MEDIA RELEASE

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Barnardos
We *believe* in CHILDREN

Be a Star of Wonder for a disadvantaged child this Christmas

Child welfare charity, Barnardos Australia, is asking companies and organisations to remember the true meaning of Christmas this year by collecting 4,000 gifts and $40,000 in donations to support the thousands of children facing abuse, neglect and poverty this festive season, as part of its Star of Wonder appeal.

For many of the children Barnardos cares for there have never been presents under the tree and Santa has never left a stocking filled with gifts at the end of bed. Yasmin, aged seven, was placed in Barnardos' care recently after her mother was hospitalised with mental health problems. Last year Yasmin and her mum escaped interstate after living through years of domestic violence and the little girl is now without either of her parents this Christmas. With Barnardos support Yasmin is learning to trust adults again and her mum is getting the help she needs so that one day they can celebrate Christmas together again.

"A gift can put a smile back on the face of a child like Yasmin this Christmas," says Glynis Sequeira, Marketing Director of Barnardos Australia. "It is our aim to provide an enjoyable holiday experience for all of the children and families we work with. By reaching our target of 4,000 gifts and $40,000 in donations, we believe we can spread holiday spirit and hope to the abused, neglected and disadvantaged children we care for across Australia."

The charity has partnered with Simply Giving to create an online toy store with pre-selected gifts, divided by age and gender for kids up to 12 years old. For children aged 12 years and older, the Rewards Come True Gift Card store offers a perfect solution. There is also an option to donate funds online, via credit card. With over 100 years of gift donation experience, Barnardos anticipates these online options will streamline the donation process while cutting administrative costs.

For the organisations that take part there is not only the benefit of knowing they've helped our community's most vulnerable children – the company whose employees donate the most to the Star of Wonder campaign will be rewarded for their efforts with a delicious morning tea thanks to freshly baked cookie retailer, Cookie Man.

To take part in the Star of Wonder appeal visit www.barnardos.org.au/starofwonder.

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For more information contact Emma Lipscombe on 02 9218 2391 or email events@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.