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Mamamia Cares

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By DANI
COLVIN

More Australian children are living [away from home](#) for their own protection than ever before. The number has doubled in the past 10 years. Tonight, more than 40,500 children won't be able to sleep in their own beds because it not safe for them to do so.

It's one of the many reasons why the Australian Childhood has launched a new national campaign, Not Another Child. The campaign supports the community to learn and understand more about the [issue of abuse](#), become more aware, more willing to engage, more empowered and more committed to becoming part of the change that makes children's [safety a priority](#) in every corner of this country.

The Foundation's patron, Chris Hemsworth, kick-started the campaign last Friday by sharing a childhood image across his social media platforms, alongside the gang from Channel 7's Sunrise program. And we're all invited to join him. Posting an image of a positive childhood memory will help us to remember the important parts of childhood that children who are abused miss out on.

Abbie's world of play with her beloved dolls stopped when she was 10 years old and her mother's new boyfriend began stealing into her bedroom to sexually abuse her. It's hard to play when you spend day after day feeling so afraid that all you can do is hide in your bedroom and hope not to be hurt again. It took all of Abbie's energy just to try to protect herself, and there was none left for play.

Rachel had been subjected to family violence from birth. Both parents' mood swings were violent, and

their rages were terrifying and unpredictable. When she was referred to the Australian Childhood Foundation, Rachel was alarmingly submissive. She would never make a choice; would never refuse to do something; would never even voice an opinion. Her life had been devoid of the nurturing, safe relationships that help children discover their world and their sense of self. She'd never felt safe enough to explore whether she preferred toy cars to dolls, or cricket to crayons.

Sometimes it's these ordinary, everyday elements of childhood – such as feeling safe enough to play, or to say “No, thanks” without the fear of dreadful consequences – that are lost to children traumatised by abuse and neglect.



The Australian Childhood Foundation has highly specialised trauma teams: people who create around abused children positive relationships that protect them, give them stability and security, and help them feel safe – and that's how they begin to recover from the ongoing trauma of their experiences.

With the help of the Foundation, Abbie was eventually able to feel safe enough to rediscover her playful heart. And Rachel's foster mum was beside herself with joy the night Rachel quietly but firmly announced at the dinner table: “ I don't like broccoli!”

If you'd like to join in, it's really very simple:

Find a positive photo of yourself as a child

When using Facebook, 'LIKE' the Australian Childhood Foundations page and @tag into your post Hashtag #NOTANOTHERCHILD and #AUSTRALIANCHILDHOODFOUNDATION

Tag your friends to encourage them to get involved

Upload photo across your social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook)

Or, if you'd rather see Chris explain it:



To view the full campaign television commercial, [click here](#).

And to take action and donate to support the work of the Foundation, to help them continue working to ensure that #NotAnotherChild has to suffer the trauma of violence and victimisation, head to: <http://www.childhood.org.au/donate>

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