

Buddy News

Stories of healing and hope,
made possible by **you!**



Because of you, children in crisis can get the love
and comfort of a Buddy Bag. Thank you!

Your kindness brought smiles to children at Southern Cross Kids Camp



With your generous support, children attending Southern Cross Kids Camp who have experienced trauma, neglect, and abuse were given a Buddy Bag to call their own.

Southern Cross Kids Camp is a week-long camp that gives children doing it tough a chance to have fun, build confidence and experience connection.

When Buddy Bags arrived at the camp, Tammy, a volunteer, was amazed by the generosity and care put into the Buddy Bags.

Tammy said, "Normally we have to find funding for our packs, so the fact that the Buddy Bags came loaded with stuff was just really amazing."

For many children at the camp, receiving something to call their own was a rare experience. But thanks to your incredible support, they received brand-new backpacks filled with fresh PJs, toiletries, soothing fidget toys, notebooks and a cuddly teddy.

Each carefully packed item helped the children feel valued and loved for the first time in their life.

"Some of them didn't even want to open their Buddy Bag because they're scared that it'll get taken from them. They're not used to getting something new – something that's just theirs," Tammy shared.

Because of supporters like you, children facing some of life's toughest challenges are reminded that they matter.

Thank you for all that you do to let vulnerable children know that they are cared for, and they are not alone.

Thank you for helping children at SCKC feel valued and comforted!



**These stories are true accounts, but names and images have been changed to protect safety and privacy.*



Because of you, Liam can trust again after years of neglect

At just five years old, Liam's* world was turned upside down.

For years, he and his twin sister had lived with neglect and uncertainty. Their parents lived with mental health challenges and substance abuse, often leaving the children alone for days at a time. When a teacher noticed their many absences and empty lunch boxes, the twins were removed from their parents' care.

While his sister went to live with their aunt, Liam was placed in foster care and moved to a new school. Separated from the person he loved most, he withdrew completely. He avoided eye contact, sat alone at lunch and struggled to trust the people around him. **Deep down, Liam didn't believe that anyone would stay or care.**

But thanks to your generosity and compassion, Liam was able to access the support of our specialist therapeutic program, Children Ahead.

Slowly, Liam began to feel safe again with the support of his Therapeutic Practitioner and your incredible kindness. Through play-based therapy, support at school and regular contact with his twin sister facilitated by his Practitioner,



Your support helped ensure Liam's childhood wasn't stolen by trauma.

Liam started rebuilding trust, confidence and connection.

With your support, his Practitioner was also able to advocate for a more suitable foster placement, helping Liam find the stability and love he desperately needed.

Today, Liam is thriving thanks to you. He has friends, enjoys school and is reaching important developmental milestones.

Most importantly, he knows he is valued, cared for and safe.

Thank you for helping give Liam back his sense of safety and trust – and for giving him the chance to experience the joy of childhood.



A beautiful note from Rosie after her time with Children Ahead

You helped Rosie piece her world back together after violence

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the kindness and generosity you showed to children like Rosie* who have experienced extreme violence this past tax time.

We are so pleased to share that you helped raise \$265,820 to help ensure children can access the specialist, trauma-informed care they need to heal through the Children Ahead program.

Behind the scenes: Preparing for Richmond Football Club match day

Before our annual fundraising match with Richmond Football Club on 2 August, the team came down to Buddy Bags HQ to pack Buddy Bags with comforting essentials.

The match day itself, and the community support, left us absolutely speechless!

Thank you to the Tiger Army for raising \$104,000 to help send over 1,790 Buddy Bags to children escaping violence - now and into the future!



The Tigers support children in crisis on and off the field.



Nick's Purple Picnic raised over \$2,400 to help children escaping violence



After a conversation with a victim-survivor of abuse, Nick was driven to do his part to help children who have escaped violence by hosting an Alannah & Madeline Day Purple Picnic.



"Our fundraising helped children we'll never meet. We'll never hear their stories, and we won't know what they've gone through – but just through having that drive to help and embodying the empathy all children deserve. We'll have changed the lives of children who have gone through so much."

"Every child deserves to have a childhood." - Nick



Nick baked cookies to make his Purple Picnic extra special!

Want to fundraise with
your community?
Scan to sign up!



From the children, families and services **you help support**



These are just a fraction of the heartwarming messages we receive about the **support you make possible for children and young people.**

From putting Buddy Bags into the hands of children escaping violence to helping young people recover and rebuild after trauma, your generosity and kindness are changing the lives of children and young people.

"Best Christmas gifts this year [after] leaving domestic violence. The Buddy Bags were well thought out and just what my child needed at the time. Thank you." - **Serina***



"Thank you so much. The hand knitted stuff warms our hearts, especially the teddy bears!!

The Buddy Bags are delightful and will be so well received by our kids/families during a traumatic situation."

- **Georgia***, children's hospital healthcare worker



"Thank you for being here for me. I appreciate the amount of confidence you have helped me find in myself the past few months."

- **A message from a young person supported by Children Ahead**



"I received a Buddy Bag a month before my 10th birthday. I got a Barnaby teddy in it...nearly 12 years later I still have him. He comes with me everywhere. That bag changed my small life. I think about it so often. I genuinely don't think I would be the person I am today if I didn't receive that Buddy Bag.

- **Bella***



New **FREE** resource: Help your little ones stay safe and protect their data

As a parent, grandparent or carer, you can't be beside your child every time they're online.

These free games for Years 5 and 6 students, created by our online safety eSmart team, build critical thinking skills – helping children recognise misinformation, understand their digital footprint, and navigate the online world safely.

Check them out below! ↓



Thank you for honouring the Port Arthur tragedy, 30 years on

28 April this year marked 30 years since the Port Arthur tragedy where Alannah, Madeline, their mother Nanette, and 32 others lost their lives to senseless violence.

To commemorate the day and honour those impacted, we invited our community to write a message and plant a virtual iris in our online Port Arthur Memorial Garden.

Thank you to our wonderful community for writing thousands of messages to help spread love and hope on the anniversary.

Thirty years on, the weight of this moment is still felt. We remember, always. Thank you, Walter, for the courage and quiet strength you have shown, and for all you continue to give. - Mel Doyle, Ambassador

"I admire the strength and resilience of all survivors and communities living with this loss and am in awe of the legacy that Walter and others around him built to not only honour his beloved girls, but to shine a light on a positive, hope-filled path forward for children and young people." - Lisa

