**5 minutes with … Amanda Bowles**

Tell us about your and your background and how you ended up where you are today

I grew up in the Hills and worked in Leadership from a very early age. I have always dreamt big and always want to see those that work with me achieve greatness and be filled with joy. If you are going to do something, be amazing! Every interaction you have with anyone is an opportunity to inspire and be inspired.

When our first son was born I just revelled in the joy of motherhood and took 13 months to be with him before returning to part time leadership.

When Liam was 3 we were delighted to be expecting another baby however we learned that our baby was too sick to survive outside my womb. At 21 weeks our mist perfect son was stillborn. Jesse was the image of his older brother and is a much loved part of our family. Losing a baby is a devastation that cannot be understood until you’ve been there. I had an incredible network of friends that were super supportive and my parents and other family members amazing every step of the way - yet the isolation and grief was unbearable.

I couldn’t fathom raising other children in a world where such horrific things happen to good people for no reason. I knew that Jesse’s brief life had purpose and I had to live it out for him.

- what do you love about what you do?

We’re empowering families to seek help, not be afraid, embarrassed or ashamed to speak of their grief or their love for their child. I am educating the wider community on the impact the loss of a baby has on a family and changing perceptions.

- what or who inspires you?

Many people. Obviously I’m driven by the desire to improve the accessibility for services for bereaved families but often I’m actually inspired by the people we serve and support. I’m so often moved by the courage of these families to attend support groups or events and trust the services we provide. But at the end of the day my mum is my greatest inspiration – without her love and unending advice I would never be the person I am today.

- what do you love about being a mum?

The laughter! My kids (12yrs, 8yrs & 5yrs) are an unending source of humour. They are delightful, loving, considerate fun and funny beings that entertain me in many ways. Then there’s always the snuggles and kisses and cuddles that truly warm your soul and energise you in a way no other person ever could.

- what do you love about living in the Hills?

The People are amazing, so many lifelong friends here.

The choices…whether its for restaurants, shopping, schools or activities we are spoiled at times for choice

* what do you enjoy doing in the Hills?

I spend much of my time at work so when I’m not working I’m either driving mums taxi or spending quality time with the most important people in my world – hubby and kids. I love to catch up with friends and love enjoying a meal at so many of the delicious restaurants around, but nothing beats a lazy summer afternoon, kids in the pool enjoying some music and my husbands cooking!