

DARREN MORT

to be loved

By Maureen Hegarty

“From the first Marcellin student of an old boy to a barrister, movie producer, and author, Darren Mort has been striving for the highest since graduating from Marcellin...”

Last June Darren Mort launched his first book *“Tommy & Tiger Terry”* at Diesel Lounge in Lonsdale St to high acclaim.

The book is a project of the charity *To Be Loved* and tells the story of a young boy with separated parents. It aims to promote the prevention of mental illness amongst children and young adults exposed to extreme physical, psychological or emotional distress as a result of family violence or family breakdown, separation or divorce.



“Tommy and Tiger Terry is a compelling book for children and parents and a useful resource for any separated family to assist children to make sense of it all. The aim is easy – as we all want our kids to grow up into well balanced and psychologically healthy adults. Tommy aims to help kids understand that they are not alone...”

Darren, in writing this book, has drawn upon his experience as a family law barrister for over 30 years, which has brought him face-to-face with a range of people suffering the trauma of marriage breakdown.

Darren has also drawn upon his own experiences of family conflict, much of which occurred while he was a student at Marcellin.

In 1978 while completing his year 12 studies, adverse circumstances led to Darren and his family being left homeless. Temporary accommodation was arranged at his aunt's house where Darren spent many a night



Darren with dad, Ian

studying at a small table with a lamp. His determination and studious nature resulted in an excellent academic finish to his secondary schooling.

Following a number of years studying a combined degree, Bio Medical Science and Law at the University of Melbourne, Darren decided Law was where he wanted to be.

Darren has made it his life's mission to stop the vicious cycle of family violence and is tackling this in a variety of ways, including having worked on a number of family violence taskforce committees.

“My frustration is that a lot of resources are thrown at the end of the line but, in my view, it's all about getting people to recognise the difficulty to change. Women and children have to get out of violent homes and out of the violence loop but it would help if more men had more professional therapy to give them insight in terms of their behaviour and break the cycle of violence.”



Darren Mort today

Darren may look familiar to you as he has appeared in a number of advertisements, which inspired him to train at the Victorian College of Arts. Darren has also appeared in popular TV Shows, including *The Doctor Blake Mysteries*, *Neighbours* and *House Husbands*.

More recently Darren has combined his love of acting to go out into the world and educate others. Darren funded and created a 15-minute film, *Degree of Separation*, about domestic violence, which has now won seven international film awards and been selected for 24 international film festivals. It also has been recommended for use as a tool for judicial officers for family violence training.

While Darren's teenage years hold some unpleasant memories of his homelife, he remembers the Marcellin College community fondly and attributes the school with helping him form an attitude of perseverance. It is this attitude which has contributed to the many successes Darren has achieved thus far in his life.



Ian Mort in his VFL days

Darren also acknowledges the unfailing support of his mother Barbara, who to this day, gives her time and energy to her family and to Darren's endeavours in addressing family violence. At 81 years of age, she is a real live-wire, devoted to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She has endured many hardships, yet she has come out the other side with positivity and generosity. She has been an incredible role-model for Darren.