

## Barnardos and Mortgage Choice 'Munch Boxes' Fight Poverty

Barnardos Australia have joined forces with Mortgage Choice to provide a simple but effective tool to tackle poverty - the Munch Box. Each Munch Box created and packed by Mortgage Choice staff contains a simple, nutritious, easy to follow recipe along with the non-perishable food needed to prepare the meal for a family.

Barnardos endeavours to augment its child welfare services by also providing practical support to families. The Munch Boxes donated by Mortgage Choice will not only provide food to children, young people and their families, but also be used as a tool to educate family members in how to prepare nutritional, economical and child appropriate meals.

Mortgage Choice Managing Director, Paul Lahiff said the company is proud and honoured to be involved with the Barnardos Munch Box program. "We feel strongly about giving back to Australians, especially those in real need, and our association with Barnardos helps us accomplish that," he said.

Mr Lahiff along with a number of Mortgage Choice Franchisees and staff, today visited the Barnardos Childrens Family Centre in Penrith who are the first grateful Munch Box recipients.

Trish Hurley, Senior Manager of the Barnardos Centre explained, "Due to financial and social disadvantage, many care-givers in lower income groups also lack basic cooking and nutrition skills, and as a result children often do not receive the regular, wholesome meals they need to grow properly."

The Munch Boxes will enable Barnardos workers to guide mums, dads and care-givers into better cooking and nutrition practices for the children in their care. With Mortgage Choice's continued support, those most in need will be able to prepare a range of healthy dishes with greater confidence and awareness.

Speaking of his loyal and committed Mortgage Choice staff members who have volunteered to prepare the hundreds of Munch Boxes to be donated over the next 12 months, Mr Lahiff said "Barnardos is such a deserving charity and working with them is very satisfying for our nationwide network. It is wonderful to know that disadvantaged families benefit from the program".

By providing the resources and financial means to undertake the Munch Box program, Mortgage Choice will enable Barnardos to continue our mission to provide relief and assistance to over 8,000 children and young people who may be suffering from, or at risk of neglect, abuse, homelessness or poverty.

Barnardos has established numerous Centres to provide such support in areas of greatest economic need. To donate to Barnardos or offer your support, call **1800 061 000**.

### Photographs attached:

Munch Box 1: Paul Lahiff, Managing Director (right) and Des Nation, Nepean/St Marys franchisee (left) of Mortgage Choice, hand over Munch Boxes to Barnardos' Trish Hurley.

Munch Box 2: Mortgage Choice staff pack Munch Boxes, ready for use by Barnardos.

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