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Subject Buddy Bags program extended in Hunter thanks to nib foundation grant

A partnership between The Alannah and Madeline Foundation and nib foundation is providing children in emergency care across the Hunter with essential items that assist the process of restoring a sense of safety and security into their lives.

The \$100,000 grant from nib foundation will see Buddy Bags delivered to 833 children living in emergency accommodation over the next 12 months.

Buddy Bags are backpacks containing new and essential items, such as toiletries, pyjamas, socks, underwear and a pillowcase, as well as comfort items such as a book, photo-frame and teddy bear. Gender and age appropriate the bags are given to children at the time of their arrival at no cost.

Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, said the extra funding support has allowed the Foundation to increase the number of refuge centres they can support in the region.

"Thanks to nib foundation, we have so far delivered more than 500 Buddy Bags to children in need in Newcastle and surrounding areas," Dr Slocombe said.

"Sadly, providing Buddy Bags cannot overcome the high number of children entering emergency care, but we can provide them with a number of personal items that can assist in their recovery," Dr Slocombe added.

nib foundation Chairman, Terry Lawler said the simple but essential support that the program provides for children living in emergency care was something that attracted the foundation's support.

"Improving the wellbeing of children is a key focal area for nib foundation and through this program we are able to help restore a sense of worth and comfort to those children who have suffered domestic trauma or found themselves in emergency care through no fault of their own," Mr Lawler said.

"The support demonstrates to these children that they are valued and cared for, which is essential for their future development, and hopefully puts a smile on their faces."

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation will also mark a significant milestone today as it packs its 20,000th Buddy Bag at the South Melbourne head office.

More than 400 volunteers have provided the manpower to pack the Buddy Bags for the Foundation since the program began in September 2007.

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