

April 12, 2022

## **SUPPORT FOR LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE GRIEVING OVER THE DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER THANKS TO NEWCASTLE PERMANENT EMPLOYEES**

Hunter and Central Coast young people dealing with grief from the death of a family member will have access to vital support, thanks to Newcastle Permanent employees.

Through Newcastle Permanent's CommunityAssist program, employees have donated \$15,000 to enable 15 local kids to attend Feel the Magic's first regional Camp Magic from 17-19 June. At the three day camp kids work with a mentor and participate in psychoeducational sessions as well as fun physical activities to help them to face, feel and heal with their grief.

Feel the Magic CEO Adam Blatch said the Newcastle Permanent employee support is helping it to bring its much needed programs to the Hunter and Central Coast.

He said In Australia, more than 300,000 children will lose a parent before they turn 18. One in 20 children aged 7 to 17 will experience the death of a parent. Children also experience sibling and legal guardian loss.

"Childhood bereavement causes disruptions in relational, academic, and occupational functioning later in life, and is associated with greater risk of maladaptive coping, mental health disorders, substance abuse, suicide, and early mortality," Mr Blatch said.

"Grieving children can feel isolated and alone. They require ongoing support to develop strategies to cope and move forward with their lives," he said.

"Our evidence-based programs have been developed by a clinical psychologist and are delivered by mental health trained professionals.

"We go beyond traditional young people's grief support groups by offering free camps, programs and resources plus support for parents to create a community of families to support each other."

He said independent evaluation of Feel the Magic's programs for kids aged 7 to 11 showed a 12 per cent increase in their ability to cope through challenging times, 11 per cent growth in their ability to manage emotions when feeling overwhelmed and a 9 per cent shift in mental wellness and belief in the ability to get through tough times.

Newcastle Permanent business manager Sabina Andersson nominated Feel the Magic to her colleagues as a charity worthy of support. The charity is close to the heart of a good friend of hers. She said losing an immediate family member would have a devastating impact on a child's wellbeing and potential, immediately and possibly for their whole life.

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# Media Release



“Feel the Magic is helping individuals deal with their grief and supporting them towards a positive future which benefits the community as a whole,” Ms Andersson said.

“I also like the whole of family approach. There is support for parents and carers to simultaneously navigate their grief and the grief of their child, to move forward as a family,” she said.

“The other great thing about Feel the Magic is that it brings families in similar situations together to support each other and create a community rather than feelings of isolation.”

Feel the Magic is a NSW based charity founded in 2013. It provides free in person and virtual camps, early intervention grief education programs and other resources for kids aged 7 to 17 following the death of a parent, guardian, or sibling.

The charity’s annual fundraising bike ride will run in the Hunter Valley from 16-19 June and finish at the Magic Camp. To find out more about Feel the Magic’s programs, the bike ride, or to volunteer or donate visit [feelthemagic.org.au](http://feelthemagic.org.au)

Under Newcastle Permanent’s CommunityAssist Program, employees donate almost \$60,000 a year to charities they vote on. Almost \$1 million has been provided since CommunityAssist began in 1997.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q15bdexPoi4&t=176s>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEW5pM8i2cM>

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