

Media Release: Monday, 6 July 2009

WE BELIEVE IN CHILDREN. DO YOU?

Barnardos Australia today launches a thought provoking new advertising campaign that highlights the charity's belief in the potential within each and every child in our community. With competition for funds even fiercer in the current economic climate the advertisements ask a series of questions aimed at motivating the Australian community to show their belief in children by investing in Barnardos' vital child welfare services.

The TV, radio and print campaign marks the beginning of a new look for the Barnardos brand and takes a positive point of view about what is possible for vulnerable children in our community with an initial focus on the impact neglect has on a child's health and wellbeing.

There are over 15,000 substantiated cases of childhood neglect in Australia every year¹. The consequences of a lack of parental care and nurturing can include low self-esteem, impaired cognitive development, poor academic performance, juvenile delinquency, and where health problems are not addressed, long-term disability. Half of the childhood deaths attributable to maltreatment are the result of neglect, and 90% of those deaths are of children under the age of four².

In the new campaign, developed with the support of Gorilla Communications, Barnardos seeks to show that with the right help, and a little belief, it is possible for even the most damaged children to turn their lives around.

Children like 18-month-old Molly whose mother died of a drug overdose last year. Left alone for hours with little or no basic care and no attention paid to her health, Molly had a severe ear infection and malnutrition. Barnardos took Molly into an emergency foster care placement while her maternal grandparents were tracked down. Sadly the ear infection has resulted in permanent partial hearing loss and Molly will live with ongoing emotional and developmental problems, but she is now living happily with her grandparents in Canberra. With Barnardos support they are able to provide the loving, nurturing home the little girl desperately needs.

"At Barnardos Australia we believe in the capacity of each child and young person, no matter their circumstances, behaviour, race or disability, that is why we offer support for as long as it is needed – we never give up," said Louise Voigt, Barnardos' CEO and director of welfare.

"As times become increasingly financially difficult for many families, it is important to remember those who have never known it to be any different and now more than ever they need our support," Ms Voigt continued. "We hope that as this campaign rolls out it will highlight the plight of the thousands of children affected by neglect, abuse, poverty and homelessness and raise awareness of the research we undertake, the resources we provide and the services Barnardos delivers on a daily basis."

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For more information contact Emma Smith, PR & Communicatons Manager, Barnardos Australia on 02 9218 2344 or pr@barnardos.org.au

Notes for editors:

Barnardos Australia is a non-government, non-denominational child welfare charity that has been helping children in need for over 120 years.

Barnardos is one of the largest children's charities in Australia, caring for children at risk of abuse and neglect. The work of Barnardos Australia focuses on the prevention of abuse, neglect and entry into care. Children of all backgrounds and cultural heritage are helped through a range of welfare programs including crisis care, family support, counselling and permanent foster care.

Our vision is that all children and young people will have caring families, in which they can grow up safely and reach their full potential supported by quality services and engaged communities.

For more information visit: www.barnardos.org.au.

¹ Child Protection Australia 2007-08, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare.

² Scannapieco, M. and K. Connell-Carrick (2002). Focus on the First Years: An Eco-Developmental Assessment of Child Neglect for Children 0 to 3 Years Of Age. Children & Youth Services Review, 24(8):601-621