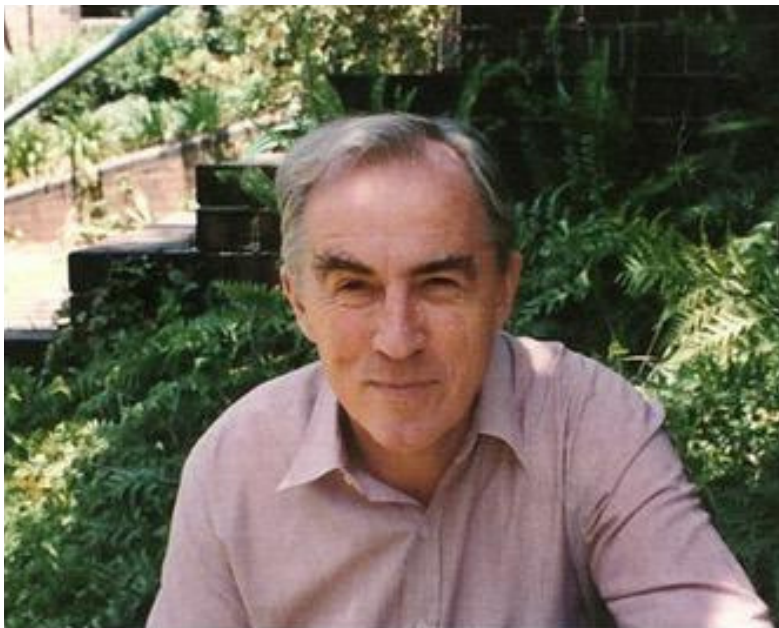
This year's theme, "Connecting Communities," highlighted the power of volunteerism in bringing people together, breaking down barriers, and fostering a sense of belonging. Volunteers at Kooloorra embody this theme every day, whether through helping at community programs, supporting families, assisting with events, or simply lending a listening ear to those in need.

During the celebration, speeches acknowledged the tireless efforts of volunteers who ensure that Kooloorra remains a welcoming and supportive space for everyone. Stories were shared about the difference that volunteers make in the lives of children, families, and seniors across the local area—reminding us that even the smallest acts of kindness can have a ripple effect throughout the community.

After the formalities, everyone came together to share a sumptuous lunch, enjoying not just the food but also the warmth of friendship and connection that defines Kooloorra. It was a moment of celebration, gratitude, and reflection on how far the community has come—thanks in large part to the dedication of its volunteers.

At Kooloorra, we believe our volunteers are the heart of everything we do. Their contributions are not just valued but essential in building a stronger, more connected community. This Volunteers Day was a fitting reminder that together, we can achieve so much more.





In Loving Memory of Paul Justin Lloyd Compton 1943 – 2025

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Paul Compton, a beloved volunteer and long-standing member of the Kooloorra community, who passed away peacefully at the age of 81.

Paul dedicated more than a decade of his time and heart to Kooloorra, volunteering with the EAPA (Energy Accounts Payment Assistance) program, where he supported countless individuals with care, compassion, and quiet strength. He also served faithfully as a member of our Committee of Management, helping to shape the direction of Kooloorra with wisdom and integrity.

Outside of Kooloorra, Paul led an extraordinary career as a highly respected Professor of Computer Science at UNSW, where he played a pivotal role in establishing the foundational school of computer science. His contributions to academia were as profound as his impact on our community.

What truly set Paul apart was his unwavering respect for others. Whether he was speaking with clients at Kooloorra, students in a lecture hall, or colleagues in a meeting room, he treated everyone with kindness, dignity, and genuine interest. His humility and compassion left a lasting impression on all who knew him. Paul will be deeply missed by the Kooloorra team, our volunteers, the community he served so faithfully, and everyone who had the privilege to know him.

Thank you, Paul, for your service, your wisdom, and your incredible heart. You will not be forgotten.

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