



## Something they can call their own...

Megan is 15 years of age and her sister Lily is 5. The girls arrived at a refuge with their mother recently, following a violent attack between two of Megan's neighbours at her home which left one of the neighbours with a permanent disability.

Lily and Megan had both witnessed the violent attack and were disturbed by what they had seen. Lily began having nightmares because of it and Megan was feeling very uneasy being at home as she was constantly reminded of what had happened.

After the incident Megan and her family received threatening phone calls, had graffiti painted on their house and windows smashed in. One night, the family decided that it was not physically or emotionally safe for them to remain at home, and so they went to a women's refuge.

When they arrived at the refuge the girls were given a Buddy Bag from The Alannah and Madeline Foundation. Buddy Bags are back packs given to children entering emergency care and are filled with age appropriate essential items such as pyjamas, underwear, a pillowslip and toothbrush.

Both Megan and Lily love the Buddy Bags they received on their first night at the refuge. For Megan, the diary she received in her Buddy Bag helped her cope with what happened; it has given her a private place to voice her fears and sadness. Lily loves everything in her bag and has found great comfort in the teddy bear, which never leaves her side and helps her sleep at night.



## What's on

11-17 May  
**National Volunteer Week**

Thursday 28 May  
**Comedy Night  
benefiting the Foundation**

Friday 17 July  
**Half Time Wrap**

Tuesday 1 September  
**Finals Fever Golf Day**

November 2009  
**Starry Starry Night**

9-10 April 2010  
**NCAB Conference**

Visit [www.amf.org.au](http://www.amf.org.au) for more information on our upcoming events.

# CEO message



Tragically, every year tens of thousands of children are placed in emergency care such as foster care and refuges. Unfortunately, domestic violence is one of the most common reasons children find themselves there; and many children arrive with only the clothes they are wearing.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's Buddy Bags Program was developed in response to continued demands to support the many children in emergency care and their foster carers.

Through our program when children arrive at their emergency accommodation they receive a backpack full of much needed items such as new and clean underwear, a teddy bear to cuddle, a photo frame, an activity or reading book, toothbrush and toothpaste. Our Buddy Bags provide children with essential and personal items, belongings of their own to help begin the process of restoring a sense of safety and security in their lives.

A recent report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, which shows the number of children in foster homes and other out-of-home care services continues to rise, reinforces for us the need for our Buddy Bags Program to continue.

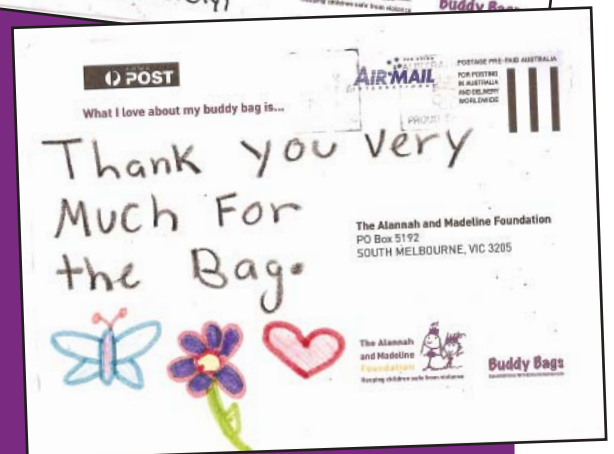
In 2008, thanks to the generosity of our donors, we were able to distribute over 3,000 Buddy Bags to more than 80 Australian foster care agencies and domestic violence refuges. Donations supporting the program in 2008 came through people purchasing a reusable shopping bag from Target, buying a NAB Visa Gift Card, or responding to our Christmas appeal and advertising campaign.

In 2009 we are hoping to distribute a minimum of 5,000 bags. You can help us achieve this goal by making a donation to fund a Buddy Bag for a child in need. A donation can be made via our website, at your local NAB branch or through purchasing a red reusable shopping bag when you are next in your local Target store.

I'd like to take this opportunity to give a heart-felt thank you to everyone who has supported the Buddy Bags Program to date, and for the many organisations and individuals involved in making the Program happen.

You only have to read a post card or two from children thanking us for their Buddy Bag, to see what a huge difference they make.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome Jackie Van Vugt, the Foundation's General Manager of Cybersafety. Jackie's most recent role was with VicHealth and she brings to the Foundation valuable expertise in a range of areas including health promotion and social change. Jackie will be working with our partners, stakeholders and the general community to help us meet our vision for cybersafety to be a normal part of every child's life.



The Alannah and Madeline Foundation will be working with the relevant agencies to ascertain how we can best help children, and their families, who have been affected by the devastating bushfires. Our hearts go out to all the people who have suffered from this terrible event, together with our sincere condolences and sympathies.

## Virtual violence is very real

Work on The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's Cybersafety and Wellbeing Campaign continues. The following statistics and media reports about young people being subjected to cybersafety risks, such as cyberbullying and sexual predation online, confirms how important it is to create a safe electronic world for our children.

### Cybersafety risks

#### Sexual predation

Twenty-two percent of children online will be targeted by an online predator or paedophile each year.  
(Youth Internet Safety Survey, US Department of Justice, 2001)

##### **Woman admits sex trip, Herald Sun, 7 August 2008**

It was reported a 36 year old American woman flew to Australia to have sex with a 15 year old boy she met on the internet. The woman was arrested three days after the boy was reported missing by his parents. The woman pleaded guilty to sexual offences involving a child under 16.

##### **Sex chat teacher banished, Herald Sun, 16 September 2008**

A 27 year old teacher sent 'sex chat' messages to students, had graphic phone and computer conversations with four pupils while working at a school; and used a school computer to email sexual material to another teacher. An inquiry found the teacher guilty of serious misconduct.

#### Cyberbullying

One quarter of Australian children report that they have been cyberbullied.

A third of children being cyberbullied do not report it to their parents for fear of having their internet use reduced or blocked.

Eighty-three percent of parents would not know what to do if their child was being cyberbullied.

*(Galaxy Research for Microsoft Australia, 2008)*

##### **Teen's porn 'hell', Shepparton News, 19 September 2008**

It was reported a 16 year old girl was subject to a 'relentless campaign of harassment, sparked by a one-minute video circulated among Shepparton teenagers via mobile phones. The video falsely but deliberately named her as the subject.' Trying to escape the cyberbullying the girl deleted her social networking site profile, got a new phone and even changed her surname. She fears potential employers and others will think she is the girl on the video and she is still haunted by the experience. She told the reporter she understood why some teenagers were driven to commit suicide.

##### **Mother faces jail over cyberbullying, The Australian, 28 November 2008**

A 49 year old Missouri mother was found guilty last November of illegally accessing computers following the suicide of a 13 year old teenager who killed herself after receiving taunting emails. The woman posed as a fictitious 16 year old boy "Josh" and befriended the girl via a bogus social networking site profile. According to The Australian the trial heard 'the girl hanged herself after receiving a message from "Josh" that said the world would be a better place without her.'

#### Where to go for help

##### **000 or local police**

If a child is in immediate danger or risk and requires an urgent response.

##### **[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or call 1800 551 800**

Kids Help Line is a telephone and online help line for young people aged between 5 and 25. It is free and confidential.

##### **[www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au)**

Contact the Australian Federal Police to report inappropriate online behaviour, such as adults acting inappropriately with or towards a child.

##### **Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000**

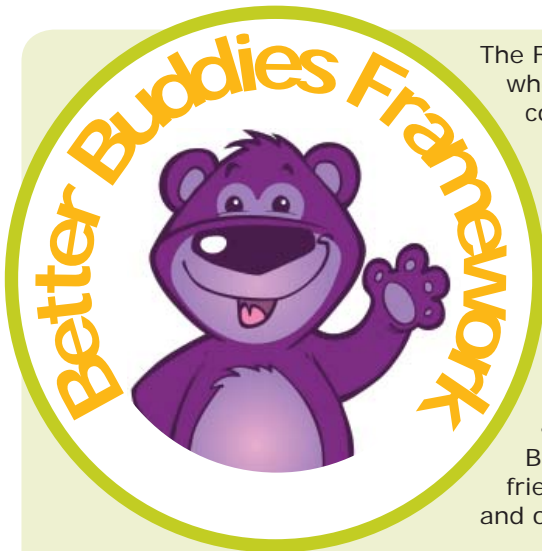
To anonymously report concerns about inappropriate behaviour that you find online contact Crime Stoppers.

##### **[www.acma.gov.au](http://www.acma.gov.au)**

To report inappropriate content, such as disturbing images of children or offensive/prohibited content contact the Australian Communications and Media Authority. This website also includes information and useful tips for children about using the internet safely.

##### **[www.amf.org.au](http://www.amf.org.au)**

For additional information and a website link to the Foundation's National Centre Against Bullying.



The Foundation's key prevention program is the Better Buddies Framework, a whole-school initiative designed to create friendly and caring primary school communities where bullying is reduced.

In Better Buddies schools, older children buddy up with younger children and through formal and informal activities learn the values: caring for others, friendliness, respect, valuing difference, including others and responsibility.

An external evaluation conducted at the end of 2008 has revealed the effectiveness of the Better Buddies Framework in primary schools nationally. Feedback from the evaluation provided the following observations from parents, teachers and the students.

- All participants in the survey were overwhelmingly positive about Better Buddies in their school environment. They felt it contributed to creating a friendlier and safer school environment and helped to reduce bullying behaviours and other disruptive behaviours in school.

- Better Buddies provided friendships among different age groups and a greater connection between children (who otherwise would have remained strangers).
- As a result of Better Buddies, students developed a sense of empowerment and consequently bolstered self esteem.
- Better Buddies is particularly beneficial for kids with disabilities or disruptive behaviours.
- Children were positive about Better Buddies and 95% of parents were supportive of it being in their school.
- Teachers and the school community responded positively to the participation of NAB volunteers and it is encouraging for the students to see the general community supporting them.

*"Better Buddies has influenced the behaviour in the yard with reduced number of 'Time Outs' and the culture change to a friendlier and safer school is evident."*

Shelley Beardshaw,  
Better Buddies  
Coordinator, Upwey South  
Primary School VIC



*"A large number of students mentioned as a highlight of their primary school years: meeting and working with their Buddy when they were in prep and then in year 5 or 6 getting their own prep Buddy. I thought it indicated just how much the kids value the program."*

Tina Conroy, Assistant Principal,  
Essendon Primary School VIC

## Aspendale Gardens Graduation

In December 2008 Grade 6 students at Aspendale Gardens Primary School graduated in front of their proud family and friends. What made their graduation extra special was that six years ago, as grade prep students, these children were the first to experience Better Buddies.

In 2002, these children were the first preps to be given a Grade 6 buddy when the Foundation launched Better Buddies at Aspendale Gardens Primary School.

In their final primary school year last year the students took on the role of the older buddy to look after the 2008 prep students; many doing so with fond memories of their first year at school with their Grade 6 buddy.

Students, teachers and family celebrated the end of their primary school years with a Celebration Picnic on Wednesday 17th December at the school. Buddy Bear, mascot of the Better Buddies Framework, together with the Foundation's CEO Judith Slocombe were there to join in the celebrations.



The Atannah  
and Madeline  
Foundation  
Keeping children safe from violence



## Fundraise for us!

You can help The Alannah and Madeline Foundation make a difference in the lives of even more children by fundraising among your family and friends.

Organising a fundraising event or activity is a fun and rewarding way to make a contribution. So why not plan to raise some funds for The Alannah and Madeline Foundation in 2009!

Hold a casual dress day at work or school, a shopping tour among friends or a sausage sizzle, with all profits donated to the Foundation. Contact the Foundation for a copy of our Fundraising Guide with lots of helpful information and tips for planning your event.

The Foundation has also partnered with [www.onlinegiving.com.au](http://www.onlinegiving.com.au) so that you can get sponsored by your family and friends to participate in an event. Online Giving takes all the hassle out of organising and collecting donations for your event. Simply log on, create a fundraising page and away you go. No cash handling, no receipt writing and no chasing people for their promised dollars.

You can create an Online Giving page for any event such as:

- raising funds by being sponsored in a fun run, triathlon or any other public event you like
- asking for donations to The Alannah and Madeline Foundation instead of receiving birthday or wedding presents
- honouring a loved one through raising funds in their memory
- any event you can think of, you can ask your friends and family to sponsor you to complete a personal challenge, climb a mountain, sleep out in the cold ... it's up to you!

Create your own fundraising page to raise money for us and make a real difference. You can personalise your page with information about your event and a photo and also keep track of funds raised through your web page. Your friends and supporters can then donate to the Foundation through your Online Giving page, while also posting you messages of support. Simply go to [www.onlinegiving.com.au](http://www.onlinegiving.com.au) and click on 'I want to raise money' to create your fundraising page for us.

For more information about fundraising for the Foundation, contact Cherie on 9697 0612 or email [cherie.shaw@amf.org.au](mailto:cherie.shaw@amf.org.au).



**Presentation of donation cheque at Iveco Trucks Golf Day.**

## Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, dedicating hours of their time for no financial gain. Whether they pack Buddy Bags for children staying in refuges, assist with data entry, filing or volunteering at an event like Starry Starry Night, each of our volunteers feels a huge sense of achievement and satisfaction that their hard work has helped us to continue keeping children safe from violence.

The Foundation is looking forward to National Volunteer Week, 11–17 May, giving us an opportunity to celebrate our team of volunteers and thank them for their contribution. Our volunteers are everyday people making an extraordinary contribution!

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering for the Foundation, contact Sue Blanck, Volunteer Co-ordinator (and a star volunteer herself!!) on 03 9697 0608 or email [sue.blanck@amf.org.au](mailto:sue.blanck@amf.org.au).

## Volunteer profile

**Name:** Bruce Clark

**Age:** 72 years young

**How long have you been volunteering for the Foundation?**

I have volunteered for the Foundation since late 2007.

**How often do you volunteer and what do you do to help?**

It's generally two full days per month and occasionally one extra day per month filling up the Buddy Bags stock room in readiness for the Buddy Bags assembly team. I also work from home affixing The Alannah and Madeline Foundation tags to the Buddy Bears bulk stocks at intervals throughout the year for the Better Buddies Framework. I work with the Starry Starry Night team on the night and I'm on call for miscellaneous projects as they arise.

**What made you decide to volunteer for the Foundation?**

I volunteered because at a very young age I survived multiple gun shot wounds and that equipped me with a deep understanding of, and empathy for, the issue of reducing violence against children, which The Alannah and Madeline Foundation stands for.

**What do you enjoy about volunteering for the Foundation?**

I have taken a keen interest in, supported and followed the Foundation's activities since its inception. Being in the older age bracket it's nice to know that one still has something of value to offer and whose efforts serve such a worthy cause. Plus there's a great atmosphere at The Alannah and Madeline Foundation; working with and around dedicated people, including other volunteers, all specialising in their respective responsibilities and who make you feel part of the team.



## Helping children recover

Exposure to serious violence can impact significantly on a child's physical, social and emotional development; and the effects can be long term. To recover from serious violence children need:

- a safe, predictable and stable environment
- the ability to express and communicate feelings
- positive relationships
- connection to family and community
- resilience.

Working closely with children and their families following a traumatic event or circumstance, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's Intensive Support Program helps children recover by focusing on their needs.

The program's holistic approach addresses the significant areas in children's lives and development. It works with children to build their resilience to help them manage the complicated emotional circumstances in which they find themselves.

Since the program began in April 2008, it has assisted more than 30 children. We have worked directly with these children and their families, and where necessary in collaboration with relevant agencies, to provide:

- individual and family counselling
- community networks and support
- positive relationships through mentoring
- financial counselling and support
- parenting skills training
- respite for carers
- positive social activities for children.

Make a donation today so more children can be part of this important program. Help us reach the children struggling to adjust due to violence in their lives.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity keeping children safe from violence. We care for children who experience or witness serious violence and run programs which help prevent violence in the lives of children.

The Foundation was set up in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac, aged 6 and 3, who along with their mother and 32 others were tragically killed at Port Arthur, Tasmania on 28 April 1996.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation Patrons and Chairman:

International Patron	HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark
National Patron	The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP, Prime Minister of Australia
Victorian Patron	The Hon. John Brumby MP, Premier of Victoria
Patron and Co-Founder	Walter Mikac
Chairman	John Bertrand AM

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National call centre: 1300 723 932

## Family violence

Family violence is violent behaviour by any family member against another, or between people with a domestic or intimate relationship. It can take the form of physical or sexual assault, emotional torment, threats, verbal abuse, economic control, social isolation and other threatening or intimidating behaviour causing a person to live in fear.

A higher incidence of family violence occurs against women and children. Therefore, children are significantly affected in two ways: by being the subject of the actual violence or witnessing it.

'Witnessing family violence has harmful immediate and long-term effects on children. Children who witness family violence can become nervous and withdrawn, perform poorly at school, have difficulty socialising, become aggressive or destructive, misuse drugs and alcohol, repeat the violent behaviour they have witnessed, show cruelty to animals and experience a range of other negative developmental impacts.' (familyviolence.vic.org.au)

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation applauds the Victorian Government for introducing new laws in December 2008 to prevent and reduce the incidence of family violence, better protect people from this kind of violence, and make those responsible more accountable for their behaviour.

For more detailed information about the new laws under the Family Protection Act 2008, visit [familyviolence.vic.org.au](http://familyviolence.vic.org.au)

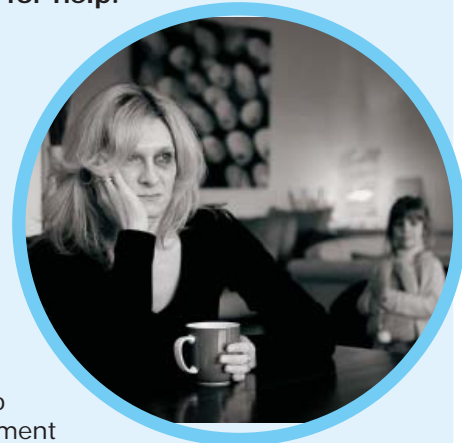
### Need help?

If you or someone you know need assistance due to family violence, here are some numbers you can call.

- **In an emergency, always call 000 for help.**
- **The Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (Vic)**  
1800 015 188 or  
(03) 9373 0123.
- **The Men's Referral Service (Vic)**  
1800 065 973 or  
(03) 9428 2899.
- **The Victims of Crime Helpline**  
1800 819 817.

### Updates from other states

In early February, the Northern Territory Government passed groundbreaking new laws making it mandatory for all adults to report domestic violence. The NT Government has also committed \$15 million over four years to support more crisis accommodation, increase counselling services and continuing public education campaigns.



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