



NO MORE INJURIES

PRESS RELEASE



#BUILDINGSTRONGLIVES

KIDS FOUNDATION IS ON A 'NO MORE INJURIES' MISSION!

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Adopting a Grand-buddy to help Geelong's older and younger generations build strong lives

Photo opportunity:

What: Residents of Opal South Valley Aged Care and children from Waurnvale Early Learning Centre hold their first interactive Adopt a Grand-buddy session. Founder and Director of the KIDS Foundation, Dr Susie O'Neill and Education Consultant Michelle McCahon will deliver the session.

When: 10.30am, Monday, April 16, 2018

Where: Opal South Valley Aged Care, 209 South Valley Road, Highton

After twelve months of active collaboration with a wonderful Geelong-based elderly community, the KIDS Foundation is excited to announce that *Connecting Generations – Adopt a grand-buddy* will be delivered into three news aged care homes starting on Monday, April 16, when residents of Opal South Valley Aged Care meet with children from Waurnvale Early Learning Centre.

In what is an exciting initiative of the KIDS Foundation, *Connecting Generations* is an intergenerational program focusing on safety awareness that brings together active kindergarten children and older members of the community for ten sessions over 12 months, where participants buddy-up to complete a series of activities focusing on socialisation, physical movement and safety awareness.

The program educates and empowers participants so that they can build strong lives and keep themselves safe.

KIDS Foundation's Founder and Director Dr Susie O'Neill says that children and the elderly have the highest injury rates through accidents of any members of our community and unfortunately injury is rarely at the forefront of health programs.

"Our organisation is on a 'no more injuries' mission and the programs we deliver help to redress the startling injury statistics. Injury is the leading cause of death in Australian children and results in more than twice the number of hospital admissions due to cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease combined every year.

"In one week across Australia 35,000 children will attend a hospital emergency department, 1,300 will be admitted and five children will die. In Victoria alone, an average of 627 elderly people present themselves to an emergency department, 410 will be admitted and 12 will die.

"Research shows that 'bubble-wrapping' children and 'helicopter' parenting is not helping to reduce injuries. When children are given the right learning opportunities and experiences they build a foundation of knowledge that equips them with capabilities they need to become competent ride-takers and manage challenges in everyday life.

“Our elderly generation has a lifetime of experience and stories to share and by combining this knowledge with the childhood innocence of four year olds, connecting two quite different generations can have positive life-long outcomes” says Dr O’Neill.

Opal South Valley Aged Care Lifestyle Coordinator Narelle O’Connor is delighted to be part of the pilot program and believes that Connecting Generations will be a fabulous addition to the recreation programs already available at the Centre with real-life benefits.

“Injury rates amongst Australia’s elderly community are simply too high and while we work hard to ensure our residents’ safety, having prepared lessons that focus on safety will add an element of fun to a topic that is otherwise quite serious.

“It’s our goal to always provide engaging activities for our residents and adding this safety program is another way for our residents to build friendships, share their knowledge and learn from young children.

“Connecting Generations covers topics that our older residents will love to talk to the children about. No doubt they will share stories from their childhood when reading books about safety in the home, at the beach, with a friend or on a bike. While the activities are designed for children to enjoy, I know our residents will get a lot of joy from them too,” says Ms O’Connor.

Connecting Generations: Adopt a Grand-buddy uses the KIDS Foundation’s internationally recognised evidence-based SeeMore Safety education program. The program focuses heavily on building identity and understanding of the physical, emotional and intellectual ‘self’.

The three home’s participating in the Connecting Generations Pilot Program each receive all of the resources required to deliver the program including SeeMore Safety booklets, SeeMore Buddy dolls, art and craft materials. Each home will also conduct pre and post testing to help gauge participation results and data.

Support for the KIDS Foundation has been received from the Geelong Community Foundation, Give Where You Live, and Harwood Andrews to provide Connecting Generations Pilot Program to three aged care homes and early learning centres in the Geelong region during 2018.

***** ENDS *****

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What is the KIDS Foundation?

Our mission is to keep children safe and create a better life for those living with serious injury and burns. The KIDS Foundation has been operating since 1993 and has an amazing story to tell, with a number of highly successful programs making a significant positive impact on the lives of many children and their families.

- Injury Prevention programs educate and empower children to keep themselves safe while still allowing them be kids. Educating preschool children through the SeeMore Safety Program is our focus. Other programs include our YAL (Youth Ambassador) Program and IF (Injury Free) Day.
- Injury Recovery programs support young people to cope with the physical and emotional after-effects of living with burns and other serious life-changing injuries. We host injury recovery camps, leadership workshops and the National Burn Survivors’ Network.
- Research clearly demonstrates that when children are given the right learning opportunities and experiences, they build a foundation of knowledge that equips them with capabilities they need to become competent risk-takers and manage their safety in everyday life and activities.
- KIDS Foundation is an active member of the Childhood Injury Prevention Alliance (CHiPA).

What is CHiPA?

- CHiPA is a high profile team of clinicians, researchers, industry partners and funders have joined to create the Childhood Injury Prevention Alliance (CHIPA). CHIPA’s mission is to reduce the incidence and impact of childhood injury across Australia. The expertise of CHIPA’s members spans all aspects of the injury journey, from prevention to reintegration. We have a detailed strategy to reduce childhood injury through evidence, research and public engagement.

