


YES, I want to give children and families secure and safe homes...

“Then life took a surprising turn for the O’Keefe family. 13 month old Abby was diagnosed with a brain tumour. For Rebecca and Martin it was the toughest year of their life.” 

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frontlines

Wesley Mission - from the frontline of help & hope
Issue No. 42 Spring 2005




Love unlimited

A REMARKABLE COUPLE, a divine plan, and the rock-like strength of Wesley Dalmar’s foster care program have combined to provide dozens of troubled children a safe and...
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- 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 that provides practical help for struggling children and families
 - \$150 to provide counselling and services to 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:
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Card No.

Expiry date

Signature


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

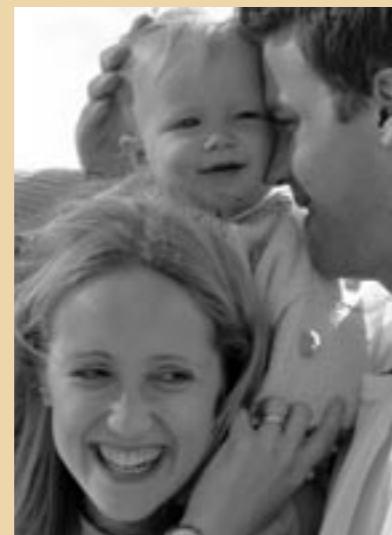
Name PLEASE PRINT

Address

Postcode

- Phone (H)
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- 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



“Extra Hands” sent from heaven

“HER FIRST DAY with us is Monday.”

Rebecca put down the phone, turned to husband, Martin and shrugged. Both of them had no idea what to expect from the “Extra Hands” volunteer who was coming to give Rebecca a much needed break from looking after two year old daughter, Jenna and baby twins, Abby and Jake.

But anticipation soon turned to appreciation – Helen was perfect! Now Rebecca could really enjoy some time out to herself.

Then life took a surprising turn for the O’Keefe family. 13 month old Abby was diagnosed with a brain tumour. What followed for little baby Abby was a series of operations, six months of chemotherapy and finally, a stem cell transplant. For Rebecca and Martin it was the toughest year of their life. But through the heartache and hospital visits Helen was right by their side.


Wesley Mission’s “Extra Hands” volunteers are equipped with practical training and experience.

For more information call Wesley Dalmar at 02 9804 7255.

“It was such a long year. One week we were in hospital the next week were out then back in again. I really struggled,” Rebecca said. “I still had Jenna and Jake to care for as well. They were confused – all of a sudden I was home for one week then gone for another. They didn’t understand what was happening.”

“Helen was amazing. She went beyond the call of duty for us. She rang every couple of days to see how we were, came to the hospital to look after Abby, sent Martin and me out together while she looked after the children, brought us food, nappies, anything we needed.”

What was originally intended as a couple of months of “Extra Hands” help turned into a two-year life saver for the O’Keefes.

“I never expected the program would be such a rescue for us,” said Rebecca. “I feel so grateful to have met Helen when we did. I guess I didn’t realise that help was out there.” 


Celebrate the contribution of Rev Dr Gordon Moyes Sydney Town Hall, 4th December 2005

WESLEY MISSION WILL be farewelling Rev Dr Gordon Moyes & Mrs Moyes at the end of this year, after being the Superintendent for the past 27 years.

During this time, Wesley Mission has become a major voice within the community speaking on issues of social justice, care for the wider community and communicating the message of the gospel.

Rev Dr Moyes has not only had an influence on the community within Australia but also abroad due to an outstanding media ministry spanning four decades.

In order to acknowledge the amazing work of Rev Dr Moyes, we would like to invite you all to the Celebration Service at the Sydney Town Hall on 4th December 2005.

It will be a time for praise to God for His providential care and leadership of the Mission through His servant Gordon Moyes, and to give thanks for Dr Moyes’ inspired leadership. Please join us to be a part of this special service where we also will be inspired to be servants of God. 

Information on the event will be posted on the website www.wesleymission.org.au closer to the date or contact Sarah Spence on 02 9263 5454 for more details.

FACT 1 More than 38,000 children were abused and neglected in the 2001-2002 financial year.

(Kids First Foundation, 2003)

FACT 2 One child is abused every 13 minutes in Australia.

(Childhood Abuse Study, 2005)



Legacy of love for children

TWENTY SEVEN YEARS ago I took over the leadership of Dalmar Children's Homes. We had 134 children in four residences. An assessment revealed that although the quality of care was good for that era, we were not achieving what we hoped.

But the Fox report, as it was known, gave us good guidelines. We decided to obtain numerous ordinary houses where a few children could live with cottage parents in reasonable resemblance to a normal family. State Government support was dreadful but with the help of the new Premier Neville Wran it soon increased.

Over the years we have developed innovative programs supporting families and foster parents. Last year we helped over 4000 children and their parents. The work today is in good hands and the outcomes are all we desire, as you will read in this edition of Frontlines.

Thank you for your ongoing love and support.

Rev Dr Gordon Moyes AC
Superintendent, Wesley Mission

A heart for horses

DANIEL IS 14 years old, but due to his condition looks about 10. Everything Daniel does is slow and measured. He rarely speaks or smiles. Daniel's suffers from a form of autism, known as "globally delayed".

He is a ward of the State. Rejected by his 17 year old birth mother, who found caring for him too difficult, Daniel has lived in five foster homes since the age of one.

Daniel recently attended a Wesley Mission Operation Hope program. His social worker felt it might help improve Daniel's low self-esteem and provide him with the physical and emotional stimulation he so desperately lacked. And it did.

Daniel discovered a passion for horses. It was such a pleasure to see his sad eyes light up and the excitement on his face at the mention of horse-riding. There was a special connection between Daniel and our horses.

Each day the staff and trained volunteers were able to convey the Operation Hope life-messages to Daniel: I believe in you; I trust you; I know you can handle it; You are listened to; You are cared for; You are important.

Over the week Daniel's self-worth increased dramatically and his communication skills improved. Most importantly, Daniel realised he was an important person to others. 🐾

Operation Hope, has turned around thousands of children's lives. For more information contact 02 9655 1515.



FUNDRAISING ENQUIRIES

DONATION LINE: 1800 021 821

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

Major Gifts: Mr Wes Selwood / 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.

“Wesley Dalmar is excellent. The mentoring and back-up they give is 100 per cent. I had the same case worker for the first seven years who helped me find the resources I needed.” (Michelle Kew) 🐾



Love Unlimited

(continued from cover)

...a loving foster home in a time of crisis. With Wesley Dalmar's support, Michelle Kew and her husband Andrew have fostered 40 children over eight years, answering a call from God to help homeless children. This year Michelle was named the 2005 NSW Mother of the Year. This is her story:

“Andrew and I went to Wesley Dalmar for training to be foster carers and began taking in kids for respite weekends. We loved it! In our holidays we took in children for one or two weeks.

We really wanted to foster full-time but we couldn't manage without my salary. Then I got pregnant and realised I couldn't go on working. We worked out how much money we would need to fulfil our dream. So we prayed.

Within one month, Andrew was offered a job with exactly the extra money we needed to become full time carers with me staying at home to look after our son, Jordan, and the foster children.

We now have two sons of our own. Five year old Jordan and two year old Benjamin, who also has Down Syndrome. The foster children we look after live alongside them.

It's amazing to see how much these children change! Sometimes they come to us and they haven't learned to speak or play, and we're able to teach them these things. Our current foster child, Joshua, who is two years old – the same age as Benjamin – is learning so much from Benjamin's speech classes. It's good for our foster kids and for our child to grow and learn together.

Wesley Dalmar is excellent. The mentoring and back-up they give is 100 per cent. I had the same case worker for the first seven years who helped me find the resources I needed. Andrew and I now run a parenting course and Dalmar sends other foster carers to it.” 🐾

We thank people like Michelle and Andrew Kew for the exceptional support they offer children and families. For more information about our foster care program, please contact Wesley Dalmar Child & Family Services on 02 9804 7255.

How Pauline found her voice

PERSISTENT AND torturous bullying had left Pauline's 12-year-old son, David, crying himself to sleep each night. Pauline felt like a useless, helpless mum, until she found out about Wesley Mission's Quakers Hill Family Centre.

Pauline got involved in the Family Connections program that helps families deal with a variety of issues. She also joined the Balancing the See Saw program where she developed self-confidence and learnt assertive communication skills.

Soon after, Pauline had clear strategies to deal with her son's bullying problem. She discussed with David's teacher, school counsellor and parents of the bullies to see what actions they could pursue. In a short time the bullying stopped.

“Before I came to the Centre I could never do anything like that. Even my friends and children make comments on how I've changed,” said Pauline.

“And it's all thanks to the support from Quaker's Hill Family Centre.” 🐾

Quakers Hill Family Centre has family counselling programs aimed at preventing family breakdown. For more information, contact 02 9626 6620.

Many families struggle on their own not knowing where to turn. With your support, battling families receive practical help to give their children a brighter future.



“Fatima was wrecked with isolation. Against her husband's wishes, she received counselling on her own.”

Insistence brings Independence for Fatima



FOR 13 YEARS Fatima and her three children had suffered abuse from her husband. They moved to Australia 10 years ago and had no friends and family support.

“Fatima got in touch with us when her husband's abuse began to get worse. She was desperate to go to family counselling, but he refused,” said Wesley Mission Dalmar's Family Centre counsellor, Gail.

“He didn't see any problem with their relationship and certainly didn't want outside help.”

Fatima was wrecked with isolation and frustration. Eventually she decided, against his wishes, to receive counselling on her own.

“We talked about her rights in Australia and different opportunities for her to get financial independence,” said Gail.

Getting police protection and an AVO for her children's safety was the final step of independence for Fatima. Her husband, shocked by her assertiveness, soon learnt that his behaviour really was unacceptable, and he began to change.

“Now he and the children are both involved in family counselling at the Centre,” said Gail.

Fatima is so grateful. She's even doing volunteer hours for us here at the Centre. She wants to do anything she can for other women and children who might be in similar situations.” 🐾

You can help victims of abuse stop the cycle of violence. Turn the page and offer a gift of hope to these children and families.

Please turn over