

# connectedau



## Letterbox Project Overview

Connected AU is a purpose-led business fighting the loneliness epidemic in Australia. We deliver meaningful programs designed to create real connection, and we are on a mission to ensure that everybody in Australia feels visible, valued and connected.

This brochure outlines our School Program.



CONNECTED AU LETTERBOX PROJECT

WHAT IS OUR

# Letterbox Project



The Letterbox Project is our national pen pal program creating connection and companionship for thousands of people all over Australia. It is the only program of its kind that creates real, meaningful connection combined with safety, security and management. Unlike other smaller pen pal programs, we don't share any identifiable personal information, and all letters are vetted through our team ensuring the safety of all writers and recipients.

- Over 500 letters sent each week (vetted by our team)
- Over 45,000 letters sent in the last 18 months
- Over 25,000 individuals registered to write
- Over 451 schools writing
- Over 91 corporates writing
- Naming Rights Partner Tetley Tea, 2021 & 2022



## Benefit and safety for students

Participating in the Letterbox Project offers enormous benefit to students, encouraging our young community members to consider their wider community, and the vulnerable people in it.

Writing letters exposes students to the issues of isolation and loneliness, gives them an awareness of vulnerable populations, and teaches them that we can all make a difference in our community. It also invites students to discover the art of handwritten letters, a life-long skill.

### SAFETY AND PRIVACY

Safety is our paramount concern and we have strict privacy policies and procedures.

- We do not share any identifiable personal information.
- We do not share the name or address of your school, only general information. For example "writers are part of a year 2 class located in QLD."
- Recipients are able to respond to your letters if they wish or have capacity, many will not.
- Letters will always be sent to our team for approval to ensure the safety of both writers and recipients.

You have access to full time support for the hub, please get in touch on [support@connectedau.com.au](mailto:support@connectedau.com.au) or phone 0481 139 332 at any time for any help.



CONNECTED AU LETTERBOX PROJECT

Signing up to our School Program provides unlimited participation to the Letterbox Project for all staff/students for the year.

Participation can be flexible and tailored, and the process to write each time is very simple. You can elect to write to other schools aged care facilities, or both!

- Letters to an aged care facility (not always likely to receive a reply).
- Letters to another school (highly likely to reply and develop ongoing communication).

Students/classes can write multiple times at once, and can request changes throughout the year.



## Option 1: Writing to an aged care facility

**Step 1:** You tell us how many students would like to participate.

**Step 2:** We match your group with a group of aged care or disability residents and send their names to you with instructions on how to write.

**Step 3:** Once you have written your letters, you post them to our team for approval.

**Step 4:** Once the letters are approved, we send them in a package to the facility.

**Step 5:** If your pen pals reply to your letter, we will send them to you. If they do not, we will notify you.

Often, aged care residents are not able to reply to letters. This can be due to their own physical or mental limitations, or it could be due to staff shortages and having no one to help them reply or organise a response.

This does not however, mean that the letters were not valued and impactful. Often times it is these residents who treasure the letters the most.

We suggest, if time permits, having students write to aged care residents as well as to another school group.



## Option 2: Writing to another school

**Step 1:** You tell us how many students would like to participate.

**Step 2:** We match your school with another school and select one school to write first.

**Step 3:** Once letters are written, they are sent to our team for approval and sent on.

**Step 4:** The recipient school will then reply, sending their letters to our team which we will send on.

**Step 5:** This process can continue indefinitely.

We often see student letters getting fast and excited replies that sometimes continue for years, giving your students the joy of tangible connection and delayed gratification.



## Impact

"Mum absolutely loves the letters she has received, thank you so much for what you do. It has brightened up mums face every time one has arrived, she is in the process of going into residential care at the moment and this is just such a blessing for her." – Jennifer

"I have received two letters via the Letterbox Project and would like to express my appreciation of the concept, and all those who have brought it to fruition.. It is heart-warming to know that strangers care enough to take time, and care, to write to others, bringing joy in these difficult times.. To all you wonderful people, sincere thanks, you've made an old woman very happy, renewed my faith in human nature." – Rosemary 81

"I signed my grandpa up and he recently received two letters and a book from two wonderful strangers and he is over the moon. He was so excited when they arrived and has been very eager to write back to them. And has been staying up late each night reading his new book. This has given him something to look forward to and a form of social interaction that he has been missing for so long. I am so thankful for all of the work that has gone into this. Thank you so much."





If you still need more encouragement to bring the program to your school, these facts might help you:



Loneliness costs Australia \$2.7bn each year.



The overall average cost associated with each lonely is \$1,565 a year.



Loneliness is an equal risk factor for mortality as smoking and obesity



1 in 5 households are lone households



approx 250,000 Australians in residential aged care and 40% do not get visits (pre-covid)



2.5 million Australians not connected to internet



increased risk of CV disease, heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative diseases, high blood pressure, cancer & diabetes.

*come and make an impact*

**Email:**  
[support@connectedau.com.au](mailto:support@connectedau.com.au)

**Phone:**  
**0481 139 332**

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<https://connectedau.com.au/contact>

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