



ABN 35 582 901 627
P O Box 112 Carlton South 3053

(03) 9328 8611
1300 VANISH

info@vanish.org.au
www.vanish.org.au

1st Floor, 50 Howard Street
North Melbourne Victoria 3051

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Lift criminal sanctions now on the 2nd Anniversary of Victorian State Government Apology for Past Adoption Practices

Nearly 100 members of VANISH, the Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self Help welcomed the announcement by Jenny Mikakos MP, Victorian Opposition Shadow Minister for Community Services, Seniors & Ageing and Children, that the

“Victorian Opposition promises to lift veto on parents contacting children after forced adoptions.”

At a gathering to commemorate the Apology Leigh Hubbard, Chairperson of VANISH stated “This law preventing (biological) parents from contacting children removed in forced adoptions was always unjust and we are glad that it will be overturned if the Victorian Opposition wins next month's election. For far too long mothers and fathers have been discriminated against in this state. It is time their right to contact their adult adopted daughters and sons was respected. Criminal sanctions and fines are simply wrong.”

Coleen Clare, Manager of VANISH stated: “VANISH has been assisting parents re-connect with their adult daughters and sons for 25 years and in our experience this contact is made with the upmost respect for the desires of all parties. We do not see cases of inappropriate contact, sometimes there is disappointment if contact is not wanted but in adult relationships that may be a reality that needs to be and is accepted.”

VANISH member Penny Mackieson agreed that these moves on the part of the Opposition will ensure the Apology was not just “hollow words”.

Coleen Clare went on to say “It is time that the Adoption Act was reviewed to reflect the reality of what we now know about the lifelong effects of adoption and to ensure transparency, honesty and support in the very few adoptions that might still be necessary. Contact between (biological) parents and their children needs to be mandated and fully supported for all parties.”

Jo Fraser on behalf of ARMS stated: “This decision to remove Contact Vetoes is welcome and it will greatly help mothers and fathers as they respectfully seek contact with their daughters and sons lost to adoption. ARMS believe it is time the 1984 Adoption Act was fully reviewed so that never again are children able to be separated from their parents with no ongoing access.”

Media Contacts:

Penny Mackieson	VANISH Inc. member and Adopted Person	0404 838 226
Leigh Hubbard	VANISH Inc. Chairperson and Adopted Person	0439 312 352
Jo Fraser	ARMS, Mother	0409 442 701
Coleen Clare	VANISH Inc. Manager	0411 696 601