



29 Oct 2018  
Hobart Mercury, Hobart

Author: James Kitto • Section: General News • Article Type: News Item  
Audience : 28,265 • Page: 7 • Printed size: 514.00cm<sup>2</sup> • Region: TAS • Market: Australia  
ASR: AUD 3,715 • words: 270 • Item ID: 1028758205

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# Big steps for little treasures



**PREMMIE POWER:** Sarah Taylor with her daughter Violet Graham, 1, who was born 13 weeks premature, her mother Lynette Taylor and children Jordan Graham and Charlotte Sutcliffe, both 8, at the Walk for Prens event at the Montrose Bay Foreshore. Picture: PATRICK GEE

## JAMES KITTO

MORE than 100 Tasmanian families took to the Montrose Foreshore to walk side-by-side in support of the 48,000 premature or sick babies born in Australia every year.

Walk For Prens, a national campaign supporting families of premature babies, took place across all Australian capital cities yesterday with

115 Tasmanians signing up for the Hobart leg.

The walk began with a moment to pay respects to families who've lost babies, before a ceremonial release of white doves was cast into the sky.

Among those who took part was Sarah Taylor, who showed off a colourful display of purple balloons for her baby Violet, born 13 weeks premature.

Paediatrician Dr Simon Fraser said premature birth in Australia was on the rise.

"It's now at about eight per cent of

births compared with six per cent in the past," he said.

"Being born premature is a significant event for not only the baby or babies but also the family."

Walk For Prens, now in its ninth year has raised more than \$1.4 million

for Life's Little Treasures, Australia's foremost charity dedicated to supporting families with premature or sick babies.

"We're still counting all the money raised on the day, but we're feeling confident that we've reached this year's goal of \$300,000, which will go a long way in supporting those in need," Life's Little Treasures CEO Shusannah Morris said.