



QUEENSLAND
**CHILD
PROTECTION
WEEK**

7 - 13 September 2014

ISSUED UNDER EMBARGO | EMBARGO EXPIRES 1PM THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

DRAFT ONLY
RELEASE

NOT FOR

AWARD WINNER HAS GIVEN 40,000 GIFT PACKS TO KIDS REMOVED FROM FAMILIES & PLACED IN CARE

Ann George started *Project: Love and Care* in the garage of her Inala (Brisbane) home, to give children fleeing abuse, neglect or violence a gift package to help ease what can be a traumatic transition into foster care.

Since 2005, more than 40,000 care kits have been given by Ann's project to children in care, as well as to kids who take refuge in domestic violence shelters. Seven hundred volunteers Statewide now work on the project. Twice each month, up to 20 volunteers join Mrs George in her garage to put the packs together.

Each of the care packs includes toiletries, pyjamas, two sets of clothes, educational supplies, a toy and a journal book, which includes special messages to remind each child/young person that they are special and being thought of. The kits are packed into a hand-sewn carry bag.

Tomorrow, Mrs George will receive the 2014 Queensland Child Protection Week Award for 'Community Initiative'. Previous Queensland Child Protection Week Award-winners include Bruce & Denise Morcombe, and Hetty Johnston.

"No matter how loving and kind the foster carers are, the fear and loneliness of that first night in care is something that can haunt foster children," said Queensland Child Protection Week Chair, Lorraine Dupree.

"You only have to imagine being a child who has just been removed from your family, who ends up at the home of someone they've never met and is told this is where they must live," Ms Dupree said. "Then, in the middle of all this fear and confusion, they receive a beautiful gift pack from someone they don't know, which shows they matter and that others care for them. The impact can be profound."

Nine Queensland Child Protection Week Awards will be conferred this afternoon, during a ceremony at the Parliamentary Annex. More than 100 community activities and events will be held Statewide during Queensland Child Protection Week, which runs from 7-13 September. The State Government provides nearly \$107,000 to support and promote the week. Visit <http://childprotectionweek.org.au/>

Further information

Teresa Adamson | 0413 682 845 (enquiries at all other times)

Caitlin King QCPW Project Officer | 0418 408 062 (for enquiries between 9am-3pm Wed 3 Sep)

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