



We're for Childhood
SINCE 1877

Berry Street Apology to Forgotten Australians

During the last century over 500,000 Australians experienced all or part of their childhood in an orphanage, State institution, children's home or some other form of State care. These children, now adults, are known as the Forgotten Australians.

The treatment of these children in care was examined by the Australian Senate producing a report, *Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children (Forgotten Australians, August 2004)*. The Senate report provided hundreds of examples of the abuse, deprivation and profound neglect commonly suffered by children in the care of the State and children's agencies. It provided a deeply disturbing picture of life for children who lived in institutional care.

Hearings of the National Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, established in 2013, gathered further evidence from Forgotten Australians, governments and institutions and made findings that reinforced those of the 2004 Senate Report.

Berry Street supports the findings of the Senate Report and the Royal Commission. They challenge us and all other past care providers to acknowledge past wrongs, respond to the harm children experienced, support and provide redress and work to ensure past wrongs are neither hidden nor repeated. We are committed to pursuing justice and providing redress for Forgotten Australians.

On behalf of Berry Street and our preceding agencies, we apologise unreservedly for any physical, psychological, sexual or social harm that children and young people may have suffered whilst in our care. We acknowledge the lifelong impact on Forgotten Australians of the abuse, deprivation and neglect so common in institutional care. We acknowledge too the bravery, dedication and advocacy of Forgotten Australians in bringing these issues into the light; often through sharing their personal stories of abuse and trauma. We believe what Forgotten Australians have told us about their experience of a childhood spent in institutional care.

Berry Street is dedicated to learning the lessons from the past. We deeply regret the effect that past policies and practices of institutional care had and continue to have on the lives of Forgotten Australians. We are committed to working with Forgotten Australians, governments and others to respond to the injustices children suffered in institutional care.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Wappett".

Paul Wappett
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandie de Wolf".

Sandie de Wolf AM
Chief Executive Officer

Original Apology in August 2006
Revised Apology on 2 November 2016