

February 2026

Forced Adoption Lived Experience Submission

PRESENTED TO

Submission to the
Commission of Inquiry into
Queensland's Child Safety
System

PRESENTED BY



Table of Contents

	Page
Who We Are	2
Lived Experience Informing Systemic Change	3
Purpose of This Submission	4
Our Lived Experience	5 - 6
Why Queensland Redress Is Essential	7
Our Recommendations	8
Closing	9

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Who We Are

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a Queensland resident and biological mother impacted by Australia's forced adoption era.

My daughter, [REDACTED] was born and placed for adoption in New South Wales during the forced adoption period and continues to reside in NSW.

Together, we bring lived experience of the lifelong emotional, psychological, relational and identity impacts resulting from forced adoption policies and practices that operated across Australia.

Although our adoption experience occurred across state borders, the impacts have followed us throughout our lives and continue to affect our wellbeing, relationships and sense of identity.

In addition, the ongoing separation created by forced adoption has meant that rebuilding our mother-daughter relationship has required significant personal, financial and emotional investment.

To nurture and rebuild our connection, we have incurred continual travel and accommodation expenses across states over many years.

Our relationship took almost two decades following reunion to begin forming in a healthy and loving way, demonstrating that forced adoption is not a past event but a lifelong process of healing and reconnection.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Lived Experience Informing Systemic Change

Out of our lived experience, we co-created The Emotional Fingerprint of an Adoptee; a psycho-educational framework exploring the lifelong emotional and relational impacts of adoption across key life stages.

This framework has received professional recognition and endorsement for Volume One: The Foundational Years, including::

- Endorsement for continuing professional development by the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia
- Approval as an accredited professional development program by the Australian Counselling Association

This professional recognition reflects what lived experience and decades of research consistently demonstrate: that forced adoption is not a single event, but a trauma with lifelong consequences affecting identity, attachment, mental health, relationships and family systems.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Purpose of This Submission

We submit our experience to highlight the:

- Enduring harm caused by forced adoption
- Intergenerational and lifelong impacts on mothers and adopted people
- Ongoing emotional and financial burden created by separation
- Urgent need for formal recognition, accountability and redress

Meaningful reform must acknowledge that forced adoption was a systemic national failure with consequences that extend long beyond the legal process itself.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Our Lived Experience

Our adoption and reunion journey was not a single event. It has been a lifelong process of separation, emotional pain, identity disruption, and relationship rebuilding.

I [REDACTED] placed my daughter, [REDACTED] (who was later renamed [REDACTED] by her adoptive parents), for adoption in [REDACTED] when I was just sixteen years old, believing I was doing what was best at the time.

Following a very difficult [REDACTED] labour, [REDACTED] I was asked to sign the adoption consent papers only four days after her birth: whilst still a minor myself.

At that time, a minor could not legally enter into other binding contracts, yet I was permitted to permanently relinquish my parental rights during an intensely vulnerable physical and emotional period following childbirth. This reflects the power imbalance and lack of genuine informed consent that characterised many forced adoption practices of the era.

No counselling, support services or follow-up care were offered following the separation, beyond being encouraged to "go on and live your life."

When [REDACTED] and I reunited in 2001, we hoped reunion would bring healing. Instead, it exposed decades of unresolved grief, identity wounds, emotional misunderstanding and unmet needs that neither of us had the language or support to navigate.

For nearly two decades following reunion, we struggled to form a healthy relationship. [REDACTED] carried the impacts of early maternal separation, including rejection sensitivity, abandonment wounds, disenfranchised grief, longing for her mother, identity confusion and challenges with emotional safety. I carried decades of longing, guilt, shame and unresolved grief. Our interactions were often shaped by fear of rejection and emotional protection rather than connection.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Our Lived Experience cont'd

The practical realities of separation and relocation across states further compounded these challenges. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Since that time, maintaining and deepening our relationship has required regular interstate travel and associated accommodation costs.

These ongoing emotional and financial impacts demonstrate that forced adoption is not a historical event, but a lifelong experience with continuing consequences.

It was not until [REDACTED] that we intentionally began rebuilding our relationship with awareness, compassion and adoption-informed understanding, allowing a healthy bond to gradually form.

Through this lived experience, we identified a significant lack of long-term, adoption-aware education and support for adoptees, biological parents and families, particularly around reunion, trauma, attachment, identity and lifelong grief.

Our lived experience directly informed the creation of The Emotional Fingerprint of an Adoptee: The Eight Essential Lessons, a psycho-educational framework designed to illuminate the lifelong emotional impacts of adoption and to support healing, understanding and connection across the adoption constellation.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Why Queensland Redress Is Essential

Queensland has formally acknowledged past forced adoption practices through apology.

However, without a redress scheme, the harm remains largely unaddressed in practical terms.

Other states have begun acting on national inquiry recommendations. Queensland now has an opportunity to do the same; offering recognition, validation, justice and tangible support to those whose lives were permanently altered by the unethical, illegal practices of the forced adoption era.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Our Recommendations

We respectfully request that the Commission recommend Queensland:

- Establish a Queensland Forced Adoption Redress Scheme consistent with national best-practice principles
- Include mothers, adopted people and fathers as eligible recipients
- Recognise both the lifelong emotional and practical impacts of forced adoption
- Provide access to financial, counselling and trauma-informed therapeutic supports
- Address systemic issues relating to identity, records access and family reconnection
- incorporate education and healing pathways as part of redress, including access for adoptees, biological parents and adoptive parents to The Emotional Fingerprint of an Adoptee: The Eight Essential Lessons psycho-educational program.

This program has received professional recognition through accreditation and endorsement by the Australian Counselling Association and the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia, reflecting its value in building adoption-aware understanding and supporting lifelong healing.

Submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's Child Safety System

Closing

Forced adoption was not a single historical event. It created lifelong separation, trauma and barriers to family connection that continue today.

True reform requires acknowledgment, accountability and meaningful action.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry and support lasting change for those impacted.