





The only thing that should be put in a

Anthony McDonough, 54, Melbourne, Vic

y stomach twisted. "There's someone you need to meet," I said.

It was 2009, and I was talking to my wonderful ex-wife, Jane. We'd split amicably two years before and co-parented our daughter Grace, five, together.

"He's called Chris," I said. I was sweating. Jane didn't know I was gay. I hadn't known it myself

until recently.

I'd grown up a country boy in a Catholic family but meeting Chris had changed everything for me.

"Great, let me meet him," she said.

Poor Chris was so nervous but as soon as we sat around the dinner table together they really hit it off.

And Chris and Grace immediately bonded.

"The lucky girl is going to grow up with two dads and a mum," Jane said generously and we split our time with her 50/50.

Because of our unusual family set-up we chose a progressive school for Grace to attend.

for Grace to attend.
She became the
envy of her friends
who thought it was
awesome she had two gay
dads and a mum!

path

path

path

She grew up to be a well-adjusted, openminded young lady and the three of us were so proud of her.

But during COVID lockdowns, Grace, then 16, and her friends struggled, feeling lost and isolated.

box is our products

"The biggest issue is we don't want to be labelled," Grace told us. "We just want to be ourselves."

As her fathers, Chris and I wanted to do something about this.

We owned a men's

We

carved

our own

skincare business, so we brainstormed with Grace and came up with a range called Unlabelled where all profits would go towards youth suicide

prevention charities.

For a year, we worked tirelessly to bring it together and finally launched it in March 2022.

The product range features hand wash, body wash and body bars, and all profits go to Black Dog Institute, QLife, Headspace and Kids Helpline. They're sold online and at Chemist Warehouse for just \$8.99 each.

Chris

It's been a roaring success. We're on track to donate \$300,000 in the first year to our charities and are forecast to increase this to \$1 million by our third year.

For us, the personal testaments are the most rewarding.

In our ad campaign we normalised vitiligo, the skin condition that can cause discoloured patches, and we had one parent tearfully thanking us.

I have a child who doesn't fit in and this makes a big difference, another mum wrote to us.

As a family of four, we broke down barriers and carved our own path, and we want to help other young people do the same.



Grace McDonough, 18

was flicking through my phone when it pinged with a message. I'm lonely, it read. Me too, I replied.

Lockdown was a difficult time and many friends were suffering from related eating disorders, anxiety and depression. "There's so much pressure to fit in for teenagers and

stereotypes make it worse," I said to Dad and Chris.
Labels can be suffocating for teens as you're still

learning about yourself. That's what led to Unlabelled.
Our mission is to help kids accept who they are in
terms of race, gender, body image and sexuality,
because these things can lead to bullying and suicide.

Now, I'm studying at uni and I'm passionate about living my life how I choose, just like my dads did.

Jane Hope, 53

hen I met Chris, I could see he made
Anthony so happy and I immediately
recognised that Grace would benefit
from having another person in her life
who would love and look after her.

I'm immensely proud of their business venture: it shows such a generosity of spirit. I'm a product manager so I helped advise them.

The name Unlabelled suits our modern blended family perfectly. Society may do one thing, but we did what was true for us and we hope to inspire youngsters to embrace their individuality.

Chris Glebatsas, 43

he boy jumped
out at me, his
eyes narrowed.
"Where're you
going nerd?" he grinned.
I tried to walk away
but another bully blocked
my path.

"We're talking to you, fatty," he chuckled.

High school was torture for me. In time, things got so bad I became suicidal but thankfully I was close to my mum, Shona, and told her what was happening.

She took me on a road trip to help with my headspace, and then to doctors, but the damage ran deep.

When I left school, I moved to London to get as far away from my former life as I could.

I came back to Melbourne when I was 30, met Anthony in the gym and finally came out as gay.

Grace was shy when she was little and I made it my mission to help improve her confidence.

We would walk through the supermarket and I'd say, "Grace, who cares what people think of you – just be yourself and celebrate who you are."

A few years ago, I was dealing with someone at work who was relentlessly aggressive and it triggered my unresolved trauma from my childhood bullying. I went to a dark place and was diagnosed with PTSD.

So when Grace started talking about how tough her teenage friends were finding lockdown, I looked at Anthony.

"We have to do something," I said.

Childhood bullying stays with you for life. Every year, more than 350 young people aged 18 to 24 take their own lives. Three out of five kids are bullied at school. These figures are even worse if you are an LGBTQI+ youth. It's a national crisis.

In creating
Unlabelled, Anthony
and I wanted to
celebrate the individual
in us all, and by doing
this, help to reduce the

bullying and the mental health issues that can lead to youth suicide.

Me as a toddler with Mum

I very nearly took my own life when I was a teenager, now I want to help other teens avoid the same fate.

