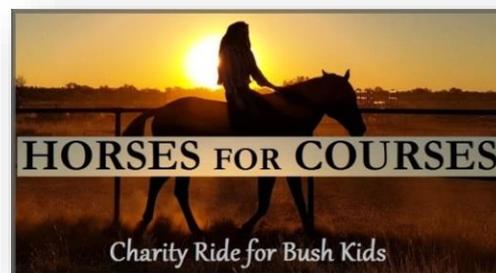
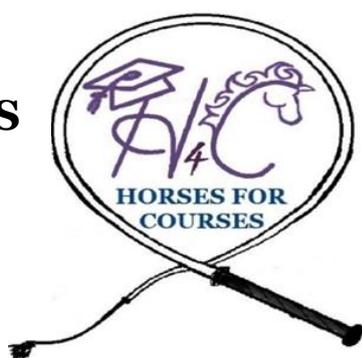


# HORSES FOR COURSES

Suplejack Downs Station  
PMB 42,  
Alice Springs NT 0872



***'Raising Awareness of Issues facing Aussie Bush Kids and their Families'***

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Wow...What a whirlwind 'Horses for Courses' event it was this year.

The 'Charity Ride for Bush Kids' kicked off Sunday 7th October, after an amazing Meet and Greet Dinner at the Glen Helen Homestead Lodge, the previous evening.

15 Horse riders and 5 support crew joined the adventure, riding between 19 and 34 kilometres each day, winding along the spectacular West MacDonnell Ranges, camping under the stars each night.

Six days later we all rode onto Alice Springs Town Council Lawns, greeted with a Mayoral welcome and sausage sizzle. A Celebration Dinner and Auction was held later that evening at the Star of Alice Function Centre.

Over the last couple of years, Horses for Courses have chosen to support a charity which resonates with our own ideals and beliefs. Last year all profits were donated to Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents' Association (NT ICPA). This year we chose to support Dolly's Dream and assist in their campaign to stamp out Bullying and to create empathy and resilience in young people.

Bush kids, along with their families face many challenges, be it:

- Sitting in a car for up to 12 hours, one way, to attend School events.
- Not having the opportunity to play afterschool sports as part of a team.
- Not being able to participate in dance, swimming or music lessons, athletics, or after school tutoring.
- Not having easily obtainable access to medical, dental or specialists' services.
- Having limited telecommunication and road network services. Annual weather conditions result in families not being able to get to town for days or weeks due to dirt roads being partly or completely washed away.
- Social and emotional wellbeing for teenagers living in the bush is a very real ongoing concern because there are limited opportunities for face to face social interactions. This can impact on a teenager's developing sense of self.
- Distance Education & School of the Air Challenges
- Boarding School Blues

It's very easy to feel socially and emotionally isolated when you live in rural and remote Australia. Through the Horses for Courses 'Charity Ride for Bush Kids' we endeavour to connect families in the bush by reassuring them, they not alone.

We also aim to keep conversations about these issues flowing, through a focus on creating a *country/city connect*. Through our Hoses for Courses Programs we're helping to close the divide and rekindle empathy between city and country.

We believe by sharing stories with people right across Australia, including those who have never experienced living in remote locations, helps to break down barriers and create connectedness. So please get involved, help to spread the word with family, friends and your greater communities.

On this year's Horses for Courses, Charity ride for Bush Kids we had 11 children riding horses. They travelled from Queensland, remote NT and Alice Springs. It was a great effort by their families to get them to Glen Helen and enable them to experience this epic adventure. Our youngest little cowgirl, Matilda C (5ys old) and her cousin Callum (6yrs old) shared Matilda's pony 'Feedback Jack' to ride every step of the 135kms...What amazing little champions!

The week long ride was filled with serenity, adventure and fun. We got rained on, (not once but twice), had an absolute ball with our beautiful horses and on occasion took the long way around, we didn't get lost, but the terrain made for some innovative trail riding. As we all rode along, we sang songs, played games; answered quiz's, absorbed our incredible surrounds and thoroughly enjoyed every step of the way.

Evening activities included campfire sing-alongs, boot-scooting boogie with some country line dancing, bush poetry, a Parks and Wildlife ranger session with Phil Cowan, a canvas painting session with Carolyn Sandaver, from InSpireEx Art Rockhampton and plenty of good old fashion country hospitality with camp-oven cook ups and some of the best campfire cooking imaginable, by Shane and Elai Pugh and Carolyn.

Sophie Pugh, a bush kid herself, serenaded us with her ukulele picking music. She also outlined some educational challenges facing families in the bush, through a song she composed herself. What a talented and amazing young lady!

A heartfelt thank you to all our wonderful sponsors, volunteers and supporters, who through their generous contributions continue to enable Horses for Courses to get on with the job of raising awareness of the issues facing Aussie Bush Kids and their Families. Without you we would not be able to do what we do.

Thank you equally, to everyone who donated their time and energy selflessly, especially Donna Digby, Shane Muldoon, Carissa Read, the CWA ladies who spoil us with some fine dining at Simpsons Gap and to my amazing family who make themselves available to support and lend a hand in every way possible.

Horses for Courses, looks forward to next year's Charity Ride for Bush Kids, doing it all again in 2019. We invite anyone needing time out of the hustle and bustle of everyday life, looking to make new friends, reboot and reconnect with nature, no matter where you hail from, grab your horse and join us on our next adventure, keep up to date by following us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/H4CBushKids](http://www.facebook.com/H4CBushKids)

Until next time, Cheers Tiani. 