

# Believe.

**Barnardos Australia Newsletter**

## A happy ending

**...and YOU made it happen!**

**A while ago, we shared the story of two-year-old Max and his four-year-old sister Layla who were violently assaulted by their mother's partner. It was sustained abuse that resulted in shocking injuries for the siblings.**

In the incident that finally brought an end to the children's nightmare, authorities were called when doctors treating Max refused to believe his mother's claims that she fell down the stairs with him in her arms. The little boy's injuries were so severe, reasoned the medical team, they could only be the result of extreme high impact force.

Layla, who presented at the hospital with a black eye and a swollen face, would later tell authorities what had really happened behind closed doors. In a rage, her mother's partner had punched her in the face. Her two-year-old brother took an even more shocking beating. His step dad repeatedly bashed his little legs and threw him, with full force, against a wall.

Max's leg was shattered and he required urgent surgery. Both children were immediately removed from their home and placed with a Barnardos' crisis carer.

It was the beginning of a long journey on the road to recovery.

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**We will be featuring an update on Max and Layla's story in our upcoming Appeal, so keep your eye on the mailbox. (Their progress will warm your heart!)**

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At the time the children came into our care, their Barnardos' case worker uttered this chilling statement.

**“I have no doubt that if the children had not been removed from the home, one or both could have been killed.”**

Max and Layla's story is one of the most confronting we have shared. Sadly, it is far from isolated, but we know it particularly touched our supporters as many have asked after the children's welfare over the years.

As we go to print, we have just caught up with the children and we have some wonderful news to report. Max and Layla have recently been adopted – together – into a permanent and loving family.

It has been a very long road for the siblings, now aged six and eight. And the level of support, counselling and guidance they and their carers have needed over the years would not have happened without the support of our compassionate donors. Our deepest thanks to you for helping Barnardos to keep Australian children safe from abuse and neglect.



Broken femur – Max aged 2 result of direct abuse by adult.

# Every child comes first!



**Advocating for best practice policy to assist children, young people and their families is one of the cornerstones of the Barnardos' mission.**

Barnardos is now lobbying of the State Government to secure recognition of the Barnardos Children's Family Centres as the best-practice model across the state.

Evidence shows that an effective child and family system considers the unique needs, preferences and strengths of people and communities. However, current government funding models generally use only vulnerability for client identification and service planning.

Barnardos operates nine Children's Family Centres in key areas of disadvantage across NSW and the

ACT. Each centre operates at a best-practice model to provide a multi-disciplinary child-centred program of support.

Last year, these centres supported 14,049 children and young people ranging from newborns to 18 years of age, through the coordination of 178 different programs and services. This mix of services is centrally managed through individually tailored programs for each child.

Photo: Tara Stanley, Wiradjuri woman from Barnardos Wellington NSW.

## **What distinguishes Barnardos Children's Family Centre model from many others?**

- **RESTORATION** Around 50% of all children taken into the Temporary Foster Care are restored to their birth parents or extended family (kin).
- **SHORTER DURATION IN CARE** Restoration is achieved within an average time frame of 8-9 months: well inside the required 2-year temporary care orders.
- **PLACEMENT STABILITY** Since mid-2012, more than 75% of the children/ young people who have exited the Temporary Foster Care program experienced only a single placement.
- **SAFETY AND PREVENTION** In 2017–18 Barnardos supported 7,567 children and young people (under 18) to remain safely at home with their families through our Children's Family Centres programs.

**For updates on our advocacy, follow us**

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# Foster carer shares insights with ABC viewers

Australia's national broadcaster turned the spotlight on foster carers in March when Barnardos temporary foster carer, Sandy Dutton, featured on the popular ABC program, The Drum.

Over the past 16 years, Sandy has provided temporary foster care to 35 children. And this loving mum, grandmother and great grandmother admits that saying 'goodbye' is never easy.

"When they leave – when they go on to their new family or back to their old family – I cry every time..." Sandy told The Drum reporter, Stephanie Boltje.

Sandy was interviewed for the "3 Things I Know About..." segment, and her insights sparked a lively discussion about foster care in Australia.

She talked candidly about the challenges, and the rewards, of the foster care role. Acknowledging that "(children in care) come in all shapes and sizes and all moods and tempers", Sandy said challenging behaviours were understandable.

"It's a transition period: where they've come from... to where they are going," she reasoned. "When they arrive at the door, they look very alone and frightened: they don't know what's happening."

Of the foster carer's role, Sandy says simply: "You're stepping into their lives when they need somebody to give them love and care."

Foster carers can have a transformational impact on the lives of young children, and we are currently recruiting carers in NSW and ACT to provide a safe and stable home for children in crisis. We offer ongoing training and 24/7 support and all carers receive a non-taxable allowance and are eligible for Centrelink entitlements.

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**If you are interested in learning more, please call our Carer Enquiry team on 1800 663 441 and ask about our free information sessions. Alternatively, visit us at [barnardos.org.au/wecare](http://barnardos.org.au/wecare)**

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## In partnership with Barnardo's UK: National Redress Scheme

Barnardos Australia is proud to be a member of the National Redress Scheme for the survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. This historic scheme acknowledges the harm caused by, and provides support to, those who were sexually abused as children while in the care of an institution.

Barnardos Australia is strongly committed to best child welfare practice with long-standing internal systems in place to visit and speak directly to children in our care and rigorous monitoring processes.

We are among a number of major non-government institutions who have already joined the scheme, including the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, the Salvation Army, YMCA, Scouts Australia and the Uniting Church.

All state and territory governments have committed to join the Scheme.

Following ongoing discussions between Barnardos Australia and Barnardo's UK we have jointly applied to the Australian Government Redress Scheme. This agreement with Barnardo's UK ensures that anyone who has ever been in care with us in Australia will have access to the Scheme.

Barnardos Australia encourages anyone who has experienced child sexual abuse in an institution to contact the National Redress Scheme on **1800 73 377**.

Under the National Redress Scheme, anyone who has experienced child sexual abuse in an institution can apply for:

- Counselling
- A Redress payment
- A direct personal response from an institution (e.g. an apology)

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**Further information is available at [nationalredress.gov.au](http://nationalredress.gov.au)**

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# You can do it, Sanita!

**As she describes it, Sanita's life was a living hell before she turned to Barnardos for support.**

Her abusive husband, who was a violent alcoholic, would regularly beat her in front of her terrified three-year-old daughter. An immigrant from Nepal, Sanita spoke little English at the time and had trouble asking outsiders for help. She certainly couldn't ask for help from her husband's family, with whom she lived.

"They blamed me for all the fights with my husband. It is in the culture: always women make mistake, never the men."

Aside from the physical violence, she endured harsh treatment from her in-laws. They forced her to do most of the cooking and housework and treated her like a second-class citizen.

But it was a particularly horrific beating that finally drove her to pluck up the courage to leave. Her ex-husband choked her so violently that she had bleeding behind her eyes: a sight that frightened her little girl more than anything. "I really thought he could kill me that day," she says.

With the help of a kind employer, Sanita fled to a women's refuge, but her husband's family kept her daughter from her. After a few days at the refuge, she was referred to Barnardos where we immediately secured her transitional accommodation.

It would take more than two months before this anxious mum – with her Barnardos Counsellor by her side – would stand in court and learn she had been awarded custody of her daughter.

That was the beginning of the long road to healing for the young family.



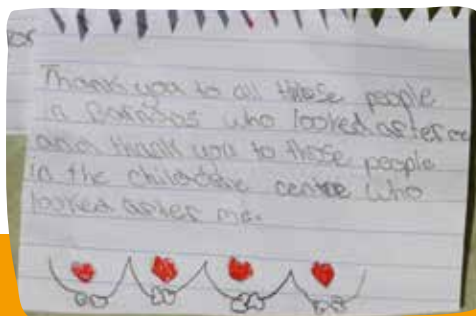
"Barnardos supported me for everything...financially, with a place to live and day care for my daughter so I could get a certificate in aged care," Sanita recalls.

**"The most important thing was to have someone tell me: you can do it Sanita".**

I had no family here, I was all alone, and I couldn't speak English well - but they made me believe I can make a new life."

Barnardos' transitional accommodation was a lifeline for Sanita and her little girl. With no rental history in Australia, and with her poor English, Sanita would have struggled to secure housing in the rental market. Sanita and her daughter would later move into permanent housing and are now living independently.

And life is good! It is now seven years since Sanita fled from her abusive ex-husband. Her daughter is doing well in school and Sanita is engaged to be married to a kind and caring man.



Drawings and letter by Sanita 3yr old daughter

**Your support for Barnardos helps give so many people a second chance in life. On their behalf, thank you!**

# What a wonderful legacy!

**Varoe Legge plans on leaving a meaningful legacy to make the world a better place. She has generously included a gift to Barnardos in her Will, and it is a gift she knows will change lives long into the future.**

With three adult children who no longer relied on her, Varoe felt she had a responsibility to give something back to the community.

**“It’s up to people like me, who have been fortunate throughout their lives, to contribute to the future of the next generation,” says Varoe.**



Before she retired, Varoe was a university lecturer and teacher, so she knows the importance of a good education. She also believes that every child deserves a supportive and loving environment in which to flourish and grow. That’s why she made the decision to leave a gift to Barnardos in her Will.

“Children really need that support when they’re younger to build the foundations of learning.

And that’s what Barnardos does: they ensure these children go to school and do their homework... so they can come through it all and make something of their lives.”

Every Gift in Will – no matter how large or small – will help to ensure Barnardos has secure and stable funding for vital programs and services for children well into the future. By writing a few simple lines into your Will, you can help children grow up in a safe and nurturing home: free from violence and suffering.



Varoe, with three of her devoted grandchildren



**“You make this world a kinder and safer place for vulnerable children through your support for Barnardos Australia. On their behalf, thank you from the bottom of my heart!”**

Deirdre Cheers, CEO, Barnardos Australia

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**To learn more about leaving a gift in your Will to Barnardos Australia, please phone Jazzmin Farey on (02) 9218 2342 (Ext 2042)**

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# #teambarnardos

## Join Team Barnardos for City2Surf 2019

In the world of running, it doesn't get any more iconic than City2Surf: 14km ... 80,000 runners ... and thousands of people cheering from the sidelines!

Team Barnardos is all about having fun while raising much needed funds for the Barnardos' family. With every step, you will be supporting vulnerable children by helping to create safe, nurturing families and prevent child abuse.

Whether you plan on walking or running the circuit, our Events Team will be there by your side: before, during and after the big event. As an added bonus, you will have the opportunity to run side by side with celebrity James Mathison.

Once you sign up to #teambarnardos, you will receive a fundraising welcome pack and ongoing training tips to help you achieve your goals.

Get a team together, run solo, walk at your leisure, or dress up to impress. It's your choice! Whatever you do, if you are planning on entering City2Surf this year, make sure you choose to fundraise for Barnardos Australia.

To ensure your supporters know you are part of #teambarnardos, register your fundraising goal through everydayhero city2surf 2019.

Go to [city2surf2019.everydayhero.com/au/get-started](http://city2surf2019.everydayhero.com/au/get-started) and select Barnardos as your charity.

For more information, contact Sabrina via email [events@barnardos.org.au](mailto:events@barnardos.org.au) or phone 02 9218 2318.



Proud Barnardos City2Surf participants 2018

For more information on foster care  
**1800 663 441**

For enquiries or donations  
**1800 061 000**

**[barnardos.org.au/donatenow](http://barnardos.org.au/donatenow)**

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*In some cases, models used and names changed to protect privacy.*



**Barnardos  
Australia**