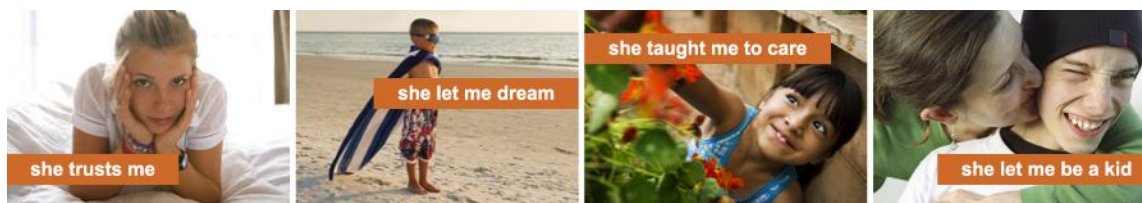


# I love my mum because...



## Australian Capital Territory shortlisted finalists 2010

### Denise Brassler, 47 (nominated by her son Peter Brassler)

Denise is a fighter. As the manager of a youth centre which caters for disadvantaged kids, young mothers, victims of domestic violence and many others, she is the voice for the young people in the community fighting for their rights. She often works above and beyond the call of duty devoting herself to helping those in need. She has opened her home to homeless kids, helped others through the trauma of abusive relationships and assisted those who may have ended up on the wrong side of the law. She has done all this whilst raising her own two children singlehandedly and coping with her own divorce. Her son Peter who nominated her says she is "the single most caring person I know, and has sacrificed so much to help others."



Nominee's top tip: "Fight for what you believe is right for you".

### Dawn Schwalm, 48 from Flynn (nominated by her daughter Tahlia)

Dawn is a single mother to eight children ranging in age from 30 to 10 years old and a nanna to 12. She is also the foster carer to a two-year-old boy who has been in her care for almost a year. Dawn had no hesitation in taking in the young boy so he could have a stable, loving family. On top of all this, Dawn works full-time with disabled children as a special needs teacher. Despite her own personal struggles and adversities, Dawn says there's always someone else worse off. Her daughter Tahlia who nominated her says she is always helping others and "she is everything to me and my siblings. We would be nothing without her. She is our hero."



Nominee's top tip: "Never ever treat anyone meanly, and help as many as you can, because what goes around comes around."

### Jakelin Verran, 27 from Casey (nominated by her foster son)

The past few years have been both euphoric and tragic for 27-year-old Jakelin. In September 2008, she gave birth to Kobi – a brother to her two young foster children aged three and two. Then tragically, in February 2009 her husband John suffered a fatal heart attack whilst driving. Suddenly Jakelin was a single mum with three young children under three years old. Without hesitation Jakelin had taken them in at aged five months and 28 days respectively. Whilst there have been many tough times, through Jakelin's dedication and determination they are now healthy, happy children who are thriving. Jakelin says even though it's been a difficult 12 months her children have given her the strength to carry on. "Watching each child grow and develop is the most rewarding and fulfilling experience in the world," she says.



Nominee's top tip: "If you do the dinner rock (eat up all of your dinner), you get an ice block."

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