

Bits & Pieces



(07) 3358 6666 or 1800 21 03 13 (Qld only) www.jigsawqueensland.com

A Reform Opportunity

The Queensland Government published its response to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety Report on 30 July 2026. You can read the accompanying media statement [here](#). And read the full response [here](#).

We are encouraged by commitments relating to adoption reform, while recognising that significant work remains ahead.

While there are aspects of the Government's response that warrant further discussion, we are encouraged by the Government's acceptance of *Recommendation 39*, which proposes consideration of how the concept of simple adoption could be incorporated into Queensland's adoption framework, together with the introduction of integrated birth certificates.

For many years, Jigsaw Queensland has advocated for Queensland to move away from the traditional plenary adoption model, which legally severs a child's identity and family relationships.

Simple adoption has the potential to provide children with the stability and legal security of adoption while preserving their legal identity, birth family connections and access to their personal history where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

If the *Adoption Act 2009* is reviewed, we hope the Queensland Government will also consider a broader range of important reforms, including integrated birth certificates, legislation for adoption record access, discharging adoptions, appropriate

safeguards and oversight and other measures that will modernise Queensland's adoption framework.

We welcome the opportunity for a broader conversation about how adoption laws can better meet the needs of adopted people throughout their lives.

As this work progresses, we also encourage the Queensland Government to recognise that discussions about adoption and child protection can be deeply personal and, for many people, re-traumatising. Thousands of Queenslanders continue to live with the lifelong impacts of adoption, out-of-home care and family separation.

We hope the reform process is accompanied by thoughtful, trauma-informed communication and meaningful engagement that acknowledges these lived experiences

Queensland Government
Response to From Pressure to Purpose – Reforming Child Protection in Queensland: Final Report of the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND

 Queensland
Government



On 22 June, President, Jo Sparrow and CEO Helen Angela Taylor attended a confidential meeting of the new Child Safety Committee Cabinet and had the opportunity to share our views on the recommendations made by the COI into the Child Safety System.

while creating space for respectful and constructive dialogue.

We appreciate the opportunity to have contributed to the Government's consideration of the commission's recommendations and stand ready to work collaboratively with the Government.

Drawing on 50 years of supporting people affected by adoption, together with our unique lived experience expertise, we hope to

contribute constructively to reforms that place children's rights, identity, safety and lifelong wellbeing at their centre and that recognises the adults those children will become.

Public discussion about adoption in the coming months may feel overwhelming, triggering or deeply personal. Here are some ways to protect your wellbeing:

You don't have to read every article

- You don't need to consume every news story, opinion piece, social media post or comment thread.
- Staying informed is important. Constant exposure is not.

Not every comment deserves a response

Ask yourself...

- Is this person genuinely curious?
- Are they open to listening?
- Will engaging help me feel better afterwards?
- Many posts are designed to generate reactions, not understanding.

Protect your peace

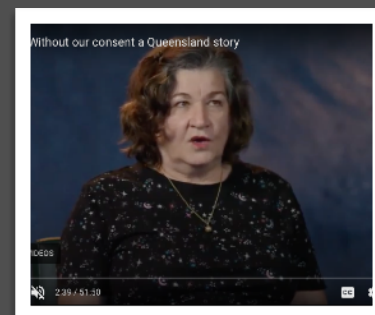
It's okay to...

- Mute conversations
- Unfollow pages
- Leave groups temporarily
- Turn off notifications

WITHOUT OUR CONSENT: A QUEENSLAND STORY

Have you watched the Without Our Consent: A Queensland Story oral history yet? The interviews feature a mother who was forced to give her child up for adoption (Anne), an adoptee (Jo), and a father who was coerced into placing his son for adoption (Alan). It also includes interviews with representatives of post adoption organisations and Queensland politicians.

This video is a must watch for anyone affected by adoptions between 1950 and through the 1980s. You can watch it [here](#).



- Log out for a few days

You are not responsible for educating everyone

- The experiences of adopted people and mothers and fathers who lost children to adoption are complex.
- You do not have to carry the burden of explaining adoption trauma to strangers on the internet.

Choose connection over conflict

Try to not spend hours in the comment sections.

- Call a trusted friend
- Attend a support group
- Talk with people who understand
- Connect with your community

Notice what is happening in your body.

Discussions may trigger...

- Anxiety
- Anger
- Grief
- Sadness
- Hyper vigilance
- Difficulty sleeping

You are allowed to step back

- You can care deeply about this issue and still choose to rest.
- Taking a break doesn't mean giving up.

A message from Jigsaw Queensland

Whatever you are feeling right now, you are not alone.

- Be gentle with yourself.
- Reach out if you need support.
- We'll continue to advocate thoughtfully, listen respectfully and walk alongside our community as things unfold.

Contact us on: 1800 21 03 13 or (07) 3358 6666 or support@jigsawqld.org.au

Annual Client Survey

A huge thank you to all the people who responded to our annual client survey that we conducted in July. It definitely put a smile on our face to read what Jigsaw Queensland means to people impacted by adoption, and we were also keen to read the great suggestions for the year ahead.



FORCED ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICE (FASS) - 1800 21 03 13

Forced Adoption Support Services are funded by the Australian Government in every state and territory. Jigsaw Queensland is proud to deliver these free services for people in Queensland impacted by past adoption practices. Our professional, dedicated team offer:

- **Telephone**, face-to-face (by appt) and online support with adoption related issues.
- **Information** on accessing your adoption records and assistance with searching for and making contact with your relatives, including an intermediary service.
- **Support** in managing post contact with relationships.
- **Referral** to support groups and professionals.
- **Small grants program** to build community capacity.



Forced Adoption
Support Services

Here is what respondents told us:

- 97% said our staff understood adoption issues
- 97% said they were satisfied with the service they received
- 95% said staff were understanding and supportive
- 93% said the information and suggestions provided were helpful
- 100% said they would recommend Jigsaw Queensland to others affected by adoption

Survey participants told us they particularly valued:

- The empathy, kindness and compassion shown by staff
- Feeling understood by people with lived experience and specialist knowledge of adoption
- Ongoing emotional support through grief, loss, identity, search and reunion experiences
- Practical guidance and assistance with records, searches, and reunions
- Regular contact, updates and responsive support
- Opportunities to connect with others through support groups and peer networks
- The professionalism, expertise and quality of information provided.

Survey responses were received from people living throughout metropolitan, regional and



rural Queensland, as well as from interstate. This reflects our commitment to providing accessible support regardless of where people live.

People who completed the survey had accessed a variety of Jigsaw Queensland services, including:

- Information and advice
- Search and reunion assistance
- Emotional support
- Counselling
- Referrals to other services
- Peer support groups
- Workshops and events

Here are just some of the wonderful comments we received:

“Without Jigsaw I would be lost. All the services and supports work together to provide an integrated experience.”

“Having someone to talk to that understands and can help you unpack those feelings was invaluable to me.”

“I have found that connecting with other adoptees and birth parents has been invaluable for my healing. My spirits are always lifted after I leave support group.”

“Jigsaw is always there when I need support from people who understand. And that is so very important in a society where very few actually do understand what our lives are like living with forced adoption.”

Thank you so much for your feedback. It helps us know what is working well and where we can improve. And thank you for trusting us as you navigate your adoption journey.

Fifty Years Illuminated

On Sunday, 19 July, as part of Jigsaw Queensland's 50th Anniversary commemorations, we were honoured to have several Brisbane landmarks illuminated by Brisbane City Council in recognition of this significant milestone.

We are incredibly grateful to Brisbane City Council for their generosity and support in helping us acknowledge 50 years of walking alongside people impacted by adoption.

For one evening, the Story Bridge, Victoria Bridge, Kurilpa Bridge, the ReddACLiff Place Sculptures (*Steam* by Donna Marcus, 2006), the Wickham Tce Car Park Architectural Wall, and the Breakfast Creek and Yowoggera Bridges in Newstead were bathed in Jigsaw Queensland's colours.

Many members of our community gathered at Howard Smith Wharves to watch the Story Bridge come to life at sunset, cheering on our 14 adventurous Bridge Climb participants as they experienced the illumination from the top of Brisbane's most iconic landmark. Across the city, others shared photographs from their own vantage points, creating a beautiful tapestry of reflections that connected our community wherever they were.



Jigsaw Queensland's adventurous climbers with the backdrop of the Story Bridge.



Jigsaw Qld's Secretary, Lois Buch, who organised the light up, pictured with her two brothers (bio & adoptive).

It was a magical evening that offered space to pause, reflect and recognise both our shared history and the many individual journeys that have shaped Jigsaw Queensland over the past five decades. For some, it was a quiet moment of personal reflection. For others, it was an opportunity to connect with friends, family and fellow community members who understand the lifelong impact of adoption.

The evening reminded us that while every adoption story is unique none of us walks our journey alone. For fifty years, Jigsaw Queensland has existed because of the strength, courage and compassion of our community, and seeing Brisbane's landmarks illuminated in our honour was a moving tribute to everyone who has been part of that story.

To see more images and videos for a snapshot of the evening, click [here](#).

Supporting Your Wellbeing

Research and lived experience tell us that adoption has a lifelong impact on identity, relationships, grief, loss, belonging and emotional wellbeing. Research has also found higher rates of mental health

challenges among people separated by adoption compared to the general population.

While every person's experience is different, many people affected by adoption can experience periods of sadness, anxiety, grief, loneliness, relationship challenges or emotional distress. Yet they also demonstrate remarkable resilience, finding ways to heal and thrive.

The important thing to remember is that you do not have to navigate these challenges alone. There are options available, with different types of support to assist at each stage of your journey.

Peer Support

As a lived experience organisation, we understand the power of connecting with people who "just get it". Talking with others who have walked a similar path can reduce feelings of isolation, offer understanding and validation, and offer hope.

Jigsaw Queensland delivers several in-person peer support groups - Adoptee Support Group, Mixed Support Group and our Mothers' Morning Tea.

We also offer an online Fathers and Sons Group, for adopted men and fathers who have lost a child to adoption to come together.

Social connection is important too. Our monthly SS JIGSAW events provide

opportunities for people impacted by adoption to come together, share experiences and build a sense of community, with events held both online and in person.

Forced Adoption Support Service

Talking with someone who understands the lifelong impact of adoption can make a significant difference.

Our Forced Adoption Support Service (FASS) provides information and support to people in Queensland who have been affected by past adoption practices. We assist with accessing information and records, searching for and connecting with relatives, navigating contact and reunion experiences, and talking through adoption-related issues and challenges.

We recently welcomed Mara as a Counsellor in our FASS Team. Mara provides short-term adoption-specific counselling for people impacted by past adoption practices, offering a safe and supportive space to explore grief and loss, identity, family relationships and other adoption-related issues.

Support can help you better understand what you're experiencing, develop coping strategies, and identify strengths and resources to support your wellbeing.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

Do you have a story to tell? If so, we'd love to hear from you.

Adopt Perspective Podcast explores the adoption experience from the perspectives of mothers, fathers and adopted people. We share personal stories, research and information and also interview creators in this space. You can submit a prospective guest form here: www.jigsawqueensland.com/adopt-perspective.

Adopt Perspective is hosted and produced by Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow, President of Jigsaw Queensland.



For people living outside Queensland, Forced Adoption Support Services are available in each State and Territory.

Information about services in your state can be accessed by calling the national Forced Adoption Support Service information line on 1800 21 03 13.

Therapeutic Support

For some people, longer-term or more specialised therapeutic support may be helpful.

This might include working with a psychologist, mental health social worker, counsellor, psychiatrist or other qualified professional.

While adoption-related support can be invaluable, some people are also navigating experiences such as trauma, abuse, addiction, significant mental health challenges, or other complex life circumstances that need specialist support.

Therapeutic support can provide a safe space to process difficult experiences, develop coping strategies, address underlying issues, and support ongoing mental health and wellbeing.

If you're unsure where to start, Jigsaw Queensland can explore options with you and help connect you with appropriate services.

Online Support and Self-Help

You can also access online mental health and wellbeing programs from home and at your own pace.

- **THIS WAY UP** offers evidence-based online programs to help people manage anxiety, depression, stress, worry, grief and other challenges. Some courses are free and can be completed independently or with the support of a health professional.



Peer Support Groups with people who “just get it”.

- **SANE Australia** provides free digital mental health support, information, moderated online forums and opportunities to connect with others who have lived experience of mental health challenges.
- **Smiling Mind** is a free app that offers mindfulness and meditation programs designed to support mental wellbeing, reduce stress and help people build healthy habits for everyday life.

Online programs and apps can be particularly helpful for people living in regional areas, those who prefer self-paced support, or as an additional source of support alongside counselling, therapy or peer support.

When Things Feel Overwhelming

At times, the lifelong impact of adoption can feel overwhelming. When you feel overwhelmed and need immediate support we recommend calling:

- **Lifeline** 13 11 14
- **Suicide Call Back Service** 1300 659 467
- **Beyond Blue** 1300 22 46 36
- **Griefline** 1300 845 745

If you are experiencing grief, loss or loneliness, Griefline offers free support, information, resources and online forums. Many people affected by adoption find grief support helpful, particularly when navigating loss, family separation, unmet expectations, and search and reunion experiences.

You Are Not Alone

There is no right or wrong way to experience adoption, and there is no set timeline for working through its impact. Whether you are seeking information, connection, peer support, counselling, therapy or additional mental health support, help is available.

Taking care of your mental health is one way to take back your personal power and an important form of self-care. If you would like to talk through support options, please reach out to the FASS Team on 07 3358 6666 or via email at support@jigsawqld.org.au



Support Groups

Our peer support groups are a powerful way for people impacted by adoption to learn, grow and heal. Our experienced and compassionate facilitators have lived experience of adoption. Below are our scheduled meeting dates for 2026. Participation at the groups is free.

Mothers' Morning Tea - For mothers who have experienced separation from their children by adoption. A regular morning tea from 10am to 12 noon - 16 Sept & 18 Nov. Venue: ground floor meeting room at 505 Bowen Tce, New Farm.

Adoptee Support Group New Farm - For adopted people. (1.30pm - 3.30pm) 12 Sept & 14 Nov. Venue: ground floor meeting room at 505 Bowen Tce, New Farm.

Adoptee Support Group Toowoomba - For adopted people. (1.30pm - 3.30pm) 5 Sept & 7 Nov. Venue: Toowoomba City Library Lvl 3 Meeting Rooms, 155 Herries Street, Toowoomba.

Mixed Support Group New Farm - For adopted people & their siblings & mothers and fathers separated from their children by adoption. Attendees are welcome to bring along a friend or family member for support. (1.30pm to 3.30pm) - 3 Oct, 5 Dec. Venue: ground floor meeting room at 505 Bowen Tce, New Farm.

Fathers & Sons Online Group - For men who lost a child to adoption; and men who were adopted. The group is run by a psychologist, Michael Chamberlain and the next groups are on 20 October & 15 December from 6pm to 8pm. It's an informal get together via Zoom so men can talk about their experience with men who understand. Email support@jigsawqld.org.au for more information or to book your place.

Please arrive at groups before the scheduled time, as doors are locked once the group begins to ensure the safety and privacy of participants.