

Response from a Barnardos Australia spokesperson:

As you will probably be aware, yesterday and today there has been media reporting on Barnardos Mother of the Year (MOTY) event.

The decision to bring MOTY to a close has been an extended discussion over the past two years, led by Barnardos Board and including the Executive Leadership Team, external advisors and also stakeholders. It was a difficult decision to come to, but there were a number of factors that brought us to this decision.

Firstly, in everything we do, we want to display our values and align to the children and families we work with day to day - sole parents, same sex couples, relatives caring for the children of family members, and children who are cared for by their grandparents. We also want to celebrate the work that is done by our foster carers right across NSW and the ACT.

This is not in any way to exclude mothers or to de-value the important role that mothers play in today's society as the media coverage has portrayed, but rather seeking to include all the families we assist and represent.

The event was also a high financial cost to Barnardos rather than one that raised funds for us, and over the 25 years that MOTY has run we have never had full sponsorship for the event. As we are all aware COVID has exacerbated the fundraising environment and is likely to do so for a considerable time to come, so we want (and need) to ensure that all our funds and resources are put towards directly supporting the crucial services we provide to vulnerable children.

Despite the media storm generated during a slow-news week, Barnardos proudly stands by our decision to represent and include diverse families in our community and ensure that all our funds and resources are put towards directly supporting the crucial services we provide to vulnerable children.