

MEDIA RELEASE

July 2022

SHOW YOUR HEART: BRAVEHEARTS URGES AUSTRALIANS TO HELP FIGHT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE THIS BRAVEHEARTS DAY

With a 25-year legacy of breaking the silence on child sexual abuse, leading Australian child protection organisation, [Bravehearts](https://bravehearts.org.au), has launched its inaugural Bravehearts Day campaign to raise awareness and funds to protect children from the insidious crime of child sexual abuse – urging Australians to ‘Show their Hearts’ by registering to participate in Bravehearts Day and fundraising ahead of Friday, 9 September.

Held during National Child Protection Week (September 4-10), Bravehearts Day builds on the iconic legacy of White Balloon Day and is the largest and longest-running child protection campaign, aimed at raising funds and awareness for the prevention of child sexual abuse and supporting survivors of this crime.

Following the success of the event for more than a quarter of a century, which notably drove a staggering 514% increase in disclosures of child sexual abuse to the Queensland Police Service in its first year, Bravehearts CEO, Alison Geale said Bravehearts Day will continue to support survivors and children at risk.

“With approximately 1 in 5 children experiencing child sexual abuse or exploitation ^[1], we need communities across Australia to band together and show their heart this Bravehearts Day to protect kids,” said Ms Geale.

“Over the past couple of years, COVID-19 lockdowns have exposed children to more risk than ever – particularly as they isolated with predators who are either family members or known to the family, which is the case in up to 90% of child sexual abuse cases.^[2]

“By wearing a purple heart and registering to host a fundraising event or donating, Australians can help us create a world where people, communities and systems all work together to protect children from sexual abuse – an atrocious crime no child should suffer,” she said.

Over the past twenty-five years, the funds raised through White Balloon Day, now Bravehearts Day, have helped to educate more than 1.5 million children across Australia about personal safety with Bravehearts Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure Program, as well as counselling services for children and families impacted by child sexual abuse.

With the aim to raise more than \$250,000 this year, Australians can support Bravehearts Day by registering now for their complimentary Bravehearts Day Supporter Pack, wearing a purple heart and donating. All donations, big or small, will go towards the prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse.

Formally known as White Balloon Day, the campaign has this year rebranded to Bravehearts Day amid growing concern about the environmental impact of balloons.

Bravehearts acknowledges that White Balloon Day holds significant meaning for survivors of child sexual abuse and although it has adopted a new name, the essence of the day remains.

Bravehearts Day is made possible by the support of major sponsors Superannuation Advice Australia and Busy Bees Learning Australia and is funded by Commonwealth's Department of Social Services, National Initiatives.

To register to host a Bravehearts Day fundraising event or for more information, visit:
www.braveheartsday.com.au or call 1800 272 831.

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About Bravehearts

Bravehearts is an Australian child protection organisation. Bravehearts' Mission is to provide a coordinated and holistic approach to the prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse. Bravehearts' Vision is to create a world where people, communities and systems all work together to protect children from child sexual abuse. Operating for over 25 years, Bravehearts provides industry-leading child protection training and education programs, specialist child sexual abuse counselling and support services, as well as engaging in research and lobbying to help protect children from sexual abuse.

References

- [1]. (JPrice-Robertson, Bromfield and Vassallo, 2010; Mills, Kisely, Alati, Strathearn, & Najman, 2016; Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017).
[2]. (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017; Quadara, Nagy, Higgins & Siegel, 2015).

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