**28 July 2022 IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MAKE-A-WISH GRANTS PAWSOME EXPERIENCE**

Make-A-Wish® Australia has made unicorns fly, sent kids to the moon and recently granted a **pawsome** adventure for 16-year-old Sahara from Parmelia, Western Australia.

Sahara, who was diagnosed with an Acquired Brain Injury, is an animal enthusiast with over ten pets, including three dogs, five cats, two mice and budgies. Last week Sahara travelled with her mum to Melbourne to have her very own tailored experience with animals who need a little extra attention and care.

Adoptive animals are a huge part of Sahara’s life, as her mum Tanya has rescued many animals that are cared for by their family. Sahara loves looking after her pets and nurturing animals, although she understands not all animals are cared for in the same way that she cares for her pets.

When asked by Make A Wish what she would like for her wish, Sahara said she wanted to care for rescue animals.

Tanya said her family is so grateful that Make-A-Wish were able to make Sahara’s wish come true.

“This week has been incredible getting to spend time at both Lort Smith and The Lost Dogs’ Home.

“Sahara’s been in heaven and loved every single minute of it!” Tanya concluded.

Lort Smith Animal Hospital and The Lost Dogs’ Home collaborated with the Make-A-Wish team to create a bespoke week for Sahara full of furry experiences, including visiting adoptive animals, walking dogs, caring for kittens, vet check-ups and much more.

During her visit to Lort Smith, Sahara fed and played with cats and kittens in the adoption centre, decorated the kitten room, and met the pet therapy team.

Chief Executive Officer of Lort Smith, Jennifer Fleming said extraordinary things happen when people and animals connect.

“Sahara’s days with us at Lort Smith Campbellfield have shown just how special this bond can be. Sahara and her mum Tanya made a big impact on our human animal teams, and we were thrilled to help make her wish a reality.

“Make-A-Wish and Lort Smith share a similar vision and deep held belief that real change starts from the ground up, and we’re excited to be building this significant partnership,” concluded Jennifer.

Sahara’s visit to The Lost Dogs’ Home included attending foster animal consults, dog walks and training sessions with the Behaviour Department, and teaching staff member Sarah’s dog Lila a new trick.

Suzana Talevski, media manager of The Lost Dogs’ Home said they were absolutely delighted to welcome Sahara.

“We hope Sahara’s visit will help continue her passion for helping care for animals that require a bit of extra love and support.

“Last year, The Lost Dogs’ Home cared for over 13,500 animals, finding a new home for over 4,700 happy cats and dogs,” Suzana concluded.

Chief Executive Officer of Make-A-Wish Australia, Sally Bateman said that due to COVID delays, the organisation currently has more children waiting for a wish than ever before.

“Our wish program receives no government funding, so we rely on the support of wonderful organisations like Lort Smith and The Lost Dogs’ Home, and the generosity of the public, to help bring unforgettable wishes like Sahara’s to life,” said Sally.

“Our aim is for the Wish Journey to leave a profound and lasting impact on wish kids like Sahara, and help inspire them to dream bigger, and to believe that anything is possible. We’re very grateful to Lort Smith and The Lost Dogs’ Home for making this such an incredible experience for Sahara.”

To find out more about Make-A-Wish and how you can support wishes, please visit www.makeawish.org.au

**-ENDS-**

**About Make-A-Wish® Australia**

Make-A-Wish is one of Australia's [most trusted charities](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeawish.org.au%2Fnews%2Ftrusted-charity-2020&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cc2099db8aa8a4460c6ad08da3df8efd9%7C53d90198f7b249858eef59fb50014d8f%7C0%7C0%7C637890436640529192%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=e7OZOKFpzeTzznh%2BWevC5dKNh0SeNeNWqoMZY5kZjbo%3D&reserved=0)and is part of the world’s largest wish-granting organisation. It exists to bring the local community together to grant life-changing wishes for children and teens with critical illnesses. Since 1985 it has delivered more than 10,000 inspirational wishes to children across the country. From the humble to the seemingly impossible – the Wish Force has made unicorns fly, sent kids to the moon and even brought dinosaurs back from extinction. Make-A-Wish Australia led the world in adopting the Wish Journey, a carefully curated program which focuses on wish capture and design, building anticipation for each child ahead of their wish being realised. In 2022, Make-A-Wish Australia was proud to place in YouGov Australia’s [Top 10 Charity Rankings.](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fau.yougov.com%2Fnews%2F2022%2F02%2F22%2Fyougov-australia-2022-charity-rankings%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cc2099db8aa8a4460c6ad08da3df8efd9%7C53d90198f7b249858eef59fb50014d8f%7C0%7C0%7C637890436640529192%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ul%2FzknXo8LsnfygGYWnFTIXoBatU3UyP4wuCuGjXzQU%3D&reserved=0)