

**YES, I want to give children in our community safe and loving homes...**

**I would like to give:**

- \$45 towards foster parent training for children without families
- \$24 for services that help victims of domestic violence stop the cycle of abuse
- \$75 to provide practical help for struggling children and families
- \$150 to provide counselling and services for families at risk of breaking up
- \$225 to give children opportunities to grow in loving and caring homes
- My choice \$

**Donation:**  I have enclosed my cheque/money order (made out to Wesley Mission) OR

- Please charge my:
- Mastercard  Visa
  - Diners  Amex

Card No.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date / \_\_\_\_\_

Title (Rev/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other) \_\_\_\_\_

First name \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (M) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in knowing how to help people in need through my Will.

If you would not like to receive copies of Frontlines, please tick this box.



**DONATION LINE: 1800 021 821**  
 FAX: (02) 9267 1022  
 www.wesleymission.org.au/donate  
 Wesley Mission, PO Box A270,  
 Sydney South NSW 1235

**DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**



**Sarah continually assured her 4 children of the huge amount of love she had for them. She was terrified of her children being put into care as she was.**

## Sarah – a tough break from the past



(Models used in photo)

Wesley Dalmar Short Term Units Program is one of very few in Sydney which can accommodate large families. For more information please call 02 9804 5225.

SARAH WAS ONLY A LITTLE GIRL when her family immigrated to Australia to start a new life.

Her mother's mental health caused her parents to split up. Sarah and her brother were moved from one foster carer to another.

Her adolescence was sad and troubled. Sarah fell pregnant in her teens and being in an abusive relationship caused her to start drinking, spinning her life out of control.

Despite her circumstances, Sarah continually assured her 4 children of the huge amount of love she had for them. She was terrified of her children being put into care as she was.

At her lowest point of loneliness and despair Sarah got into a relationship with a local drug dealer and when she eventually decided to leave him, her family became the target of abuse for him and his customers.

Sarah was finally put in contact with Wesley Mission Dalmar's short term accommodation. Her family were moved to safe premises. The family blossomed with the nurture, support and friendship they were shown.

Sarah is our most committed playgroup supporter, she is always ready to set up, clean up, welcome new people, or help out in any way at all. She is friendly and outgoing, and puts new or shy people at ease right away. The children continue to attend everything on offer, including the school holiday activities – girls day out, boy's day out, video nights, family days etc.

After facing some of her deepest fears at counselling, Sarah decided to do something she had been avoiding – access her foster care files and remember her time in care. With the support of Wesley Dalmar's aftercare worker, she looked back at the nightmare that had been her childhood.

We're still walking with Sarah, supporting her however we can as she faces the torrent of emotions and memories that family life – past and present – brings her way.

Mary Reay, Senior Coordinator, Short Term Units, Wesley Mission

## Your Will, their future

There are many in our society who are suffering and in need. You may not be able to help them personally, but you can make a difference to their future with a gift to Wesley mission through your Will.

**Make your hopes a reality – give children in need the chance to grow up in loving and safe homes with foster parents who can provide happy, nurturing and safe environment.**

### Yes, I would like to make a difference

(Please tick as many as is applicable)

- Please send me a FREE copy of the information booklet "Making your hopes a reality. Your guide to Wills and Bequests."
- Please contact me, as I would like to speak to someone about making a bequest through my Will.

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Rev/Other) .....

Address .....

Phone (H) ..... (W) ..... (M) .....

Email ..... DOB .....

Post this coupon in the reply paid envelope provided or send to:  
 Wesley Mission, Reply Paid 270, SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

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# frontlines

Wesley Mission – from the frontline of help & hope  
 Issue No. 46 – 2006



## Chalk, Mud and Pretend Food

Chalk drawings and muddy footprints on the garden path, glitter glue on the table, pretend food and cooking pots strewn in one bedroom, a train set and building blocks scattered in another...

(continued on page 3)



**FACT 1.** Due to lack of resources Wesley Dalmar's Short Term Units for homeless families have to turn away at least 150 families in a year.

**FACT 2.** Families are increasingly under financial pressure with household debt more than doubling from 60% of household income to 150%.

**FACT 3.** The cost to the community of marital breakdown is \$3.6 billion per year, and of domestic violence, \$1 billion per year.



## On the frontline with Rev Keith Garner

AS WE MOVE THROUGH Spring towards Christmas, inevitably we shall be constantly reminded of the importance of children and families. We need no such reminder at Wesley Mission.

One of the greatest gifts God gives to the community is children and I see it as an enormous privilege to provide love and support not only to children, but also to their families. I recall an occasion, having begun a project to help toddlers and parents, being confronted by a mum with a very intense look on her face. I felt she was going to say something critical. However, she thanked us for having the foresight to provide a place where parents could meet with each other to share their stories.

Wesley Mission continues to express its commitment to children and young people – through our congregations, Wesley Dalmar's many wonderful services and in other ways, we try to help. I am grateful to those of you who are sharing with us in the Name of Christ to help families in need.

Warmly yours,

Rev Keith V Garner  
Superintendent, Wesley Mission

## Listening to local mums and dads

EVER FELT THAT YOU'RE THE only parent with kids you can't control? Ever wondered if there are other parents who can't cope?

Sometimes getting much needed help seems impossible for families in distress. Wesley Mission tries to hear the voice of need before it becomes a desperate cry for help.

In the Hills area, recent research conducted revealed that people affected by Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) had no services or support networks. Parents of sufferers faced extreme difficulty in managing their child's issues and there was considerable lack of understanding of the disorder within the wider community.

In response, the Hills Family Centre held an information night to raise awareness of ADHD.

Guest speakers were invited to address various issues. Julie Appleton, from the NSW ADHD Association, gave a parent's, families' and sufferer's perspective on the disorder. Michael Kohn, from the Adolescent Medicine Unit at Westmead Children's Hospital, provided the medical and scientific perspective. Gerald Vargas, chiropractor and kinesiologist, presented alternative therapies.

Due to the demand for support, Wesley Mission Hills Centre now runs workshops for parents on developing skills to assist children with ADHD, and has created a Be Yourself Program for children with ADHD.

The voices of mums and dads were heard and answered.



Wesley Dalmar works closely with foster parents on an ongoing basis to ensure that each child grows in a loving and safe environment.



## Chalk, mud and pretend food

(continued from cover)

Di & Trev with Mark & Joy at Wesley Dalmar

... IT'S ANOTHER DAY in toddler world... and in my world. "How old are they?" My friend asks over coffee, glancing over at the two children playing.

"Mark is three years and ten months; Joy is two years and five months.

Seventeen months apart."

"Gee, that's close. Did you plan it that way?"

"Ummmm, not exactly," I respond with a smile.

Unable to have our own biological children left my husband and I with four options; we could remain childless, adopt from Australia or overseas or foster.

Believing that we are 'blessed to be a blessing', and that God's greatest mission outreach is the family, I had yearned to adopt or foster. Throughout my life I had friends who were either adopted or whose families fostered and it made a strong impression on me. Now too old for the Australian adoption lists, fostering became our choice.

We applied to Wesley Dalmar, were approved and soon got the call regarding Mark. It was love at first sight. Mark was – and still is – the most cheery-faced, adorable little imp I have ever seen.

When Mark's birth mum, Kate, became pregnant again she asked us, "If DoCS take my baby, will you have her?"

Joy came to us at six and a half weeks and stole our hearts.

We spend 'access time' with Mummy Kate, meeting her in a nearby park: two mums, two

happy children and a social worker – what an odd little family unit. Mummy Kate often says it is taking two mums to raise Mark and Joy.

Soon Mark will realise his surname is different to ours. He already knows his surname is the same as Joy's and Mummy Kate's. And it won't be long before he asks if he grew in my tummy.

## "Muddy feet, glittered hands and two tired, happy children"

God grant us the courage to be honest and not skirt around the subjects raised or put them off. Mark and Joy have the right to secure foster carers; safe in the knowledge they are loved for who they are, not for whose tummy they grew in or whose surname they have.

Muddy feet, glittered hands and two tired, happy children. Just another day in toddler world, and the end to a lovely morning for this mum. 🐦

Written By Diane Harrison

Two years ago Di told Frontlines of her fostering experience when Mark was only 18 months old.

DoCS removed Mark from his birth mother at ten days of age. After six months of short-term care it was decided he would be best placed in long-term foster care and not returned to his birth mum, Kate. With Kate's tearful agreement, he came to live with Di and Trev at seven and a half months.

Mark's birth sister, Joy was born seventeen months after Mark and was removed by DoCS at six and a half weeks, following Kate's greatest attempts at competent parenting.

Some people, regardless of how much they want to, are unable to parent. They just don't have the internal resources and good decision making ability to create a happy and safe environment for a child. Wesley Dalmar works closely with foster parents on an ongoing basis to ensure that each child grows in a loving and safe environment.

"I have the privilege of supporting a team who are able to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families"



Rose Cowan,  
Manager, OOH, Castle Hill

## "A day in the life of Rose Cowan"

Rose Cowan has been at Wesley Dalmar Out Of Home Care (OOHC), Castle Hill for over 14 years. Wesley Mission's three OOH centres – Castle Hill, Penrith & Tuggerah – care for more than 200 children per year. We now have a chance to look at her typical day at work.

- 8.20 am Arrive at office. Spend 40 minutes, uninterrupted, focussing on emails and planning for the day.
- 9.00am Caseworkers and admin staff arrive – the phones start to ring.
- 9.30am Drive to Carlingford to attend 'Start of the Week' meeting with Wesley Dalmar managers from various services. Review highlights and celebrations of the previous week and look at upcoming activities.
- 10.30am Coffee break with managers at Carlingford.
- 11.00am Meeting with Dalmar's Financial Adviser to monitor program budgets.
- 11.30am Driving to office – reply on hands-free phone to messages. Many calls from DoCS regarding children/birth families in our foster care programs.
- 12.00pm Arrive at office. Address any relevant matters with staff.
- 1.00pm Lunch in office with team members.
- 1.30pm Finalise reports, letters, paperwork with admin support.
- 2.30pm Case Review for Josh who has been in foster care for eight years. Chair the meeting between Josh, his birth family, foster family, representative from school, counsellor, DoCS caseworker and manager.
- 4.00pm Authorise paperwork for three referrals received today. Check that a safe and nurturing placement has been found for a 6 week old baby, a three year old boy, and a seven year old girl.
- 4.30pm Prepare for tomorrow's staff supervisions and for team meeting later in the week.
- 5.00pm Phone call to foster carer regarding a concern that they have.
- 5.30pm Close computer. Reflect on the day's challenges and achievements and continue to be grateful that I have the privilege of being involved in supporting a team of workers and carers who are genuinely able to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families. Time to go home.

Please turn over

**WESLEY MISSION'S VISION**  
Serving People,  
Building Hope,  
Honouring God

### FUNDRAISING ENQUIRIES

DONATION LINE: 1800 021 821

PH. (02) 9263 5555 FAX. (02) 9267 1022

Major Gifts: Mr Wes Selwood / Ms Zoe Mason

Trusts/Foundation/Clubs: Mr Wes Selwood

Appeals/Pledges: Mrs Sharyn Tidswell

Community Relations: Mr Glenn Swan

In some Frontlines stories, names and some details have been changed and/or models have been used to protect identities and maintain confidentiality Wesley Mission is a part of the Uniting Church in Australia.