

Second chances at living up to you

EDITORIAL

By **NIKOLAUS WHITE**

ORGAN and tissue donations really are a matter of life or death for some people. The problem is, many Australians probably don't realise that the way we agree to become an organ donor has changed.

Instead of registering when you renew your driver's licence, you must now register by either going online to the Australian Organ Donor Register or by calling them and asking for a registration form. You can also visit your local Medicare office.

Currently the rate of donations of organs and tissues around the world is rising. Yet people are still dying unnecessarily and we need to do something about it.

Around 6000 organ transplants are completed successfully each year. This rate could be better.

Australia is one of the most successful organ transplant countries in the world. This is great, but it must be our goal to fight to keep and improve on that spot.

It is important to realise that one organ or tissue donor can save the lives of 10 people and improve the lives of many more.

Even though we have one of the most successful organ-transplant systems, there are still over 1700

Australians desperately waiting for lifesaving operations at any one time. The most needed organ for donations is kidneys.

In January 2007, there were 1824 people waiting for an organ transplant; 1488 were for kidneys, 65 needing hearts, 110 for livers and 124 lungs. One-sixth of these people died before the right organ became available. In 2012, 354 organ donors gave 1052 Australians a new chance in life.

Although it costs a lot of money to transplant organs – a lung transplant is worth \$220,000 and a heart transplant is even more – it is worth it to save a life.

It may be true that some people make less fortunate lifestyle choices than others, but everyone deserves a second chance at life. Many donor recipients have inherited genetic conditions.

One person needing our help is toddler Jessie Payet. Jessie had an unlucky start in life. She lives with a disease called cystic fibrosis. Jessie needs a lung transplant soon as she is in a grave condition with this disease.

Become an organ donor now and save people like Jessie and plenty of other Australians.

The families of people that die can take comfort that their death is helping others to live.

So be sure to discuss your wishes with your family today. Register at donatelife.gov.au, or call 1800 777 203, and you could help save lives.

Become an organ donor today!



Cartoon: Markayla Whitbread



HARD TALK: Nik White, Stuart Hitchens and Hayley Forbes observe as James Overton interviews Georgia Stewart. Picture: Alana Bray

Cub reporters run the news

By **SAHAR ELLICOTT**
and **ALANA BRAY**

THIS year Dungog Public School is participating in the NBN Junior Journos, showcasing their whole school signing initiative.

This signing initiative began in 2011 when a student with a hearing impairment began school.

The reporting project allows school children to be part of a news crew and appear in a television story.

According to the co-ordinator, Kerryn Scully from NBN, the program creates "a unique opportunity for year 6 children to see the whole process and take ownership of producing a television news story".

A school team of six students comes up with a story idea and then NBN comes out to do an hour shoot. This involves the team conducting interviews and directing the cameramen.

Then the team heads into the NBN studio newsroom to voice the story, sit in the news set as anchors, read the introduction and watch part of the editing process.

"The beauty of this program is that it does not take up a great deal of time for the schools involved," Ms Scully said.

Junior Journos has been running since September 2012. Ashtonfield Public, St Columbans and Glendale East Public are some of the schools that have already taken part.

Loyal supermarket supports community

By **ABBY CROWE**

DUNGOG Loveys Supa IGA has recently donated nearly \$5000 to Dungog Public School to assist in buying a projector for the school hall and sporting shirts for representative teams.

One of the store owners, James Lovegrove, said: "Dungog IGA donates lots of money and donations such as groceries and vouchers to local sporting clubs, schools, charities and non-profit organisations."

"IGA loves contributing to the community where

their staff live.

"I have been involved with IGA for seven years. The token donation has raised over \$70,000 in just three years."

"So over seven years nearly \$100,000 has been donated to our local community."

Over the past nine years, IGA has donated over \$60 million to local community organisations across Australia.

People can help by buying any IGA-branded product or Community Chest-ticketed products.



HELPING HAND: Dungog Public School leaders Georgia Stewart and Jack Walters with James Lovegrove of Loveys IGA. Picture: Abby Crowe

Adopting an Aussie can alter lives

By **HAYLEY FORBES** and
GEORGIA STEWART

IT may come as a surprise but one in six Australian children live below the poverty line.

Adopt an Aussie is an Australian charity with over 89 years' experience providing support to thousands of families.

For some families, sending their children to school can be a major financial challenge – empty lunch boxes, secondhand clothes, missing out on excursions and eye sight and hearing problems go untreated because families cannot afford to keep up with costs.

This leads to children believing that they are different; they become self-conscious and they are reluctant to attend school.

By providing money to break the cycle of poverty, Adopt an Aussie ensures that these children have the same opportunities as their peers.

A year 12 student who has been helped said: "It is hard to put into words how much this has helped me. Without Adopt an Aussie I don't know if I would be where I am today."

Sponsorship begins at \$50 per month and you receive updates from the sponsored student and what they have achieved through the year, as well as a half yearly newsletter sharing the progress of all students who are being supported.

Find out more at astartinlife.org.au.

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