

I love my mum because...



2009 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SHORTLISTED FINALISTS

Kay Byerley, 62, from Lyndoch, South Australia: (Nominated by her foster daughter, Celestine Rowe-Byerley)

Kay fostered Celestine from an Aboriginal community when she was just four and a half months old. Celestine says that Kay gave her the love she needed. A few years ago when Celestine went through a very tough time with drug abuse and an attempted suicide it is Kay she credits for helping her get her life back on track. Kay also adopted three Sri Lankan girls, one of whom passed away when she was 11, and fostered an Indonesian girl who is now aged 35 and married with her own children. On top of this Kay also has two biological sons and two stepsons, one of whom is deceased.

Kay's top tip: "Always help out whenever and whoever you can."



Jeka Malbasa, 51, from Parafield Gardens, South Australia: (Nominated by her son Daniel Malbasa)

Jeka is a true survivor and a fighter for her family. Originally, from Croatia she and her husband had four children before tragedy struck when civil war broke out and her husband was killed. Jeka survived four years of a civil war that tore up her country on her own in a refugee camp caring for her four young sons who were all under 14 at the time. Jeka worked in labour intensive jobs, found bomb shelters to keep them safe and often went hungry in order to feed her boys. She eventually managed to flee to Australia with her sons. "She endured hunger, poverty, sickness, disease and personal grief to come to Australia and provide a better life for her children," says her son Daniel who is now 22. Jeka now helps other Serbian migrants settle into Australia and has never remarried, preferring to dedicate her time to her children.

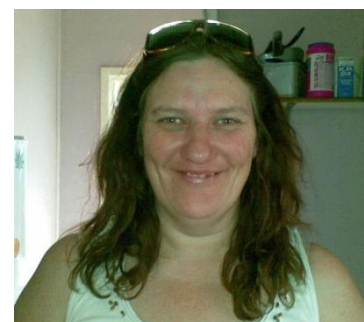
Jeka's top tip: "You must always be ready to work hard if you want to get anywhere."



Linda Wollaston, 44, from Port Lincoln, South Australia: (Nominated by her daughter, Samantha Wollaston)

All Linda ever wanted was to have lots of children to love and care for. So she was devastated when she tried to start a family and suffered the trauma of a stillbirth followed by a miscarriage. Her joy at giving birth to her eldest daughter, Samantha, now 21, was short-lived when subsequently she experienced another stillbirth. After youngest daughter, Natasha arrived in 1989 Linda counted her blessings and she and her husband decided to give something back by becoming foster carers. For 10 years they have taken in countless children for varying lengths of time and currently have four foster children, aged six to 10, who will be in their care until they are 18. "Mum always puts other's needs before her own, she has helped many and won't stop anytime soon," says her daughter, Samantha. "I truly believe she is a wonderful, amazing mum."

Linda's top tip: "No matter how big the family you are all loved and treated the same as each other."



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