

# International #1 Bestselling Author Says Australia Won't Solve Its Blood Shortage Until It Tells Better Stories

**Bestselling author, founder and TEDx speaker Kate Fisher says she is tired of seeing the same headlines warning that Australia needs more blood donors.**

“They’re not wrong,” Fisher says. “They’re just not changing behaviour.”

Fisher’s daughter, Marleigh, depends on plasma-derived medicines made from donated human plasma to sustain her life. Yet Australia continues to rely on imported plasma for around 60% of the plasma-derived medicines used by Australian patients, highlighting the ongoing need to strengthen domestic donation.

Rather than asking why Australians aren’t donating, Fisher believes it’s time to ask a different question:

Are we telling the right stories?

“Stories don’t just reflect culture—they help create it,” she said.

“If we want the next generation to see blood and plasma donation as a normal part of being an adult, then we need to start telling stories that make generosity visible.”

That philosophy has shaped an expanding body of work spanning books, podcasts and public speaking.

Following her internationally award-winning podcast and bestselling adult non-fiction book—both built around interviews with blood recipients thanking the anonymous donors who saved their lives—Fisher has now added a children’s picture book and a TEDx Talk to her growing portfolio of blood donation advocacy.

This week, *The Milkshakes for Marleigh* children’s book became an International #1 Bestseller, reaching the number one position in multiple countries.

Inspired by the lived experience of Fisher’s daughter, the story explores friendship, kindness, courage and family through the eyes of a child. Although its origins are deeply connected to blood and plasma donation, most children reading the book will never realise that was the motivation behind writing it.

Kate and Marleigh worked alongside Australian artist Joanne Colely, whose illustrations bring Marleigh’s memories to life with warmth, wonder and just the right amount of magic, inviting children into a story that celebrates kindness, courage and community.

Instead, Fisher hopes young readers will simply grow up believing that helping other people is part of who we are.

“One day, the children reading this book will become adults,” Fisher said.

“My hope is that they instinctively look for ways to help others—whether that’s volunteering, supporting a neighbour or becoming blood or plasma donors. Not because someone told them they should, but because kindness became part of how they see the world.”

The book has already found readers across Australia, the United States and beyond, with copies being purchased for homes, libraries, schools and children’s hospitals.

The international bestseller announcement comes during a significant week for Fisher’s broader work.

Earlier this week, she wrote to every Federal Member of Parliament, inviting them to take her Nine Minute Challenge by watching her recently released TEDx Talk, *The Life-Saving Act Nobody Sees*.

The challenge asks parliamentarians to invest just nine minutes—the length of the talk, and less time than it takes most Australians to donate blood—and consider how storytelling could become one of Australia’s most underutilised public health tools.

Together, Fisher’s TEDx Talk, podcast and books share a single premise: Australia’s blood donation challenge cannot be solved by awareness campaigns alone. Lasting change will come when stories make anonymous generosity visible, strengthen public trust and reshape social expectations.

“Every movement begins with an idea,” Fisher said.

“And every idea begins with a story.”

## **About Kate Fisher**

Kate Fisher is an author, founder and TEDx speaker whose work explores how overlooked stories shape human behaviour and social change. She is best known for designing spaces where overlooked stories change behaviour, strengthen public trust and transform anonymous generosity into a visible force for social change.

Her work examines the hidden social infrastructure that sustains healthcare and demonstrates how storytelling can inspire participation, strengthen communities and make invisible acts of generosity visible.