

## Constable Care celebrates three decades of keeping WA children safe

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### WA's much-loved Constable turns 30!

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Constable Care Child Safety Foundation was celebrated today at the Constable Care Safety School in Maylands.

1989 was the year the Berlin Wall came down, Bob Hawke was Prime Minister and WA's Formula 1 ace Daniel Ricciardo was born. It was also the year Constable Care came to WA with the aim of improving child safety.

Created as a superhero character that children could look up to, Constable Care began in NSW in 1986 and was brought to Western Australia three years later by Sergeant Ross Pengilly.

Originally the program ran as a safety colouring competition in primary schools. Bike safety and stranger danger were the initial focus, however the emphasis soon moved to overall safety including protective behaviours and road safety. The much-loved puppet shows were introduced at the Royal Show and later shopping centres and schools and were an instant hit.

"It was one of the most exciting parts of my 30 years in the police force," said Constable Care Founder Ross Pengilly. "The acceptance of the concept in schools and the community was brilliant and although it's hard to define what makes a safer place, I'm sure it has had a lasting positive influence on kids many of whom are now grown up."

Thirty years on, Constable Care Child Safety Foundation has expanded into high schools, opened the state's first road and transport safety school and developed unique programs using cutting-edge technology including augmented and virtual reality.

Police and Road Safety Minister Michelle Roberts congratulated the Foundation on its significant milestone.

"For 30 years Constable Care has been serving and supporting our young people here in Western Australia.

"Starting with an initial focus on Stranger Danger, Constable Care's work has grown to educate our young people on a broad range of social issues including drugs, bullying, child abuse, protective behaviours and road safety.

"I was delighted to open the state's first safety school at Maylands last year – an outstanding initiative which is teaching children important road safety skills from a young age.

"Of course Constable Care now has a partner in Constable Clare and I look forward to many more years of their important work to educate our young people and keep them safe."

David Gribble, CEO of Constable Care Child Safety Foundation, says 2.6 million WA children have been reached through entertaining, educational and empowering Constable Care theatre shows.

“A lot has changed in thirty years and Constable Care programs have evolved to remain engaging and relevant in today’s often-complicated world,” said Mr Gribble.

“Along with road and transport safety, we now focus on topics such as internet safety, respectful relationships and cultural understanding and acceptance in primary schools, while high school programs cover safety and issues relevant to today’s teenagers such as cyber safety, bullying, substance abuse, relationship violence and mental health.”

Other recent additions to the Constable Care Child Safety Foundation programs include:

- ‘City After Dark’ tours which teach young people about the potential risks and how to stay safe in the CBD at night;
- Arility, an app designed for classroom use which uses augmented reality to engage and educate 4 – 11 year olds on a range of safety issues they might encounter as they grow up; and
- Your Call, the Foundation’s youth brand which develops interactive videos allowing viewers to explore different outcomes for youth issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, violence, crime prevention and mental health.

Constable Care has provided more than 1500 comfort packs to children in crisis. Each year the Foundation welcomes more than 10,000 children to the Safety School to practice road and transport safety skills, provides Lost Child services at more than 60 community events and helps up to 6000 teenagers develop help-seeking strategies for youth social issues.

**For images, interviews or for further information, please contact:**

Diane Ainsworth – Marketing & Communications Manager  
Constable Care Child Safety Foundation  
9272 0006/0412000606 or [diane@cccsf.org.au](mailto:diane@cccsf.org.au)

Notes to editor:

- Constable Care Child Safety Foundation is a registered harm prevention charity that delivers award-winning safety education programs free of charge to school students throughout Western Australia.

- The Foundation continues to support the growing needs of children, youth and families by developing ongoing programs and products relevant to the challenges faced by our youth to ensure a safer, brighter future for those living in Western Australia.
- Constable Care Child Safety Foundation was established in 1989 by Sergeant Ross Pengilly and launched by WA Police.
- In 2017 the Foundation introduced WA's first transport safety learning centre. The Constable Care Safety School recreates Perth's streets and includes life-size train and bus stations, road signs, pedestrian crossings and other transport elements. Using cutting-edge augmented reality, children aged 4-11 years navigate safety risks they may encounter in real life and practice skills that could potentially one day save their life.
- Free services provided to WA schools include: Constable Care pre-school to Year 6 educational puppet and actor shows, Theatrical Response Group interactive performances and intensive workshops for Years 7 to 12.
- Constable Care Child Safety Foundation also provides Comfort Packs for children in distress or at-risk youth; and Lost Child Points – a meeting point service and a safe refuge for children, should they become separated from their parents or guardians at major events in WA.
- The Foundation's other safety services include: Arility, a safety education App which teaches vital safety skills to 4 – 11 year olds in the classroom; and Your Call, a suite of interactive videos which allow users to explore a range of youth safety and social issues.