

I love my mum because...



2009 NT SHORT-LISTED FINALISTS

Sharon Donnellan, 39, from Alice Springs, NT: (Nominated by her mother, Christine Donnellan)

From 2001 to 2007 Sharon Donnellan experienced one devastating event after another; she lost her husband, a child, her dad and auntie. Although grief stricken, Sharon remained focused and dedicated to her five remaining children. With her husband gone so too was an income but Sharon was not deterred and sought employment. Three jobs were required to cover the existing expenses such as fees for education and sporting activities for her children. Sharon wanted the next five years to have a minimal impact on her children's lives and was determined the children maintain their interests. It was at this time Sharon also wanted to provide opportunities for other, less fortunate, children, so she decided to become a respite foster carer in a specialist program. She is certainly a mum who will not give up.

Sharon's top tip: "Be well mannered, do well in school and sport"



Kristina Kent, 48 from Karama, NT: (Nominated by her daughter, Alicia Kent)

Kristina has raised four children of her own and has one grandchild but in addition to this, has dedicated love, energy and a home to over 100 disadvantaged children. Whether it was foster care or respite care, for the last seven years Kristina has believed in these children and made sure they were loved and cared for as if they were her own. With all these children and varying levels of need, Kristina required the patience of a saint and the routine of an army officer. She taught the children respect for themselves and for others. In fact, Kristina treats all people with a high level of respect, no matter their colour, race or state of mind. She has a huge heart and is always happy to lend a helping hand.

Kristina's top tip: "Respect your elders and treat others how you wish to be treated"



Joan Stokes, 48, from Adelaide River, NT: (nominated by her daughter, Delvene Spiteri)

From the age of 17, Joan Stokes, a full blooded indigenous woman could not bear to witness the local indigenous children suffering from neglect. Joan made a decision to place her own young life on hold and instead dedicated all her efforts to love, care and protect these children in trouble. Over 31 years she has raised 34 children as well as her own four children and an adopted boy. Joan's ambition was to save these children from a life on the streets, educate them and provide them with a chance to grow and develop safely. Joan's skills in art and story writing have always provided a positive starting point. Joan's greatest dream is to create a sanctuary on her property, to continue her work with disadvantaged indigenous children but she is finding it difficult to get funding for the project. Even though she is sick and money is scarce, Joan refuses to give up on these children.

Joan's top tip: "I was put here for a purpose"



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