

I love my mum because...



2009 TASMANIAN SHORT-LISTED FINALISTS

Bernadette Black, 32 of Blackmans Bay, Tasmania: (Nominated by her son, Damien Oliver-Black)

When Bernadette fell pregnant at 16, she promised herself that she would be a good mother, complete her education and write a book to help others in her situation. Now at 32, Bernadette has fulfilled her promises. She has three children aged 15, seven and four and wrote a book called "Brave Little Bear". Bernadette is a regular speaker at schools and community events throughout Australia providing advice and support on teenage pregnancy. "She works tirelessly to show single mums how life's adversities can be turned into positives," says her son Damien. "But she also always has time for her own kids and makes us all feel very special – and she makes great choc chip cookies!"
Bernadette's top tip: "Support and encouragement will get you through everything."



Roberta Ferguson, 51, of Beechford Tasmania: (Nominated by her adopted daughter Wubrist Ferguson)

A Barnardos child in the UK, Roberta was adopted at the age of 12 months and moved to Tasmania when she was three with her parents who adopted three more children. As she had such a wonderful childhood, Roberta wanted to share her love with other children. With three biological children, now aged 29, 27 and 23, Roberta adopted two sisters – Kidist, now 15 and Wubrist, now 12 – from Ethiopia nine years ago. She later discovered that they had a brother, Getasaw, now nine, and Roberta fought tirelessly to also adopt him. "Without my mother's determination and perseverance we would not have been reunited as a family and have the wonderful life and opportunities we now have," says Wubrist.
Roberta's top tip: My love for you is like a circle. It never ends."



Denisa Woolley, 37, of West Moonah, Tasmania: (Nominated by her friend Judy-Ann Vienna-Hallam)

Denisa's son Cody, now 17, was born profoundly deaf. A single mum at the time, Denisa met and married Jason who had a daughter Chantelle, now 18. They have since had three children together – Sharni, 15, Renae, 13, and Jamie, eight. Renae was born with one leg shorter than the other and Denisa has to undergo regular trips to Melbourne Children's Hospital with Renae for operations. On top of all this Denisa provides temporary foster care for many children and currently has four children in her care aged two, five, nine and 10. "I can provide a warm bed, a full belly and a cuddle for these children," says Denisa. "I feel so rewarded when they give me a big smile and I see the gleam in their eyes."
Denisa's top tip: "Love everyone for who they are, not for who you want them to be."



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