

ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY MS QUENTIN BRYCE AC
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
ON THE OCCASION OF
LAUNCH CUPPA FOR HEARTKIDS 2010 CAMPAIGN
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA
5 AUGUST 2010

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm really delighted you could join me here at Government House today for a very special morning tea:

no ordinary Yarralumla cuppa,

but the premiere stir and sip flagging the start of this year's Cuppa for HeartKids campaign.

I am so pleased to shine light on the vital work of HeartKids Australia.

Work that was begun thirty years ago by a small number of dedicated families:

who had experienced the demands and anguish of congenital heart disease with their own children and who wanted to make a positive difference to their own lives and the lives of others.

Work that has been steadily and carefully built upon over three decades to achieve HeartKids' status today as:

an outstanding national organisation

and the public face of childhood heart disease.

Work that has volunteerism, expertise, compassion, pragmatism and generosity at its heart.

The financial and caring support you give to families of children with heart disease.

The opportunities you create for families to grow their networks of support and friendship.

Your funding of essential equipment and facilities, and frontier research by some of Australia's leading heart specialists in order to:

reduce mortality rates of childhood heart disease

and better understand its causes.

The awareness you raise throughout the Australian community about childhood heart disease.

And your efforts in bringing these serious issues to the attention of our governments and decision makers.

As a result of HeartKids' public awareness programs, we know:

that six babies are diagnosed with heart disease every day

and that four young Australians die from congenital heart disease every week
it is the most common birth abnormality and, by far, the leading cause of childhood death
while 20% of childhood heart disease has genetic origins, 80% is acquired
and a common trigger, rheumatic fever, is especially prevalent among our indigenous children.
More than half of children with heart disease require surgery or medical intervention,
and while survival rates have significantly improved over the years,
a great deal more research is needed to inform better treatments and approaches.

The Cuppa for HeartKids campaign is a marvellous way of rallying Australians in their homes, schools and workplaces to help fight the challenges of childhood heart disease - over a decent Australian cup of tea and, I believe, today there's a very fine cake to go with it.

HeartKids Australia is a strong and vibrant presence in our community, as are the individuals who stand up in your name and lead your cause.

Families, staff and volunteers; sponsors, ambassadors and supporters:

I sincerely thank you for all that you do, and all that you inspire others to do, towards improving the quality of health and life of young Australians with heart disease.

Friends, it's my great pleasure now to launch Cuppa for HeartKids 2010.

I wish you every success with your campaign, and may your cups well and truly runneth over!