

ACT FOR KIDS

Formerly known as the Abused Child Trust



NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2011

ISSUE #54



Riley. Not his fault.

Riley* is seven years old and he used to live with his mum and dad, but he and his little sister Emma* were removed for their own safety when he was five. Riley remembers some good days, but it's the bad days that still haunt him. His mum and dad would often get drunk, and strangers would be in and out of the house on most nights. This is when Riley's parents fought the most. When his dad got drunk he would hit his mum, and sometimes she would hit back. Riley would try to hide himself and Emma. Sometimes they would be safe, but sometimes, if they did not run fast enough, his dad would hit them as well. One night when Riley was five he and Emma were beaten so severely that they were both hospitalised.

Riley and Emma did not go home; instead they now live with foster carers. ACT for Kids helped them work through nightmares, lack of appetite, social and learning problems at school and aggressive outbursts. Riley in particular was in a permanent state of extreme anxiety – exhibiting intense emotions and constantly on the lookout for danger. He would often spend hours at a time pretending to be a superhero in an attempt to have some control over his environment. He would try to create a sense of safety so that bad things would never happen to him and his sister ever again. Every day Riley wore his superhero costume under his school uniform, sometimes he would sleep in it.

ACT for Kids worked with Riley and Emma individually, as well as their foster carers and school. Therapy with Riley focused on his experiences prior to coming into care and brought to light his thoughts about not being able to protect his sister, feelings of helplessness and coping with mixed feelings towards his parents.

Nine months later and Riley no longer wears his costume to school and has fewer aggressive outbursts. He is performing better at school, has joined a football club and feels safer and is less anxious around adults. Riley is starting to understand that the abuse was not his fault and he is slowly learning to trust the people around him.

* Names changed to protect privacy.

Every day we work with kids like Riley. And every day there are kids we cannot afford to work with. For less than \$1 a day you can become an ACT for Kids Crusader and give an abused child like Riley the chance to overcome their trauma and find out what it's like to be safe, happy and loved. Make protecting kids your business this Child Protection Week 4–11 September.

From the CEO



Every week the ACT for Kids team works with over 1,000 children and families, and during Child Protection Week concerned organisations and caring communities all across Australia unite and advocate that protecting children is everybody's business. In this newsletter we share with you the activities we have planned and let you know how you can play your part in breaking the 12 minute cycle of child abuse and neglect.

It was this time last year that I joined ACT for Kids and I have since gained a much deeper understanding and an absolute admiration for the ACT for Kids team and the special work they do every day with children and families. It's a privilege for me to share with you just a few of my experiences to date as well as ACT for Kids' hopes and plans for the coming year.

A priority for me was to meet the entire ACT for Kids team – to understand the daily challenges they face and learn more about the positive changes they help create with children and families. My first port of call was a visit to each of our five Safe Houses in remote Indigenous communities. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting our passionate and caring local staff, and was impressed with the motivation and dedication shown by our partners in this project, The Aboriginal Corporation of West Coast Cape York Peninsula Traditional Land Owners. Indigenous children are 6.6 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children and often stay longer in care. The reasons for over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system are complex and require a whole-of-community approach to assist families. Keeping kids safe in community is what the houses are all about, and keeping kids connected with community underpins everything we do.

The more I learn about the work we do and the families we help, the more certain I feel that our work in the area of early intervention is critical if we are to break the cycle of abuse and neglect. It is all too easy to think that child abuse does not happen to 'normal' happy families. But it does, and it happens far too often, probably a lot more than the already startling statistics indicate. That's why our family early

intervention services in Cairns and our strengthened services on the Gold Coast are so important. If we can help keep food on the table, a family in their own home, and provide a child with a school uniform that fits we can also help provide the hope, and ultimately the belief, in a brighter future that is essential in helping parents care for their kids. This is just one very small example of how we help struggling families.

I also wanted to let you know that we are moving forward with our partnership with James Cook University (JCU), who has provided us with a free parcel of land in their Discovery Rise community precinct, and we have been busy engaging the Townsville business community and the broader Townsville community in order to establish a Child Protection Centre of Excellence. Our goal is to work together in order to provide:

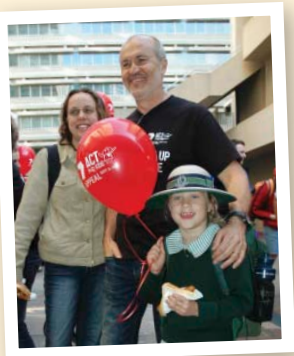
- a family support centre and preschool for abused and neglected children
- a child trauma research centre developed and run in conjunction with JCU including a postgraduate program dedicated to treatment of child trauma
- a training centre for Indigenous cadets – to address the shortage of trained Indigenous workers in Townsville as well as provide employment opportunities
- the delivery of a protective behaviours program to all grade one students in the Townsville region.

I know many of you have supported us since we began as the Abused Child Trust over 22 years ago and some of you will have only recently joined us. I want to thank each and every one of you for having already made protecting children your business, and I look forward to meeting many of you at our Annual Gala Dinner on 2 September (see page eight for details).

Dr Neil Carrington
Chief Executive Officer



Don't turn your back get involved during Child Protection Week 2011



National Child Protection Week (4–11 September) has been raising the profile of child protection in Australia for more than 20 years.

There are events planned across Australia so you can get involved wherever you are. See page eight for the major ACT for Kids events, and visit www.actforkids.com.au for updates.

The Channel Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal was a success last year thanks to the generous contributions from our sponsors and supporters. This year, again with the help of Channel Seven, we are running the appeal from 5–9 September.

The Channel Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal is just one of many ways Channel Seven has supported us over the years as a Gold Sponsor. We are proud to announce Channel Seven is now an Official Partner of ACT for Kids. Max Walters, Managing Director Channel Seven Brisbane, was an ACT for Kids Board Member from 2004–06 and has encouraged Channel Seven's pro bono work, offering ACT for Kids exceptional fundraising opportunities.

Channel Seven News personalities and ACT for Kids Ambassadors, Kay McGrath and Joanne Desmond, have also been longstanding supporters of ACT for Kids. Kay was the driving force behind establishing National Child Protection Week.

Stay tuned to Channel Seven during Child Protection Week or visit our website to learn how you can help.

Create your own Child Protection Week event

Share your passion for helping kids and host your own event during Child Protection Week. The only limitation is your imagination; here are some ideas to get you thinking:

- If you are having a birthday party or housewarming, ask for donations instead of gifts.
- Turn your back on something throughout Child Protection Week (like coffee or a bad habit) and get sponsored by your friends, family and work colleagues.
- If you are in Brisbane, host a Riverfire party and collect donations from your guests.

For more great ideas for raising funds visit www.actforkids.com.au

Become an everyday hero

You can be a hero during Child Protection Week and raise vital funds for thousands of kids in need of our help. Simply visit the Help Out page on our website and find the link. You can design your own fundraising profile page and send it out to your friends, family and work colleagues. You set your own goal and can check your page as the donations roll in! It's fun, inspiring and you will have a great sense of accomplishment.

For more information visit www.actforkids.com.au or contact Sarah Osman on 1300 228 000.

Channel Seven Brisbane Racing Carnival racegoers bet on kids

Black Caviar's thirteenth win during Racefest at Doomben on 14 May made racing history and may have been the highlight for racegoers, but for ACT for Kids' 57 volunteers it was the generosity of the crowd.

As the charity beneficiary of this year's Channel Seven Brisbane Racing Carnival Pin & Win promotion, ACT for Kids raised more than \$19,000 during the carnival.

ACT for Kids CEO, Dr Neil Carrington, was humbled by the support shown by the crowd and the enthusiastic volunteers.

"The hype and atmosphere around Black Caviar was electric, but we're incredibly grateful to the racegoers who bought pins, many even made donations."

A big thank you to Brisbane Racing Club and Channel Seven for the opportunity, and to our supporters Infront Solutions, The Treasury Casino and Zarraffa's Coffee for donating such great prizes.



Supporting families before

Strengthening families is at the heart of everything we do at ACT for Kids. We work with parents, carers, young people and children, as well as other service providers across entire communities to make sure children and young people can have the safe and happy childhood they deserve.

Family matters

In January we began providing a new free service on the Gold Coast – the ACT for Kids Helping Out Families Program. We support families with complex problems that put them at risk of child abuse and neglect. This innovative approach is all about building positive relationships and strengthening families through counselling, parental education and referrals to other specialised services as needed. Dr Kaye Pickering, our Gold Coast Regional Director, knows that early intervention is critical in preventing child abuse and neglect and says that “in order for families to stay safely together they need practical and expert support so that they don’t reach breaking point”.

With support from the Queensland Government Department of Communities we have 30 new staff focused entirely on early intervention and prevention. Our team is trained to work with families with many different needs. We encourage parents to act in their family’s best interests and make positive changes in their lives. We work with the whole family to make sure they participate in deciding the best course of action and use a case management model which means we can refer families to other organisations for specialised support when needed. Our team helps families access financial management services, domestic violence support, parenting programs and other expert counsellors as well as connecting families with local support networks like play groups and child care.



Photo: (from left) Minister for Child Safety, Phil Reeves; State Member for Burleigh, Christine Smith; ACT for Kids CEO, Dr Neil Carrington; ACT for Kids Gold Coast Regional Director, Dr Kaye Pickering; ACT for Kids Chairman, Denis Loaney.

We were pleased to have Minister for Child Safety, Phil Reeves, join us at our new ACT for Kids Centre on the Gold Coast on 18 May 2011 to unveil a plaque commemorating the launch of the program and personally congratulate our Gold Coast team on the wonderful work they are doing with families.

Helping put the future in their hands

We firmly believe, and know from our daily work, that it’s never too late for kids to change their lives, as long as they have the right encouragement, advice and opportunities. Recently we were heartened to see evaluation results from a three year pilot – the Youth Opportunity Program (YOP) in far north Queensland. The results have confirmed the positive impact we have had on the lives of young people in that region.

Over the last three years we have worked with over 260 young people, who have had early brushes with the law, from Cairns and remote Indigenous communities as far away as Weipa. Our team of Family Coaches act as mentors for young people and their families in order to help them create a better future for themselves. We link them with positive peers to provide them with good role models, and re-engage them with school, training and sport and recreation within their communities. We work with families and tailor individual plans based on their unique needs to foster a range of positive outcomes that encompass health; involvement with education or training; connections with community and culture; and development of their skills and talents.

Results from the evaluation show that over 12 months, three-quarters of the young people we worked with did not re-offend, compared to the general rate of almost half. Additionally, where they did re-offend they committed fewer offences compared to the general rate. Karen Dini-Paul, our Far North Queensland Regional Director, knows that these statistics are also accompanied by a deeper change across entire families.

“We have also seen families become stronger and more confident in caring for their children through the development of their own skills and support networks”.

they reach breaking point



Josie* was referred to us when she was 13 years old. She had a history of truancy and suspension from school. Her mother had longstanding mental health problems and, coupled with domestic violence issues, she struggled to actively and positively support Josie and her siblings. After being referred to us by the local Youth Justice Service Centre, two ACT for Kids Family Coaches worked with Josie and her family for one year. What is fundamentally important about our approach with YOP is that we work with young people and their families in both an individualised and developmental manner. We encouraged Josie to re-engage with her passion for sport (through brokerage we could supply her with sneakers and cover her registration fees); and arranged for a private psychologist to work with Josie and help her address issues that impacted her ability to attend and achieve at school.

At the same time we supported her mother, helped her access mental health services, improved her overall living situation, and empowered her to take a more positive role in Josie's education. Josie has now achieved measurable and significant goals – she attends school regularly and recently received her first A! Her passion for sport has been reignited and she was recently selected for representative sport. Through our coaching Josie's mother is also now better able to support Josie, and has successfully gained full time work. Our hope for Josie and her family is that they continue to make real improvements in their lives; we hope that they, like so many of our clients, have no further involvement with the Youth Justice System.

* Name changed to protect privacy.

Generosity helps those waiting

At ACT for Kids we help over 1,000 kids every week, but sadly, some of the children who are referred to us by doctors, teachers, allied health professionals, and other not-for-profit organisations often miss out on the expert help we provide because we simply do not have the money or resources to support all the children in need.

It costs us around \$150 for every hour we provide therapy and over the course of 12 months we spend around \$5,000 on every child we work with.

Fortunately last year we received significant ongoing funding from the Bryan and Talbot Foundations (respectively) and can now care for more children in Brisbane and Townsville. The children and families we see have varied backgrounds including experience of sexual harm, problematic sexual behaviours, physical and emotional abuse and neglect; breakdown in parent/child communication and relationships; intergenerational experiences of abuse and trauma.

We have waiting lists for all our critical programs - if you can help fund these much needed services with a significant donation, please call our Director of Fundraising, Kerry Cutting on 1300 228 000.

Your support matters to us, and them.

Thank you.

ACT for Kids volunteers make a difference!

Volunteers play a central role in everything we do at ACT for Kids. Their time, skills, enthusiasm and energy, whether it's gardening, data entry, conducting research or assembling invitations for our annual dinner, are essential to help us achieve our goal of preventing, treating and raising awareness about child abuse and neglect.

An ongoing volunteer pledge of five to six hours per week could help the ACT for Kids team with things like data entry, administrative tasks and general office duties which will minimise our operating costs so that more than 90 cents of every dollar we raise can go directly to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

"Working as a volunteer for ACT for Kids is genuinely a rich and rewarding experience that touches my heart on a personal note. I know my contribution is making a valuable difference and whatever I do is truly appreciated by the entire team," Lorena Radford, Administration Volunteer, Corporate Office.

There are endless ways that you can support ACT for Kids and we are always looking for skilled, qualified and dedicated individuals who are willing to take that next step to become an active ACT for Kids Volunteer.

If this is something you feel passionate about or want to know more about, then we want to hear from you today!

Remember, whether it is a few hours once a year or a few hours each week, every single volunteer contribution makes a difference. Corporate volunteer teams are warmly welcomed!

Visit www.actforkids.com.au or call Jodie Mears on **1300 228 000** for more information.



The E3! team help out in Brisbane.



Would you like to win a Merc?

ACT for Kids' Platinum Class Lottery gives you the chance to win a new C250 BlueEFFICIENCY Coupe and the ultimate South American adventure, eight night tour for two people across Ecuador and Chile, and a seven night cruise around the Galapagos Islands! Tickets are only \$50 and proceeds raised help us provide free therapy to abused and neglected kids. Get in quick, lottery 33 tickets are available from 2 September and sales close on 26 October.

Call 1800 968 946 or visit www.platinumclass.com.au today!

Your legacy...

Leaving a bequest (a donation in your Will) to ACT for Kids is one of the most significant ways you can help kids in need. Many people, often those unable to donate as much as they would like to in their lifetime, choose to leave a legacy in the form of a residual bequest (a percentage share of their estate) or a specific sum.

If you would like more information about leaving a bequest to ACT for Kids or would like to talk to someone about making or updating your Will, please call our Bequest and Community Fundraising Manager, Jan Saunders, on **1300 228 000**.



Need a speaker?

We would love to have the opportunity to talk to your staff or function guests and explain how we are changing the lives of Australian kids.

To book an ACT for Kids speaker please call us on **1300 228 000**.



ACT for Kids Corporate Christmas Cards and Hampers are now available from www.christmascards4charity.com.au/act. Cards can be personalised with your own greeting and ACT for Kids receives 40c from every card purchased and 10% from every hamper sold.

Thanks for all your support

Thankyou 1st for women!

We want to thank 1st for Women Insurance for their generous support – for promoting us and also donating \$10 to ACT for Kids from every new comprehensive car insurance policy sold. So far they have donated close to \$15,000!

If you're a female driver over 25 visit www.1stforwomen.com.au to see how much you could save, and support a company that supports us!



We're travelling comfortably

Since our partnership with travel.com.au kicked off in January 2011, we have been able to offer our lottery winners a safari in Africa, an exclusive New York experience, a Baltic Adventure cruise and luxury Greece getaway, all thanks to the fantastic deals we receive. travel.com.au provide attractive holiday prizes for ACT for Kids' Platinum Class Lottery at a vastly discounted rate, which means more profits from ticket sales are going to children traumatised from the effects of abuse and neglect.

"The entire team at travel.com.au are proud of our association with ACT for Kids and are always proud of any savings we can deliver them. We look forward to a long association with them," travel.com.au Brand General Manager, Lisa Ferrari.



Gold Coast SUNS jump on-board

The Gold Coast SUNS may be off to a slow start with their first season in the AFL, but they were certainly quick to support children and families within the Gold Coast community in alignment with their strong focus on respect and responsibility. We were delighted earlier this year to be selected as one of their official charity partners, and we are truly grateful that we have been able to offer many of our clients free tickets to enjoy the buzz and excitement of a day at the footy. We've had positive feedback both from our team and clients, some of whom have never been able to afford family outings. We are looking forward to working more with the SUNS in the lead up to Child Protection Week.



Welcome to The Peak Partnership!

The Peak Partnership may be the newest ACT for Kids sponsor, but they have been supporting us financially and with pro bono support for close to 20 years. We are delighted to officially acknowledge them as a bronze sponsor, and want to give a special thank you to John Eales who despite being busy with partnership responsibilities at The Peak Partnership, has also been our Board Treasurer for 18 years.



The Peak Partnership
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Subway still bringing in the coin

The 114 ACT for Kids collection boxes in Subway stores throughout South East Queensland have been collecting change for almost a year now, and we are amazed at the results. Subway customers have donated a total of \$91,000 since January 2010!

That means Subway customers are supporting us with cash donations on average of \$5,000 per month!



For further information about ACT for Kids' official partners and sponsors program please call Sarah Osman on 1300 228 000.

Save the date!

2 Sept 7pm **Emmy's Night of Stars (Annual Gala Dinner)**
Join us and MC Kay McGrath to celebrate a year of incredible achievements with fine dining, stunning entertainment and the chance to win exclusive raffle and auction prizes under the hammer of Pat Welsh.
Moda Events Portside
Ticket cost: \$170 or table of 10 for \$1,650
To book call 1300 228 000

Child Protection Week events

5 Sept **Central Station breakfast with Channel Seven News**
Be there for the Seven/ACT for Kids Appeal launch.

9 Sept 7pm **Tatts & Tiaras Cocktail Party**
Enjoy canapés and a complimentary glass of champagne.
The Venue Townsville. Tickets: \$45 per person.
To book visit www.thevenuetownsville.com.au or call Natasha Jamieson on 07 4779 0611

9 Sept Tee-off 7.15am **UBody ACT for Kids Golf Day Wynnum Golf Club**
To book call David Richter 0411 496 370 or email richterscalept@gmail.com

16 Nov 9.30am **Time to say thank you Brisbane therapy centre**
Join us for tea and sweets, a tour of our therapy facilities and meet our team.
To book call 1300 228 000 or email jans@actforkids.com.au

1 Dec 1.30pm **West Burleigh therapy centre**
Join us for tea and sweets, a tour of our therapy facilities and meet our team.
To book call 1300 228 000 or email jans@actforkids.com.au

Visit www.actforkids.com.au for more events.

Wish List

Over the years ACT for Kids has benefited from the donation of money, pro bono services and much needed equipment. Here are some examples of what we need urgently.

\$25 could help pay for much needed paper and art supplies for art therapy for children who've been abused and traumatised.

\$50 could help pay for an excursion for a child in our Early Education Program who has never been to the zoo.

\$150 could help pay for a one-on-one therapy session for a sexually abused child.

\$250 could help pay for one Learn to BE SAFE with Emmy workshop in a grade one classroom — helping kids learn the difference between unsafe and safe behaviours and what to do when they feel unsafe.

\$5,000 could help provide the professional therapy and treatment for just one child in our care every year.

\$25,000 p.a. could help provide a trained bus assistant to help with the daily transport of very young children to and from our centres.

\$100,000 p.a. could help pay for a clinical trauma psychologist, therapy, tools and professional development for one year — vital to ensuring our kids receive the specialised treatment they so desperately need and deserve.

Call 1300 228 000 today!

Thanks to our supporters

Official Partners



PUBLICIS MOJO



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Bronze Sponsors

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Thank you



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Screen Offset Printing kindly print our newsletters, annual dinner invites & lottery brochures at discount rates!

ACT for Kids is a not-for-profit organisation which provides free professional therapy to treat and prevent child abuse and neglect. We have helped thousands of children and families overcome the pain of abuse since we were established as the Abused Child Trust in 1988.



Formerly known as the Abused Child Trust

1300 228 000

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www.actforkids.com.au

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