

# I love my mum because...



## 2009 ACT SHORTLISTED FINALISTS

### **Sandra Cumberland, 47 from Narrabundah: (Nominated by her daughter Jessica Ellis)**

Sandra has been a single mother for 17 years and has battled multiple sclerosis since the mid 1990s – but thankfully she is in remission. Despite her own hardships she has provided support to many others including her daughter Jessica and her elderly mother. She has also provided a home for a 16-year-old friend of Jessica's, who returned home from a student exchange program only to find that his whole family had moved overseas. "My mum is nothing short of my best friend, says Jessica who nominated her. "As I move forward towards university and my own life, I thank her for everything that I am."

**SANDRA'S TOP TIP: "Any problem can be an opportunity in disguise."**



### **Julia Rollings, 47, from Conder: (Nominated by her friend Helen Fenwick)**

"An inspiration and a champion for children's rights," Julia is mum to eight children – six of whom have been adopted from overseas. One of the children is also autistic and blind. A few years ago Julia and her husband discovered that their two youngest children had been sold for \$50 by their biological father in India – unbeknownst to their biological mother. Through Julia's determination and courage she successfully reunited the children with their biological mother and siblings and they all continue to maintain close contact. Julia has written a book "Love Our Way" recounting this amazing and heartfelt story. "Julia's complete devotion, courage, determination and love for all her children is simply overwhelming," says Helen.

**JULIA'S TOP TIP: "Family comes first."**



### **Helga Rosenthal, 63, from Watson (Nominated by her adopted daughter Sofia Piscioneri)**

As one of Helga's adopted children, Sofia is well aware of the difference Helga has made to many children's lives. Helga has two biological children and has adopted five more –from Ethiopia, Fiji and Australia. In her life Helga has worked as a teacher in Africa for four years and established a basket weaving co-operative, as well as working in Fiji as a social worker where she helped to set up their child welfare unit. Now at the age of 63, Helga continues to work in social welfare as a teacher and still manages to attend to the needs of all her children and grandchildren. "My mum has shown me how one person, through their unwavering compassion and determination, can make a difference to the lives of those less fortunate than us," says Sofia.

**HELGA'S TOP TIP: "Never give up."**



Nominate her for Barnardos **Australia's Mother of the Year**  
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