

26 November 2018

**On the night that most children are counting down the hours,
11 year-old Mark was battling his greatest fears. Alone.**

Dear <<First Name>>,

It troubles me to have to write this to you. In a season full of carols, festivities and joy that fills the air, I hesitate to bring this up.

But for a child like Mark, the holiday season is full of dread. Can you imagine finding your child in tears on a night all other children have been waiting for the whole year?

This is why we are reaching out to people like you with an opportunity to turn what seems like a hopeless situation into hope.

You see, Mark is battling an eating disorder and as you may already know if you've read our past letters; eating disorders not only cause psychological impairment and distress, but serious physical impairment.

It can potentially damage every major organ in the body.

I know what you might be thinking. But he's just too young. It's probably just a phase.

But this isn't the case. Butterfly has recently expanded the hours of our free National Helpline service, and sadly Mark's experience at such a young age is not uncommon.

Jessica, a counsellor on our National Helpline recently shared:

'In the past year, we have had a significant increase in contacts seeking support and guidance for their child, some as young as 7 years of age.'

Having been a CEO in this space for as long as I have, this still startled and saddened me. Every day I am reminded of the need for early intervention for our young children just like Mark, to prevent this illness from ravaging their growing bodies.

Will you help ensure specialised support services are available to children like Mark and his family in time for Christmas?

You see, in a time that should be full of joy and hope, for people experiencing an eating disorder the holiday season can be the most difficult and tormenting time.

'My eating disorder meant that during the Christmas season, I felt fearful of food when others celebrated it. I felt terror at even just the thought of food. I watched my loved ones laugh and share stories, whilst I sat quietly, feeling hopeless and confused. Christmas should

have been a time for uncontrollable laughter, not debilitating self-loathing, ' Mark bravely shares reflecting back on his journey.

By giving a gift today, you can help children as young as Mark have support in schools through our education programs, turning hopeless into hope.

Can you imagine the difference this would have made for Mark?

On a night where most children are lying awake counting down the hours to open their presents, Mark was anxiously trapped in his mind relaying all the ways he could avoid food and glaring eyes the next day.

He tried to guess which foods his grandmother would make so he could prepare his plate without drawing attention to himself.

This is no way for a child to be thinking. A child should never have to battle these thoughts alone.

This is why your gift this Christmas is necessary to ensure carers can attend our support groups; to better understand what their child is going through and connect with other families.

By addressing the early signs before it gets worse, you make them aware they are not alone. Giving them hope in what can sometimes feel like a hopeless situation.

I know you are someone who has a heart for people who struggle with something that is so often misunderstood and shamed.

Therefore, in order to help you create the change these children and their families need, this year Butterfly is giving you the opportunity to help connect them with services that can help prevent eating disorders. **Together we can turn hopeless into hope.**

With the holiday season fast approaching; your gift today can turn the very thing they fear, into an opportunity to be loved, connected and supported to good mental and physical health.

What an amazing Christmas gift for someone like Mark. To know on that festive morning, that he is supported and there's still hope.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Wishing you all the best for the upcoming holiday season,

Christine Morgan
CEO, Butterfly Foundation

P.S. \$100 could go towards more schools facilitating our first digital body image program for males. Please give the most generous gift you can this Christmas!

CALL:1800 33 4673

DONATE: thebutterflyfoundation.org.au

OUTER DLX

FRONT WINDOW FACE:

The night before Christmas, this 11-year-old was battling his greatest fears.

BACK:

– Not Required

CALL:1800 33 4673

DONATE: thebutterflyfoundation.org.au

REPLY DL

<charity details>

<photo of happy boy> URGENT: Please send my gift to a child like Mark this Christmas.

LIFT PIECE DL

FRONT:

It's Christmas tomorrow. I feel so scared.

I have been lying here for hours awake worrying about eating in front of everyone tomorrow.

Where will I sit so people don't see me move around the food on my plate? How will I fill up my plate? Will grandma be using that salad dressing again? I hate it when she hides it in there like I'd never know.

I can't stop the thoughts going around in my head. I wish they would end. I wish I could just disappear.

I hate being different. It doesn't seem to worry the other kids at school. They were all so excited for the holidays. All my family seem so happy. I want to be happy.

But it's different for them. They don't have to worry about their weight. They don't get teased by the other boys at school. I hate my body. It's disgusting.

Mum and dad think I'm asleep right now. I can hear them whispering and I think they are putting my presents under the tree. I wish I could tell them not to bother. That nothing feels happy anymore. But I don't think they'd understand. I don't think anyone would understand.

---M

COUPON

<happy picture of child top right corner>

Yes! I will give a child like Mark and his family access to the services they need to overcome an eating disorder

\$50 To enable **parents** of someone with an eating disorder to attend a Butterfly face-to-face support group.

\$100 So more schools can facilitate our first digital body image program for **males**.

\$500 To help **Butterfly train and educate rural or remote communities** to deliver recovery and carer support programs.

<PAYMENT DETAILS>

<CC> <BPAY> <ETC.>

<DISCLAIMERS>

Thank you for helping a child like Mark and his family this Christmas!