

# Believe.

**Barnardos Australia Newsletter**  
**Volume 5 - 2015**



**Barnardos**  
**Australia**



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**Outrunning child abuse**

## Barnardos welcomes new CEO, Deirdre Cheers



**New Barnardos Australia Chief Executive Officer, Deirdre Cheers.**

After 30 years, former CEO Louise Voigt bid Barnardos Australia a fond farewell. She thanked everyone – donors and staff—who had stood alongside her to help improve the lives of Australian children. One of these people, Deirdre Cheers, held senior manager positions at Barnardos and has returned as our new CEO.

Barnardos Chair, Gabrielle Trainor, noted “Deirdre’s deep familiarity with Barnardos’ work and her established relationships with many of our employees and stakeholders will ensure a smooth transition.”

While away, Deirdre continued to build her reputation as a respected leader in the child welfare sector. For the last nine years she was Executive Director at CatholicCare Diocese

of Broken Bay, and is the Chair of the industry body, NSW Association of Child Welfare Agencies (ACWA).

“Deirdre is a very worthy successor, and we are confident her leadership will ensure we continue to make our utmost contribution to protecting children and securing for them loving care and safe futures,” Gabrielle said.

Barnardos has made great strides to better the lives of children, however there is much still to be done to stop the family violence, youth homelessness and poverty that are still major problems in society. We look forward to Deirdre’s guidance, expertise and commitment to children as Barnardos, with your help, continues to work to stop child abuse.

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## Caseworkers - our unsung heroes

Earlier this year film maker Mihaal Danziger interviewed Barnardos Manager, Thang Do, as part of the ABC Open “Unsung Heroes” film project. Thang talks about his long-time dedication and commitment to helping bring out the best in disadvantaged young people.

Thang runs Barnardos Kingston House, providing accommodation and support to emotionally disturbed young people from 12 to 18 years.

In describing the young people he works with, Thang said “they have no education and formal training whatsoever. I feel they have a lot to offer society, if people give them a chance to do that. They learned a lot of bad stuff, from whoever they used to be with. We have to try to get them to relearn how to behave better, how to do the right thing.”

Thang likened getting through

to young people to tuning into the radio and finding the right channel for that young person before communicating with them. He said, “It sounds simple, but, it’s not simple. They’ve been through so much, they’ve been abused so much, they never trust anyone, they never trust the authority.”

The staff at Kingston House have been threatened many times by the young people they work with. “Even when it feels like you’re not getting through to them, you have to believe that your work will have an effect on their future,” said Thang.

One young person Thang worked with many years ago wanted to get his driver’s licence, but he wasn’t able to read or write. It took him six months to memorise the answers and 17 attempts before he managed to get his licence.

Thang said, “to him it meant everything. Many years later he came back with his wife and kid and he is now a truck driver. He’s driving a truck! You look at how that person changed from the day he came - the way he behaved at the time he came to us, to the time where he left Kingston House. That young person had to go through a lot of difficulty to achieve something that you and I can achieve much more easily. [He] had to work very hard, a lot harder.”

Your commitment and ongoing support allows Thang and his team to provide round the clock, intensive support to young people who need it.

The full interview is available to watch online at [www.open.abc.net.au](http://www.open.abc.net.au)





Children from Yurungai participating in the one mile run.

## Runners sprint to outrun child abuse

On Sunday 14 June, Barnardos held our first major event – a one mile dash along Coogee beach known as the “Beach Bolt,” as well as a 100m mini bolt for under 5’s. Runners made their way over grass, pavement, stairs and sand to fundraise for vulnerable Australian children.

Also running on the day were children from the Yurungai Learning Centre. The children, ranging from 5 years old to 10 years old, impressively completed the full mile.

Senior Manager, Vivianne Freeman, said “it was great

to see so many people out supporting Barnardos and the kids had a fantastic day. I think they really felt proud to be part of Barnardos.”

The day raised much needed funds for Barnardos, which will go towards helping children recover from the damaging effects of abuse.

If you’re competing in a challenge event or would like to organise your own event to fundraise for Barnardos, please call Kaitlin Commins on 02 9218 2375 or email her on [kcommins@barnardos.org.au](mailto:kcommins@barnardos.org.au)

## Case study: Paul

Paul, nine, first came to Barnardos with his mum after fleeing from extreme domestic violence. The situation was so dire that Paul’s mum fled to New South Wales and cut all ties to her past to escape. Not only did Paul’s mum have significant health issues, the little family was completely isolated with no support.

With your help, we were able to help Paul and his mother. We linked them to community groups and assisted with accommodation. Paul’s mum requires frequent stays in hospital and Barnardos provides care for Paul with a carer he loves when these occasions arise.

Because of the violence at home, Paul was behind at school and had some behavioural issues.

He struggled with mathematics and times tables, so we arranged for a tutor to help him with his schoolwork. Paul has built a great relationship with his tutor and has also opened up about his Dad and the violence he has experienced. His tutor has helped Paul to start to behave differently. This little boy is beginning to make friends and settle.

Your donations mean we can provide children like Paul with safe role models and the support they need to recover from abuse.

## Have you looked at your Will recently?

It’s a difficult thing for anyone to think about, but leaving a gift to charity in your Will can help create a better world.

It’s a common misconception that only wealthy people leave money to charity when they pass away. The reality is that most bequests are made by ordinary, hard-working people who want to make a positive

difference to their community after they’re gone.

September 7th through 13th is Include a Charity Week, which aims to raise the public awareness of the importance of charitable gifts in Wills.

Gifts made in Wills hold a special presence in the work of Barnardos. In fact, they make up more than one-third of all individual donations, and without them some of our key programs to help keep children safe would be at risk of closing.

Include a Charity Week

reminds us of how vital our choices in Wills are not only to Barnardos’ programs, but to the future of all Australians.

The good news is that including a charity in your Will is just as easy as providing for your loved ones. And it can be as much or as little as you want.

If you are considering revising your own Will and would like to discuss the possibility of including Barnardos please contact Jessica Wood on (02) 9218 2308 or email [jwood@barnardos.org.au](mailto:jwood@barnardos.org.au)

## Barnardos in focus - Family Support and Preservation

At Barnardos, we provide support to families where children are at risk of harm unless changes are made.

Many of these families have been affected by physical and mental health issues, domestic violence, sexual assault, drug and alcohol misuse, legal problems, housing issues or financial strain. When families are in crisis, behaviours can escalate and children suffer.

When families are pushed to the limit, sometimes parents are not able to meet their children's needs: making sure there are meals on the table three times a day, keeping them clean and getting them to school on time. It is when parents fail to meet these most basic needs and their children's health or safety is at risk that they can be taken into care. Addressing these things early can keep families together.

Breege Turnbull, a Barnardos manager, explained the impact. "Some families can be at breaking point, where something terrible can be on the verge of happening or they're already causing harm to their children, because they're struggling even to meet their most basic needs," she said.

Barnardos staff work intensely with these families, sometimes visiting them every day. They

work with the family to create an action plan to address the problems that are occurring.

The aim is, where possible, to keep families together and prevent children from entering the foster care system.

"One small thing such as an untreated mental health issue can mean mum can't hold down a job, is missing rent payments, doesn't know how to budget and is stressed all the time, which then causes all these knock on problems" said Breege.

Staff identify what the problem is and work with the family to get everything back on track. "When children aren't suffering and mum and dad are getting the support they need, it's win, win. When we don't see a change, we make difficult decisions, so that children aren't at risk. No one wants a tragedy to occur."

The support and resources workers provide to families are designed to help them make long-term, meaningful changes. While the government provides support for this work, funding is for a limited time. Your support means that we can stay with families longer, and make sure that changes are lasting. Thank you, for giving these families hope and these children protection.



Children from our Auburn Children's Family Centre with Ninja Turtle Leonardo.

### A Snapshot of Australian Children

Every day in Australia there are more than **145** substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect.\*



More than **43,000** Australian children are unable to live with their parents.\*



In 2014, **40,844** children were the subject of a substantiated report of abuse or neglect.\*



Children under **one-year-old** are most likely to be the subject of substantiated abuse or neglect.\*



\* Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013/14



## Max and Layla look for a forever home

You may remember two-year-old Max and his four-year-old sister Layla from one of our recent appeals. Max and Layla came to Barnardos after their mum's partner violently assaulted them, punching Layla in the face and throwing Max into a wall full force. As a result, Max suffered a shattered leg that required surgery and Layla had a black eye and swollen face.

At first, Max was a sad and anxious child, frustrated with the immobility caused by his leg brace. He didn't trust adults and leaned heavily on his sister Layla, who in turn focused more on her brother's needs than her own play and growth. Their crisis carer, Jenny, taught them that they deserved to be cared for by adults they can trust.

Now, Layla knows that there is someone there to take care of Max and doesn't "parent" him when he cries. She has started

in Barnardos long day care so that she can interact with other children before beginning kindergarten. Instead of only speaking when spoken to, Layla has opened up around adults and expresses the things she needs and wants.

Max has finally recovered from his injury and learned to walk again. He loves to spend as much time as possible outdoors where he can be boisterous, though he is still learning to control that energy in tantrums. Now that Layla isn't his only form of support, he teases and plays with her just as any little brother would.

Thanks to generous donors like you who reached out to help, we've raised \$592,000 of our \$600,000 goal to help save children from life threatening situations. The courts recently made the decision that it is not safe for Max and Layla to ever return home and our Find-a-Family team are now looking for a long term home where they can grow up safe from harm.



## Case study: Tom

Not all children who turn to Barnardos for help have come from abusive homes. Eight-year-old Tom and his sisters, two-year-old Naomi and three-year-old Stacey have come into care because their mum has an incurable disease. With no relatives, the family had no-where else to turn.

Their mum is now in the late stages of the illness. In the two months before coming to Barnardos, the children had moved house seven times through foster care placements while she was in hospital.

As no stable home could be found to keep the children together, the Department of Family and Community Services wanted to put them in residential care.

Our case workers fought instead to have the children placed with Barnardos. With a shortage of carers, it's taken time to settle this little family. We found two homes with mums known to the children and their mother. Tom is with one carer and Stacey and Naomi with the other. The carers are friends, and the children get to spend extra time together on top of organised visits. With two carers, they are receiving the support they need during this difficult time, especially Tom, who, as an older child needed someone to focus on him.

We will continue to be there for these children and their mother, so that they can focus on the little time they have together. We will also help these children to rebuild their family when the inevitable happens.

Your support gives us the flexibility to go the extra mile for every child who needs us.



Rae King, Barnardos foster carer

Rae, thank you  
for believing in  
children.

## Vale Rae

In June we received the very sad news that one of our adolescent foster carers, Rae King, passed away from cancer. She had been a foster carer for nearly 25 years.

Rae started as a temporary foster carer, providing emergency and short term foster care to children. In early 2000, she moved across to the Adolescent Foster Care Program and provided longer term care to a number of adolescents aged 15 years and over. During her time as a carer, Rae provided a safe and caring home to over 90 children and young people.

While Rae never married or had biological children of her own, she was very involved in providing care for her nieces and nephews. Before Rae became a foster carer, she helped other people working as a community volunteer and felt that she had a home where those in need could come and stay. Rae always said she found it

“far more rewarding than her paid job.”

Rae was a very warm, friendly and loving person. She was able to handle everything in her own way and her approach was patience, forgiveness, humour, love, care and stability. She had a special ability to communicate with the child or young person on their level and not preach or talk down to them. She thought it was best for those in her care to make their own decisions and to learn from their experiences, but she was there with them every step of the way for support and guidance.

In short, Rae believed in empowering these young people. Her favourite motto in life was to “Never Give Up.” True to her word, Rae has never given up on any child or young person. Right until the end of her battle with cancer, she continued her commitment to the young person in her care.

Thank you Rae, we will never forget you.

## I too believe that children deserve to be safe and protected.

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Barnardos Australia, GPO Box 9996 in your Capital City.

Call **1800 061 000** or visit **www.barnardos.org.au**

Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.

**Appeal:0915NL**

complaint will be handled by Barnardos Australia. You may contact our privacy officer with any queries via email: [info@barnardos.org.au](mailto:info@barnardos.org.au) or mail: GPO Box 9996, SYDNEY NSW 2001 or telephone: (02) 9218 2300.

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