

Media Release – 11 September 2019

**The Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)
and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley appointed as Joint Patrons of Gidget Foundation Australia**

Gidget Foundation Australia today announced the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley as its new joint patrons.

Arabella Gibson, CEO of Gidget Foundation Australia, said, “It is such an incredible honour to have the patronage of the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley. As the Foundation continues to expand nationally, to have the support, endorsement and advocacy of their Excellencies is a wonderful alignment and testimony to the impact of our work. We are truly delighted.”

His Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC (Retd) was sworn in as the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia on 1 July 2019.

David Hurley joined the Australian Army in January 1972, graduating from the Royal Military College, Duntroon into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. In a long and distinguished 42-year military career, his service culminated with his appointment as Chief of the Defence Force.

Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC (Retd) said of their appointment:

“Start talking – it’s a simple message.

A simple message and one that can have a powerful and dramatic impact.

Becoming a parent is one of the most exciting experiences anyone can have. It is life-changing in every way imaginable. It can be daunting, scary and full of unknowns. Raising a child will bring you joy and happiness. Having and raising a child can make you feel anxious and depressed.

All of these seemingly contradictory statements can, at the same time, be true and the range of emotions and responses are perfectly normal for parents to have.

There should not be a stigma around how any parent feels. Mental health is as important as physical well-being.

That is why it is so important for us to have conversations. Start talking.

It is why the work of Gidget Foundation Australia is so important and Linda and I are so pleased to be their Patron. Started after a tragedy – ‘Gidget’ was the nickname of a young mother who took her own life while suffering postnatal depression – the Foundation is raising awareness of Perinatal Depression and Anxiety and providing support.

Their work is critical. From Gidget House, the Start Talking Telehealth Program, Emotional Wellbeing Screening and Workplace programs, education, outreach and advocacy, the staff, supporters and volunteers of Gidget are making a real difference to Mums and Dads.”

-ENDS-

About Gidget Foundation Australia

Gidget Foundation Australia is a national not for profit organisation. The Gidget Foundation exists to promote emotional wellbeing for expectant and new parents and to raise awareness of perinatal depression and anxiety amongst women and their families, their health providers and the wider community to ensure that those in need receive timely, appropriate and supportive care.

The organisation leverages its impact and strengthens its outcomes by working collaboratively with many professionals who support vulnerable parents. All funds raised are directed to its programs, which include:

- Gidget Emotional Wellbeing Screening Program at hospitals
- Gidget House, providing 10 free face to face psychological support sessions for families experiencing emotional distress during pregnancy and early parenthood
- Start Talking, providing 10 free video call psychological support sessions nationally for families experiencing emotional distress during pregnancy and early parenthood
- Education and awareness programs for health professionals and the community
- Advocacy and active memberships of professional networks
- Research and contribution to mainstream and professional publications
- Development and distribution of resources

About Perinatal Depression and Anxiety (PNDA)

Perinatal depression and anxiety and the difficulties of early parenting affects 20% or 1 in 5 new mothers and 10% or 1 in 10 new fathers who will experience some degree of clinically diagnosable mental health illness in association with pregnancy or early parenthood. This equates to over 100,000 new parents every year. Over 50% of new parents will experience adjustment disorders. The cost to the workplace, the family and the community is significant and poorly recognised. Suicide remains the leading cause of maternal death.

Gidget Foundation Australia

gidgetfoundation.org.au | 1300 851 758 | contact@gidgetfoundation.org.au

Instagram [@gidgetfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/gidgetfoundation) | [facebook.com/GidgetFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/GidgetFoundation) | twitter.com/GidgetFoundation

For further information, interviews or images, please contact:

Arabella Gibson, CEO - Gidget Foundation Australia | arabella.gibson@gidgetfoundation.org.au | 0412 906 157