

that's lovely



Mick, me, Chet and Nash



I wanted our clothing to give people hope



It's cool

to be kind



When mum Amber decided to spread kindness, she had no idea how big it would become

Amber Wilkinson, 37, Melbourne, Vic

Isighed as I read another article about online bullying. *When will it stop?* I wondered.

It was the end of 2017 and I was feeling despair at how the world was going. Trolling and online bullying seemed to be becoming the norm.

My two boys, Chet, then eight, and Nash, six, were both at school and reaching the age where bullying was a

thing. Little Chet had already been on the receiving end of some nasty treatment.

I'd always taught the boys that being kind was more important than anything else, but I wanted to reinforce this message.

Then, I had an idea. I could make them T-shirts sporting a kindness slogan.

I told my hubby, Mick. 'That sounds great, love,' he grinned.

First, I found an online printing website, then I ordered two tops, one to be printed with *Be Kind* and the other with *Kind Is Cool*.

The boys' faces lit up when their shirts arrived.

Being kind is more important than anything

'Can I wear it to school, Mum?' Chet asked. 'Of course,' I told him. When I showed my younger sister, Bonnie, then 24, she loved them. 'Could you make me a few?' she asked. Then she said, 'I think you should start selling them.' 'Nah, no-one will buy them,' I laughed.

But over the next few months, Bonnie kept encouraging me.

'Okay, I'll give it a go,' I agreed.

Calling the business 'Kind Is Cool', I set up a website and Instagram, and shared the links with my friends and family.

Incredibly, people started ordering the T-shirts.

Some wanted them for their kids – others wanted them for themselves.

I was still using the same T-shirt company, but after a month of non-stop orders, I decided to start making

my own. I wanted to touch every single top!

Heading out to YouTube, I taught myself how to make the T-shirts using a screenprinter I'd purchased.

Every evening, when the boys had gone to bed, Mick and I would whip up tops in our garage.

Mick's job was to speedily wash the ink from the screen after each print – as it dried in just 30 seconds.

It was a hectic, intense time, but we got through it – even if there were a few jokey mentions of divorce!

I decided to donate \$2 of every sale to the charity Bully Zero. But I still wanted to do more to spread the kindness.

Chatting with my friend Steph, who's a blogger, I suggested, 'Why don't we create a national kindness day together?'

'What an amazing idea,' she gushed.

We agreed Steph would reach out to her online mates who also had large followings, and I'd ask celebs to get involved.



Our Christmas-themed tops





Our bright rainbow design



It all started for my boys



Have you helped a worthy cause? Tell us at [@thatslife](https://www.instagram.com/thatslife) [aremedia](https://www.facebook.com/aremedia) [.com.au](https://www.au.com.au)



Sending out T-shirts, we asked everyone to post a photo of themselves wearing the top on March 2, 2019, along with the hashtag #standinguptothebullies.

On the day, my Instagram feed was brimming with celebs wearing my tops – I couldn't believe it!

I burst into tears as I saw the likes of Bec Judd, Jimmy Barnes and Jason Mraz supporting us.

'I'm so proud of you,' Mick beamed.

Nearly 100 people posted, and afterwards we received an astounding 200 orders for T-shirts.

To make the process speedier, I invested in a digital printer.

I also expanded the collection, making jackets, tote bags and pin badges.

Customers even emailed me about their own experience with bullying.

I'm getting bullied at work. Your T-shirts are

just what I need right now, one woman wrote.

One high school ordered a top for each of their 35 teachers, then every single one emailed to say how the T-shirts were having a positive impact on the kids.

When COVID-19 hit, I was gutted to hear that online bullying had increased.

So, I got a local artist to create a new design. It had a bright rainbow to give people hope and it quickly became

our bestseller.

In April 2020, we even launched in the US, which was amazing.

'How did we get here?' I chuckled to Mick one evening, as I was packing up orders.

Nowadays, I'm taking 2000 orders a month and we've raised over \$15,000 for Bully Zero.

My lovely mum, Connie, and my nan, Dawn,

regularly help me out.

Even the boys have little jobs when they come home from school, such as packing up orders.

It's full-on, but I'm lucky to have an army of kind people supporting me.

I still can't get over how successful the business has been – it makes me incredibly happy to know there are so many people who believe in compassion.

All I want is to help make the world a better place and spread joy.

I've always told my boys, 'I don't care what you become, as long as you're kind.'

After all, love is what makes the world go round and kindness is at the heart of it all. ●

As told to Kathryn Lewsey

Love makes the world go around



Everyone loves them