

# MADELEINE BUCHNER

## LITTLE DREAMERS, FOUNDER AND CEO

“OUR children must be able to grow up nourished and supported in loving and caring environments. They must have time to be children with

all the wonder, happiness and innocence that childhood should bring” – National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009 – 2020, DSS.

You may not know what a young carer is, but I bet that you know one. A young carer is someone under the age of 25, who currently provides, or intends to provide care, to a member of their family who has a chronic illness, mental illness, disability or addiction. These young people take on tasks that are way beyond their years – think emotional support, cooking, showering, toileting and even catheter care at the age of 13.

I was 16 when we launched Little Dreamers Australia and today, 10 years on, we are Australia’s leading not-for-profit organisation working to improve the quality of life for young carers. As of today, we have 12 staff across Melbourne and Sydney, working with 3000 young carers every single year around the country.

To me, being the founder and CEO of Little Dreamers is so much more than just a job.



Growing up as a young carer myself, I know just how isolating, lonely and challenging a childhood can be when you have caring responsibilities. These young people inspire me to push the boundaries of the care industry further, challenge the status quo, and develop innovative programs that deliver impactful results.

I believe in a world where every single young carer is supported by someone or something by 2030. It won't be easy. But it will be fun and that's what makes it exciting.