



# Act for kids

Preventing and treating child abuse and neglect

## LEVI & RUBY'S\* STORY



*\*Names changed to protect identity.*

Levi and Ruby were just one and three years old when they first came to Act for Kids. They are now safely living with mum but were traumatised after being exposed to severe domestic violence in the form of physical and emotional abuse from dad. Mum's primary focus had been only on safety and as a result their development had not been a priority at home. Both Levi and Ruby had missed major milestones with no hope of catching up on their own.

One year old Levi could only communicate with grunts, while three year old Ruby had a very limited vocabulary and neither of them would respond to their names when called. They had not grown up in an environment that encouraged play or imagination and as a result had no idea how to engage with each other or play with toys. Their lack of knowledge on how to play with things infuriated them, and as a result they would stomp on toys and throw them across the room.

Their days were filled with frequent tantrums and their emotions were explosive. Mum was struggling to get things done and learning how to be a single parent was overwhelming.

Act for Kids Integrated Therapy Team worked with the entire family to help develop a positive relationship between the young mum and her young kids. We worked with both children to support their speech and language development, teaching Levi his first words and helping Ruby learn to use her words to ask for things she wanted and tell mum how she was feeling. We helped the children learn to play with each other and how to interact with the environment around them and supported mum to manage and understand her children's emotions.

The family now have positive routines in the home and mum is coping much better day-to-day. Levi and Ruby have improved speech and language skills and Act for Kids will continue to support them as they get ready for kindy. While Levi and Ruby's tantrums still occur, they are much less frequent and the kids are now excited for new experiences and are playing and exploring like other children their age. Your donations have helped us give Levi and Ruby the therapy they needed and because of you, they will go on to have safe and happy childhoods.

**Thank you!**





## MAKE A MONSTER OF A DIFFERENCE FOR KIDS!

As the CEO of Act for Kids, one of the most common questions that people ask me is **'what more can I do to help?'**. And without fail, I will tell them, help us raise awareness and help us bring in funds so our therapists can see more kids.

This year, we have launched our Monster Crayons – four adorable monster shaped crayons that quite literally make the monsters disappear for abused and neglected kids. You can help us make a difference by selling these crayons on our behalf – I guarantee your

colleagues will find them much more exciting than chipping in for another sausage sizzle! Our Monster Crayons fundraising box is available for purchase online and costs just \$160 + postage.

Whether you want to sell Monster Crayons to your internal team or you think your customers would love to get their hands on some, it's a fun and unique way to fundraise that delivers real results. By helping us sell our Monster Crayons you are making a massive difference to the Aussie kids we help – they can't thank you enough, and neither can we.

**Dr Neil Carrington**  
CEO Act for Kids

## ROSIE BATTY ATTENDS LAUNCH OF FLOURISH THERAPY IN BUNDABERG



Australian of the Year 2015, CEO of the Luke Batty Foundation and anti-family violence campaigner Rosie Batty has visited Bundaberg to celebrate the launch of the Act for Kids Flourish Therapy program which is now being delivered to schools in the region.

With funding support from Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN and the Department of Education, Act for Kids provides therapy to help children overcome their experiences through individual therapeutic support, group programs and counselling for families.

"More than 656 children were confirmed as abused or neglected in the Wide Bay region last year," said Tom McIntyre, Act for Kids Regional Director.



"An important part of the program is to clarify the causes of behaviour

problems, and rather than being wilful or deliberately naughty, these kids may be showing symptoms of unsafe and scary experiences."

Rosie Batty believes when children see and hear family violence, it makes learning and childhood extremely difficult. "It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in particular. Early support and intervention is crucial," Ms Batty said.

## HAVING A BALL FOR KIDS IN NEED

It's been an incredibly busy few months at Act for Kids with four charity balls in a row! It kicked off with the Act for Kids Gala Ball which was, as usual, a fantastic night raising big dollars for little kids!

Next, it was the Civil Contractors Federation Queensland and Dial Before You Dig's 'Arabian Nights' Charity Ball which was a spectacular evening with performances from fire dancers and belly dancers.

Then it was down to Sydney for the Subway and IPCA 'Queen of Hearts' Charity Ball. Act for Kids Ambassador and 7 News Presenter Angie Asimus did a fantastic job of MC'ing the evening while auctioneer Andrew Morello had attendees digging deep for kids. He even managed to sell two packs of Monster Crayons for \$10,000!

Then back in Brisbane, Star Wars fanatics took over Tattersall's for the 501st Legion's Redback Garrison Galactic Empire Charity Ball. It was the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and boasted charity auctions, meet and greets with screen accurate characters and droid races.

Together, these four charity balls brought in over \$300,000 for vulnerable Aussie kids and allowed Act for Kids to share their story with hundreds of people and make meaningful connections to continue the growth of the organisation.

If you would like to hold an event on behalf of Act for Kids, we'd love to connect you with our Events team! Just send us an email at [mail@actforkids.com.au](mailto:mail@actforkids.com.au)



## CHINA TREKKERS RAISING BIG DOLLARS FOR LITTLE KIDS



**WITH THE ANNUAL TREK FOR KIDS LESS THAN THREE MONTHS AWAY, OUR TREKKERS HAVE BEEN BUSY WITH LOTS OF EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS TO HELP THEM REACH THEIR GOALS!**

So far, the trekkers have brought in over \$40,000 which will all go towards helping abused and neglected children get their childhoods back.

Channel 7's Sammie O'Brien will be taking on the trek and smashed her fundraising goal in just one day! Earlier this month, she held a sell-out champagne afternoon at Eleven Rooftop Bar and with some amazing raffle prizes brought in almost \$20,000 – doubling her initial goal of raising \$10,000!

Australian Survivor contestant's Sue Clarke and Kat Dumont are also taking on the challenge and held their own Trek Trivia Night in Western Australia and brought in over \$5,000!

**To find out more about the Trek or to donate visit [www.trekforkids.com.au](http://www.trekforkids.com.au)**



Recently, team members from Marsh Pty Ltd, a global leader in insurance broking and risk management, spent the day at the Act for Kids Centre in Woolloowin cleaning up the yard and playgrounds for our kids to enjoy after all the nasty weather.

Senior Account Executive, Chanel McCanna said Marsh provides all staff with paid volunteering time so that they can help out local communities.

"It was great to see the Marsh team at the Woolloowin Act for Kids Centre, lending a hand to tidy their garden and kindly," she said.

Act for Kids Fundraising Manager Karen McIntyre said more and more companies are encouraging their staff to volunteer as well as support charities through workplace giving.

"It's been amazing to see organisations embrace all the different ways they can give back over the last few years. Particularly at Act for Kids, we've had a massive increase in the amount of pro bono support we receive as well as an increase in corporate volunteers and donations of prizes and experiences as prizes for our events. Every little bit helps," Karen says.

## HITTING A HOLE IN ONE FOR KIDS

Two major supporters of Act for Kids, insurance provider Auto & General and telecommunications giant Vita Group recently raised over \$120,000 to help vulnerable kids at their respective Charity Golf Days.



Gerry O'Shaughnessy, Community Manager at Auto & General said the support for the golf day from the Auto & General business partners was outstanding.



"We had 23 partners invest in, sponsor and participate on the day. Their support is helping us make a difference in our community and in this case Act for Kids are the beneficiaries of a great community effort," Mr O'Shaughnessy said.

Vita Group CEO Maxine Horne said she was blown away by the generosity shown by Vita and their partners.

**"Act for Kids play an important role in protecting and advocating for young children, so being able to support them in such a meaningful way, fills me, and I'm sure the whole team at Vita, with a great sense of pride," she said.**

Act for Kids CEO Dr Neil Carrington said these contributions will go a long way in helping vulnerable kids get their childhoods back.

"A contribution of this size could provide 1,200 hours of intensive therapy for children that have been abused or neglected," Dr Carrington said.

## MARSH CLEAN UP DAY





## ACT FOR KIDS ATTENDS BLACKTOWN YOUTH WEEK



To mark the end of Blacktown's Youth Week, Act for Kids participated in the closing celebration held at the Dawson Mall in April. X-Factor stars Paris Inc. and Beatz performed on the main stage, with local high school students playing acoustic sets on a second stage.

Local services, including Act for Kids, ran activities

for young people attending the event. Act for Kids (with help from Mount Druitt TAFE students) made stress balls, engaged in discussions around healthy relationships, and facilitated the creation of a collaborative artwork around the question "What does a safer community look like to you?"

The event was organised by Blacktown City Council and others. Adele McLennan-Gillings from Act for Kids Blacktown and said the turnout from the local community was fantastic.

"Though the event was targeted at youth, there was a broad range of people coming through, many of whom commented on how pleased they were to meet us and other services in their community and thanking us for helping out," Adele said.

**By making a monthly donation to Act for Kids and becoming a Kids Crusader you are enabling us to continue our important work with children, families and communities around Australia. Visit our website [www.actforkids.com.au](http://www.actforkids.com.au) to learn more about becoming a Kids Crusader!**

## MISS DIAMOND FINALIST SHINES A LIGHT ON CHILD ABUSE

The Act for Kids team had the pleasure of meeting 13-year-old Gabriella Hortin, a Miss Junior Diamond finalist who had travelled to Brisbane all the way from Western Australia.

Miss Diamond Australia is a beauty pageant that celebrates beauty in diversity and promotes change in the industry by having no weight or height restrictions.

**Gabriella competed in the Miss Diamond Australia pageant in early April and in the lead up to the competition, held a Disney Quiz Night fundraiser with the proceeds going to Act for Kids.**

As the youngest of nine children in her family, Gabriella said her happy childhood was the reason she chose to support Act for Kids.

"I've always grown up in a happy environment; some children don't have that and I really wanted to help those children," Gabriella said.



## ARTWORK HELPING TO HEAL LITTLE LIVES

MARTA, ONE OF OUR SEXUAL ABUSE COUNSELLORS ON THE GOLD COAST, HAS CREATED THIS BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF ARTWORK WHICH SHE HAS DONATED TO THE FLOURISH PROGRAM AT OUR ACT FOR KIDS LABRADOR CENTRE. IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE TOUCHED, UNDERSTANDING THAT CHILDREN ENJOY BEING ABLE TO TOUCH AND FEEL DIFFERENT TEXTURES.

Michelle, a Flourish therapist, said her clients have been drawn to the colourful and vibrant piece. "Last week one little girl asked if she could touch the artwork, and was commenting on the various parts of the painting. She would not normally pay attention to anything for more than a minute and it was amazing to see her be so mindful of the art," Michelle said.

Thank you Marta for this beautiful edition to our Family Therapy Room, it certainly brings a smile to many faces when they see it.



**For more information or to donate please call 1300 228 000 or visit [www.actforkids.com.au](http://www.actforkids.com.au)**

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Act for Kids is a not-for-profit organisation providing free professional therapy and support services to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect. Established in 1988, we have helped thousands of children and families in Australia who have experienced, or are at risk of child abuse and neglect.