



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION*

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### **Pre-Christmas joy from Variety**

Variety, the children's charity, will present over 400 bikes and helmets to Special Needs Children in Docklands today, as part of its annual 'bikes for kids' program.

Today's presentation is a major highlight in a series of bike presentations that have been held across Victoria over the past few weeks, during which over 1600 bikes have been given away!

Variety Victoria CEO Norm Hutton said the bike presentation program was one of the most rewarding initiatives on the charity organisation's calendar.

"Seeing the big smiles on children's faces as they reach for the handlebars of their new bikes brightens everyone's day," Mr Hutton said.

"Recipients are sourced from many different schools and organisations and we're yet to see anyone leave disappointed!"

This is the sixth consecutive year Variety has been able to distribute new bikes and helmets to Special Needs Children, thanks to the annual 3AW Variety Radiothon where listeners are invited to donate money for bikes and helmets. A total of \$342,000 was raised during the 2008 event, ensuring 1677 Victorian children will receive a new bike just in time for Christmas.

The bike presentation program is one of many activities Variety coordinates to improve the lives of Special Needs Children. Some of the other projects Variety supports include enabling the provision of life-saving medical treatment; funding hospital wards and neo-natal transport ambulances; running public education campaigns; providing scholarships; purchasing minibuses and wheelchair-friendly playground equipment; and supporting individuals with mobility and communication devices.

Another \$1 million of grants was announced at the recent Heart of Variety Ball, some of which included: The Boatshed, Sailability Freedom Program – \$200,000; Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS) Ambulance – \$300,000; Life Education Mobile Learning Centre – \$300,000; Sunshine Coach Program to Glenallen School and Hand Brake Turn Program – \$110,000; Liberty Swings to the City of Casey and Maroondah City Council – \$105,000.

#### ***Further information:***

***Variety, the children's charity – (03) 8698 3900 or visit: [www.varietylvic.org.au](http://www.varietylvic.org.au)***

#### ***Media enquiries:***

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