



September_A Brave Life MEDIA RELEASE September 2023

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Queensland's 2023 Local Hero, Melissa Redsell, repositions *A Brave Life* to support vulnerable mums across the state

Some mums-to-be are fortunate enough to be decorating the nursery, picking out baby clothes or heading off on a 'babymoon' holiday. For many other women, though, new motherhood occurs during times of intense vulnerability such as a housing crisis, rising cost of living pressures or domestic violence.

Melissa Redsell, Queensland's 2023 Local Hero and a trained midwife, is now repositioning her charity, *A Brave Life*, to support these vulnerable women and their babies.

"A Brave Life began as a way to support young mums to raise their babies and complete their education," explains Redsell who had her own daughter as a teenager before going to university to qualify as a midwife. "We're widening our focus because young mums aren't the only ones who are vulnerable. Many women are giving birth in intensely challenging situations and are navigating mental health challenges alongside caring for their babies. We want to help them too."

The need is great, with perinatal mental health concerns emerging as a key issue in Queensland.

Each year:

- 255 mothers need specialist perinatal inpatient services
- 4,652 need specialist community perinatal mental health services during pregnancy
- 15,300 mothers need specialist community perinatal mental health services during the post-partum period
- 6,400 new dads will need specialist community perinatal mental health services during the post-partum period.

A Brave Life will support vulnerable mothers in 2 key ways:



- Baby Bundles – gifting essential items to care for a newborn, which eases the financial burden on mothers and conveys a message of support as they navigate the early days of motherhood
- The Refill connect program – a groundbreaking initiative that connects vulnerable mothers to qualified social workers and midwives at A Brave Life who can help identify any issues they are facing and refer them to the correct services, such as domestic violence, housing, and perinatal mental health services.

Redsell is calling on businesses to join this crucial work. By collectively contributing to reach a target of \$500,000 per year for the next 3 years, businesses can play a pivotal role in supplying and distributing over 20,000+ Baby Bundles to vulnerable mothers across Queensland. This generous support will not only provide tangible resources but also send a powerful message of compassion and solidarity, empowering mothers to embrace their journey with confidence.

For Redsell, this is not only about mothers but also about the next generation. We can't change their past. But our early interventions enable vulnerable mothers to forge a better future for themselves and their babies.

“Our Baby Bundles and Refill connect program are designed to provide practical and emotional support to vulnerable mothers when they need it the most. We believe that with the collective effort of businesses, we can make a substantial difference in the lives of these mothers and their children.”

For more information on how to contribute to this transformative initiative, please visit <https://www.abravelife.com.au/>.

About A Brave Life

A Brave Life is a visionary charity committed to supporting vulnerable mothers during their journey of pregnancy and early parenthood. Through innovative programs like baby bundles and Refill connect, the charity aims to alleviate the pressures associated with childbirth and create a supportive community for mothers in need.

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