

Real Care The Second Time Around

Responding to the aged care needs of Forgotten Australians / Care Leavers

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Questions at the end



Acknowledgement

We acknowledge all Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers past and present for their pain, resilience and advocacy.

Childhood brings up images of innocence, joy, optimism and wonder. It should be a time of security where we feel protected and loved. Having stability in knowing we are loved by our family allows us to form solid, trusting and safe relationships later in life.

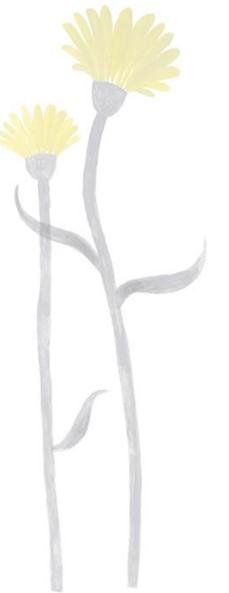
This was not a reality for Forgotten Australians / Care Leavers.



Content Alert:

The content of this presentation includes discussion about childhood trauma. This may be upsetting for some people who have experienced trauma.

If you feel upset through this presentation, please feel free to take a break. You may also want to speak to your Manager or a Counsellor.



Outline

- RCSTAAim
- Video
- Overview of Forgotten Australians
- ✓ Map of homes
- ✓ Experiences / Impact of Abuse
- ✓ Case Studies
- ✓ Memorials
- Considerations for Care
- RCSTA Overview
 - ✓ Establishment of Co-design Forum
 - ✓ Co-design Framework
 - ✓ Priorities
 - ✓ Lived Experience Framework
 - ✓ RCSTA Outcomes
 - ✓ Evaluation
- Learnings / Recommendations



RCSTA Aim

To ensure that Forgotten
Australians / Care
Leavers have access to
the aged care they need.

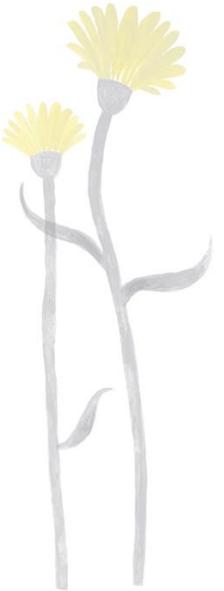


Video

Who are Forgotten Australians? (6 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVD-bJcFbEk>

“I am so tired of telling and re-telling my story to people in the system. My story is a sad story. It hurts to tell it again”. Forgotten Australian/Care Leaver



A large audience is seated in a hall, facing a stage. A large screen on the stage displays a photograph of a group of children. The hall has high ceilings and large windows. The audience is diverse in age and appearance.

Overview of Forgotten Australians

- 'Forgotten Australians' term used by the Senate Inquiry (2004) — 'Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care'
- 'Care Leavers' refers to anyone under the age of 18 who spent time in 'care'
- Contestable and interchangeable terms
- Not every person identifies in these groups

- 500,000 children in 'care' in the last century (1930s-1989)
 - 440,000 non-indigenous;
 - 50,000 Indigenous - some from stolen generations;
 - up to 10,000 former child migrants

Overview of Forgotten Australians

- 96.7% suffered physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse
- 800+ orphanages and other out-of-home 'care'
- Managed by State/Religious/Welfare groups
- Reasons: poverty, neglect, abandonment, single mothers (no pensions), divorce, war, death – not all were orphans/wards of state
- Senate enquiry / Royal Commission / State – National Apologies Redress / Find and Connect Services/Aged Care Act (1997)
- Memorials in each State
- Move away from orphanages 1970s (influenced by John Bowlby – Attachment Theory and progressive social policies)

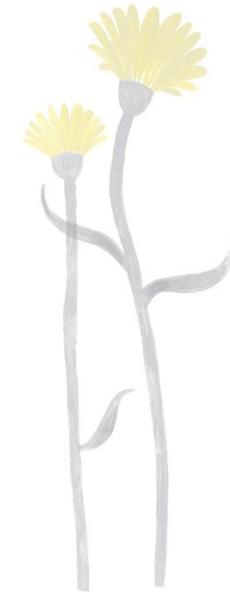
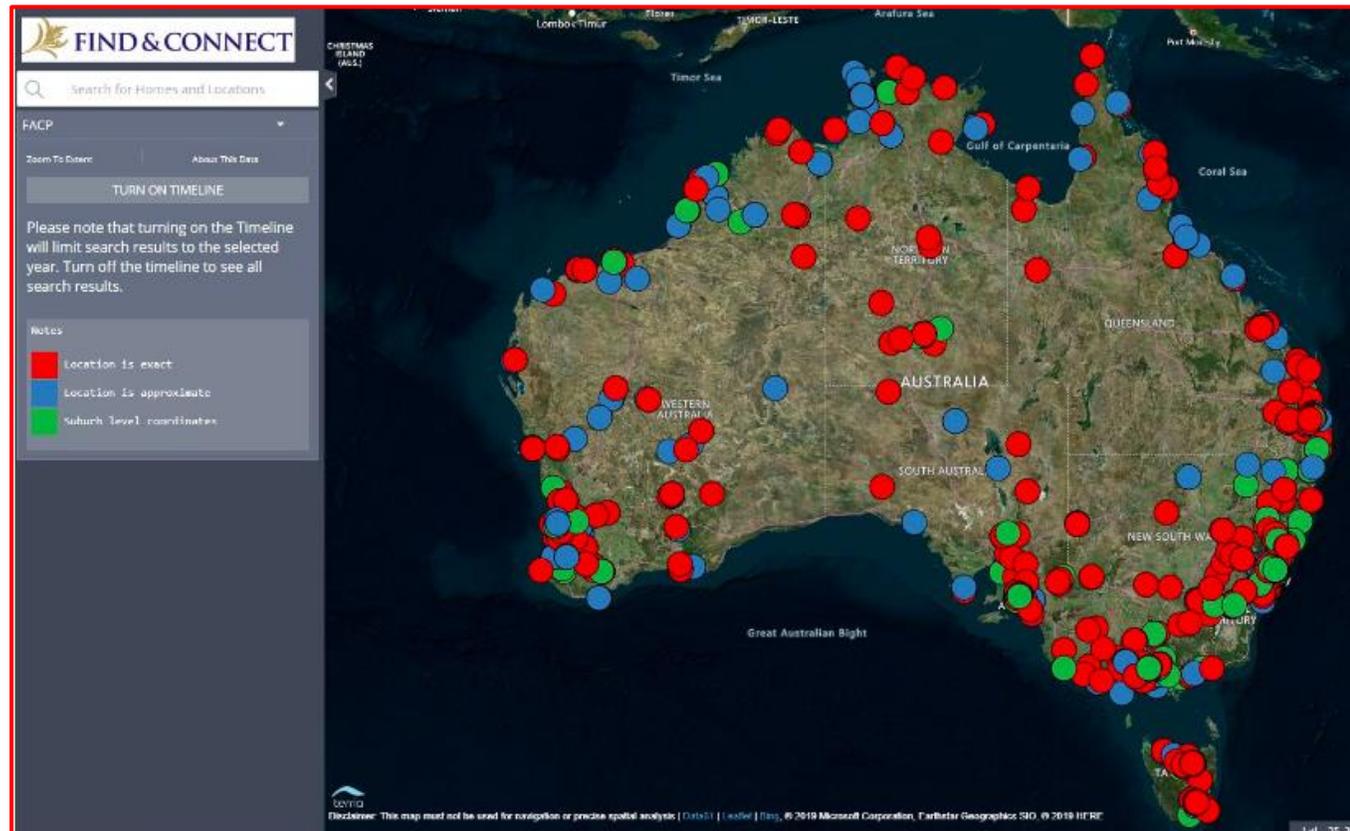




The Map of Children's Homes shows the locations of residential institutions for children in Australia from 1790-1990 (including orphanages, children's homes, family group homes and missions)

Some of these homes are now aged care facilities with the same name

"..a gateway to information about records."



<https://map.findandconnect.gov.au/?>

Experiences

- physical, emotional and sexual abuse by 'carers' or other children and visitors
- lack of love and nurturing
- inadequate medical and dental care
- use of children in 'care' for experimental medication and drugs
<https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/vic/biogs/E000503b.htm>
- extreme physical hardship
- lack of healthy food and adequate clothing
- voiceless, defenseless, powerless and vulnerable
- harsh and sometimes humiliating punishment

Impact of abuse

Barriers to accessing support:

- ✓ Fear of re-institutionalisation
- ✓ Fear of/aversion to authority
- ✓ Loss of independence
- ✓ Shame
- ✓ Re-telling stories
- ✓ Low literacy (including digital)
- ✓ **Difficulty trusting**
- ✓ Difficulty with intimacy
- ✓ Vulnerability

Health and economic status:

- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ PTSD, depression, anxiety....
 - Intergenerational trauma / fractured family units – separation from family/siblings/culture
 - Social isolation

see Practical Tips for Aged Care Providers to Engage with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers

Health and Economic Impact - Housing



Figure: Summary of the risk factors contributing to homelessness in care leavers in Australia. Individual risk factors are compounded by the systemic problems of lack of access to information and support, and lack of affordable, appropriate and secure housing.

▶ APPROPRIATE SERVICES FOR OLDER CARE LEAVERS EXPERIENCING, OR AT RISK OF, HOMELESSNESS

A collaborative paper on what needs to be done endorsed by: Australian Association of Gerontology, Alliance for Forgotten Australians, Healing Foundation, Housing for Aged Action Group and Wintringham
April 2020



<https://www.aag.asn.au/documents/item/3507>

Case Example 1 – ‘Jack’

- child of ‘Italian’ immigrants
- at 4 years, accidentally drank from a bottle of kerosene
- rushed to hospital, deemed ‘at risk of neglect’, taken from parents/siblings unable to speak English
- placed in an orphanage and on “experimental drugs” – rashes / nightmares / wet the bed
- wet the bed, he had to strip it and put the wet sheets over his head, marching to the laundry in front of everyone - “it was humiliating”
- suffered sexual, physical and emotional abuse by staff for years
- reunited with family – but “damage was done” - spent adolescence / adulthood in the justice system
- **Impact:** Depression, anxiety, aversion to authority and relationships, chronic health issues....

Case Example 2 – ‘Jenny’

- mother moved from country town to the city, difficulty finding work
- two small daughters to support
- both placed in a Children’s Home
- mother rarely allowed to see girls
- multiple foster care placements while in Home and multiple abuse
- left ‘care’ at 15, had a child who was adopted
- now reunited with child, spent years trying to find her mother
- **Impact:** PTSD, intergenerational trauma, chronic health issues, multiple suicide attempts, loss of family / identity

Memorials

<https://forgottenaustralians.org.au/about/monuments>

The South Australian Memorial to the Forgotten Australians unveiled on 17 June, 2010 in Peace Park at the corner of Sir Edwin Smith Avenue and Brougham Place (opposite the Women's and Children's Hospital).

It consists of four huge stainless steel daisies, each in a different state of opening, as a symbol of hope and healing for children (now adults) who suffered harm in out of home care. The tallest of the daisies is over 6 metres and can be seen from quite a distance.





communal eating



dormitory accommodation



large/imposing buildings



labour intensive

Considerations for care

Potential emotional feelings and triggers for people like Jack and Jenny:

- **anger and shame from the past / not being able to fill out forms**
- socially isolated / lacking a sense of belonging
- not being believed about events or experiences
- **worrying about staff turnaround due to having to repeat their stories**
- not feeling in control of daily life
- inflexible daily schedules, including eating, sleeping, socialising
- being confined to one room, feeling 'locked in'
- factors reminiscent of dormitory living
- **personal items being removed**

Considerations for care

- **fear of authority figures** (including medical professionals/hospitals)
- denial of cultural traditions and practices
- unappealing, sloppy, 'flavourless' food
- **fearing personal care - choice**
- iconography, symbols and shrines
- **being called by their Name-avoiding infantilizing language**



Practical Tips

- **spend time establishing a relationship and creating a relaxed atmosphere**
- **avoid telling clients how and when to do things**
- where possible, try to encourage independence in daily tasks and decision making
- ensure privacy when showering or changing
- allow choice of gender for personal care
- vary menu, make it appealing
- **some people may not like eating in communal environments.**

Practical Tips

- be as flexible as possible in providing care
- **be observant. People may not want to disclose / need time to feel comfortable (trust) / observe heightened reactions and find out triggers – behaviour = unmet need**
- stigma about having been in the ‘care’ system. People enjoy gentle, supportive and person-centre care.
- consider past care experiences / possible trauma when planning or providing care

Practical Tips

- get to know the stories and attachments behind personal belongings
- avoid touching personal belongings – gain permission
- label clothes / fear of losing possessions
- **recognise that many people are reluctant to seek health services, especially in hospitals, due to prior experiences of trauma (Ian's story)**



and....

- identify Forgotten Australians at intake / admission
- Age Care Act 1997 identifies Care Leavers
- TIC training for staff
- not a homogeneous group – veterans...homeless.....
- grief is not linear

Intake

Q: Were you in an orphanage, children's home, mission, foster care or any other form of out-of-home care as a child?

Assessment

Q: Is there anything about your childhood experiences that you would like to tell us so that we can provide the best support to you? Q: Would you like to discuss that now or later?

Q: Do you have any important preferences or requests that would ensure you feel safe?

RCSTA Overview

Commonwealth funded project - June 2019 to June 2021

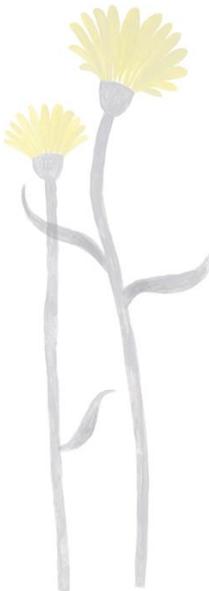
Partners: Flinders University, Relationships Australia South Australia (Elm Place)

Co-design Forum of Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers; Operations Group; Evaluator (Flinders University)

Project Aims

Respond to the aged care needs of Forgotten Australians through priorities:

- **Forums and Workshops** – improving awareness and accessibility
- **Resource** development for aged care sector and Forgotten Australians
- **Raising Awareness** – presentations to the broader sector
- **Safe and Inclusive Aged Care Practices** – Recommendations – Flinders
- **Trauma-informed Care Training** – trialled and evaluated



Establishment of Co-design Forum

- RCSTA / RASA, identified Forgotten Australians
- 16-20
- Explored priorities via narrative approaches



Co-design Framework

- referrals
- selection (addressing diversity of interests in members, commitment, impact of emotional involvement, balancing numbers with staff capability/budget)

Induction:

- project aim, introductions and commitment
- rights, responsibilities, group norms, safe spaces, boundaries, clarity of expectations
- forms of participation (Committee representation, presentations, resources, interests)
- addressing people's needs (advocacy, referrals)
- remuneration (e.g. taxis/lunches/vouchers)
- regrouping and evaluation (project updates)

1st Forum:

- establishing priorities (individual/group outcomes and project outcomes)
- 95% participation

Priorities – Forums and Workshops

- advanced care planning
- enduring power of attorney
- aged care and disability
- ‘About ME’ one-page profile
- project updates
- Lived Experience training
- site visit - residential
- Q. & A. Consolidation



Lived Experience Framework— based on John Capecci's 'Living Proof Telling Your Story to Make a Difference'

selection and screening:

- emotional demands of course/commitment to challenges
- access to RASA counsellor
- freedom to leave
- safe space / open doors / garden outlook
- consent to share

Framework – elements:

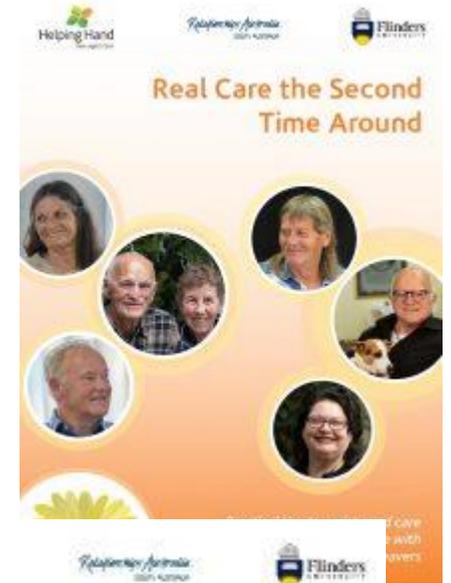
- **Living Proof Telling Your Story to Make a Difference – narrative framework**
- **Goal: speakers trained to be community educators and advocates (aged care sector)**
- 5 workshops (stepped approach/narrative framework), including a Presentation Day
- self-care techniques
- experienced presenter (lived experience) sharing her story as a mentor
- **supported participants to put together their narrative in a safe way**
- group norms, creating safe spaces, building group trust
- sharing aged care information
- video - Alliance for Forgotten Australians / Department of Health
- working individually with participants
- available counsellor (RASA)

Priorities – Resource Development

- Top 10 Questions for Forgotten Australians
- Practical Tips to Assist Aged Care Providers to Engage with Forgotten Australians – case studies
- Practical Tips to Developing an ‘About ME’ one-page profile

• Support for Care Leavers:

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/support-care-leavers>



Priorities – Raising Awareness

- Helping Hand Aged Care
- Presenting to the Royal Commission
- Aged care providers
- Australian Govt. Department of Health
- Universities/Hospitals (continuing)
- ACAT / RAS
- Webinars: OPAN, ACSA, AAG
- Older Persons Mental Health
- Community Centres SA - CEO
- Collaborative Project Officers (CHSP)
- Primary Health Networks (continuing)
- National Networks



Priorities – Safe and Inclusive Aged Care Practices



- 48 recommendations
- 10 for immediate action
- RCSTA undertaken 10

Intake

Q: *Were you in an orphanage, children's home, mission, foster care or any other form of out-of-home care as a child?*

Assessment

Q: *Is there anything about your childhood experiences that you would like to tell us so that we can provide the best support to you?* **Q:** *Would you like to discuss that now or later?*

Q: *Do you have any important preferences or requests that would ensure you feel safe?*

Priorities – Trauma-informed Care Training

In partnership with RASA – we have developed and trialled:

- 1.5 hour e-learning module for staff on Forgotten Australians and TIC
- 1.5 hour train-the-trainer resources for managers and team leaders, Home Care Co-ordinators and Client Support Officers to debrief from the training with staff.
- Training will complement other e-training (e.g. Phoenix Australia)
- Training will be uploaded to Helping Hand/RASA website



RCSTA Outcomes

Forgotten Australians:

- access to the aged care sector
- resources to support decision making
- skills through Lived Experience training and presenting
- empowerment through involvement in activities and being listened to



RCSTA Outcomes

Age Care Providers:

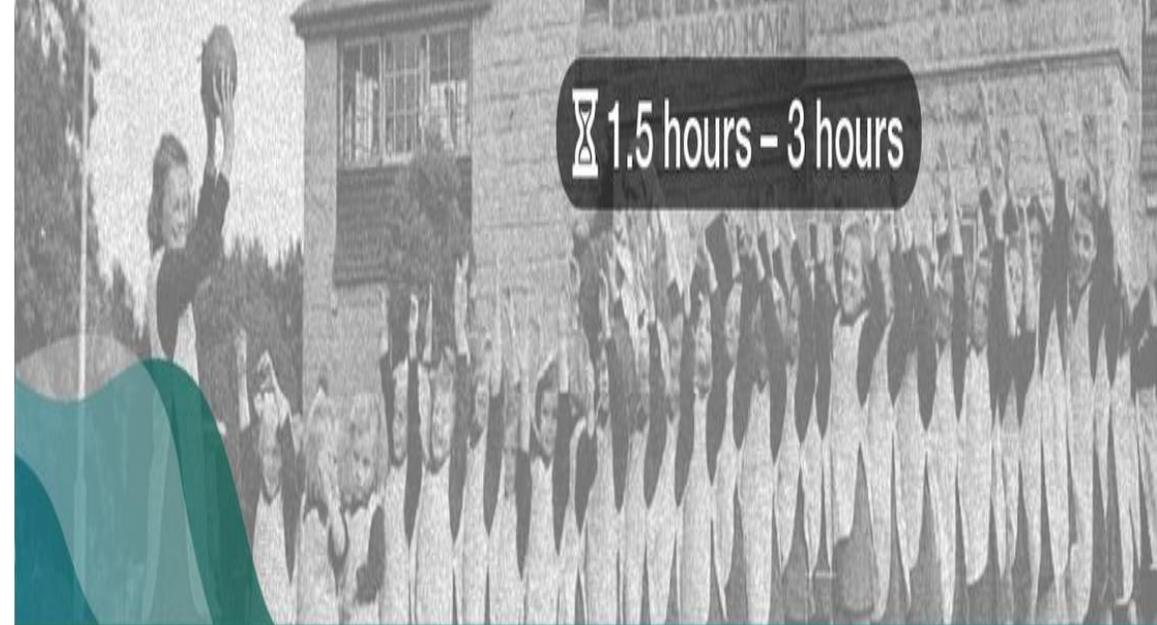
- increased awareness of Forgotten Australians history and experiences
- access to TIC training
- resources to support engaging with this group
- Find and Connect referral pathways
- increased confidence



RCSTA Outcomes

Influencing:

- national DOH e-training module about Forgotten Australians
- raising awareness through diverse pathways to aged care
- strategic stakeholder engagement
- involvement AFA, CLAN, Find & Connects, National Network



Working with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers in My Aged Care

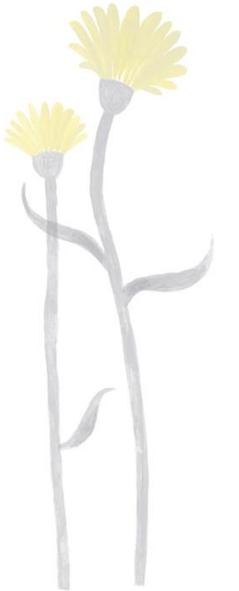
Working with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers in My Aged Care

This Working with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers in My Aged Care module provides an in-depth overview of Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers, their experiences of institutionalised 'care' and the long term impacts of living in institutions and out-of-home 'care'.

This module is contextualised to My Aged Care and offers you considerations for working with Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers. It invites you to think about how you may be able to best support clients who identify as Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers, in the most sensitive and respectful way.

Evaluation

- evaluation of each Co-design workshop
- Flinders University evaluation with Co-design Forum via focus group
- pre and post surveys with Helping Hand staff
- reviewed policies and procedures and integration of 'Care Leavers'



Learnings

Forgotten Australians:

- Complex group with complex needs – Co-led by Project person with same lived experience important for developing trust
- Intensive advocacy as a result of diverse service needs
- Literacy skills (including digital) represent significant barriers to accessing support
- Care Leavers are over-represented in services
- Trauma-induced memory loss and PTSD link to dementia

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344265512_Post-traumatic Stress Disorder as a Risk Factor for Dementia A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344265512_Post-traumatic_Stress_Disorder_as_a_Risk_Factor_for_Dementia_A_Systematic_Review_and_Meta-Analysis)

Aged Care Sector:

- Busy, regulated sector with diverse levels of expertise and experience, high casualisation of staff and training time and costs and need for training and resources that are user-friendly, time-efficient
- Change management can take a lot of time

Recommendations

Forgotten Australians:

- Identification of Forgotten Australians and data collection
- Reduction in eligibility age for access to My Aged Care
- Need for aged care advocacy through Find & Connect services/Aged Care Navigator
- Need for services that build capacity (social/skills) /understand PTSD-Dementia link (people with dementia can access remote memories from many decades ago – therapies such as Reminiscence may re-traumatise people with complex childhood trauma)

Aged Care Sector:

- Tailor resources specifically for the diversity that constitutes aged care and workload
- Resources need to be couched within a whole of organizational framework and approach – not disseminated on their own
- Link resources to Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards to ensure uptake

Other (funding)

- Aged care support / aged care trauma framework (cultivating diversity/values/policies)
- 'Forgotten Australians' to be included in curriculum – schools, universities as part of our social history

Further information

Helping Hand Aged Care *Real Care The Second Time Around* Position Statement: how we formally recognise and respond to this group.

www.helpinghand.org.au/about-us/diversity-inclusion/forgotten-australians/

Helping Hand Aged Care *Real Care the Second Time Around* TOP 10 Questions for Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers to ask when seeking Residential Aged Care Accommodation

<https://www.helpinghand.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Brochure-FA-ten-questions.pdf>

Helping Hand Aged Care *Real Care the Second Time Around* Practical Tips for Aged Care Providers and Staff to Engage With Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers

<https://www.helpinghand.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FA-practical-tips-booklet-web-version.pdf>

Alliance for Forgotten Australians – Resources

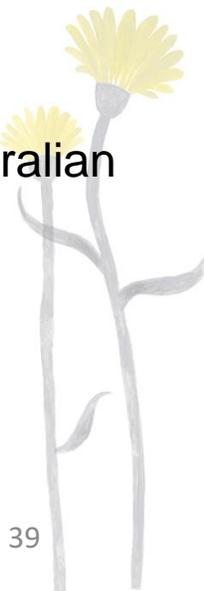
<https://forgottenaustralians.org.au/resources>

Caring for Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and Stolen Generations Information Package, Australian Government Department of Health:

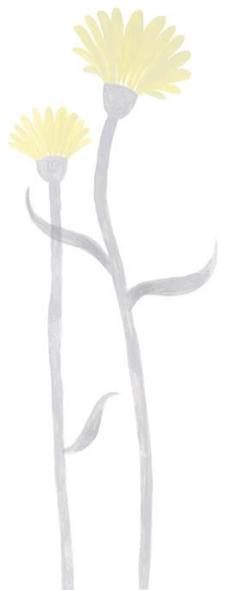
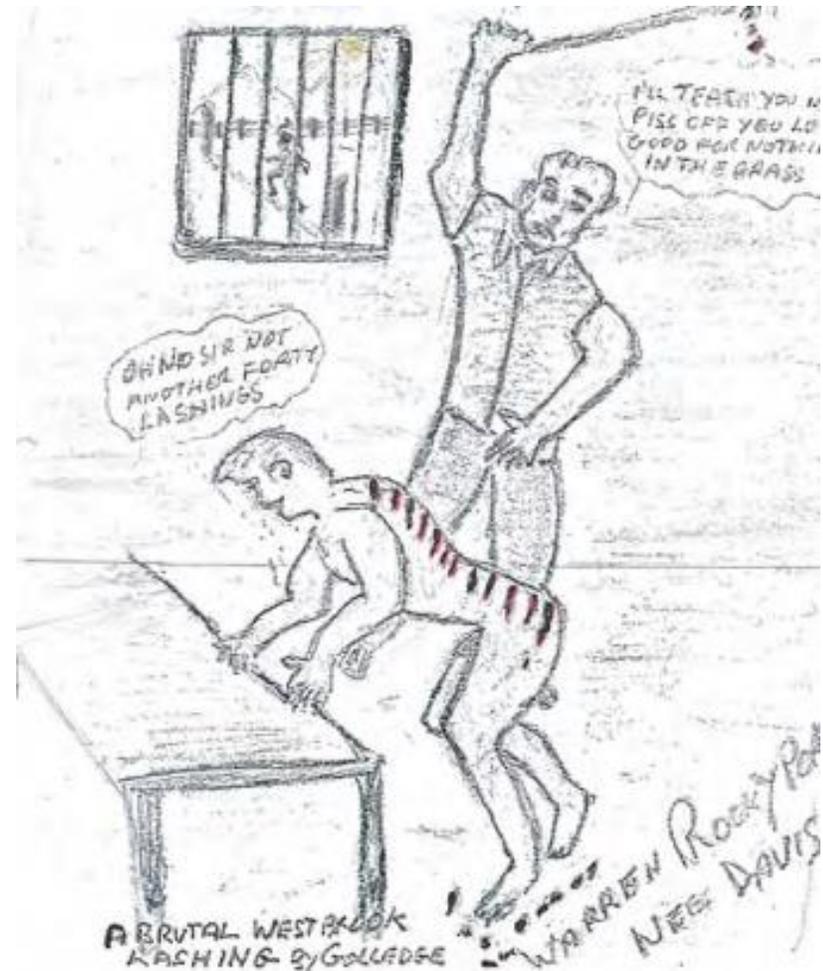
www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/caring-for-forgotten-australians-former-child-migrants-and-stolen-generations-information-package

National Apology to Forgotten Australians (Mr Kevin Rudd – 16 November, 2009 – 25 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWW3Vlj2z4E>



The truth is this is an ugly story. I believe we do a disservice to those who have been the victims of abuse if in any way we seek to gloss things over. Because the truth is, great evil has been done. And therefore, hard things must be said about how this was all possible in this country of the fair go. (Mr Kevin Rudd, 2009 National Apology)



Any questions or thoughts?

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