MEDIA CALL – TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 2018

BRAVEHEARTS’ “DITTO KEEP SAFE ADVENTURE SHOW” SET TO ROLL OUT ACROSS MELBOURNE AND HELP PROTECT CHILDREN THROUGH SPECIALISED PERSONAL SAFETY EDUCATION

DATE: Wednesday 22 August 2018
TIME: 11:15AM for an 11:30AM start
LOCATION: Avondale Primary School
ADDRESS: 11 Clarendon St, Avondale Heights, VIC 3034

INTERVIEW, PHOTO & VISION OPPORTUNITY: Ditto, Dani McLaren (teacher and survivor); Kayleen Johnston, Bravehearts; Carla Roden, Ambassador (will also have her young son with her, 2 years old); school children and representatives of the Ditto program sponsors; Mark Supple, Mazzei Homes; and, Celebrate Health.

In the lead-up to National White Balloon Day and Child Protection Week, Bravehearts will today announce that their Ditto Keep Safe Adventure Show is set to roll out across Melbourne thanks to funding by sponsors Celebrate Health and Mazzei Homes.

Aimed at children aged 3 to 8 years-of-age, the Bravehearts’ Ditto Keep Safe Adventure Show is an interactive live education program which has been teaching children about personal safety since 2006.

To date, Bravehearts’ Ditto personal safety education program has reached almost one million children nationally.

Wilma James, Bravehearts CEO thanked Celebrate Health and Mazzei Homes for their incredible support saying, “Both award-winning companies have committed an incredible $120,000 each over the next 3 years to enable Bravehearts to deliver this vital personal safety program in Melbourne schools.”

Teacher Danielle ‘Dani’ McLaren is a mother and survivor of child sexual assault and a true “Champion for Children”. Dani who has raised a staggering $40,000 for child protection through participating in the Bravehearts 777 Marathon over the past four consecutive years, will launch the program at Avondale Primary School today.

“Every child has the right to feel safe and thanks to Celebrate Health & Mazzei Homes, Bravehearts can now present their Ditto Keep Safe Adventure Show to children living in and around Melbourne,” said Dani.

This highly effective education program, which has been independently evaluated three times, is delivered by Bravehearts’ education facilitators to children in childcare centres and primary schools.

The 30 to 40 minute live production teaches personal safety strategies and skills to help children stay safe in a range of situations from sexual assault to bullying.

The star of the Show is Ditto – a friendly, non-verbal lion cub in purple overalls, whose personal safety messages are facilitated via a specially trained Bravehearts educational performer.

Ditto and the facilitator impart the educational messages using song, dance and child-friendly, age-appropriate language.

The show builds on children’s instinctive understanding of feelings around their personal safety in a way that is non-confronting, safe and highly effective, focusing on Ditto’s ‘three rules’:

1. We all have the right to feel safe with people.
2. It’s ok to say no if you feel unsafe or unsure.
3. Nothing is so yucky that you can’t tell someone about it.
These three rules underpin the program and help to support the five key areas of the show that break down into the following five key learning objectives:

- Differentiation between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ feelings.
- Recognition of ‘warning signs’.
- Identification of ‘private parts’ and body ownership.
- Identification of language and feelings associated with secrets.
- Action children should take if they feel unsafe or unsure.

Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure Show is facilitated by education teams in Tasmania, Victoria, NSW, South East Qld and Northern Qld, who collectively visit up to 2000 schools and early-learning centres annually along the East Coast, as well as in remote and rural communities as far north as Thursday Island and inland to Longreach and surrounding outback communities.

Last financial year, close to 126,000 children saw Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure Show and thousands more learned personal safety skills via Bravehearts’ related Ditto teaching resources, including the DVD of the Show, the Parent’s Guide, Activity Book, and learning kit, Ditto in a Box. Bravehearts sold and/or distributed free over 99,000 of these personal safety learning resources last financial year alone.

Everyone can help Bravehearts educate, empower and protect Australian children by registering their participation in the annual White Balloon Day (Friday 7 Sept) as part of National Child Protection Week (2-8 Sept).

Endorsed and funded by the Department of Social Services National Initiatives, White Balloon Day is Australia’s longest running and only annual national campaign to increase community awareness of child sexual assault to prevent a crime currently affecting more than 58,000 children across Australia, every year.

To register for White Balloon Day, please visit whiteballoonday.com.au.

Bravehearts is Australia’s leader in child protection offering specialised training services for government organisations, educators in schools and childcare centres, education and support services for children and their families, while parents and carers can download free child safe information resources from our website www.bravehearts.org.au. Call our toll free Support Line on 1800 272 831 Monday to Friday between 8:30am to 4:30pm (AEST) or visit our website www.bravehearts.org.au.

#WBD2018 #ProtectKids #Bravehearts #ChildProtectionWeek #WhiteBalloonDay #BeBalloonSafe #1in5 #DittoProtectsKids

-ENDS-

For interview requests with Dani McLaren, Wilma James, CEO of Bravehearts or representatives of Celebrate Health & Mazzei Homes please contact Insight Communications.
Clare Collins - P: 02 9518 4744 – M: 0414 821 957 E: clare@insightcommunications.net.au
Alice Collins - P: 02 9518 4744 – M: 0414 686 091 E: alice@insightcommunications.net.au

What teachers and parents have said about Ditto’s Keep Safe Adventure:

“The children haven’t stopped talking about Ditto and recalling the songs. The content was very useful and easy for the children to use in conversations.” – Alison, Teacher, Beacon Point Preschool

“Fantastic show! The children were engaged. We had been learning the catchy songs prior to the visit and the children continue to request the songs to dance to.” – Ellen, Teacher, Goodstart Waurn Ponds

“This is the first time I’ve seen your performance and I was very impressed. Such delicate and serious issues are dealt with so sensitively and preciously.” – Teacher, Collinsvale Primary