

MEDIA RELEASE



16 July 2009

CP Week Perth-O-Nalities Making a Difference in the Community

During National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Week (CP Week) over 20 **CP Week Perth-O-Nalities** are celebrating the difference people with CP can make as part of The Centre for Cerebral Palsy's 'You Be the Difference' National Online Campaign.

Jess and Bodie of Willetton, and Maria from Queens Park are three of these outstanding individuals telling their stories about how they are 'being the difference' in the WA community.

Nineteen-year old Jess was awarded The Centre's Joseph Michell Scholarship in 2007 for to help further her education. She is now studying events management and organising a music festival in Perth to raise funds to help improve the lives of others with CP.

25-year-old Bodie contracted CP at the age of three months as a result of bacterial meningitis. Despite significant challenges he has forged a successful career as a vocalist, musician and DJ and is currently recording a debut album. He will be performing in Forrest Chase on August 7 as part of The Centre's annual Street Appeal.

Twenty-five year old Maria graduated with a Bachelor of Law from Notre Dame University in 2007, earning first class honours and the role of Valedictorian. Maria's cerebral palsy meant that she required a 'scribe' and full time carer, but this did not stop her from achieving exceptional results and gaining a position at Perth Law Firm, Hotchkin Hanly, where she is now completing her articles.

CEO Judy Hogben says, "The Centre has been working closely with people with CP

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and their families to help build fulfilling futures for people like Jess, Bodie and Maria since 1951. It is very rewarding to see people who have more barriers to overcome than most of us do in a lifetime go on to make substantial differences in our community.”

“CP Week gives us the opportunity to acknowledge these people’s achievements, their devoted families, the dedicated staff at The Centre and the kind support we have received from the wider community over the past 58 years,” Ms Hogben says.

Ms Hogben encourages readers to visit www.youbethedifference.com.au to read how CP Week Perth-O-Nalities like Jess, Bodie and Maria are making a difference in our community. There is also the opportunity to send a message of support or to make a donation towards equipment and services that can help other children and adults with CP.

The Centre’s work in helping to build independent futures for people like Jess, Bodie and Maria is limited to the funding we receive. They encourage readers to visit www.youbethedifference.com.au and to ‘**Make a Difference and Donate**’ as part of this year’s National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Week August 2-8.

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For further information contact:

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Photo Opportunity:
Jess, Bodie and Maria are available for photos and interviews.

FACTS ABOUT CEREBRAL PALSY

- *CP is a permanent physical condition that affects movement.*
- *In Australia a child is born with CP every 18 hours.*
- *Australians under 18 are three times more likely to be diagnosed with cerebral palsy than cancer.*
- *There is no pre-birth test, no known cure and severity is on the increase.*
- *For most the cause of CP is unknown.*
- *CP is not a disease, it is not contagious.*
- *CP can be as mild as just a weakness in one hand ranging to almost complete lack of movement.*
- *Since 1951 The Cerebral Palsy Association has forged an enviable reputation as one of the leading disability service providers in WA. In line with the outstanding work we do in the area of CP management and support to those with disability, on 13 March 2007 we adopted a new name The Centre for Cerebral Palsy and colourful new logo.*