



MARCIA AND TREVOR BROWNLEY NAMED AS FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARER CATEGORY WINNERS FOR WA

Marcia and Trevor Brownley of Kalgoorlie have been selected as dual state winners in the WA Foster and Kinship carer category (along with Angela Haligan of Busselton)

Marcia and Trevor Brownley have been caring for children and young people for over 35 years. When we asked how many children they had cared for over the years, they lost count at 50. Through foster care, they know many families and sometimes have cared for children from several generations.

Well known in the Kalgoorlie region, Marcia and Trevor together speak five languages and value their culture enormously. Trevor is a Traditional Land Owner of the Wongatha people and a member of the Waljen tribe

“Our own children speak my husband’s traditional language at home in Kalgoorlie, and my language when we are at home with family in Perth,” Marcia said.

Trevor and Marcia use their knowledge of Aboriginal people and communities to help connect children in their care to relatives, making them feel part of their extended family.

Through their care program, they identify where each foster child is from and then teach them the language and traditions of their cultural background. They also focus on bush outings and bush tucker along with Aboriginal language to keep children connected to culture.

They focus on building a warm, secure environment, being involved in activities to make them happy and bring laughter and joy into their lives. One child who they have supported said he wished to look after Nan and Pop when they are old.

Marcia says they keep going because there are so many children who are disadvantaged and have been through significant hardship and pain.

They tell the children we can’t make changes to history – but we can make a change to ourselves and grow up and take on responsibility for our lives.

Marcia says “We teach them all that tomorrow is a new day – every day is a new beginning and there are always good things to look forward to.”

Both Trevor and Marcia learnt from their own parents and families who grew up in the bush. They are both the first generation living out of the bush, but their parents believed in and gave them the opportunity to access education.

Marcia said their own families taught them the importance of playing a part in their community – whether it is simply by just sharing meals and giving friendship and support

The couple say they feel honoured and blessed to have been nominated for the National Carer Awards.