



WALK FOR PREMS 2019 – MEDIA RELEASE

Let's walk together in support of premature & sick babies at Walk for Prems 2019

On Sunday 27th October families across Australia will walk together in support of the **48,000** premature or sick babies born in Australia every year¹.

Walk for Prems 2019 is proudly presented by Baby Bunting and is the largest annual fundraiser for the [Life's Little Treasures Foundation](#), Australia's foremost charity dedicated to supporting the families of babies born sick or prior to 37 weeks gestation.

Celebrating its **10th Walk**, *Walk for Prems* will take place simultaneously in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, Canberra and Perth – as well as regional locations such as Cairns, Townsville, Ballarat, Goulburn Valley & Gippsland.

"Premature birth is on the rise - now about 8% of births compared with 6% in the past. There are many reasons for this. They include increasing maternal age, more multiple pregnancies with assisted reproduction, higher rates of maternal diabetes and obesity to name a few. Being born premature (before 37 weeks) is a significant event for not only the baby or babies but also the family. Most families are not expecting or ready for a premature baby and thus many more families are needing the support that LLTF can provide. Prematurity can cause significant financial, emotional and psychological hardship to families and is associated with significant rates of stress and mental health issues for families particularly if they have no supports".

Dr Simon Fraser, Medical Director with a private health insurer

Walk for Prems has raised over 1.8 million and this year Life's Little Treasures Foundation hopes to raise **\$350,000**.

At the beginning of each **Walk for Prems 2019** event, participants will pause to show their respect for the families whose babies have sadly passed away. Life's Little Treasures Foundation honours their babies' memory with the ceremonial release of white doves by a family that has lost a child or a ceremonial bubble ceremony in the regional settings.

Life's Little Treasures Foundation understands that it is not possible for everyone to attend a *Walk for Prems* location, so those who live far away or whose baby is still in hospital are still able to take part in *Walk for Prems* by registering as a [Virtual Walk for Prems](#) Team member.

¹ According to Hilder L, Zhichao Z, Parker M, Jahan S, Chambers GM 2014. *Australia's Mothers and Babies. Perinatal statistics series no. 30. Cat. no. PER 69. Canberra: AIHW.*



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Locations

Walk for Prems 2019 will take place at the following **12** [locations](#);

- **Adelaide**; Karrawirra North Bank, War Memorial Drive, Adelaide
- **Brisbane**; Arthur Davis Park, Flinders Parade, Sandgate
- **Canberra**; Lake Tuggeranong, Tuggeranong Town Park, Bartlett Place, Greenway
- **Melbourne**; Palms Lawn, Albert Park Lake, Albert Park
- **Hobart**; Montrose Foreshore, Brooker Highway, Glenorchy, Hobart (TAS)
- **Sydney**; Jubilee Park, Glebe Foreshore Parks, Northcote Road Glebe (NSW)
- **Perth**; Sir James Mitchell Park, Zone 8, off Coode Street, South Perth Esplanade, South Perth Foreshore (WA)
- **Cairns**; Funship Parklands, Cairns Esplanade (FNQ)
- **Townsville**; The Strand, Strand Park, North Ward, Townsville (QLD)
- **Ballarat**; Wendouree Parade, Lake Wendouree, Ballarat (VIC)
- **Gippsland**; St Pauls Anglican Grammar School Gymnasium, 150 Bowen Street, Warragul (VIC)
- **Goulburn Valley**; Nathalia Primary School, Bromley Street, Nathalia (VIC)

Time

On Sunday 27th October *Walk for Prems 2019* will open at 8.30am in Cairns, 8.30am in Townsville, 9.00am in Melbourne and Brisbane, 9.30am in Adelaide, Canberra, Perth, Sydney and Hobart and 9.30am in Ballarat, Gippsland and Goulburn Valley.

Registration and Fundraising

People can register up for *Walk for Prems 2019* at www.walkforprems.org.au

Registration costs \$27 for adults, \$15 for children and \$8 for babies² in Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Canberra, Perth and Sydney.

Registration in Melbourne³, is \$44 for adults, \$20 for children and \$10 for babies.

Registration in Cairns, Townsville, Gippsland, Goulburn Valley, Ballarat is \$18 for adults, \$10 for children and \$7 for babies.

Virtual Walk Team registration entries are \$30 for adults and \$25 for children and include a *Walk for Prems 2019* t-shirt.

All registrations include receiving a participation medal at the conclusion of the walk, access to free entertainment and children's activities at each location.

²It is an insurance requirement that all participants be registered for the event, including babies.

³The Melbourne Walk for Prems includes more entertainment and children's activities than other walk locations.



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Participants are asked to fundraise, either individually or as a team, through their own page on the Walk for Prems website.

Entertainment

After the walk, participants can relax and enjoy a range of children's activities including music, a jumping castle and face-painting.

Ambassadors

Life's Little Treasures Foundation's Walk For Prems Ambassadors

- **Brisbane: Brooke Hanson** OAM, Australian Olympic Swimmer and radio/television presenter. Brooke along with husband Jared Clarke experienced nine months in the NICU after the birth of their son Jack Hanson Clarke. Jack was born at 28 weeks 5 days, 12 weeks premature, weighing just 663grams, severely growth restricted and only 32cm long. Sadly, after a nine-month battle in the NICU Jack passed away. Despite her loss, Brooke wants to continue to bring a greater awareness to the birth of premature babies and the importance Life's Little Treasures Foundation can have on parents, family and friends through the journey of their "Little Treasure".
- **Brisbane: Michelle Worthington** is an internationally published award-winning author of empowering picture books for children of all ages, who has written a book for families of a premature baby called "My Brother Tom". Her gorgeous three year old Little Treasure Tom was born premature at 28 weeks, weighing 1350 grams. Michelle was the recent recipient of the 2018 AusMumpreneur Award for Business Excellence as a scholarship holder and graduate of the Women's Business School.
- **Sydney: Matt Levy** OAM, Australian Paralympian Swimmer & Bronze medal winner at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. Matt has vision impairment and cerebral palsy due to being born 15 weeks premature.
- **Melbourne: Rusty Benson**, Director, Raine & Makin. Dad to Jack and Juno. Jack, Rusty's first child, was a late preterm baby who spent the first 10 days of his life in NICU back in 2015. Since this challenging start, he is always open to sharing his experience to hopefully help others feel connected and not alone in theirs.
Melbourne: Dr Simon Fraser, trained in Neonatology at the Mater Hospital for Women in the late 80s and early 90s and practiced as a Staff Neonatologist at the Mercy Hospital for Women from 1993 to 2005 and then in various Special Care Nurseries in Gippsland until 2016. He currently runs a small private practice in regional Victoria with a particular interest in premature babies. He also a Board Director of a Victorian sub-regional health service

Presenting Partner

Baby Bunting, is the *Walk for Prems 2019* presenting partner for the **4th year** in a row. A well-loved and well-known Australian retailer of baby goods for over 40 years. Life's Little Treasures Foundation is so proud of this exciting partnership and takes this opportunity to thank Baby Bunting for its support.

Major Partners

Medela, a long-standing Partner of Life's Little Treasures Foundation and a breastfeeding and health care specialist

Britax, leaders in child safety products

Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate – The Ponds and Bella Vista, is an extension of the well-known and much-loved Better Homes and Gardens brand



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Sponsors

Earlybirds, makers of quality clothes especially for premature babies, they have supported Life's Little Treasures for over 10 years and will once again be a Sponsor of the Walk.

Web Intelligenz, are an online marketing company, the company has a unique combination of broadly-based business experience, technical know-how and academic achievement. They pride themselves on bringing a creative edge to the services and advice they provide. This is their second year as Sponsors.

About Life's Little Treasures Foundation

Life's Little Treasures Foundation was born in 2005 when a group of parents of premature babies decided to do something about the lack of support available to people in their situation, from there it has grown to a national charity servicing over 123 hospitals around Australia and helping many more families at home and in the community. Life's Little Treasures Foundation want to ensure that no family endures the traumatic and life changing experience of having a premature or sick baby without easy access to critical information and community support to help them through their journey. For further information about Life's Little Treasures Foundation visit www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au

#Walkforprems2019 #makingadifferencetogether #lifeslittletreasuresfoundation

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For Walk media enquiries and interviews with local participants please contact:

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