



Is it POSSIBLE to have hope
for the *future*, when right
now you can't even SMILE?
We believe it is.

We'll be there for families in need this Christmas. Will you?

Please make a Christmas gift to give families like three-year-old Ryan's the support they need.

Barnardos works with Australian families who are doing it tough. Because when poverty, violence or break-ups hit families, it's children who bear the brunt. Without urgent action, vulnerable kids are robbed of their childhoods – and their future potential – forever.

With your help, our family support service has given thousands of people at risk of abusing or neglecting their children the support they need to become better parents – and give their children the best possible start in life.

But right now, we're facing a shortfall of \$314,000 in one of the most needy areas of NSW, which I hope to make up through gifts from wonderful individuals like you. If I can raise this amount, we'll be able to reach 210 more children who urgently need our help – children who are now in danger of falling through the cracks.

Please help us give more vulnerable Australian children the bright future they deserve by making a special Christmas gift today.

Your gift could not be more urgently needed. If I can't raise this shortfall in time, hundreds of kids like Ryan will face a bleak Christmas – and an even bleaker future.

I recently spoke to one of our amazing case workers, Leonie, who started working with Ryan and his family just over a year ago. As she told me:

"Ryan is only three years old, but he and his seven-year-old sister Kate have already been through more than you or I could possibly imagine. Ryan's mum had a long history of mental illness, which spiralled out of control after he was born. His dad Tim worked as a seasonal labourer on farms, and was often away for long periods, leaving the children to bear the brunt of their mum's wild mood swings.

Just over a year ago, Ryan's mum ran out. With no one to help him care for his children, Tim was unable to go back to his job. Within weeks, what little savings they had were gone, and the family were soon evicted from their home and living out of their car.

Tim desperately wanted to find a job, but he was constantly rejected because of his dishevelled appearance and limited skill base. While he was out looking for work, Ryan and his sister would wander the streets alone. When a local shopkeeper saw them eating out of a bin, he called the police, who contacted Barnardos.

When I met Tim, he was desperate for a solution. The first thing I had to do was organise emergency accommodation. Ryan and his sister were badly malnourished, so organising urgent health checks and food hampers was also critical.

At first, Tim was overwhelmed by the problems he was facing, but the more I've been visiting and worked with him, the more his confidence and skills as a parent have improved. I'm also working with Ryan and Kate to help them deal with the terrible pain and trauma of their mum's illness and disappearance.

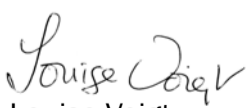
*When I saw Ryan smile for the first time, I knew that I was making a real difference. Tim told me that without Barnardos, he doesn't know what he would have done. Barnardos gave him back his dignity when he'd lost everything – and gave his children hope for a brighter future. **I just wish I could do this for all the kids who need our help.**"*

Almost every parent I've met wants the best for their child, even if they've lost their way. But sometimes a crisis hits and it all falls apart. When this happens, Barnardos is there to work one-on-one with families and give them the help they need.

Our aim, where possible, is to prevent further neglect and keep families together. And although Tim will need our support for some time yet, I know that he and his children will now be able to build a better life together. This is the amazing impact you can have by supporting our family support service right now.

With your help, Barnardos is on call for families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We'll be at the other end of the phone on Christmas Day, ready to help if needed. Please be there for families this Christmas too by making a gift.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.


Louise Voigt
CEO, Barnardos Australia

Help him believe it too.
Call 1800 061 000.
www.barnardos.org.au


Barnardos
We believe in CHILDREN