

YOUR *newsletter*

A space where we keep
Forgotten Australians / Care
Leavers, family, friends and
service providers connected
and up to date about any
news and the supports
available for our community
of people affected by out of
home care or harmed in
other Australian institutions

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Relationships Australia®
TASMANIA

Relationships Australia Tasmania acknowledges that we work on Aboriginal land, Lutruwita, the lands of the Palawa and Pakana peoples. We are deeply committed to community action and to community healing. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Always was, Always will be.

Introduction

At Relationships Australia Tasmania (RA Tas) we support people affected by child removal policies and experiences in institutions through the Adult Specialist Support Services programs by engaging community members to actively contribute through reference groups, peer support groups and by submitting pieces to feature in this newsletter.

We hope that you are all keeping well in what has been particularly challenging times and know that the Adult Specialist Support Services which encompasses Find and Connect Service, Forced Adoptions Support Services and Redress Support Services are all here to support you.

Some updates from us: RA Tas have been engaging with stakeholders in the Aged Care sector and will be attending an Aged Care Conference in May with

the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation to present an awareness session to Aged Care providers in relation to Forgotten Australians and Care Leavers to ensure trauma informed care and psychological safety as our care leavers engage with aged care supports.

We will be developing a Forced Adoption Support Services (FASS) peer support group in the Northwest, it is hoped that in time the groups in the North and South can meet to broaden the FASS network in Lutruwita, Tasmania. RA Tas are also working on increasing resources and community awareness through capturing the voices of people with lived experiences of Out of Home Care, through the development of documentaries and an installation at the State Library of Tasmania for National Family History Month in August.

We are always welcoming to new members in the FASS peer support groups and Find & Connect Reference Group and YourPlace support groups, where you can have your say on the delivery of our programs, help determine how we promote and provide events to former children in care. We'd like to hear from you about what you would like to name the Newsletter and are keen to see community members feature in the newsletter; whether it be sharing your experience in the FASS, Find and Connect or Redress programs, or send through any artwork, stories, photos - whatever you would like to share. If you'd like to be involved, please get in touch with the Adult Specialist Support Services team on 1300 364 277 or contact admin@reltas.com.au.



Significant Dates for People that spent time in Australian Institutions for 2022

13th February

National Anniversary to the Apology to the Stolen Generations

21st March

National Anniversary to the Apology for Forced Adoptions

13th May

Apology to Former Ward of the State Abused in Tasmanian State Care

26th May

National Sorry Day to Aboriginal people for the impacts of Stolen Generations

27th May to 3rd June

Reconciliation Week calls for all Australians to commit to reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples, commemorates the 1967 Referendum and High Court Mabo Decision which granted Native Title Legislation

3rd July to 10th July

NAIDOC Week- celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Achievements, history and cultures

August

National Australian Family History Month

4th August

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

13th August

Apology to Tasmania's Stolen Generations by the State Government

18th October

Tasmanian Government Apology to Forced Adoptions

22nd October

National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

16th November

National Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

Ninth National Anniversary of the Apology for Forced Adoptions

- 21st March 2022

On Monday the 21st of March a group of people affected by Forced Adoptions practices met at the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens by the Tree of Hope Statue, designed for people to come and reflect, feel at peace and recognise the thousands of people affected by past Forced Adoptions policies in Australia.

On this day each year, former adoptees and mothers of adopted children across Australia meet to commemorate the Anniversary of the National Apology by Prime Minister Julia Gillard for Australia's Forced Adoptions.

The group meet monthly at RA Tas in a peer support group for mother, fathers and former children affected by Forced Adoptions. Many of the members have been fighting for justice and for political change so that families are supported to remain together and where adoptions do occur, everyone affected are able to have greater control and choice over their adoption process, clearer in their identity and make family contact or family tracing more possible.

This year the group were addressed by Le-ella Doyle, Director of Early Intervention Services, shared morning tea, were given a candle and placed a flower by the Tree of Hope memorial.

Some of the women were interviewed by Journalist Amber Wilson and featured in an Article in the Mercury (pictured).



National Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

- 16th November 2021

On the 16th of November members of the YourPlace support group (Launceston), of the Find and Connect Reference group as well as others participating in the Find and Connect Service, came together at Midway Point Neighbourhood House to remember the experience of Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers and celebrate their strength and resilience.

In this commemorative event we were also joined by members of the Hobart Dog Walking association and Delta Therapy Dogs, who brought their wonderful pups for companionship. The RA Tas CEO and the Director of Early intervention services also joined us in this remembrance.

We were all lucky to count with the insightful and generous words of David (Find & Connect Reference Group member and representative of the Alliance for Forgotten Australians) and Steve (member of the YourPlace support group - Launceston). They warmed our hearts and made us connect with the strength held by each survivor of institutional child “care” as well as with the ongoing journey towards belonging that as humans we all inhabit.

(Photos taken from the recording by Duff TV)



Updates from Your Place support groups

- Find & Connect Service

If you spent time in a children's home or an institution, are a former child migrant or were a Ward of the State or in foster care prior to 1989 then please join us at one of groups in Hobart or Launceston.

At YourPlace you will not feel judged, alone or voiceless. You will be treated with respect and warmth.

You will be supported by our counsellors to meet whatever it is you want to achieve by being part of this group, which can include things like connecting with peers, advocating for your rights as a Forgotten Australian/Care Leaver, Former Child Migrant or member of the Stolen Generations, and sharing & learning strategies that allow you to be more in the here and now rather than back in the there & then.

If you are interested in coming along, or you would just like some more information, please contact one of counsellors from the Find & Connect program at RA Tas on 1300 364 277 or admin@reltas.com.au.

Launceston YourPlace support group

The Launceston YourPlace Group meets on the second Monday of every month between 12:00pm and 2:00pm for a chat and catered lunch at 6 Paterson St, Launceston (RA Tas Launceston office).

Hobart YourPlace support group

The Hobart YourPlace Group is back! We are meeting on the second Monday of every month between 12 and 2pm for a chat and catered lunch at 20 Clare St, New Town (RA Tas Hobart office). Our first gathering will be on Monday 11th July between 12:00pm and 2:00pm.

Projects involving YourPlace support groups

We are committed to raising awareness about the impacts on Forgotten Australians, Care Leavers, Former Child Migrants, Stolen Generation and those who experienced forced adoption throughout their life; we are looking for people that may be interested on sharing photos, personal stories, crafts, artworks or any other forms of creative expression they may be involved with, for setting up an exhibition or other forms of public display. We are currently in conversation with the Libraries Tasmania to hold an exhibition during the Family History Month this year (August 2022) at the Hobart Library.

If you think that you may be interested to be part of this project or would like to know more about it, please call either Eliza or Ignacio through 1300 364 277 (please ask to speak directly with either of them).

Updates from the Find & Connect Reference Group

Presentation at the Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Annual Conference

David (member of the Find & Connect Reference Group), Sharon and Eve (Launceston-based Find & Connect Counsellors) presented at the Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Annual Conference. As a result of David's eloquent presentation, Neighbourhood Houses throughout Tasmania increased their awareness about Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers. Representatives of many Houses as well as the CEO of Neighbourhood Tasmania expressed their appreciation towards David's presentation and their willingness to learn more and increase their connection with the Find and Connect service. Thankyou David for another amazing piece of advocacy work!

Commission of Inquiry so they can better support survivors in the community through referrals.

The key advice from the representatives of the Commission was to directly contact their inquiry line (1800 950 110) if you wish to explore how you can participate in the Commission of Inquiry and how you can be supported. They reassured that those picking up the phone (being this themselves or other counsellors) have experience and skills to support and guide the person calling in a way that is trauma-informed.

<https://www.commissionofinquiry.tas.gov.au/home>

Visit from the Tasmanian Commission of Inquiry

Representatives of the Commission of Inquiry into Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings presented to the Find & Connect Reference Group at the last meeting. During this meeting members of the Reference Group were able to ask questions about the how to participate in the Inquiry, and also raised key considerations to improve the support for survivors taking part in the Inquiry. As a result of this meeting, the contact details of the Find & Connect and Redress Support Services have been made available to the Counsellors of the



RA Tas is working on a film project about Forgotten Australians, and we want you to be part of it!

We have been hearing from our Find & Connect members that they are struggling when they are coming into contact with institutional care as they get older.

Hospital stays, aged and disability care or entering residential care can be particularly difficult for those who have good reason not to automatically trust institutions. Service staff and the wider community don't know much about Forgotten Australians, and even fewer know what happened in our own home state.

Therefore, our films will have two goals. The first is to record Tasmanian stories around mistreatment and abuse in state "care", so they are not forgotten all over again. The second is educating service providers about what Forgotten Australians have experienced and how they feel they need to be treated by services to feel safe.

RA Tas is seeking 5 people to feature in these films. You would be supported to talk about your experiences as a Forgotten Australian, and each story will be made into a short film of about 5 minutes duration.

You would be able to choose what you would like to talk about (and not talk about), and whether you would like to include any photographs, art or mementos in the film.

You will also be asked at the end of the interview to talk about whether you think that your experiences in "care" have changed how you think, react, and interact, and if so, what those differences are. You will also be asked to talk about what you want service providers to do, so that service recipients who are Forgotten Australians feel safe and understood.

Support staff will be available during filming, debrief counselling will be available on request, and participants will be asked to view their film for final approval before it is distributed. We hope to film in late June both in North and South Tas, and assistance may be available to cover travel expenses, if required.

To participate please contact 1300 364 277 and ask for the Find and Connect team.

Trauma informed care for Aged Care Providers working with Forgotten Australians

Some great work is being done at the moment in Australia to respond to the aged care needs of Forgotten

Australians/Care Leavers, and to support aged care providers to understand and engage with this very large group of older people. Between others, Helping Hand Aged Care and the Real Care the Second Time Around Project, in partnership with Flinders University and Relationships Australia South Australia (Elm Place), have developed some amazing resources and training including:

- resources to support Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers access the aged care they need and
- resources to support the aged care sector to engage with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers
- Online training on Working with Aged Care Clients Who Experienced Childhood Trauma in “Care”

All the work undertaken by Helping Hands has been designed in collaboration with Forgotten Australians/ Care Leavers. As such, and given the high quality of this work, at RA Tas we are starting to work with Aged Care providers to promote this training and resources.

So far, Eliza and Ignacio presented to the Aged Care Bapcare team in Devonport (servicing the Karingal Community and the Orana Respite and Social Centre).

Access to this training and resources can be found in:

<https://www.helpinghand.org.au/about-us/diversity-inclusion/forgotten-australians/trauma-training/>

<https://www.helpinghand.org.au/about-us/diversity-inclusion/forgotten-australians/>

<https://www.flinders.edu.au/college-education-psychology-social-work/our-research/safe-inclusive-aged-care-forgotten-australians>



National Memorial for Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

(National Memorial)

The Design Competition for the National Memorial for Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse is now complete.



The competition attracted strong interest from Australian design professionals. Following a robust selection process, the jury selected the design scheme titled 'Transparency and Truth' by architects Jessica Spresser and Peter Besley. The design was approved by the Canberra National Memorials Committee on 20 January 2022.

A short video featuring the views of some design competition selection panel members on why the National Memorial is important to people with lived experience of institutional child sexual abuse is provided in the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBBmLDIUbJE>

(A conceptual illustration of the selected design titled 'Transparency and Truth' by Jessica Spresser and Peter Besley)

Update on the Redress 2nd Year Independent Review of the National Redress Scheme

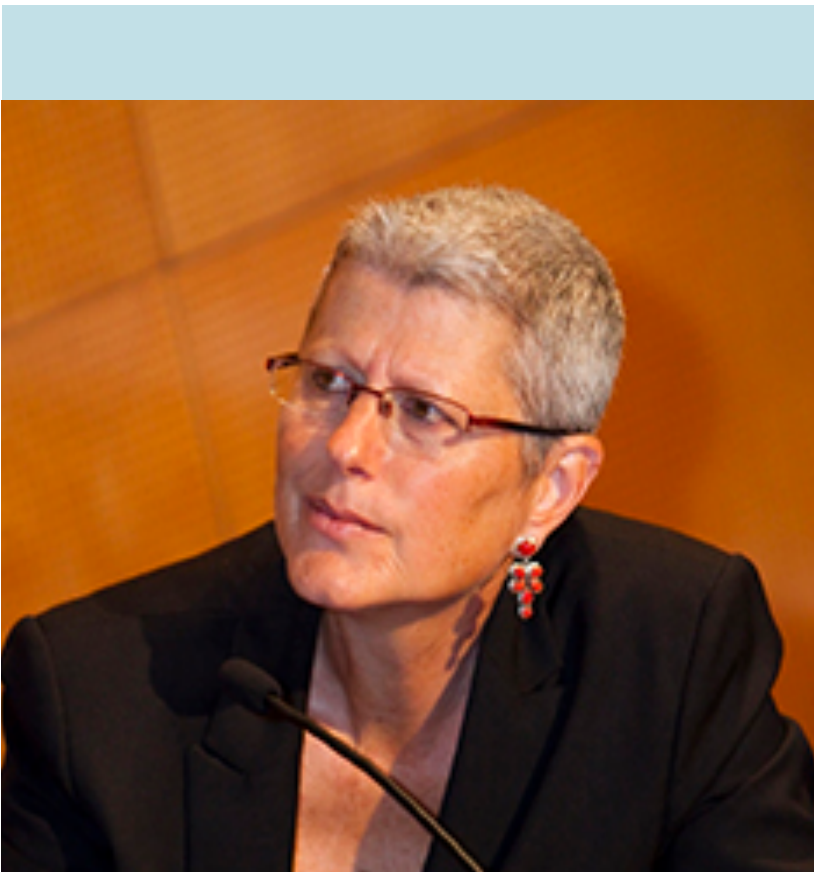
The National Redress Scheme is for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional settings across Australia.

Relationships Australia is a trauma informed Redress Support Service, providing counselling, warm referrals and assistance in engaging with the National Redress Scheme

Applicants can receive counselling, a direct personal response from the offending institution and assistance filling in an application for a monetary payment from the institution.

Ms Robyn Kruk, AO was tasked with completing a 2nd Year Independent Review of the National Redress Scheme, support for survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. The review instructs the Scheme; Support Services and Institutions to be more transparent, survivor focused and timely. Robyn met with 81 survivors, support services, government agencies and ministers. Robyn received 226 submissions, which provided significant insight into the Scheme, how it operates, and how to improve the survivor experience. The Review also commissioned a feedback study in which 503 survivors, support groups and institutions participated. To read the accessible version of the Report please follow this link:

<https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021-06/final-report-second-year-review-national-redress-scheme.pdf>



Meet our counselling staff



North Team

Eve
Redress, FASS,
Find & Connect



Gardia
Redress, FASS,
Find & Connect



Sharon
Redress

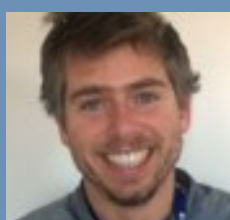


South Team

Alex
Redress



Eliza
Redress, FASS,
Find & Connect



Ignatio
Redress and
Find & Connect

Relationships Australia, Tasmania

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6 Paterson St, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250
68 North Fenton St, DEVONPORT TAS 7310
admin@reltas.com.au
1300 364 277

Alliance for Forgotten Australians

forgottenaustralians.org.au
0488 460 646 or 0419 854 980
admin@forgottenaustralians.org.au

Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN)

www.clan.org.au
support@clan.org.au
1800 008 774 or 0425 204 747

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

www.tacinc.com.au
Hobart (03) 6234 0700 Burnie (03) 6436 4100
Launceston (03) 6332 3800
Free Call - 1800 132 260

Link-up Victoria (for Stolen Generations)

www.linkupvictoria.org.au
Free call: 1800 OUR MOB (1800 687 662)
(03) 7002 3700
linkup@vacca.org

SASS (Sexual Assault Support Service)

www.sass.org.au
Hobart (03) 6231 0044
1800 697 877, 24-hour support

Laurel House (Sexual Assault Support)

www.laurelhouse.org.au
Northern Tasmania:
(03) 6334 2740
NW Tasmania:
(03) 6431 9711
1800 697 877, 24-hour support

Engender Equality

www.engenderequality.org.au
admin@engenderequality.org.au
(03) 6278 9090 (statewide)

Helplines:

Lifeline (24/7)

13 11 14

Beyond Blue helpline

(24/7) 1300 22 4636

Blueknot Helpline and Redress Support Service

(9am - 5pm, all days)
1300 657 380

MySupport

(SASS and Laurel House 24/7 counsellors)
1800 697 877