

BRAVE PARENTS JOIN FORCES TO BATTLE FATAL BRAINSTEM TUMOUR

A fight for the kids

A DEADLY brainstem tumour with a survival rate of zero will be given a funding boost by four Victorian parents determined to stop it in its tracks.

After losing their children, Isabella and Marcus, this inspirational foursome are dedicating their lives to raising money to find a treatment for the Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG).

The charity has raised more than \$500,000 and is already directly funding three research projects in Melbourne.

"Our ultimate goal is that a family diagnosed with DIPG is given some hope, some kind of treatment to prolong their lives or save them," Daniela Ruberto said. "Currently, there is nothing that you can do, your child becomes paralysed, they don't eat, they don't drink and they can have radiation but it's usually only palliative care."

Mrs Ruberto recalls the day she had to tell her five-year-old son, Marcus, he was dying.

"Marcus looked at me and said: 'What's wrong with me, Mum?'"

"I told him he was really sick there was something horrible growing in his brain, a tumour,

LUCIE VAN DEN BERG

which is why he was walking and talking funny.

"I said, there is no medicine for you and you are going to die and be with Jesus and the angels; they'll look after you."

Marcus, the child she and her husband had taken 11 years to conceive, turned to her and said: "I know what's in the angels' wings — lollies."

After his death the Rubertos met Khush and Robert De Rose, Isabella's parents, and they formed a foundation named in honour of their children — The Isabella and Marcus Paediatric Brainstem Tumour Fund.

Shocked by the lack of medical research being carried out into DIPG, which claims 90 per cent of diagnosed children's lives within 18 months, they vowed to donate their funds straight to the institutes.

Monash Institute of Medical Research-Prince Henry's Institute Dr Jason Cain, whose work has been funded by the foundation, said it was extremely difficult to get funding for rare paediatric cancer.

ISABELLAANDMARCUSFUND.ORG.AU
lucie.vandenberg@news.com.au



PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE ISABELLA AND MARCUS FUND

Murdoch Childrens Research Institute

■ Developing genetically engineered mice to recapitulate paediatric brainstem tumours — specifically DIPG — in mice to develop new treatments.

Monash Institute of Medical Research-Prince Henry's Institute

■ Developing alternative models of DIPG. For example, they will develop new cell lines from primary human brain tumour donated from children

that have died from DIPG to see how these cells subsequently become cancerous.

Monash University

■ Examining mutations found in DIPG and how they affect the replication of DNA, which goes awry in cancer.

■ Two PhD scholarships will be awarded in 2014 thanks to funding from The Upstream Foundation. Each scholarship named in honour of a child that died from DIPG.



Clockwise from left: Isabella de Rose; Marcus Ruberto; Tony and Daniela Ruberto (Marcus's parents) and Khush and Robert De Rose (Isabella's parents).

FOR SALE
SOLD

To the couple with the investor's edge and a growing property portfolio.

If you're ANZ Buy Ready™, you're well prepared to snag the right property when it comes along.

- Free ANZ Property Profile Reports¹.**
Including average rental yields and sales history.
- Approval in Principle².**
Know what you can borrow.
- Pay on the day deposit².**
We can provide ways to access your money.

Visit anz.com/buyready or your local branch, call 1800 035 500 or ANZ Mobile Lenders come to you.

ANZ Buy Ready™
 The property investor's edge.

We live in your world **ANZ**

¹All estimates contained in the reports are based on available public sales history, which in Victoria may not include all sales. Estimates may not be available for all properties. Sales history and past performance is not indicative of future performance. ANZ Property Profile Reports are for personal domestic use only. ²ANZ can provide Approval in Principle to eligible customers who apply for an ANZ Home Loan and complete an application form. An Approval in Principle is an approval for a loan subject to conditions being met, including that security is satisfactory to ANZ. All applications for credit are subject to ANZ's normal credit approval criteria. ANZ Mobile Lenders operate as ANZ Mortgage Solutions, independently operated franchises of Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ) ABN 11 005 357 522. ³ANZ Buy Ready is a trade mark of ANZ. Australian Credit Licence Number 234527. ANZ's colour blue is a trade mark of ANZ. AMO0334/INV/D