

I love my mum because...



Northern Territory shortlisted finalists 2010

Ann Fleming, 50 from Ludmilla (nominated by her daughter Olivia Fleming)

Ann is a mentor to her own two children Olivia, 11, and James, 15 and strives to instil in them a sense of social justice and compassion through taking them on trips to Indigenous communities she had visited. Ann is the Manager of the Top Ends' Aquaculture Centre and assists remote Aboriginal communities. A keen environmentalist and biologist, Ann is assisting in setting up aquaculture ventures in coastal areas – such as sea cucumbers, clams etc – for these communities and teaching them how to breed and sell them. Ann has taken her children on trips to remote Aboriginal communities to give them an insight into their culture and way of life. Her daughter Olivia, who nominated her, says her mum helped her to read and write and is always there when she's having problems at school. "I love my mum more than the whole world because she lets me dream the wildest dreams. She encourages me when I'm shy and cheers me when I overcome it. She is an antidote to my pain and makes me happy in my saddest times."



Nominee's top tip: "Mum always says to think of others."

Michelle Ormsby, 42 from Moulden (nominated by her son James Roberts)

Michelle is an "angel from heaven and has the patience of a saint," according to her son James who nominated her. A single mum for many years after she left an abusive marriage she was left to raise her three children, Justin, now 22, James, now 20, and Madison, now 14. Michelle met Darren five years ago who has a disabled child, Floyd, now 13. They subsequently had another child together, Bryce who is three. Floyd has cerebral palsy confining him to a wheelchair, is fed by a tube and requires constant care. Due to Michelle's perseverance and dedication, Floyd can now put on his shoes, use the toilet and sleep without wetting the bed. Michelle firmly believes that in time with hard work and practice, Floyd will be able to walk. "Floyd has taken major steps in becoming more self sufficient which hopefully will give him more opportunities in later life," says Michelle. She believes that if you give children enough tools they will handle any situation they are faced with.



Nominee's top tip: "Just try it, what have you got to lose."

Monika Schaefer, 48 from Moulden (nominated by her daughter Sherronna)

A single mum to eight biological children, now aged 30 to eight, Monika has also raised many more children. Whether they were street kids who needed somewhere to stay, whether they stayed for a few days or many years, Monika never turned anyone away no matter how tight money was. On some occasions food has been so limited that they had to survive on Weetbix for four days but the togetherness of the family pulled everyone through. Her daughter Sherronna who nominated her says her mum's generous and giving nature is unconditional. "She would sleep on the floor, so the children could have a bed and has gone without any luxuries all her life to make sure all the children in her care have food and clothes," she says. "She is non-judgemental and is patient and accepting of everyone." Monika now works as a Psychological Rehabilitation Worker at TEAM Health (the Top End Association for Mental Health) and is active in community work within the local Church assisting her time, support and services when required.



Nominee's top tip: "Love and forgive your enemies, because life is too short for hatred and bitterness."

Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year
www.barnardos.org.au

Barnardos Australia, GPO Box 9996 Sydney NSW 2001 | Tel 02 9218 2300 | Fax 02 9281 0526
A Company Limited by Guarantee | ABN 18 068 557 906 | Registered Charity


Barnardos
We believe in CHILDREN