

THANK YOU *and* HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Our BestLife children have had a terrific year making friends, learning new skills, having fun (imagine trips to SeaWorld, bowling, movies, listening to music, cooking, playing computer games) and just being kids. And, their mums, dads, carers and siblings have enjoyed a much-earned break. This makes a huge change for many of our children who would otherwise be isolated from community.

As the saying goes 'it takes a village'. So at the end of our first full year we wanted to say a big thank you to everyone that has become part of our village and helped make this a great year.

To everyone who has donated time, money, expertise, to our incredible volunteer board members, creative team, to our partners and sponsors and perhaps most of all to our dedicated compassionate staff and our BestLife families, for every act of kindness our heartfelt thanks to all for making 2014 a great year for our children.

The BestLife team wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy holiday. See you in 2015!



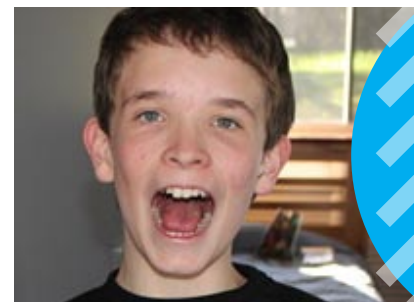
WHAT'S NEW IN 2015?

SATURDAY MORNING PROGRAM

We are excited to announce that in 2015 a further 20 children will enjoy the BestLife experience via our new regular Saturday Morning Program. So we are doubling the number of children and families we serve (20 children are currently enjoying Saturday night sleepovers). This means children can be moved off the waiting list and it provides a fun BestLife experience for children who may not be quite ready for a sleepover. We are looking forward to welcoming new children and families to this service in 2015.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

In September we piloted a 2-night/3 day School Holiday Sleepover. This was a great success. And, as you can imagine the interest in this type of program is very high, particularly during the long December-January break, which can be quite stressful for families. We plan to rollout four (4) of these in 2015/2016.



FUNDRAISING NEWS



Thanks to Sophie and Alex for hosting a Halloween Sleepover in Hong Kong!

SLEEPOVER OCTOBER

This year we launched our first fundraiser, Sleepover October. Thanks to all those who hosted a sleepover in their homes (from Salisbury to Hong Kong!) to raise money so that we can continue our sleepovers. A big thanks also to those who donated via our website (<http://www.bestlifefoundation.com.au>). It was a great success and it will be back again next year, with a twist!

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks also to the Mazda Foundation for supporting our sleepovers, to the Bernborough Club for helping to fund the School Holiday Sleepover pilot and to Cannon Hill Anglican College for their fundraising and support.

WESLEY MISSION *brisbane our* FOUNDING PARTNER

WESLEY MISSION BRISBANE

As many of you know Wesley Mission Brisbane were responsible for helping kick start BestLife sleepovers in late 2013 through their Campaign for Change grant program. As successful recipients of that \$30,000 grant we were able to pilot and fine-tune our sleepover program. Wesley Mission Brisbane's support did not end there. This year they provided an additional \$40,000 to ensure the smooth continuation of our sleepovers for twenty eager children throughout the first half of this year. Without the platform that Campaign for Change gave us we would not be here celebrating 2014 and looking forward to 2015 for our children and families. So, many thanks to our founding partner Wesley Mission Brisbane!

LATEST GRANTS

Some great things have been happening thanks to our new grant partners!

VARIETY MAKES BESTLIFE POSSIBLE FOR MORE KIDS

We have been very fortunate to have terrific support from Variety Queensland. Variety Queensland's initial funding of over \$13,000 made it possible for sleepovers to continue throughout October and November 2014. We are now excited to announce they are so pleased with the experiences children are enjoying at BestLife they have pledged an additional \$35,000. This means almost twenty additional children will join the BestLife family as part of our Saturday Morning program kicking off in February and we will be offering School Holiday Sleepovers later in the year. Thanks to Variety Queensland!

ST GEORGE FOUNDATION SECURING THE FUTURE

The St George foundation is committed to securing the futures for disadvantaged Australians under the age of 18 by 'helping the little guys'. This is a terrific funding program and we are deeply grateful to have been the recipients of a \$49,000 grant that will help ensure both Sleepovers and Saturday Morning Programs continue in 2015. Thanks St George Bank for giving us 'little guys' a boost!

LORD MAYOR'S CHARITABLE TRUST

Supporting our children's development and independence requires both skilled, trained BestLife staff and great resources. We are very thankful to the LMCT for funding the purchase of much needed sensory integration equipment, eating and cooking utensils, scooters and learning materials.



Steven McNoulty, BestLife Program Manager gratefully accepting the LMCT Grant funding cheque from BestLife Patron and Brisbane's Lady Mayoress Anne Quirk.



A SPECIAL *thanks* TO DONORS

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

We continue to receive much needed regular donations via our website (<http://www.bestlifefoundation.com.au>). Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has donated and continues to donate. You are changing the lives of these deserving children and families like Tom and his friends). We are deeply grateful.

BESTLIFE *supporters* AND PARTNERS

Mackenzie State Special School
Deborah Wilson Consulting Services
(Program Evaluation)
Kate Hunter (Writer)
Jim Hunter (Treasurer)
Karen Zoch (Secretary)
BCM (Sleepover October Design and Copy)
Damian Coory (Marketing)
Alison Fraser (BestLife Logo Design)

CHRISTMAS DONATION

You can make a difference to children's lives by giving a Christmas donation to BestLife this year. Simply log on to our website <http://www.bestlifefoundation.com.au> to donate this Christmas. Or ring Jen on 0459 707 850 for more details about donating, helping out or registering your child. Remember, to stay up to date with all our news like us on facebook!

TOM COUNTS DOWN *to his* NEXT SLEEPOVER!

Throughout 2014 Tom has been enjoying BestLife sleepovers with his 'besties' (Elijah, Dylan, Eli, Eleanor and Alana). They are a great bunch who love music, wii, kicking a ball around, craft, making dinner together and just hanging out. Tom's mum is thrilled for him: *'Each month now he counts down on the calendar crossing off the days until he gets to go back. He tells everyone about it, counting off on his fingers the other children's names in his sleepover for that month. What a great bunch you have in terms of staff - smiling, eager, engaging - just so impressed by the high calibre. Last Saturday Tom packed his own bag and came out to me saying 'best life mum!'. He was very disappointed when I took him over to the calendar and showed him he had another 7 sleeps until it came around again! Tom now knows he is on an equal footing with his brother, and is matching him sleepover for sleepover!'* Tina



MEET *your* BESTLIFE TEAM

Each newsletter we will introduce a member of our BestLife team ('BestLife buddies' as we like to call them). They are an incredible group who demonstrate their compassion and understanding of our children consistently every weekend.

Meet Sam...

Sam has been a key member of the BestLife team since the Pilot in 2013. Sam embodies the BestLife values of enthusiasm, passion, optimism, flexibility, and most importantly fun! Sam is a nurse and has undertaken her BestLife training in Positive Behaviour and Active Support.



Sam was recently promoted to Team Leader and also raised a record amount (\$530!!) hosting a 'sleepover party' at her place for Sleepover October. Well done and thanks Sam.

