

VANISH – INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

WHO CAN APPLY?

Any person who:

1. Falls within a membership category **Offspring** (including adopted person, former wards of the state, children born of technologically assisted reproduction, children in permanent care, under custodial or guardianship orders or informal family arrangements), **Natural Families, Alternative Families**;
2. Supports the aims, objectives and statements of philosophy of VANISH; and
3. Is accepted for membership by the committee of management (individual members)

HOW TO APPLY

1. Complete an application form.
2. Submit the application form to the Public Officer.
3. The Committee of Management will consider the application at their first meeting after the application is submitted.
4. The Committee of Management shall reserve the right to approve or reject any membership application, and shall not be required to give reasons for so doing.

VANISH PHILOSOPHY

VANISH endorses a self-help model as the way of empowering individuals affected by adoption, state wardship. We aim to assist those individuals to have control of their futures by enabling them to make their own decisions and to take independent action.

VANISH stands for both individual growth and collective strength. By empowering people, we promote personal, social and community development.

VANISH is committed to bringing together members of the adoption community - natural families, adoptees, adoptive families, and state wards. We believe that only by working alongside each other can we promote better understanding of all these groups.

VANISH recognises and respects the diverse experiences and beliefs of all people involved in adoption, and state wardship. We are committed to understanding the uniqueness of each individual's life experience - recognising the similarities that forge common bonds while acknowledging the factors that create different perspectives.

VANISH endorses the right to open information, knowledge and search access. We are committed to providing an accessible service (offering resources, referral, information, and professional expertise) to all individuals and organisations associated with the adoption, and state wardship network.

VANISH promotes progressive legislation and practice in accordance with its basic principles.

VANISH PURPOSE

The purpose of VANISH is to relieve the suffering and distress of people who have experienced adoption, state wardship or separation from family, by providing a formal structure through which to deliver efficiently and effectively advice, search, counseling and support.

VANISH AIMS

1. To empower individuals, through self-help, to address any matters which are issues in their lives, related to their adoption and state wardship experience or separation from family.
2. To facilitate any party in their search and contact with another party.
3. When working to achieve either of the two above goals, to assist people in their negotiations with agencies, organizations or government departments.
4. To increase community awareness and promote change in community attitudes to adoption, state wardship or separation from family through community education.
5. To develop an active, statewide adoption, state wardship and separation from family self-help network.

VANISH OBJECTIVES

1. To offer practical and emotional support in an individual and / or group environment.
2. To link individuals with other persons in the adoption and state wardship community and with those who have experienced separation from family.
3. To encourage and develop self-search skills.
4. To assist people in their search by offering direction, assistance, advice and support in a group, or individually.
5. To advocate on behalf of individuals, to agencies, government departments and organisations
6. To advocate the development of policy options that facilitates change or responsiveness in these groups.
7. To participate in and contribute to government and agency policy development,
8. To develop and maintain an effective database in order to monitor, evaluate and maintain the effective and efficient operation of the service and to provide a basis for changes to the service which may be required to maintain the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.
9. To develop and offer seminars throughout regions in Victoria concerning changes in adoption, state wardship or separation from family philosophy legislation and practice.
10. To develop a comprehensive library of literature, videos, films and research material on all adoption, state wardship or separation from family issues.
11. To promote media coverage and attention to issues of importance in this field and the services of VANISH.
12. To develop information sharing networks.