

Maree Stanley

General Manager, Prevention

The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation



Keeping children safe from violence

Our history

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity protecting children from violence and its devastating impact.

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

We care for children who have experienced or witnessed serious violence. We also run programs that prevent violence and advocate for children's safety and wellbeing. Our vision is that every child will live in a safe and supportive environment.

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Maree Stanley is the General Manager of Prevention for The Alannah and Madeline Foundation and founder of the Better Buddies Framework – a prevention program to help schools create friendly and caring environments where bullying is reduced.

A teacher for more than 20 years, Maree has considerable first hand experience of bullying in schools. Identifying the need for national leadership around the issue of bullying, Maree approached a number of experts in the field and the result was the establishment of the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB).

For many years, Maree has worked closely with government, education departments and communities to raise awareness of the seriousness of bullying and preventative measures. Maree was the Foundation's Project Director working with the Department of Science and Training on the National Safe Schools Framework Best Practice Grants Program providing funds, leadership, advice and direction to 171 schools around Australia.

She was also the Principal Consultant working in partnership with Deakin University through the Department of Education and Training, on the Victoria Review of Anti-bullying Policy and Practice.

In 2004 and 2005 Maree self-funded her Masters of Education to bring a best-practice model into the redevelopment of Better Buddies. This resulted in the evidence base for the newly developed Better Buddies Framework and the publication of her thesis *Buddy Systems in Australian Primary Schools: An investigation of the staff and the students' perceptions of buddy systems in school communities*.

About Better Buddies

Better Buddies, an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, helps students entering their first year of primary school to feel safe, valued and connected to the school community. The school pairs new primary school students with an older buddy.

The Framework teaches students the values of caring for others, friendliness, respect, valuing difference, including others and responsibility. It aims to create positive behaviour, as well as build students' self-esteem, connectedness, social skills, trust and sense of community.

Launched in 2000, Better Buddies is now in more than 800 Australian schools, thanks to the support of NAB, trusts and foundations and other community partners. Better Buddies has also been adopted in other countries, including Denmark, Singapore and Dubai.

Buddy Bear is the mascot of Better Buddies – a fun-loving and caring purple bear, who promotes care, security, warmth, comfort and the values of the Framework. Buddy Bear makes special appearances at select schools and events throughout the year.

As part of the Better Buddies Framework, schools are encouraged to conduct regular buddy activities and run four key events throughout the year, including:

- Better Buddies Welcome (February)
- Better Buddies Games (May)
- Better Buddies Book Week (August)
- Better Buddies Celebration (November)

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has extensive experience in school-based cultural change programs. The Foundation runs bullying prevention programs in more than 1,000 schools nationwide, including the Better Buddies Framework and eSmart, and cares for children who have witnessed or experienced violence.

For more information visit betterbuddies.org.au or call 1300 720 747.