

# Aussie Parents Must Be Asbestos Aware: Kids Need Protection Too!



November Is National Asbestos Awareness Month - Asbestos Awareness Day is Friday 24 November 2017

The Asbestos Awareness Campaign is rolling out throughout November to raise national awareness of the dangers of asbestos and remind mums and dads that kids need protection too from asbestos fibres when families are renovating or maintaining their homes.

Because Australia was among the highest consumers of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) in the world, multiple products still lie hidden in one third of Aussie homes built or renovated before 1987 including brick, weatherboard, fibro, clad homes, flats and apartments.

The very tragic story of young Adam Sager who was just a toddler when his parents sanded the walls of their home, not knowing the health risks, sends a disturbing and vitally important message to every parent.

The son of Julie and Don Sager, Adam was just 24 when he was diagnosed with malignant mesothelioma from inhaling asbestos fibres. Six months later at age 25, tragically Adam lost his battle with the disease.

"We didn't know the dangers of disturbing asbestos or that the dust our little boy inhaled would one day take his life. As parents we blamed ourselves because it's our job to protect our children and keep them safe," said Mrs Sager.

"Our beautiful boy is gone but we hope that by being a part of this ongoing fight, our tragic loss will help increase awareness of the dangers of disturbing asbestos among other parents so they know the importance of protecting themselves and their children from deadly fibres," she said.

Asbestos Awareness Ambassador Cherie Barber, Australia's Renovation Queen and proud Mum of 11-year-old daughter Milan issued a vital warning to Aussie mums and dads everywhere.

"There is nothing more heartbreaking for any parent than to lose a child particularly from a preventable disease," said Cherie.

"In those days Adam's parents didn't know the dangers of sanding asbestos but today we do know the risks and as parents, we each have the responsibility to protect our children from something that has the potential to kill," she said.

"We know that children are often present when parents and tradespeople are working on home renovations and undertaking maintenance - even playing with materials and sweeping up dust that could contain deadly asbestos.

"Although there's no known safe level of exposure to asbestos fibres, what we do know is that the greater the exposure, the greater the risk of developing asbestos-related diseases," said Cherie.

If sealed, in good condition and left undisturbed, asbestos is not considered dangerous. However, when ACMs are disturbed releasing microscopic fibres that can be inhaled, this can cause deadly diseases to develop 20-50 years after exposure including cancers such as malignant mesothelioma.

Each week 13 Australians die of asbestos-related diseases - 12 from malignant mesothelioma. Another 13 are diagnosed with this incurable cancer and the average survival time following diagnosis is just 10-12 months.

"Most Australians would be surprised at where they might find the hidden danger of asbestos. It could be anywhere! Under floor coverings such as carpets, linoleum and vinyl tiles, behind wall and floor tiles, in cement floors, internal and external walls, ceilings and ceiling space (insulation), eaves, garages, roofs, around hot water pipes, fences, extensions to homes, garages, outdoor toilets, backyard and farm sheds, chook sheds and even dog kennels," Cherie said.

"Knowing what to look for and how to manage asbestos safely is the key to preventing asbestos-related diseases so it's vital that parents thinking about renovating visit [www.asbestosawareness.com.au](http://www.asbestosawareness.com.au) to learn where asbestos products might be found and how to manage them safely."

"On the website parents will find the video Asbestos in Your Home – The Ultimate Renovators Guide, an online Asbestos Product Database where they can search the various products that might be in homes, and download the Healthy House Checklist – A user-friendly, step-by-step guide to identifying ACMs and their locations in homes."

"Every Australian parent has the responsibility to learn the dangers of asbestos and how to manage it safely so we don't risk exposing ourselves or our children to fibres that can develop into a deadly cancer," said Ms Barber.

If you're thinking of renovating and you think a product might be asbestos, play it safe and treat it as if it is asbestos and take all the necessary precautions including getting the experts in. A licenced asbestos assessor can come to your home and assess the property and if you need to remove asbestos, only use licenced asbestos removalists because it's not worth the risk!

When it comes to renovating, GO SLOW - Asbestos it's a NO GO! Visit [asbestosawareness.com.au](http://asbestosawareness.com.au) to find out what you need to know!

-ENDS-

Loosing Breath: The Adam Sager Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fqk5FDm1i-Q>

Asbestos In The Home: The Ultimate Renovators Guide Video: <https://vimeo.com/147058660>

Media Kit: <https://asbestosawareness.box.com/v/asbestos-awareness-families>

## CHERIE BARBER

Cherie Barber has been a national Ambassador for Asbestos Awareness since 2013 and is the leading Australian media authority on property renovation.

Cherie is one of the stars of Network 10's The Living Room, a regular TV renovator on Network 9's Today Extra show & Sky News Real Estate, weekly radio presenter, highly sought after public speaker, author, award winning business woman and the star of her own TV show in the USA called 5 Day Flip.

Cherie has been a renovator since she was 21-years-old. Over the past 27 years Cherie has personally renovated over 105 properties. In 2009, Cherie established her company, Renovating For Profit. More than 11,000 Australians have undergone Cherie's training program in quality property renovation and education.

Although Cherie has won multiple awards and was named one of the Top 100 Women of Influence in Australia in 2016, Cherie says that her most significant role is in being a mum to her 11-year-old daughter, Milan.

"Australians have a love affair with renovating. But many do it in a gung-ho approach, demolishing walls and the like, in Rambo renovator style, oblivious to the fact that asbestos could be present. I've seen it first hand – inexperienced renovators and homeowners unknowingly exposing themselves and their children to asbestos fibres. And our Aussie attitude of "she'll be right", won't be right, when it comes to asbestos. I personally lost my grandfather to asbestos poisoning and I can tell you, it's a horrible way to go. It's my role as an ambassador to help spread the word, that through proper handling and awareness, no Australian in the future, needs to fall victim to this disease. We can put a stop to it. It's an absolute honour to be involved in such an important cause".

## Contacts

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