

**BRAVE FOUNDATION RECEPTION**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 25 JULY 2022**

Good evening, and welcome to this special reception to recognise the current and former Chairs, Directors and current Board of the Brave Foundation; the 'owners of Brave'.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

May I acknowledge among us:

- Jane Howlett MLC, representing the Premier
- Lisa Burnett, representing the Honourable Elise Archer MP
- Tim Vaastra, representing the Honourable Roger Jaensch MP
- The Honourable David Bartlett
- Leanne McClean, Commissioner for Children
- Jillian Roche, CEO Brave Foundation
- Bernadette Black, Founder, Brave Foundation and Social Economic Ambassador
- current and former Brave Board members and staff.

Since its inception, the Brave Foundation has worked tirelessly to improve the outcomes for expecting and parenting teenagers across Australia. This is a cause that is incredibly valuable for the parents, but also for the future of our community.

As a parent and grandparent myself, I know and appreciate how challenging, and at times nerve racking, having and raising children can be. I can only imagine the challenges for teenage parents.

Teenagers are a vulnerable demographic and understanding teenage pregnancy and parenting carries complications and entirely unique challenges for young

people. They are often unprepared to navigate the stresses of parenting and are often alone as they face challenges of parenting.

Research has shown that teenage parenting is also associated with risks such as anxiety and depression, financial hardship, and isolation,<sup>1</sup> lower academic outcomes and non-completion of schooling, poorer social, community and family support, and increased risk of poverty. Equally important, the children of teenage mothers are also at risk from factors such as neglect, maltreatment and poor educational outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

Your Brave Foundation has the vital aims to overcome the challenges of teenage pregnancy and parenting to empower teen parents. Your support is delivered by skilled Brave mentors and supplements existing community-based supports for greater parenting, mental health, education, employment opportunities and enhanced life skills.<sup>3</sup>

The addition of the Social Economic Empowerment Division to your organisation, with Bernadette Black acting as Ambassador will facilitate strategy to increase resources and streamline service delivery to better assist this vulnerable cohort.

Recently, Brave Foundation has been at the forefront of developing our national strategy and policy aimed at helping teen parents to re-engage with education. Most significantly, Brave has created the Supporting Expecting and Parenting Teens (SEPT) program which has been trialled across Australia, with the assistance of the Try, Test and Learn grant.<sup>4</sup> My warmest congratulations to you all on the roll out of this successful program, which has clear and lasting positive aims for expecting and parenting teens.

Your organisation's aim at ensuring the best possible opportunities for vulnerable teenagers is important to the future of our community, as well as for the teen parents. Our society is the better with resilient, educated and employable young adults with functional parenting and life skills. Neil Postman

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<sup>1</sup> [https://bravefoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Factsheet\\_TeenParents.pdf](https://bravefoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Factsheet_TeenParents.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Cox, J.E., Harris, S.K., Conroy, K., et al. (2019). A parenting and life skills intervention for teen mothers: a randomized controlled trial. *Pediatrics*, 143, 1-13.

<sup>3</sup> <https://bravefoundation.org.au/about-us/the-foundation/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-05/171663\\_brave\\_foundation.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-05/171663_brave_foundation.pdf)

articulated this perfectly when he wrote “Children are the living message we send to a time we will not see.”<sup>5</sup>

I am sure I speak for us all when I thank the Brave Foundation and everyone here tonight associated with the Brave Foundation. And congratulations to Bernadette on her new role as Social Economic Empowerment Ambassador.

Thank you.

David...

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<sup>5</sup> Neil Postman (1982) *The Disappearance of Childhood*, New York : Delacorte Press