



NEWSLETTER March 2015

Greetings to everyone

VANISH is in full swing for this new year of 2015 with our search and support work as busy as ever.

Well, we are in the last six months of our Workforce Development Project which was funded by the Department of Human Services for two years. We are currently looking for ways to continue this valuable work and have had discussions with Minister Jenny Mikakos.

VANISH has been surprised by the results of the post National Apology funding round by the Department of Social Services. Across the nation existing post adoption support services have largely been ignored, except in South Australia and Queensland. In Victoria the funding has gone to Relationships Australia and VANISH congratulates them and we will be doing everything we can to facilitate access to the new services for the adoption community, our VANISH members and especially those on our waiting lists. Please contact me with any queries you might have.

Below is the advice we received:

Dear Grant Applicant

Thank you for taking the time to apply for **Forced Adoption Support Services** grants under the Families and Communities. Unfortunately on this occasion your organisation has not been selected as a preferred applicant for this funding round.

With more than 5,500 applications received across 26 funding rounds, this grants round has been a highly competitive process with very high quality proposals received. This demonstrates the commitment and dedication of civil society organisations, such as yours, in supporting vulnerable Australians.

A comprehensive feedback summary with information about the assessment process and the main strengths and areas for improvement for proposals is available on the [DSS website](#). The feedback will be useful to help guide proposals for grants funding in the future.

We understand that some organisations will have received grant funding over a number of years. The Department would like to work with you through this transition. If you would like us to contact you please email grants@dss.gov.au

We would like to assure you that although you have not been selected on this occasion, this will not affect any applications you may make for DSS funding in the future.

When available, information about DSS funding opportunities is published on the [DSS website](#). If you are interested in staying up to date with future DSS grants and opportunities for funding, you can [subscribe](#) to receive alerts when new information is published.

VANISH has also been advised of the following Department of Health funding for Guidance and Training Materials. We look forward to working with APS who has begun their nation-wide consultations.

As part of the Government's response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee report on the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices, the Department of Health is responsible for the development of guidelines and training materials for mental health professionals to assist in the diagnosis, treatment and care of those affected by forced adoption.

In January 2015, following an open tender process, the Australian Psychological Society (APS) was contracted to develop and deliver national training and resources designed to support health professionals working in mainstream health services. The training and resources will assist health professionals deliver services in an appropriate and sensitive manner to people who have been affected by forced adoption policies and practices in Australia. The health professionals targeted as part of the project include psychiatrists, general practitioners, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, mental health nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers.

The APS acknowledges that forced adoption is a sensitive issue and seeks to ensure that this project is informed by a wide range of stakeholder organisations so that the resources developed by the project broadly reflect the views of those affected by forced adoption and the health professionals working with them. Accordingly, there will be a range of consultation opportunities available to different organisations in the sector over the course of the project.

For more information on the project please visit the APS website at <http://www.psychology.org.au/forced-adoption/>

Anne
Forced Adoptions Team
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What's happening on the anniversary of the National Apology in March?

The National Archives Forced Adoptions History Project team is very pleased to share the latest news about the exhibition that is opening next month. After extensive consultation we would like to announce that the name of the exhibition is: *Without Consent*.

The exhibition will open to the Australian community from Friday 20 March 2015 for the second anniversary of the National Apology for former forced adoption policy and practices.

The National Archives recognises the spirit of shared ownership and acknowledges your support and interest in the project. **We understand it will not be possible for everyone to attend the opening in Canberra and have arranged concurrent events in all National Archives capital city offices, including a live broadcast.**

The official opening of the exhibition with Julia Gillard on the afternoon of Monday 30 March 2015 is not open to people outside ACT as there will be state level screenings. The Victoria screening will be at the NA office in North Melbourne. Invitations will be sent out soon with instructions of how to book.

There are still tickets available for the Speakers Corner talk by Dr Rickarby Friday 20th March 2pm

Title: Learn about the experiences of people affected by forced adoptions from leading authority Dr Geoff Rickarby.

There are still tickets for the panel discussion led by Prof Mushin Saturday 21st 2pm

Title: What's in an apology? What does it mean to those affected by an issue such as forced adoptions? Who benefits?

Panel: Former Senator Sue Boyce, Professor Mick Dodson, Professor Sue McKemmish, Dr Trevor Jordon and Dr Naomi Parry

The floor tours of the exhibition by Caroline Webber are all booked out but they are arranging more.

Title: Join an insightful journey from the inception of the Forced Adoptions History Project to its culmination in the website and *Without Consent* exhibition. A tour with a difference. Led by Caroline Webber, Project Manager of the Forced Adoptions History Project

There are still tickets for the talk by Dr Karen George on 13th May 10.30am

Title: Restricted, redacted, destroyed - the role of records in rebuilding the past

Dr Karen George, consultant historian and writer, will discuss the record holdings of institutions such as McBride Maternity Hospital, Kate Cocks Babies Home, Fullarton Refuge and other institutions from where many children were adopted. She will focus on records discovery and reconstruction when records have not survived and the importance of records to people affected by forced adoptions and out-of-home care.

Here is the link to the events <http://www.naa.gov.au/visit-us/events/index.aspx>

***Without Consent* – exhibition floor talks** will also be given on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st March 2015 at 11am and 3pm.

Bookings are essential for all these events. To book your ticket, please click on the event title and you will be transferred to the electronic booking system, or please leave a message on (02) 6212 3669 and we will return your call as soon as possible to make your booking.

Website

Our final news is that the team has added a new section on the Forced Adoptions History Project website forcedadoptions.naa.gov.au/research for individuals to share their research of forced adoption practices. Documents, artwork, newspaper clippings and other information can be included, which will then be available to the general public to increase awareness of forced adoptions. You can also continue to contribute your personal experiences.

The Forced Adoptions History Project team would like to thank you for your continued support. We look forward to the exhibition and special programs to honour the National Apology and the findings of the Senate Inquiry.

If you have any questions please contact the team at forcedadoptionshistory@naa.gov.au or on (02) 6212 3669. Department of Social Services.

VANISH also understands that the opening of the National Archives Exhibition ‘Without Consent: Australia’s Past Adoption Practices’ (Exhibition Launch) will occur at the National Archives of Australia on Monday 30th March 2015 from 2-4.

Please contact the National Archives directly for information about tickets. We understand the event is by invitation only but there may be some late tickets available in the week of the event.



At the National Apology in 2013, the then Prime Minister Julia Gillard said:

“Today, this parliament, on behalf of the Australian people, takes responsibility and apologises for the policies and practices that forced the separation of mothers from their babies, which created a lifelong legacy of pain and suffering.”

We appreciate that the apology helped bring peace and comfort to our members and raised awareness in society of the lifelong suffering caused by separation from a child by adoption. The anniversary will prompt a lot of mixed feelings, particularly as we once again see adoption promoted as a viable placement choice. It is hard to see past learnings again being ignored.

Please join us for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat with VANISH staff members – if you are free.

VANISH AFTERNOON TEA

You are cordially invited to attend at VANISH on the afternoon of Thursday 20th March from 2-4 to meet with staff on the occasion of the second anniversary of the National Apology for Forced Adoption. **Please RSVP to info@vanish.org.au**

VANISH VOICE

I am delighted to say that in the upcoming March edition of VOICE we are focussing on your stories and your voice. I am sure you will enjoy it and if you wish to contribute a short story or article please send it in to me soon at manager@vanish.org.au

Kind regards
Coleen Clare
Manager, VANISH Inc.