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FILM SERIES PROVIDES A VOICE FOR MEN TO TALK OPENLY ABOUT GRIEF

Bears Of Hope Releases Part Two In Their Powerful Series *It's Not All Black & White*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, 12th October, 2017 – On October 15th people around the world will unite and continue to break the silence surrounding baby death during pregnancy and infancy. October 15th is a globally recognised day of awareness and Australian non-profit [Bears of Hope](#) will release *Perspectives*, part two in a powerful series that sheds a light on all those affected by baby death.

A death during pregnancy and infancy is sadly, common. In Australia, 1 in 4 pregnancies end in loss. The only uncommon part is that we hide from talking about this as a society.

Many of those affected by baby death suffer from depression and long-term anxiety, and this is especially true of men. Whilst women are allowed to, and expected to express grief, societal norms prohibit men from showing emotion. The pressure to be “strong” in our society often means that many males affected by pregnancy and infant loss are crippled by the silence imposed on them.

There is a fear of judgement – to be seen as weak, or that a set time to “get over it” has gone past, even though the grief remains. Many men feel that they are not entitled to the grieving process or that their responsibility lays in supporting others.

Western Sydney Wanderers player, Robbie Cornthwaite commented, "Quite often the father is somewhat forgotten. I know I felt my job was to support my wife after we lost our daughter and I never really dealt with the grief until over a year later. Partly because I was telling everyone I was fine but also there wasn't really anyone to talk to. Sharing my story has helped so many others speak up and together we could all lean on one another."

In a society where we have learned to run for breast cancer, grow beards for men's prostate, the death of a child remains a taboo topic, and one which especially men and boys feel unable to discuss.

[Bears of Hope](#) wishes to change this.

Perspectives is a 16-minute short film, the second in a BOH funded 4-part documentary series titled “It's Not All Black & White”. Their first film focused on the parent's passage looking back several years onwards to give perspective to grief over time, while this film candidly shares the personal journeys of grandparents, relatives, siblings and friends and the often complicated process of supporting parents while managing their own grieving process.

The film includes the stories of 2 grandfathers, Don George and Michael Rawlings, and 3 male siblings Tobias, Isaac and Liam, among others. Their honest and raw recollections show that no one is unaffected by the death of a child, and why it is important for all affected, especially men and boys, to speak out, share and seek support.

Grandfather, Michael Rawlings said, “We live in a world where we are taught boys don't cry, where we as men often do need to cry, and we need to society who supports and understands that.”



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Sarah Andrews talks about her best friend asking her to be a buffer for the simple everyday task of grocery shopping, shielding her from questions about the baby until she was able to cope. “People don’t think about these things...it’s crippling for both parents and those supporting them.”

Producer, Pia Dorer, stated “This series responds to almost 10 years of BOH listening to, and supporting, parents, families, friends and healthcare professionals of all ages. Each of these audiences is unique and it was poignantly clear that we needed to produce videos that spoke to each of these groups. BOH’s ultimate goal is to support those directly affected, and educate the broader community so people are not blindsided if a tragedy like this occurs. We are human and we learn best from other human stories.”

Co-founder Amanda Bowles commented, “Along with our initiative, [Beards of Hope](#), which is run in August, we hope this film provides another safe area for men who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss to express their grief and share their journeys. Every loss equal. Every loss is felt, and every man should be able to grieve freely.”

The video “**It’s Not All Black & White – PERSPECTIVES**” is available to view here:
<https://vimeo.com/237852559>

Bears of Hope is a not-for-profit organisation which was founded by Amanda Bowles and Toni Watson, who are both bereaved parents, themselves. With care and kindness Bears of Hope focuses on the provision of ongoing comfort, support and counselling to parents and families who have experienced the loss of a baby during pregnancy, birth and infancy. We are committed to sharing stories, to creating a conversation that has the opportunity to break the silence and offer solace to all who have been through this loss. The final two films in the *It’s Not All Black and White* series will be completed in 2018 and 2019.

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