



# Act for kids

Preventing and treating child abuse and neglect



## CHLOE'S\* STORY

Chloe was removed from her mother when she was just seven months old. Her mum had a history of substance abuse and mental health issues and wasn't able to properly look after her new baby girl. Chloe was affected by the drugs before she was even born and her first six months of life were unpredictable and scary.

As a baby she was looked after by many different people which affected her ability to form attachments with adults.

Although Chloe is now living in a safe environment with her foster family, she has many daily struggles that affect her relationships with those around her. She has difficulties managing her emotions, she's self-conscious, has obsessive catastrophic thoughts, craves being in control and lacks social skills and boundaries with strangers.

Chloe came to Act for Kids when she was nine years old. Early in therapy, our team could see the emotional 'walls' that Chloe puts up to avoid engaging in conversations around feelings. She would walk around the room, try to distract the therapist and her foster mum and try to seek control of the room. When we could get her to sit still, she needed to have emotional breaks every few minutes.

*\*Name changed to protect privacy.*

Her foster mum desperately wanted to strengthen her relationship with Chloe and was a big part of the Integrated Therapy Treatment. Our psychologist helped Chloe and her foster mum engage in attachment-focused therapy to explore Chloe's early experiences of neglect and learn about Chloe as a baby to help develop a healthy self-concept. Although Chloe found it hard to talk about her feelings, she gave our psychologist permission to label her thoughts and feelings and Chloe would tell her therapist if she was correct or incorrect. A small step towards some really powerful therapeutic work!

Chloe can now engage in therapy with her foster mum for an hour and a half – something she never could have done six months ago. She is learning to seek emotional support from her foster mum when she feels sad or vulnerable, instead of putting up emotional walls and their relationship is strengthening everyday. Her anxiety and obsessive thoughts have reduced and she's finding it much easier to let go of control.

Chloe is now well on her way to experiencing a normal and happy childhood. With the help of our therapists and lots of hard work, she is seeking comfort in her foster family and learning to be a little girl again!







## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The latest statistics on child abuse and neglect in Australia have just been released and sadly, the number of children confirmed as abused or neglected has risen yet again.

During 2016-17, there was **49,315 children who suffered abuse or neglect**. That's one child every 11 minutes. In the last five years, the number of children receiving child

protection services has risen by 25% and during that same five years Act for Kids has increased our service delivery by **227%**. With your help, we are reaching more children than ever and putting little lives back together all across Australia. Thank you so much for your ongoing commitment to making a difference. Let's keep fighting this fight to keep our kids safe and give vulnerable kids back their childhoods.

**Dr Neil Carrington**  
Chief Executive Officer

## TREK FOR KIDS

The Women In Business Arkaba Trek for Kids is in progress right now! Nine inspirational trekkers have been training and fundraising hard to achieve their goals! So far they've raised over \$75,000 all of which will be directed to Act for Kids Integrated Therapy Programs to help abused and neglected children overcome their trauma. Our trekkers will walk 42km across the Flinders Ranges in South Australia and experience all the Australian Outback has to offer. Get behind them and support their incredible efforts at [www.trekforkids.com.au](http://www.trekforkids.com.au)



## COMING SOON!

### WE ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING FOR OUR BIBBULMUN TREK FOR KIDS IN SEPTEMBER 2018!

This incredible adventure will be a life-changing experience as you witness some of Australia's most spectacular scenery and raise vital funds and awareness for abused and neglected kids!

To find out more information or to register your interest go to [www.trekforkids.com.au](http://www.trekforkids.com.au) or email [events@actforkids.com.au](mailto:events@actforkids.com.au)



## CHRISTMAS IS ALL WRAPPED UP

What an incredible Christmas it was with the Act for Kids Christmas Gift Wrapping stands raising over \$35,000 for vulnerable children. With the support of Robina Town Centre, Westfield North Lakes and Orion Springfield Central, 2017 was the biggest year yet!

At Robina Town Centre, the Gold Coast community really got behind the initiative and raised over \$16,000! The North Lakes stand raised an incredible \$13,000, using 40 rolls of wrapping paper, 60 rolls of sticky tape, 30 rolls of ribbon and 5,200 gift tags, in just two weeks!

These wonderful achievements are all thanks to the unbelievable generosity of the many volunteers, including the spirited and enthusiastic staff at Auto & General who donated a massive 124 hours in the 14 days leading up to Christmas, manning the North Lakes stall everyday, even after hours.

Gerry O'Shaughnessy, Auto & General Community Manager and long-time supporter of Act for Kids, said "The staff were eager to give their time selflessly to help gift wrap for Act for Kids, as it was a first time for a lot of them to be able to physically give and do something in aid of vulnerable children."

Unfortunately, Christmas time can be tough for children who have experienced abuse. Raising this amount of money at Christmas goes a long way in putting huge smiles on little dials!







## SYDNEY HIGH TEA A SWEET SUCCESS

At Act for Kids, we are incredibly grateful to have some truly amazing ambassadors that tirelessly work to make a difference to the lives of abused and neglected kids. In February our NSW Ambassador Angie Asimus organised and hosted our first ever event in Sydney to help raise funds and awareness of our work in Western Sydney.

Held at the Burnt Orange in Mosman, 50 guests were treated to spectacular views and a delicious high tea, all the while raising funds to support vulnerable kids at the Act for Kids Blacktown centre.

Sadly, many of Act for Kids services have waiting lists for children to receive integrated therapy, but Angie says funds raised at the high tea will make a real difference.

"Thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended, we raised over \$2,700! That's enough to give two children in Western Sydney life-changing therapy for an entire year," Angie said.

Angie was joined by National Ambassador Sascha Chandler who kindly shared his personal experience of overcoming his childhood abuse and why he is so passionate about the work Act for Kids does in the prevention space and with protective behaviours.

Act for Kids protective behaviours program 'Learn to be safe with Emmy & friends' teaches children about safe and unsafe secrets, their early warning signs when they are feeling unsafe and most importantly according to Sascha, who they can tell when they feel unsafe and to tell and tell again until they are believed.

"I wish there was something like this program around when I was six years old – I would have known how to speak out and known that I would have been believed. Programs like this are so crucial for our kids, just as crucial as it is for adults to educate themselves about the signs of abuse... child abuse ignored is child abuse," Sascha said.

Overall the event was hugely successful and a step in the right direction to building the profile of Act for Kids in New South Wales. Act for Kids will be hosting its inaugural Golf Day on June 22nd and is calling on players and businesses alike to come along and have a putt for kids. For more information or to sign up contact [events@actforkids.com.au](mailto:events@actforkids.com.au)

## GALA BALL – BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

The Act for Kids 30th Anniversary Once Upon A Time Gala Ball is coming up on the 19th of May! We have been working hard to ensure that this year's Gala Ball is one of our best yet! Proudly presented by the Vita Foundation, we have some incredible sponsors that have come on board including our major sponsors Mercedes-Benz Brisbane, Minor Hotels, Budget Direct, Expose Media and SRJ Walker Wayland. Not to mention, we've lined up a past X Factor winner to keep you entertained all night long!

Brisbane Arts Theatre have been busy working their musical magic and we promise to deliver an opening act that will take you back to your childhood! Minor Hotels have kindly supplied our amazing live auction prizes and guests will have the chance to bid on luxury getaways to New Zealand, Africa, Thailand and Portugal just to name a few...

But what's most exciting about this milestone event is the vital funds that will be raised and the number of children whose lives will change because of the generosity of our guests. We hope you can join us for this magical evening. If you haven't already, please book your tickets at [www.actforkidsgalaball.com.au](http://www.actforkidsgalaball.com.au)



Up for grabs – a luxury Kenyan safari



Going once, going twice – an indulgent Thailand escape

*Gala Ball*

ACT FOR KIDS 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GALA BALL

Saturday 19 May 2018

Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane Showgrounds

*Once upon  
a time*







## HELP HEAL LITTLE AUSSIES AND PLAY FOR PURPOSE!



Play for Purpose is a new charity lottery that lets you win great prizes and help support vulnerable kids at the same time. Not only do you have a 1 in 19 chance of winning one of over 11,000 prizes but you are making a difference to the lives of abused and neglected kids in Australia. Tickets are just \$25 each and there are some truly incredible prizes on offer. First prize is a life-changing \$500K in Gold Bullion, you could also win a \$150K luxury car package, holiday packages as well as thousands of gift cards! Best of all, \$15 from every ticket goes straight to Act for Kids to provide free therapy for vulnerable kids and their families. Buy your tickets at [www.playforpurpose.com.au/act-for-kids](http://www.playforpurpose.com.au/act-for-kids)

## SAFECARE PROGRAM OPENS IN COOMERA

A new program designed for parents of children aged 0-5 will soon be delivered by Act for Kids to families in Coomera.

The behaviourally based program consists of 18 sessions delivered in the parent's home with the aim to enhance parent-child relationships, teach new mums and dads how to plan and organise daily play activities for their kids, positively interact with their child and prevent challenging behaviour.

There are three modules to the SafeCare program which focus on positive parent-child interactions, systematic health decision making and appropriate supervision. Essentially, helping young parents or struggling parents learn essential life skills and create a safe family environment for their child to thrive.

The program will launch in the coming weeks and we look forward to seeing many positive outcomes for children and families in Coomera and surrounds.



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.