

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 30 November 2018

Barnardos' Beyond Barbed Wire Mentors win NSW Volunteer Team of the Year 2018

Barnardos is pleased to announce the **Beyond Barbed Wire Volunteer Mentors** have been awarded the **2018 NSW Volunteer Team of the Year** for their support for mothers who are in or have been released from gaol.

The announcement was made at an awards ceremony today run by The Centre for Volunteering to recognise the outstanding work of volunteers across NSW.

The volunteer mentors spend time with mothers to help strengthen their parenting skills, maintain strong bonds with their children and connect them with support services when they are released from the Wellington Correction Centre in Central NSW.

The program, run by Barnardos, has recently reported that it had supported 86 women. The recidivism rate amongst those women in the program was 6%, compared with the general rate of 48%.

The close one-on-one social contact that the program's volunteers offer provides practical as well as emotional support. It helps keep many women out of the prison system and closer to their children, families and their community.

Participants exiting gaol receive support with a range of issues including, education, parenting, life skills, employment and housing, but it is the role of their mentors that make the biggest difference to their lives.

The success of this program would not be possible without this group of passionate and dedicated community members who are providing ongoing support to vulnerable women and children in their communities.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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About Barnardos Australia

Barnardos Australia is a leading non-government, non-denominational, child safety and family care organisation which has provided services for vulnerable children, young people and their families in Australia since 1883. We work with highly vulnerable children and young people to provide a safe home and permanent relationships for all their childhood. We care for children exposed to physical, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as neglect, exploitation and homelessness. As one of the nation's leading child protection charities, Barnardos vision is that all children and young people will have caring families where they can grow safely and fulfil their potential, as we believe all children deserve a safe and stable home. www.barnardos.org.au