

ACT FOR KIDS

An initiative of the Abused Child Trust



NEWSLETTER – MAY 2010

ISSUE #50

Thomas finds his feet

Thomas may be small, even for a three year old, but he has already faced some big challenges.

When Thomas was referred to ACT for Kids by the Department of Communities almost 12 months ago the scratches on his little body told a tragic story of physical abuse, but equally heartbreaking were his developmental delays, a result of neglect. While other kids his age would laugh, run and play together, Thomas only had the limited development and coordination of a two year old.

Thomas could barely walk a few steps without falling over; he had mastered a few words but could not string a meaningful sentence together. As a result of only being fed once a day, he ate with his fingers, gulping down food so quickly that he often made himself sick. He avoided eye contact, never smiled and his vacant stare revealed his torment.

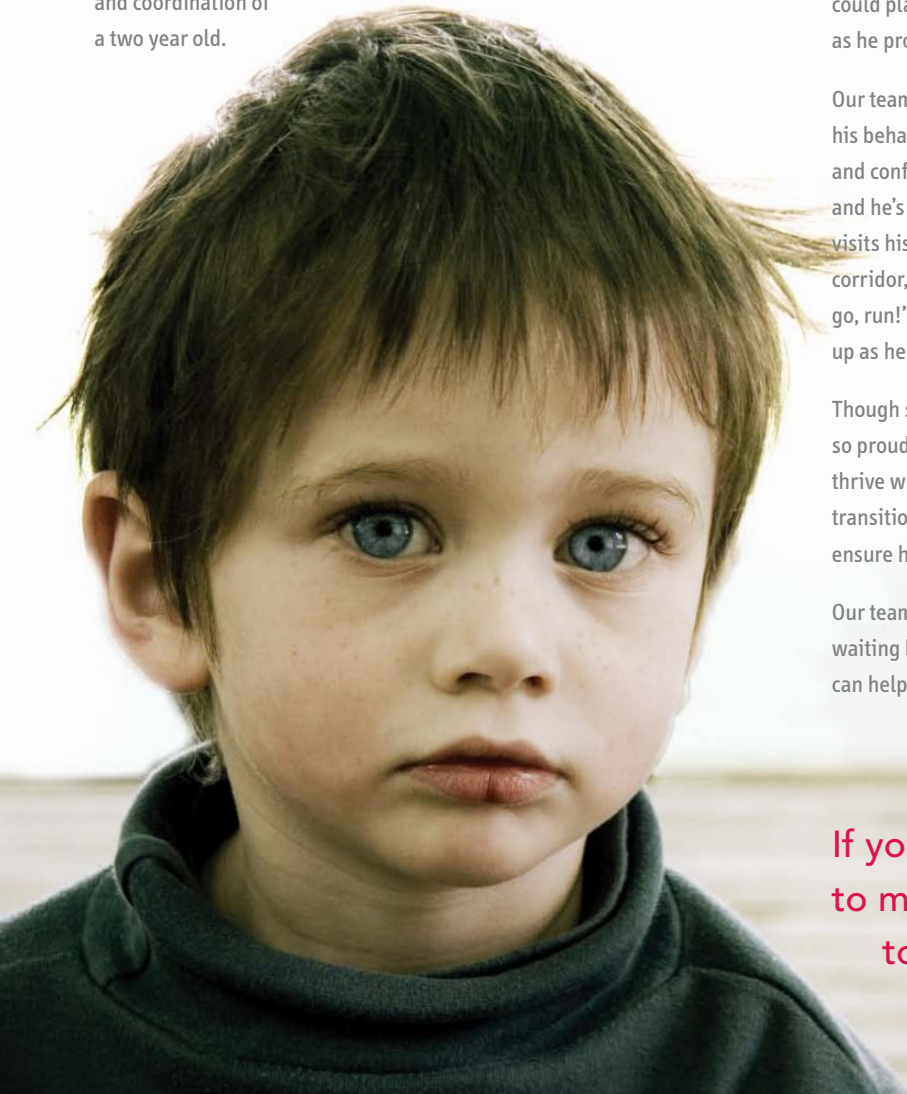
A multidisciplinary team including an Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist and Psychologist helped Thomas, through the ACT for Kids Intensive Therapy Program (ITP), addressing both his developmental and emotional needs. He particularly enjoyed the Large Play Room where he could play and move freely, developing his motor skills and coordination as he progressed through therapy.

Our team also worked with Thomas' foster mum to help her understand his behavior and develop ways she could encourage his independence and confidence. Together we have helped alleviate his separation anxiety and he's making great progress, picking up new skills each time he visits his therapist. Just last month he asked "Can I run?" pointing to the corridor, a sentence he could not have articulated six months ago. "Yes, go, run!" was his therapist's reply; his previously sad and listless eyes lit up as he took off down the corridor without a single stumble.

Though still underdeveloped compared with other kids his age, we are so proud of Thomas' achievements. His foster mum is confident he will thrive when he starts prep next year. The team from our ITP will carefully transition Thomas to prep, and work closely with his future teacher to ensure his progress is positive.

Our team of experts works with kids like Thomas every day. We have waiting lists for our critical services; we hope that with your support we can help many more.

If you would like to help us reach out to more kids like Thomas, please give to our Tax Appeal. To help us mend little hearts see page 2.



From the Chairman's desk



It is nearly 12 months since I stepped into the role of Executive Chairman at ACT for Kids and, as I write this, talent2 is actively assisting us in the recruitment of a new CEO.

We all know it has been a difficult year for many families and organisations due to the global financial crisis, but rather than dwell on the challenges of the last 12 months I'd like to focus on some extraordinary acts of kindness, generosity and goodwill that I feel privileged to have witnessed.

Our single largest bequest ever came last year from Mrs Orme Black, and her generous legacy is providing us with both security and much needed funding across a multitude of services. In the last four weeks, we received significant and ongoing funding from both the Bryan and Talbot Foundations – the largest donations we've received for services to date. Be sure to read our next newsletter for an update on the services these monies are funding.

Michele Norris, a generous and loyal supporter, advocated on our behalf to facilitate some amazing improvements to our Brisbane ACT for Kids Centre (p5). New corporate partnerships with Mercedes Benz Brisbane and Subway are providing additional funding and awareness for our cause. Conexus Consulting came on board as a sponsor and are giving generously of both time and dollars (p4). Helen McGrory continues to be a keen volunteer and fundraiser (p6).

Our 2010 Child Protection Week program promises to be impressive as we launch the first ever Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal (p7). This is sure to be a stand out campaign with Publicis Mojo's creative team behind its execution.

We are still at a challenging stage in our growth, and with abuse statistics at critical levels (p3) it is only with the continued generosity of loyal supporters like you that we will be able to reach out to more kids and families in need.

I would like to sincerely thank all staff, sponsors, supporters and volunteers for their great support and commitment. As I continue to support ACT for Kids as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, I ask you to join me in wishing the new CEO the very best in this challenging but highly rewarding role.

Denis Looney
Executive Chairman

The ACT for Kids team thanks Denis Looney for giving his valuable time and expertise pro bono as Executive Chairman during the last 12 months.

Minimise your tax – maximise hope for abused kids

If you're wondering how to minimise your tax as the end of financial year looms, you're in a great position to help abused and neglected children by making a tax deductible donation to ACT for Kids.

It's a win-win situation. Not only will you beat the 'tax man' by reducing your assessable income, you'll also feel good knowing you're bringing some hope to the lives of many children affected by abuse and neglect.

You can support a particular ACT for Kids program or event, be a winning bidder at our upcoming Art Show, or simply make a donation by participating in our Tax Appeal – you get a tax break and help us mend little hearts.

If you would like more information about how you can support ACT for Kids and reduce your tax through deductible donations, please call us on 1300 228 000.

A close-up, profile view of a woman with long, wavy brown hair looking out a window. Her hand is visible, with a gold ring on her ring finger, as she touches the white horizontal blinds. The background is a blurred view of greenery outside.

Hard figures to swallow

Recent statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveal that the number of children suffering abuse and neglect in Australia is increasing.

The disturbing facts: in 2008-09, there were 207,462 individual children reported as abused or neglected across Australia. This is an increase of 6.2% over 12 months, and 28% over the last five years. Tragically, most of these children were under 10 years old, many under one, and the most common source of reports to child protection authorities was from Police, not members of the community.

The increase in reports of suspected child abuse could be the result of enhanced public awareness. It is heartening to think awareness and action is increasing. Denis Looney, ACT for Kids Executive Chairman, is calling for the community to acknowledge the issue and take responsibility for the support, wellbeing and future of Australia's children.

"While the increase in reports of child abuse and neglect is alarming, it also means that the issue is being brought out of the shadows and children are getting help. We've been working hard to increase public awareness to ensure abuse is reported and the children get the support they need," Denis said.

Child abuse and neglect affects whole communities including extended family, friends, neighbours and schools; the impact on our economy is equally significant. The current estimate is that child abuse and neglect costs the Australian community \$10.7 billion each year, though it could be as high as \$30.1 billion, and that doesn't include the costs of prevention programs.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020, demonstrating their commitment to achieving a substantial, sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia. The framework recognises that protecting children is a shared responsibility and emphasises the importance of early prevention and intervention programs.

ACT for Kids will continue to speak up for children's rights in our quest to increase public awareness of Australia's child abuse and neglect crisis.

[Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010. Child protection Australia 2008-09. Child welfare series no. 47. Cat. no. CWS 35. Canberra: AIHW. Pp – 53 – 55.]

[Taylor, P., Moore, P., Pezzullo, L., Tucci, J., Goddard, C. and De Bortoli, L. (2008). The Cost of Child Abuse in Australia, Australian Childhood Foundation and Child Abuse Prevention Research Australia: Melbourne.]

Human costs of child abuse and neglect include substance abuse, mental health issues, anti-social behaviour, self harm and psychological trauma affecting the ability to learn or be employed, even suicide.



Protective Behaviours Workshop empowers little Aussies

At ACT for Kids we're proud of our innovative programs to prevent and treat child abuse and our contribution to the protection and wellbeing of Australian children. Last year, we introduced a new preventative program called Learn to BE SAFE with Emmy – a Protective Behaviours Workshop which to date has educated over 2,000 Gold Coast grade one students.

The workshop was developed by two very experienced and dedicated ACT for Kids therapists, Samantha Melching and Katie Bunch, in direct response to a community need to help educate and protect at-risk kids in the Gold Coast region.

ACT for Kids Executive Manager Research and Programs, Katrina Lines, said "teaching children how to identify when they feel unsafe and what to do when that happens is an effective self-protective tool that will stand them in good stead their whole lives. Prevention is always more effective than trying to pick up the pieces once child abuse has occurred."

The program is based on a cognitive behavioural framework that provides kids with simple and practical skills to ensure their interpersonal safety. Through five one-hour sessions, children learn how to distinguish between 'safe' and 'unsafe' situations, understand the differences between private

and public parts of the body, to recognise early warning signs of potential danger and people they can talk to if they feel unsafe.

Activity-based, fun and interactive, the workshops have been well received, with positive feedback from teachers and students. Educating 2,000 children in a year is a great achievement, but there is still a long way to go.

The program was fully funded in 2009 by a generous grant through Perpetual Trustees; however, we are now seeking funds to support the 2010 workshops. We need \$70K annually to fund a co-facilitator so we can continue educating kids in the Gold Coast region.

Friends of ACT for Kids, a Gold Coast based fundraising team, is motivated to engage the local community and ensure the program will run again this year. If you can help we would love to hear from you! Please call 1300 228 000 or email mail@actforkids.com.au for more information.

Welcome Conexus Consulting!

Newly appointed ACT for Kids Silver Sponsor, Conexus Consulting, is an organisational and leadership development consultancy based in Brisbane and operating across Australia and internationally. Conexus partners with organisations to design and deliver innovative people solutions that transform the performance of individuals, teams and organisations. They are a small but passionate team and their support to date includes a sizeable cash donation, much appreciated volunteer hours and pro bono services, with their Director, Andrew and a team member Louyse, facilitating our Board's strategic planning in recent weeks.



PHOTO: Michelle McNicholl (ACT for Kids Fundraising Manager) and Lesley-Anne Houghton (Conexus Consulting General Manager) are excited about our new partnership.

What's been cooking at ACT for Kids Woolloowin?

The ACT for Kids Kindergarten at our Woolloowin centre, Brisbane, received a long awaited kitchen upgrade earlier this year thanks to the generosity of our long term supporter Michele Norris of Norris Group, who motivated her personal contacts to assist with the renovations after attending one of our Open Days.

The very outdated 70's style kitchen was replaced with a brand new fully functional kitchen. Clem Crisci from CRISCON coordinated and covered all costs in relation to the project, including flooring and plumbing, and their subcontractor, Leo Steiner from Image Joinery, manufactured and installed the cabinetry free of charge. A number of industry suppliers pulled together to support the cause, including Barchie, Laminex Industries,

Multiform and Lincoln Group who all offered discounts on their products.

We'd like to thank Stephen Cooper and the team at Intechsys for the free installation of 10 security cameras and digital video recorder, critical observation and assessment tools for our therapy staff. The cameras will improve the observation and reviewing of parent and child interactions, ultimately leading to greater quality outcomes for abused children and their families.



Thank you E3 whose graphic designers have created our Platinum Class Lottery brochures free of charge since lottery draw 23. In January, the E3 team also spent a whole day painting our office building and kindy at Woolloowin, providing all paint and required materials.

Partnership with Mercedes Brisbane a SMART move



PHOTO: Shane Parkins (Dealer Principal Mercedes-Benz Brisbane) and Christine Budd (Marketing Manager Mercedes-Benz Brisbane).

As Mercedes-Benz Brisbane's primary charity partner, ACT for Kids has been delighted by the support of the prestige dealership. We're particularly excited about our new smart car, provided free of charge for the term of our partnership.

Not only is the car essential for our daily operations, but the eye-catching artwork provided free by Surreal Signs has the ACT for Kids' brand turning heads across Brisbane.

In addition to the new wheels, Mercedes Brisbane has provided ACT for Kids with low price vehicles for our Platinum Class Lotteries. The luxury dealership also purchases tickets for each of their new car buyers, a smart way to show they appreciate their clients whilst supporting ACT for Kids at the same time.

Platinum Class Lottery Draw 25 now open – new E-Class Cabriolet yours to win! Buy your tickets today. Call 1800 968 946 or visit www.platinumclass.com.au

Top points for Top Taste

Every month the Top Taste staff at Kedron, Brisbane, raise money for a worthy charity, this February they chose ACT for Kids. The motivated Community Engagement Team (including Col, Kobie and Kristelle) rallied staff with raffles throughout the month and held a burger day raising a total \$2,100. That's a lot of burgers!

Kobie Morgan was humble in response to our thanks, "On behalf of the team I would just like to add that it was an honour and a privilege to be able to do something for ACT for Kids. I hope we can do more in the future." Every dollar raised helps support our child abuse counselling services so we are thrilled with this tremendous effort. Top points for your support – thanks Top Taste!



ACT FOR KIDS Star Supporters



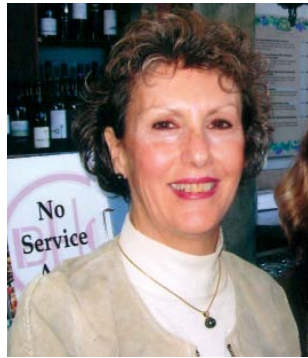
ACT for Kids relies heavily on support from the community to keep our services running. Every dollar raised helps us treat and prevent child abuse and neglect; we are proud to share with you just some examples of the dedication and generosity of our supporters so far this year.

Some of our star supporters to date in 2010:

Tatts and Tiaras supporters

Although we lacked the funds to widely promote Tatts and Tiaras this year, we were touched that some of our most dedicated supporters still chose to host their own fundraising events in February. Small businesses and individuals showed their support by selling Tatts and Tiaras merchandise.

A special thank you goes to Helen McGrory who sold over \$4,000 worth of merchandise from a stall at the Brisbane Airport. In total, our supporters sold merchandise to the value of over \$6,000, a fantastic result!



Everyday Hero fundraisers

Using *Everyday Hero* is an easy way to raise funds for ACT for Kids, completing an exhausting two hour swim is more challenging! Angela Szczepanski, an ACT for Kids regular donor and long-time supporter, recently rallied her family, friends and colleagues raising an impressive \$1,690 through her swim challenge. Thank you Angela!

Everyday Hero allows you to create a personalised fundraising page, processes donations, issues tax deductible receipts and transfers donations to ACT for Kids. You can even upload photos and videos to promote your fundraising efforts. If you are interested in supporting us through *Everyday Hero*, either by donating or starting your own fundraising event or challenge, visit www.everydayhero.com.au and our website www.actforkids.com.au



Brisbane Boys' College (BBC) students

On Friday 26 March BBC prep school students donated over 300 Easter gifts for the kids at our Woolloowin therapy centre. The students proudly presented the gifts to ACT for Kids during their morning assembly. BBC Learning Support teacher, Glenda O'Brien, was overwhelmed by the generosity of the students this year.

"Our boys are always so excited to think that they can help other children less fortunate than them have a happy Easter," Glenda said. The generosity of the BBC prep students meant the kids at our therapy centre could even take Easter eggs home for their families.



Please contact us if you would like to fundraise for us, and help us achieve our goals!



Child Protection Week, 3-10 September

Time to take action for child protection

Child Protection Week, 3–10 September, promotes the belief that protecting children is everyone’s responsibility. This week, with Seven’s help, we’ve planned some exciting activities and encourage anyone who shares our passion for child protection to register for these events.

We’re absolutely thrilled that Channel Seven Brisbane are partnering with us to bring you the first ever ‘Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal’, supporting a whole week of events to help raise funds for our child abuse therapy services. The appeal will run from 3-10 September.

Channel Seven television personality and long term ambassador and advocate of ACT for Kids, Kay McGrath, is the face of the appeal and Seven are committed to providing extensive media coverage throughout the week.

“In light of the recent tragic crimes against children, the important work of ACT for Kids is now more crucial than ever,” Kay said.

You can help us treat and prevent child abuse by donating to the appeal in September. Tune into Channel Seven for regular updates on the appeal’s progress.

On Friday 3 September we will mark the beginning of Child Protection Week with ‘Emmy’s Night of Stars’, our annual supporters’ celebration, at Victoria Park Golf Club. Our biggest event of the year, the night promises entertainment, dancing and celebration of what we can and will achieve by working together.

Our ‘Shake-A-Can for Kids’ Street Collection Challenge will hit the streets Wednesday 8 September across Brisbane CBD. Last year’s event was a great success with corporate teams raising awareness and significant funds in just a few hours. Register your 2010 team today if you’re up to the challenge!

Special thanks to Publicis Mojo for providing us with impressive pro bono advertising concepts for our upcoming TVC and Seven / ACT for Kids Appeal!

How to register for our events:

If you’re ready to take action against child abuse and neglect, register for our events today! Simply visit the ‘events’ page at www.actforkids.com.au or call 1300 228 000.

Save the date, show your support

To see up-to-the minute details of fundraising and community events that raise funds and support our programs visit www.actforkids.com.au and click on "news and events".

23 July **ACT for Kids Annual Art Show**

This year our Art Show is being held at White Canvas Gallery, Fortitude Valley, from Friday 23-30 July. The opening night cocktail party, from 6-9pm, is only \$60 per person and includes wine and canapes.

5-11 Sept **National Child Protection Week**

This week promotes that the wellbeing and safety of Australia's children is everyone's responsibility. We host a number of fund and awareness raising events throughout the week, how will you show your support?

3-10 Sept **Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal**

Channel Seven Brisbane are partnering with us to bring you the first ever 'Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal', supporting a whole week of events to help raise funds for our child abuse therapy services. Watch throughout the week or visit our website to support the appeal.

3 Sept **Supporters' Annual Celebration Dinner**

'Emmy's night of stars' will light up the Victoria Park Golf Club, Herston. Join us and host Kay McGrath for what promises to be an uplifting evening, celebrating what we can and will achieve working together.

8 Sept **'Shake-a-Can for Kids' Street Collection Challenge**

Register your corporate team (minimum of two contenders) and help us raise awareness and funds for our child abuse counselling services. You'll race against time and each other around Brisbane CBD to raise the most funds and could even win a prize or two!

To register visit www.actforkids.com.au and click on "events calendar" in our "news and events" section or call us on 1300 228 000.

Thanks to our Supporters

Official Partners	 Queensland Government	 PUBLICIS MOJO		
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Silver Sponsors	 COLORADO group ltd	 Katrina Christ photographer	 conexus CONSULTING	 96.5 FM Family <small>www.96five.com</small>
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Thank you



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ACT for Kids is a not-for-profit organisation which provides free services to treat and prevent child abuse. We deliver professional counselling to abused and neglected children through our network of ACT for Kids centres. We have helped thousands of children and families overcome the pain of abuse since we were established as the Abused Child Trust in 1988.



An initiative of the Abused Child Trust

ACT for Kids centres – Brisbane, Townsville, Gold Coast, Cairns

Freecall: 1300 228 000

Email: mail@actforkids.com.au

www.actforkids.com.au

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