

2010 PCRG Charity nominations

You can vote here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HWZKGCT>

1) Velo-Cardio-Facial Syndrome Foundation of Queensland

I nominate the Velo-Cardio-Facial Syndrome Foundation of Queensland and its clinic at the Mater Children's Hospital.

www.vcfs.com.au

<http://www.vcfsef.org>

Our foundation supports the clinic financially. We're a very small foundation, so funds help; however, our top concern needs are education and information. Even if we cannot be the top charity, just having our name on something as public as PCRG's site and any PR in The Courier-Mail would get people wondering and spreading the word to educators, GPs, specialists (speech path, podiatrists, etc.).

What is VCFS? It's a genetic disorder caused by a deletion on the 22nd chromosome. The area of the deletion carries heaps of material, so children with it can have a variety of problems--188 possible effects. Velo represents all the issues that the children have with the deformity or absence of their soft palate. Cardio? I don't have to tell runners what cardio stands for, but most children with VCFS are born with serious, life-threatening heart defects. Facial? There is a look that children with VCFS have. The children look like their parents, but together one can see that they have common characteristics.

It's common but no one knows about it. Education Queensland doesn't recognise it, so the children don't get extra help. Many parents will tell you about how they went from Cardiologist (at birth) to GP to speech pathologists to podiatrists (leg and foot pains) to occupational therapists to psychiatrists with NO ONE connecting that these children don't have many separate and unrelated problems to ONE genetic disorder with many symptoms. It's a sneaky disorder.

This problem never ends for them. There is a high rate of schizophrenia in the VCFS population. I know a child with the onset of schizophrenia at age 8. Families lucky enough to encounter a doctor clued in to VCFS get the diagnoses early. Unfortunately, many families learn of VCFS after adolescence when schizophrenia sets in. I get their "had I only known" emails.

One parent put it to me this way. She said that, as an occupational therapist whose family is well to do, she knew all the best specialists and still no one diagnosed her daughter until she was 11. What happens to families who don't know the best specialists or have the money to travel to find it? What happens to them?

Take care and thank you.
Katy Cassidy

2) The Hear and Say Centre

I would like to nominate the Hear and Say Centre to be the recipient of the 2010 PCRG Countdown to Gold Coast fundraising. As some will be aware, I had a cochlear implant late last year and can attest to the difficulties that can be faced by recipients after their cochlear implant procedures. I needed to call upon a lifetime of knowledge, experience and determination to deal with my circumstances. But what of the brave young children and their nervous parents who must make this life transforming transition with no prior experience in assisted hearing? Lets give a handful of kids the opportunity to get a start in post-cochlear implant life with the Hear and Say Centre!!

Thanks.

Matt Phillips

3) Breast Cancer Network Australia

<http://www.bcna.org.au/>

I'm aware that Kerryn McCann received tremendous assistance from Breast Cancer Network Australia throughout her illness.

BCNA is the peak national organisation for Australians personally affected by breast cancer. BCNA work to ensure that Australians diagnosed with breast cancer and their families receive the very best information, treatment, care and support possible, no matter who they are or where they live.

The way I see it is that there are many great charities raising much needed funds to aid with medical research however BCNA is different through the way they offer assistance directly to the individual. This may be in the form of travel assistance or possibly assistance with paying for drugs to help fight the illness, along with many other forms of assistance.

Hardly a day goes by when I don't think of Kerryn and what an amazing lady she was. In memory of Kerryn I nominate BCNA.

Pat Carroll

4) RSPCA Queensland

Since 1824, RSPCA Queensland has worked tirelessly and successfully to prevent cruelty to animals by actively promoting their care and protection. Last year alone, RSPCA Qld's nine shelters took in and cared for more than 42,000 animals - of these approximately 14,000 sick, injured or trapped animals were brought in by the RSPCA Qld Animal Ambulance - many needing emergency care.

RSPCA Qld's service to all creatures great and small is achieved by the invaluable commitment of the staff and volunteers who work with few resources and less than 2% government funding. As a not-for-profit organisation, there is a heavy reliance on the good will of the community and corporate community partners to raise funds for the essential services provided.

RSPCA Qld is currently raising vital funds for the new Animal Care Campus. Thanks to a \$19 million land and capital gift from the State Government, the development of the new Animal Care Campus - the first of its kind in Australia - is now firmly underway. Replacing RSPCA Qld's main Fairfield Shelter, this new facility will be much more than just a traditional animal shelter. Designed to be a destination for anyone wishing to obtain or learn about an animal, future generations will have a unique opportunity to become responsible, caring and compassionate citizens. Additional funding of \$8 million is now required to complete the construction of the Campus.

Thank you again for considering RSPCA Qld as a potential receiver of your fundraising monies. We greatly appreciate all of your help and support.

Cassie Smith

5) The Black Dog Institute

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to nominate the Black Dog Institute (www.blackdoginstitute.org.au) as a possible charity beneficiary of the Gold Coast Marathon fund raising efforts of PCRG.

In relation to the charity I selected I went with this one as they are linked to the Prince of Wales hospital in NSW and are amongst the leading research centres in to Bipolar and depression illness's. The Black Dog Institute is a not-for-profit, educational, research, clinical and community-oriented facility offering specialist expertise in depression and bipolar disorder

The reason I nominate this charity is quite simple.

On the 7th of September 2009 I lost one of my younger brothers to Suicide. It was a battle that he fought for a long time and quite often on his own. He was married with a wife and two young boys aged 9 and 15. In my career of 13 yrs as a police officer I came across numerous instances of suicide never for one moment believing I would ever have to confront it at a family level. I always held the belief that if it came to that point you would be able to say that the next day would have to be better and wonder why these people could never see it. It is apparent the disease took over and determined his last actions on this earth and I have since learnt that they just lose the ability to decide and then see that the next day would be better.

As we all run and my initial goal was to run one marathon (GC 2009) which I did and wasn't happy with my effort and then ran Brisbane to see if I could do better. I at that time decided to Melbourne 09 as my last one. In the intervening period Brendan passed away and I thought right I need a challenge. I then set my goal of raising money and awareness of this insidious disease whilst combing it with my love of running and run a marathon in each state and territory of Australia and also the Nth and Sth Island of NZ . I figure the pain of the run is nothing to fight that people suffering from this disease fight each day. I also have researched where they say that exercise assists people in their combat with depression disorders, healthy mind etc..

The other thing I have found that since I opened my door to what happened to our family have been overwhelmed by the level of support I have received from many people and also how many people have lost a wife, husband, mother, father, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, cousin, friend. Very few people remain disconnected from this disease.

I think we need to raise the profile and reduce the stigma attached to it and I feel that by your support we would enable others suffering from this to share the fight with their loved ones and friends.. There would also no doubt be people in our midst at training each week who would gain strength from the fact that we are in some way lending them a hand in fighting there fight. It may also open the door that it is ok to talk to us and in turn we might be able to lend a hand.

To this point I have raised approx \$8700. My target was set at 10k but I am now hoping to continue it on and see where it ends up but more importantly I hope that one family doesn't have to go through what we are dealing with and hopeful they can find ways to assist people dealing with this disease.

Lou Majer

6) Cystic Fibrosis Queensland

I just wanted to suggest that we donate money to Cystic Fibrosis Queensland this year.

<http://www.cysticfibrosis.org.au/qldaboutcfq/>

Our flatmate Carly suffers from CF and has CF-related diabetes. She has benefited from the services of CFQ over the years (they provide respiratory equipment, counselling, etc) both before and after her double lung transplant. CF is a fatal genetic disease; patients often don't live past their teenage years. Receiving a transplant does not provide a cure, and the median time between receiving a lung transplant and death is about 4 years. There are about 700 sufferers in Queensland.

Let's use our good lungs to help those who've been dealt the rough end of the respiratory stick.

Dale Truscott

7) Abused Child Trust

I think the Abused Child Trust (ACT for Kids) is an amazing organisation.

From their website:

More than 60,000 individual children are affected by child abuse in Australia every single year. That's 1 child every 10 minutes who is suffering from neglect or physical, sexual or emotional abuse (often by people they know and should be able to trust). Many of these kids get no professional help whatsoever, and end up with lifelong problems.

But a small few find themselves at an ACT for Kids centre. We give children all the skills, care and confidence they need to turn their tiny hearts around and lead a normal life. We're also there for mums and dads, healing the hurt that abuse and domestic violence causes the whole family.

Originally known as the Abused Child Trust, ACT for Kids has been helping Australian families keep their children safe for more than 20 years.

Website: <http://www.abusedchildtrust.com.au/>

These guys do amazing work and rely heavily on donations to provide the support that hopefully can get these children back to a point where they are able to function, socialise, communicate and live. I donate to them regularly.

They have a Brisbane base at Woolwin, and I know they are also on the Gold Coast and at Townsville.

Allyson Lindsay

8) Kids Under Cover

I work for Kids Under Cover and would appreciate your support and your consideration to raising awareness for this charity with other athletics competing in the Brisbane Marathon with the view of fundraising for this great cause.

This is a brief of who we are and what we do:

Kids Under Cover believe that every young person has the right to a safe and secure home and an education. We partner with organizations eg: Hutchinsons Builders, Grocon Const, BLF, Australia Post, Carina Leagues Club, Institute of Public Administration and Intraining Running Centre to fundraise so that we can build a one or two bedroom bungalow for young people who are at risk of homelessness.

Kids Under Cover commenced in Victoria 20 years ago and we successfully launched into Queensland in August 2008. Since then we have installed, free of charge to the families, 5 bungalows that provide 7 young people with safe and secure homes.

We work with Community Service Organisations (CSO) that alert us to the young person who is at risk of becoming homeless and after the bungalow recipient moves into the bungalow, the CSO worker continues to support that young person therefore we are not just giving them someone to live but also assisting them with life skills to become independent and hopefully reach their potential in the future.

Glenda Haig