

# Polly and Me

A STORY OF NEGLECT

## IMPACT AND ACTIVITY STATEMENT, AUGUST 2015

### FILM SYNOPSIS

**Behind closed doors unfolds a story of neglect.**

An 8 year-old girl lives alone with her mother and dreams of a better life beyond the walls of their small and dingy apartment.

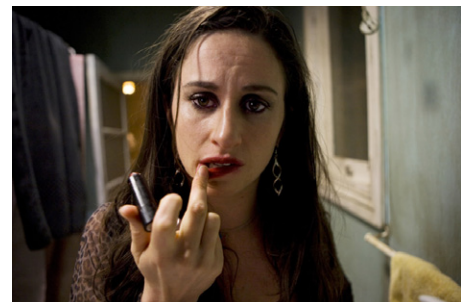
When an invitation arrives to a picnic in the park, her mother promises to take her. But so far life has been a series of broken promises. Maybe this time will be different.

**POLLY AND ME** is the story of one little girl who has fallen between the cracks, and reminds us that just because we don't see her, it doesn't mean she isn't there.



### CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- A coalition of community partners working with children at risk were assembled around this film: ARACY, Benevolent Society, Create Foundation, Families Australia, Good Beginnings, Lighthouse Foundation, Lou's Place, the Mirabel Foundation, NAPCAN, Oasis Youth Support Network and The Smith Family.
- During National Child Protection Week in 2010, approximately 1 million viewers were exposed to nationwide media coverage in radio, print and online.
- The NSW Police Force uses the film to train over 12,000 police officers on child protection awareness.
- Over 5,000 DVDs distributed through community partners.
- Over 500 online requests for the film and resources for educators and practitioners.
- Used as a primary teaching and learning resource in child protection and early childhood training by Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, and in Queensland Department of Health.
- Study Guide available through Australian Teachers of Media.
- Available on VET and TAFE online portals for use in child protection training and awareness.
- Available on the Australian Government's National Child Protection Clearing House Archive and National Library of Australia trove.
- In excess of \$1m donations to community partners were attributable to the initiative.



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## THE CAMPAIGN

### THE CONTEXT

There are over 35,000 Australian children proven to have been abused or neglected (NAPCAN 2015).

### IMPACT CAMPAIGN AIMS

- raise awareness of vulnerable children in Australia
- build community capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect
- draw attention to policymakers of the importance in investing in early intervention and prevention
- act as a fundraising tool for partners in the sector.

### HOW THE CAMPAIGN WORKED

With guidance from Emeritus Professor Dorothy Scott OAM, PhD, recently retired as the Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection at the University of South Australia, the **POLLY AND ME** initiative is aimed at reigniting the conversation about child abuse and neglect.

In partnership with The Caledonia Foundation, Shark Island Productions and a collaboration of non-profit organisations, **POLLY AND ME** was part of an overarching **YOUTH HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE** and a follow on to the documentary **THE OASIS** about AUSTRALIA'S HOMELESS YOUTH.

The **POLLY AND ME** initiative was facilitated by a collaborative partnership with a number of philanthropic organisations, and 12 community partners including: The Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth (ARACY), National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), The Benevolent Society, CREATE Foundation, Families Australia, Good Beginnings Australia, The Lighthouse Foundation, Lou's Place – Women's Refuge, The Mirabel Foundation, The Salvation Army and The Oasis Youth Support Network and The Smith Family.

**POLLY AND ME** was accompanied by a national education and outreach strategy that commenced in July 2010. The film is still used extensively in raising awareness, skills training and education around keeping children safe and building community capacity.

## OUTREACH UPDATE

The Mirabel Foundation (in 2014) using **POLLY AND ME** with 24 Kinship and Advocacy and Family Support workers.

Extensively in use by Educators including: lecturer in Faculty of Health Sciences at ACU and La Trobe Universities, Barnardos Australia Crisis Care Programmes for foster parents, Therapeutic Welfare Interventions (USA) "Train the Trainer" courses offered to agencies, Uniting Care Australia, independent psychologists and teachers for programs from Australia to Denmark, educators delivering Certificate 3 and above in Early Childhood Care (Aus).



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## CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS:** The Mirabel Foundation, NAPCAN, The Benevolent Society, Good Beginnings, Lighthouse Foundation, Lou's Place, The Oasis Youth Support Network, The Salvation Army, The Smith Family, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), Families Australia and Create Foundation.

**PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS:** David and Claire Paradice, Calvert-Jones Foundation, David Clarke AO & Jane Clarke, Eureka Benevolent Foundation, Matana Foundation, Macquarie Group Foundation, Nelson Meers Foundation, Bob Rose AM & Margaret Rose AM, The Turnbull Foundation, The Wolanski Foundation, Hal Epstein & Geri Ettinger and the Sydney Community Foundation.

## WHO SAW IT

- Over 1 million viewers on the ABC1 TV screening KIDS AT RISK hosted by Geraldine Doogue.
- Over 25 screenings through community partners to corporate, non-profit supporters and community audiences.
- Over 5,000 DVDs distributed through community partners.
- Over 10,000 visits to the website.

## CONCLUSION

Over the last 6 years it has become apparent that **POLLY AND ME** is most widely used in the training and education of people working with children who have experienced trauma, or in fields where they may encounter these children. The film has been used by educators across the world, primarily in Australia but as far afield as Denmark, in secondary schools, TAFE and university courses, professional development courses and independent online colleges. While the film may not be seen by one audience in the numbers it was when broadcast, the real impact of the project has been in education.

## TEAM

**IAN DARLING**, Director & Writer  
**SUSAN MacKINNON**, Producer  
**MARY MACRAE**, Production Manager  
**SALLY FRYER**, Editor  
**PETER A. HOLLAND**, Cinematographer

## CONTACT

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“JUST WANTED TO WRITE TO SAY THANK YOU FOR MAKING POLLY AND ME! I WORK WITH PARENTS AND INTEND TO START INCORPORATING IT INTO MY SESSIONS WITH THEM. IT IS AMAZING.”

— *Therapist, Community Counseling & Mediation, Brooklyn New York*