



CHANCE TO SMILE: Santa Claus and event co-ordinator Bev Hockings prepare for today's Special Children's Christmas Party.

PHOTO: MEGAN LEWIS ML27/1109/6

Stars chuffed to see kids' smiles

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NEIGHBOURS stars James Sorensen and Ashleigh Brewer are in Rockhampton today to put a smile on some children's faces.

James, who plays young father Declan Napier in the Australian soap opera, yesterday spoke to *The Morning Bulletin* about his trip to Queensland with Ashleigh, who plays Kate Ramsay, to attend the Golden Casket Variety Special Children's Christmas Party.

The event at the Rockhampton Showgrounds is invitation-



STARS IN ROCKY: Actor Ashleigh Brewer and, right, James Sorensen.

PHOTO: IMAGES COURTESY SOUTHERN CROSS TEN

only for children with special needs who have been nominated by their doctors, hospitals and carers as children who need and deserve to have fun.

About 1000 children

with special needs and their families will celebrate Christmas with the two stars, and will be given the star treatment, with presents, amusement rides, jumping castles and face painting.

James said he couldn't wait to see the children's smiles.

"We love our Christmas parties," he said.

"It is a little bit confronting because it's not what we are used to, but it's fantastic to see the smiles."

James said he and Ashleigh would try to talk with and sign autographs for as many children as they could to try to make the day

extra special for them.

He said the trip would be a little break from their 12-hour day filming, and it was "lovely to give something back" and help charities.

"Doing a studio show like this (*Neighbours*) you don't have an audience and you don't see your fans.

"We are very fortunate," he said.

