

NEWS RELEASE

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HELP CLOSE THE INDIGENOUS LITERACY GAP ON *INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY*

Join the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, and many more leaders and personalities from politics, media, entertainment and business who are raising their hands to help close the Indigenous literacy gap as a part of the Australian Literacy & Numeracy Foundation's (ALNF) 2013 Wall of Hands Indigenous Literacy Appeal.

You have seen the famous faces raising their hands across billboards, taxi backs, bus shelters and digital screens, as a part of the 2013 Wall of Hands national outdoor advertising campaign, so why don't you raise your hand to improve the Indigenous reading rate on International Literacy Day on Sunday 8 September.

This year's Wall of Hands Appeal raises much needed funds to implement ALNF's life-changing literacy programs in remote communities across Australia.

"Only one in five kids in very remote Indigenous communities can read and write at the minimum NAPLAN standard. With illiteracy comes disadvantage – we must address this reality now," said Kim Kelly, ALNF Co-Founder.

"International Literacy Day highlights the fact that literacy is a basic human right and the foundation of all learning. There is a profound need to support our Indigenous people to help close the Indigenous literacy gap. We can turn the numbers around if all Australians join together and raise their hands in unison, particularly on a day like today."

The ALNF deliver ground-breaking programs to improve literacy rates in remote and very remote Indigenous communities – this year's Wall of Hands campaign will raise funds to support literacy programs for kids in the remote Northern Territory community of Groote Eylandt.

The major sponsor of the three month national outdoor advertising campaign, which wraps up on Sunday, is the Outdoor Media Association (OMA) with over \$1.6 million in free outdoor advertising donated to this year's appeal.

OMA member organisations who are donating campaign space include Adshel, APN Outdoor, Bishopp, goa, iOM, JCDecaux, oOh! Media, Rova and Torchmedia.

"Everyone should have access to an education – this is a simple fact but sadly not a reality for everyone. The outdoor media industry are partnering with the ALNF to tackle this important issue and strive for better outcomes for remote and very remote Indigenous communities," said Charmaine Moldrich, CEO of the OMA.

"According to MOVE, our audience measurement system, the 2013 Wall of Hands campaign has reached over seven million people to date. The industry is proud to assist in getting such an important message out, in the hope that people will contribute to this important cause to bring about long standing change for Indigenous literacy."

Other Australians who have raised their hand include Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO, Dr Tom Calma AO, journalists Peter Overton, Jessica Rowe and Deborah Thomas, TV presenter

Faustina Agolley, Bob Hawke, Gotye, The Chaser, the team at Triple J, Urthboy, The Wiggles, Kerry O'Brien, Hon. Barry O'Farrell, Hon. John Robertson, Mario Fenech, Dan Kelly, Hon. Jenny Macklin, Mia Freedman, Peter Garrett, Pip Edwards, Bridie Carter, Deborah Cheetham, Hon. Adrian Piccoli, Sarah Wilson, Matt Shirvington and Rhys Muldoon, The Swans, Lewis Jetta to name a few.

The ALNF and OMA are appealing to people to go to www.wallofhands.com.au raise their hand, make a donation and spread the word.

FACT SHEET

Politicians who are endorsing the campaign

Kevin Rudd: "Education breaks the cycle of poverty and marginalisation. We must close the gap and lift literacy levels for Indigenous students. I urge all Australians to raise their hand for Indigenous literacy and put their name on the Wall of Hands."

Malcolm Turnbull: "Literacy is the key to education, employment, to a life of opportunity and promise. All of the legal rights in the world, all of the good intentions will be frustrated unless all Australians can read and write."

Barry O'Farrell: "We should aspire as a society to ensure no child is left behind, whether in remote communities or the suburbs of our biggest cities. I am pleased to support the Wall of Hands appeal and congratulate ALNF on the young people they are inspiring and results they are achieving."

John Robertson: "Improving literacy in Indigenous communities is not just an educational issue. It is a moral and compassionate one – as vital step towards reconciliation and a country that grows and prospers together."

About the main partners

The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF) is Australia's first charity dedicated to raising national language, literacy and numeracy standards. ALNF funds and delivers specialised literacy programs throughout Australia. www.alnf.org

Wall of Hands is an annual fundraising appeal supporting ALNF's Indigenous literacy programs. Now in its 4th year, the campaign has contributed close to \$1 million to fund urgently needed literacy programs in remote indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. In 2012 alone, over 1300 children & young people received literacy support through ALNF's programs. www.wallofhands.com.au

The Outdoor Media Association (OMA) is the industry association for the \$500 million Australian outdoor advertising industry, representing approximately 90 per cent of Australia's outdoor media display companies and production facilities. It has 31 members and its core functions include audience measurement, regulatory affairs, media relations and member services.

Corporate partners

- The Outdoor Media Association – www.oma.org.au
- Barclays – www.barclays.com
- Downer Group – www.downergroup.com
- Eleven Communications - www.elevencom.com.au
- Michael Kennedy Photography - www.facebook.com/michaelkennedyphoto
- Two Feet Films – www.2feet.com.au

Media contacts:

Manon Dallee, ALNF M: 0405 237 984 or manon.dallee@alnf.org

Kate Windon, OMA M: 0424 057 129 or kate.windon@oma.org.au