

# Media Release

Monday, 14th November, 2011



## **YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SUPER MUM TO BE A BARNARDOS MOTHER OF THE YEAR!**

Nominations are open for the 2012 Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards

Barnardos recognises that being a mum is one of the toughest and most important jobs around and there's no manual to help out! So, if you want to show a mum just how fantastic she is and how much she's appreciated, nominate her today for the 2012 Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards by visiting [www.motheroftheyear.org.au](http://www.motheroftheyear.org.au)

Nominations open on 14<sup>th</sup> November and close at midnight on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. They could be your own mum - birth, foster, step or adoptive - your wife, partner, sister, daughter, friend, or someone in your local community. The Awards showcase ordinary Australians who go above and beyond the call of duty and whose achievements are rarely recognised or rewarded.

Now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards are the only national awards that recognise the critical and significant contribution by mums in helping shape Australia's future – our children.

Rebecca Healy of the Northern Territory is the current Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year and she says that receiving the Award was "like receiving an award for breathing. So many people do it and do it well. I was humbled and honoured that I was selected out of so many worthy mums all around Australia. I encourage everyone who knows a great mum to nominate her. It's a wonderful way to make her feel special and loved."

At just 25, Rebecca is the youngest recipient of this award. She has turned her life around to become an inspirational mother to not only her own two children but also to many in her remote community. She also cares for her 16-year old sister and is an emergency foster parent. After leaving home at 12, Rebecca lived in refuges for seven years and was taken in by friends. At 19, she met a lady in the refuge who believed in her so she decided to clean up her act and swore that she would help others. She is a passionate advocate for the local youth and participates voluntarily on a range of community committees.

Barnardos' marketing director, Manisha Amin says, "Rebecca's message is synonymous with Barnardos' belief that if children are given positive encouragement and a safe and loving family environment, they will feel good about themselves and that attitude can inspire them to lead happy, productive lives. Unfortunately, this isn't the case for thousands of disadvantaged and neglected children, many of whom have been robbed of the foundation of life – their childhood.

**"The aim of the Awards is to publicly acknowledge the vital role mothers play in giving children a good start in life and also to raise public awareness of the nurturing role Barnardos plays in many children's lives. We support thousands of children and families in crisis in Australia every year," said Manisha.**

Respected TV presenter and actress, Noni Hazlehurst AM is national ambassador of both the Awards and Barnardos agrees. "Barnardos' intention in hosting these Awards is to bring motherhood to the forefront of Australian social consciousness and instil a high level of respect within the community for this tough but incredibly rewarding role," she says.

Other ambassadors include Today show host, Lisa Wilkinson, multi Aria award winner and author Damien Leith, singer Pete Murray, Dr Ginni Mansberg, resident doctor on Seven's Sunrise and The Morning show and columnist, Heidi Middleton one half of fashion duo Sass and Bide, Channel Ten news presenter Natarsha Belling and actors Debra Lawrance and Dennis Coard (Pippa and Michael from Home and Away).

A judging panel will select eight state and territory finalists. These finalists will be announced from March to April 2012 at a morning tea ceremony in their respective capital city. One of these finalists will then be announced as the Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year 2012 at a gala dinner in Sydney in May 2012 – just prior to Mother's Day.

To see highlights from the 2011 Awards please visit [www.motheroftheyear.org.au](http://www.motheroftheyear.org.au)

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**Nominate her for Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year**  
[www.barnardos.org.au](http://www.barnardos.org.au)

  
**Barnardos**  
We believe in CHILDREN