

Media Release

14 May 2013

**Award-winning documentary *Absent* to finally screen around Australia on ‘Bring Back Fatherhood’ tour**

* **Powerful movie highlights the important role of fathers and what happens when they go missing.**
* **Features Metallica frontman James Hetfield, author John Eldredge, model Robin Decker and more.**

*Absent,* a powerful and moving film about the impact of fathers on children and society, will screen in Australian cities as part of a National Premiere film tour from 13-29 June, 2013, accompanied by its award-winning director Justin Hunt.

The documentary is an emotional journey that reveals the universal impacts of fatherlessness while providing hope for a better future for men and women alike. The film draws on the heartfelt stories of Metallica frontman James Hetfield, the late world champion boxer Johnny Tapia, *Wild at Heart* author John Eldredge, renowned author Richard Rohr, fitness model Robin Decker, prostitutes, vulnerable youth and many more.

“The film shows that fatherlessness and the father wound is a universal problem across our planet but, through stories from people such as James Hetfield and others, we begin to create understanding of the issue - and with understanding, you can begin to create change,” said Hunt.

Australian studies show a strong association between absence of a father and poor academic achievement, low self-esteem, criminal behaviour, delinquency, substance use and abuse, social, sexual and psychological problems, depression, and suicidal behaviour.

“So often it is difficult to know how to turn something around until you know what is at the core of the issue,” said Hunt. “I am so excited that I will have the chance to be there for the Australian premiere and share this film with people. It’s a great launching pad for talking about how people can heal their hurts and break the cycle of absent fatherhood that has gone unnoticed for far too long and has such a negative impact on individuals and society as whole.”

When Metallica’s James Hetfield poured out his heart and pain in the lyrics of the iconic heavy metal songs he and the band created, he connected with generations of people who carried the legacy of growing up without a father.

“The thing that hurt me most, when I look back at it ... he left without saying goodbye,” says Hetfield in the movie. “He left a note, but it wasn’t even to me.”

Later reflecting on the experience of being involved in the movie and a number of American screenings, Hetfield said: “This movie has done a lot more for me than I thought it would. Justin, the crew, the books, opened my eyes to the male role in the family - the father..."

Absent has been shown at 18 festivals in eight countries, winning six awards. It has screened in more than a dozen countries and DVDs have been shipped to 33 countries, highlighting the universality of the issue. As part of the National Premiere ‘Bring Back Fatherhood’ tour, Absent will screen in capital cities and some regional centres across six states and the ACT from 13-29 June, 2013. Opportunity will be given to support the tax deductible work of Dads4Kids.

The [Dads4Kids](http://www.fatherhood.org.au/) charity is sponsoring the Bring Back Fatherhood tour, including bringing Justin Hunt to Australia to promote the film and talk about the underlying messages. All screenings will be **free** entry to invite public attendance.

“This is an honest, raw and moving film with a powerful message for all Australians – men and women - about the role of fathers, the future of our children and the health of our nation,” said Dads4Kids CEO, Warwick Marsh.

“I encourage not only fathers and future fathers to come along to the special screenings, but any Australian who desires to better understand fatherlessness and how we can turn the tide.”

**For more information go to:** [**www.absentmovie.com.au**](http://www.absentmovie.com.au) **Enquiries: Phil Crocker:** 0400 983 903

**Interview opportunities include James Hetfield, Justin Hunt and Warwick Marsh. See Editor’s Notes for details.**

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

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**Editor’s notes**

More information along with national screening dates and locations can be found at: [www.absentmovie.com.au](http://www.absentmovie.com.au)

A one-minute preview for the Australian tour is available on YouTube: <http://tinyurl.com/ckotrgv>

Requests can be made for interviews with James Hetfield of Metallica, including live satellite or pre-recorded. Granting of interviews will depend on Metallica’s schedule and management decisions. Contact Phil Crocker on the details above to request an interview.

Justin Hunt is available for pre-recorded interviews from the United States up until June 10. He will be available for live/in studio or telephone interviews in Australia depending on the tour schedule from June 13. Contact Phil Crocker on the details above to request an interview.

**Background materials and photographs**

**ABSENT ‘BRING BACK FATHERHOOD’ TOUR SCHEDULE**

13 – 29 JUNE 2013

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Place** | **Phone** |
| Thursday, 13 June 2013 | 3pm Dendy Theatre Newtown, NSW | 0418 225 212 |
| Thursday, 13 June 2013 | 7pm Sydney South, NSW | 02 9524 2709 |
| Friday, 14 June 2013 | 6.30pm Event Cinemas, Castle Hill, Sydney | 0406 446 899 |
| Saturday, 15 June 2013 | 1pm Avoca Picture Theatre, Gosford NSW | 02 4382 1777 |
| Saturday, 15 June 2013 | 7pm Tahmoor, SthWest Sydney NSW | 0403 202 930 |
| Sunday, 16 June 2013 | 6.30pm Nowra, NSW | 02 4421 4602 |
| Monday, 17 June 2013 | 7pm Brisbane, South, QLD | 07 3801 4211 |
| Tuesday, 18 June 2013 | 7pm Brisbane, North, QLD | 07 3883 1144 |
| Wednesday, 19 June 2013 | 7pm Toowoomba, QLD | 0427 012 126 |
| Thursday, 20 June 2013 | 7pm Townsville, QLD | 07 4723 2371 |
| Friday, 21 June 2013 | 7pm Cairns, QLD | 07 4055 1337 |
| Sunday, 23 June 2013 | 6pm Wollongong, QLD | 02 42 299 744 |
| Monday, 24 June 2013 | 7pm Melbourne, South, VIC | 03 8551 6600 |
| Tuesday, 25 June 2013 | 7pm Melbourne, Central, VIC | 0481 288 551 |
| Wednesday, 26 June 2013 | 7pm Canberra, ACT | 0425 905 883 |
| Thursday, 27 June 2013 | 7pm Hobart, TAS | 0418 123 338 |
| Friday, 28 June 2013 | 7pm Adelaide, SA | 08 8263 2344 |
| Saturday, 29 June 2013 | 1pm Perth, WA | 0449 001 505 |
| Saturday, 29 June 2013 | 7pm Nth Perth, WA | 0406 856 459 |