

Media Release



Don't go crackers this cracker night

Darwin, NT - Friday, June 29, 2018

WHEN Bianca Stubbs was 13 years old she watched her baby brother suffer horrific burns when a firecracker landed in his pram.

With Territory Day – and cracker night – just around the corner, the now 21-year-old is urging locals and visitors to be careful around fireworks on July 1.

“My brother Brodie was in his pram about 70 to 100m away from an area where fireworks were being lit when we suddenly heard a big bang,” Ms Stubbs said.

The then-teenager remembers diving to the ground while being hit in the leg by a firecracker.

“I wasn't hurt, but then I heard a blood-curdling cry.”

A cracker had landed in little Brodie's pram, exploding wedged under his arm and back, melting the pram straps.

“We administered first aid and St John Ambulance arrived within minutes to take Brodie to hospital,” Ms Stubbs said.

The boy, who had to undergo several surgeries for his serious injuries and endured eight months of ongoing burns treatment, still carries faint scars on his back and arm from the 2009 incident.

Ms Stubbs, who has worked as Emergency Medical Dispatcher with St John Ambulance for over two years, said the incident had frightened her entire family, but it had also shaped her career.

“I started with St John as a cadet when I was 12 years old, but watching my brother go through this horrific experience pushed me to become an advocate for first aid.

“All safety precautions were in place that day, but freak accidents do happen.

“Knowing what to do in a medical emergency is so important. St John Ambulance is the Northern Territory's leading provider in First Aid services and having been with St John for nearly 10 years I am proud to watch my brother also join St John cadets and learn crucial first aid skills.”

Ms Stubbs, who has recently enrolled in a Paramedic degree, said while she would stay away from Territory Day celebrations, she is hoping Territorians will have a great night without having to experience what her family went through.

“Don't go crackers this cracker night,” she said.

“Please have safety precautions in place, like a garden hose, keep your pets safe, and if someone gets burnt by a firecracker - run cold water over the wounds for 20 minutes and make sure an ambulance is on the way.

“If you're unsure what to do, ring the professional call takers at St John on 000 and they'll talk you through.”

ENDS.

Photos attached

1. St John Ambulance Emergency Medical Dispatcher Bianca Stubbs at the Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre at Berrimah
2. St John Ambulance Emergency Medical Dispatcher Bianca Stubbs with her brother Brodie, 10, who suffered serious burns when a firecracker exploded in his pram when he was 14 months old.

Annie Hesse

Annie.hesse@stjohnnt.asn.au

0428 709 607