

Bits & Pieces



Jigsaw Qld: (07) 3358 6666 or 1800 21 03 13 (Qld only) -

Submission for Reform

Jigsaw Queensland has formally lodged a detailed [submission](#) to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety and the Review of the *Adoption Act 2009*.

This Inquiry comes at a critical time for our community. Nearly five decades on from the height of the forced adoption era—and thirteen years after the Queensland Apology—many people affected by adoption continue to tell us they feel forgotten, unheard and deeply concerned that harmful practices could be repeated under new names.

Our submission draws on 49 years of service delivery, the experiences of thousands of people we have supported, and contemporary national and international research. It calls for a child protection and adoption system that is trauma-aware, evidence-based and firmly grounded in human rights.

What we're calling for

This submission is a blueprint for modernising adoption in this state.

Our key recommendations include:

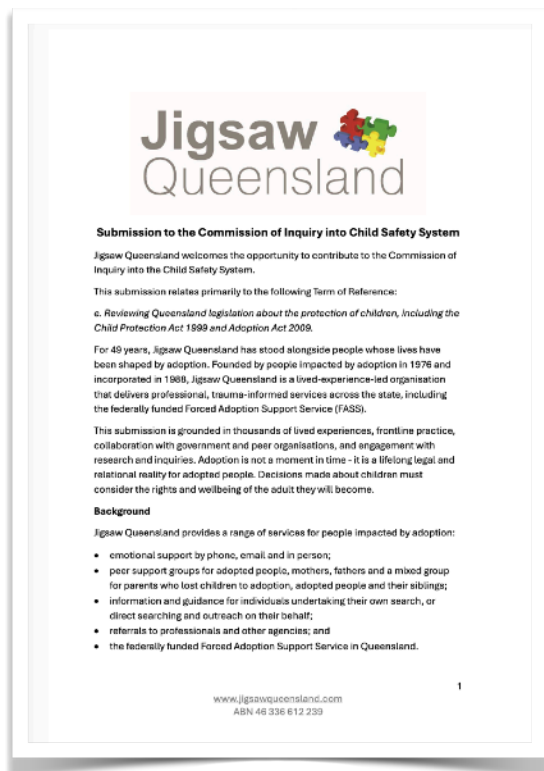
- **Replacing plenary adoption with simple adoption**, ensuring children can achieve stability without losing legal identity or kinship.
- **Using simple adoption only as a last resort** when a child cannot safely remain with their family.
- **Protecting and strengthening rights to records access**, following the

damaging removal of access rights in September.

- **Introducing Integrated Birth Certificates**, which accurately reflect both sets of parents.
- **Creating an easier, no-fault pathway to discharge an adoption**, acknowledging the lifelong impacts of trauma, coercion and identity loss.
- **Allowing people to add a father's name to pre-adoptive birth certificates**, resolving longstanding injustices.
- **Establishing a National Framework** governing identity, records access, and ethical standards across adoption.
- **Recognising adoption as a form of out-of-home care**, ensuring adopted people abused in their adoptive homes can access reporting pathways and redress.
- **Ensuring the Commission hears from national experts**, including Professor Daryl Higgins and Professor Emeritus Nahum Mushin, alongside adult lived-experience voices — both notably absent from the Commission's current consultation approach.
- **The introduction of a Queensland Forced Adoption Redress Scheme**, inclusive of mothers, adopted people and fathers who were denied their right to raise their children.

Read Jigsaw Queensland's full submission [here](#).

Listen to our President, Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow discussing the key points on ABC Radio



Click the image above to read Jigsaw Qld's full submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety and review of the Adoption Act 2009.

Brisbane Drive with Ellen Fanning [here](#) (fast forward to 45:31).

Read an article about the submission by ABC's Antonia O'Flaherty [here](#).

How you can be involved

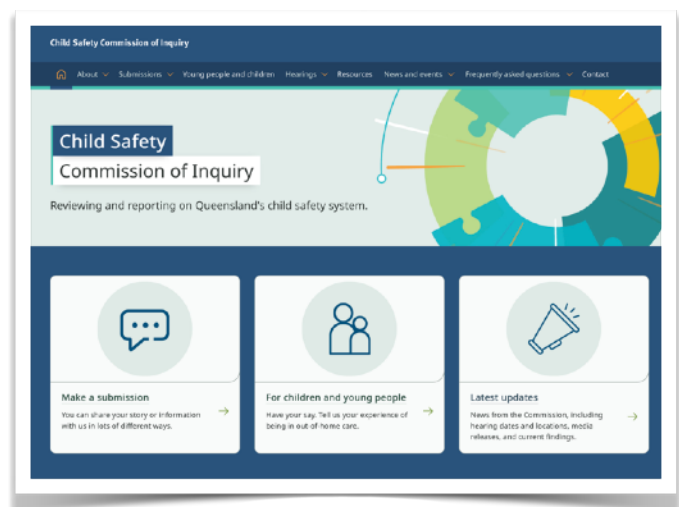
Although the Inquiry's online submission portal does not appear particularly inviting or inclusive of adult lived-experience voices—especially for people affected by past

adoptions—please don't let that discourage you.

Your voice matters profoundly, and it is vital that the Inquiry hears from those who live with the lifelong impacts of adoption. It is important to know that you do not need to have been adopted recently, or to be a child in the child protection system now, for your submission to be relevant.

The Inquiry is looking at the safety, rights and wellbeing of children—and your lived experience of adoption provides powerful evidence about what helps, what harms, and what must never be repeated.

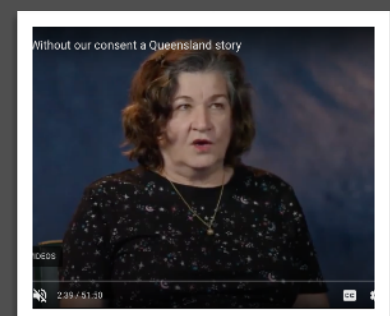
There are also many unaddressed recommendations from the Senate Report into the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices you may wish to make a submission about.



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](#).



Adoption support service warns against increasing adoption in Queensland

By Antonia O'Flaherty ABC Radio Brisbane Adoption

3h ago



Jigsaw Queensland warns the state government against seeing adoption as a solution for children in the child safety system. (ABC News/Lucas FAS)

In short:

There are renewed calls to amend adoption laws in Queensland as an inquiry investigates adoption practices in the child safety system. Post-adoption support services warn that the practice and loss of legal identity can have lifelong impacts for adopted people.

What's next?

A commission of inquiry into the child safety system in the state is due to report back by November 2026.

Click the image to read ABC's Antonia O'Flaherty's article about Jigsaw's submission to the Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety & Review of the Adoption Act 2009.

We have put together some practical tips to help you write a submission [here](#).

You can lodge your submission [here](#).

Thank you

We want to acknowledge and thank every person whose lived experience, research and advocacy has contributed to this work—whether through past formal submissions, past inquiries, peer groups or quiet



Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow speaks on 612ABC. Click the photo to listen to her ABC Drive interview with Ellen Fanning on 11 Nov (fast forward to 1:07:16).

conversations over many years. We've heard you. This submission belongs to all of you.

Jigsaw will stay in close contact with the Department throughout the Inquiry and keep our community updated via [Facebook](#), our [website](#), [YouTube](#), this newsletter, and the [Adopt Perspective](#) podcast.

If the issues raised here bring up feelings or memories for you, please remember you don't have to sit with them alone. You can contact Jigsaw Queensland on (07) 3358 6666 or 1800 21 03 13 (toll free in Qld) or support@jigsawqueensland.com for free, confidential support.

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



Click the photo to read the letter from the Director General of the Department of Justice, Sarah Cruikshank.

Access Rights Restored

In September, the Queensland Government suddenly closed long-standing access to vital adoption records, a move that set back the rights of adopted people and their families by more than three decades.

The change was introduced without consultation, removing adopted people's ability to access critical information such as their mother's married name following adoption making it significantly harder for mothers and adopted people to connect.

Two months after these regressive actions and following significant communication with government, media attention and grass roots activism, Jigsaw Queensland received a [letter from the Director-General of the Department of Justice](#) confirming access to identifying information had been restored.

We are relieved this long-standing practice has been reinstated, however, we

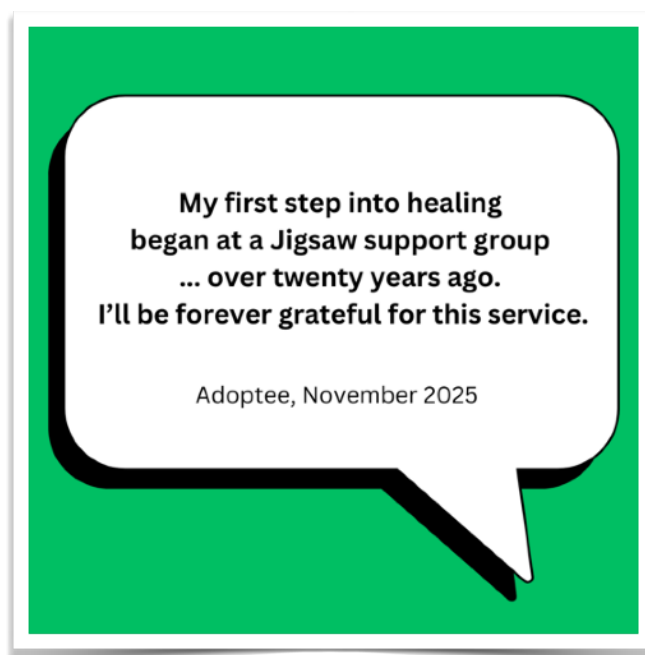
wish this issue had been handled more swiftly and with greater care and transparency, given the significant distress and confusion it caused.

We will be monitoring closely to ensure a complete return to former practices is evident.

Jigsaw's submission to the [Commission of Inquiry into Child Safety and review of the Adoption Act 2009](#) has called for these information rights to be enshrined in legislation so that future generations are protected and no Queenslanders impacted by adoption ever has to endure such an experience again.

Thank you to everyone in our community who fought so hard with us for two months to reverse this Executive decision. This is your victory.

If you'd like to find out more about how things unfolded the [Latest News](#) section of our [website homepage](#) and [Facebook](#) page have links to relevant [media stories](#) and you can read the letter from the Director General of the Department of Justice [here](#).



Fathers and Sons Group

Our support groups are very popular and we've noticed an increase in participant numbers in 2025.

The majority of people who attend and benefit from our peer support groups are women. So we decided to trial a group just for men, which we've called our Fathers and Sons Group.

We invite men impacted by forced adoption—fathers who lost a child to adoption and adult men who were adopted—to join this monthly online support group which is facilitated by psychologist Michael Chamberlin.

Our first group came together on 25 November. We've had positive feedback from both the facilitator and the participants about the value of a men-only group which is a great first step.

Here are the dates for upcoming Fathers and Sons Groups—every meeting is on a Tuesday evening from 6pm to 8pm (AEST) via Zoom.

You need to express an interest by emailing us at support@jigsawqld.org.au so we can send you the Zoom link.

Dates of upcoming groups are:

16 December 2025

20 January 2026

17 February 2026

17 March 2026



21 April 2026

19 May 2026

16 June 2026

Please spread the word with the men in your life so they know about this exciting opportunity!

SS JIGSAW 2025



We're thrilled to report that our new social connection program for people impacted by adoption—SS (Simply Social) JIGSAW—has been a great success! Thank you to everyone who participated in our mix of social activities between February and December this year.

We started out dancing in the dark at No Lights No Lycra in West End. Then it was a bushwalk in Toohey Forest south of Brisbane.

One Sunday morning we meandered along the Brisbane River before enjoying breakfast at Cordeaux Social Club. Brisbane Comedy Festival was a popular event, as was lunch at Carina Leagues Club.

We sat high above the world on the Wheel of Brisbane before dining at Ahmet's Turkish Restaurant in South Brisbane. And we enjoyed an ignite Choir Concert at Brisbane City Hall followed by a meal at Jimmy's on the Mall.

The final three events were a Sound Bath Meditation at West End, a heritage tour of the Queen's Wharf Precinct with lunch at Pancake Manor, then drinks and nibbles at Brisbane Jazz Club to enjoy Brisbane Big Band and Company B.

Overall, 65 people impacted by adoption came together socially through SS JIGSAW. We met some new people at each event. Connections were made. Laughs were shared. Stories were told. Every single person was made welcome because, even though each of our stories is unique, we share a common understanding of the lifelong impact of adoption and compassion for each other.

Our first SS JIGSAW event for 2026 will be held in February so keep an eye out on our social media once the New Year kicks off.



**I am so pleased to have
connected with Jigsaw.
After years of secrecy,
I am finally acknowledging
my experience.**

Mother, November 2025

Annual Client Survey

In July 2025 our FASS team distributed the annual client survey to find out if the people we work for are happy with what we're doing. Turns out they are. Very happy, in fact.

100 per cent of survey participants agreed that FASS staff understood adoption issues (84.21% strongly agreed & 15.79% agreed) and that FASS staff were consistently understanding and supportive (89.47% strongly agreed and 10.53% agreed).

100% of survey participants were satisfied with the services provided (94.74%

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.



**It is good to talk with people
who have knowledge
and lived experience.**

Mother, November 2025

strongly agreed and 5.26% agreed) and would recommend Jigsaw Queensland to other people.

Participant responses acknowledged the depth of our team's specialist expertise and emotional support skills, with comment about the following:

- Compassionate understanding and non-judgemental listening
- Feeling less isolated through support groups
- Assistance in initiating contact with relatives
- Gentle, respectful advice and guidance
- Availability and reliability of support, particularly during moments of need
- Emotional safety created by staff with lived and professional experience
- The sense of being heard and validated

Survey respondents were drawn from diverse geographical areas across Queensland—including South-East Queensland, Gympie, Sunshine Coast, and North Queensland—as well as NSW, because we support many individuals who were born in Queensland but now reside elsewhere.

Participants accessed a variety of services, including:

- Assistance with searching
- Intermediary assistance
- Emotional support for adoption-related issues
- Participation in peer support groups

We also received heaps of great ideas for future events and workshops, such as an adoptee retreat, art therapy, yoga, walking adventures, regional support groups, social activities, therapeutic groups, and hosting an adoption conference. These ideas will certainly keep us busy into next year!

Brisbane Care Expo

In September we exhibited for the third year running at Care Expo Brisbane.

We keep going back because it's a fantastic opportunity to promote what we do and meet other service providers in Queensland's community services sector.

This year was extra special because some of our new Peer Support Workers got to mingle with the care community and our President Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow appeared as a guest speaker on both days.



Members of our amazing peer support team and Management Committee at the Jigsaw booth. (Left to right: Lois, Phil & Chrissa)



Jo Sparrow speaks at Care Expo 2025 about Jigsaw's long history of supporting people impacted by adoption and its lifelong impacts.

Each year at Care Expo is different but it's always a worthwhile investment of our time and money. People come up to us and reminisce about how someone from Jigsaw Queensland helped them many years ago when they were searching for their mother.

People come up and ask about what we do which gives us a chance to explain Australia's history of forced adoption and the lifelong impact of birth separation. People come up and talk about their service and we're reminded of the collective strength of the community services sector.

**Thank you for all
of your support,
care and guidance -
you are just the best!**

Adoptee, September 2025

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 2025/2026. 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 - 21 Jan, 18 March, 20 May, 15 July, 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) 10 Jan, 14 March, 9 May, 11 July, 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) 7 Mar, 2 May, 4 July, 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) - 7 Feb, 11 April, 6 June, 1 Aug, 3 Oct, 5 Dec. Venue: ground floor meeting room at 505 Bowen Tc, New Farm.

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

To keep up with the latest information or changes, please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page.