

# Bits & Pieces



(07) 3358 6666 or 1800 21 03 13 (Qld only) [www.jigsawqueensland.com](http://www.jigsawqueensland.com)

## Adoption Roundtable

On 18 February 2026 our President Jo and CEO Helen attended an Adoption Roundtable hosted by Amanda Camm MP, Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. The Roundtable was held in an office tower on Eagle Street Brisbane from 8.30am to 11.30am.

Thirty people were seated across six tables with a broad mix of representatives from government and the community sector. Jo and Helen were proud to be part of a group of people with lived experience attending the meeting, along with representatives from ALAS (Adoption Loss Adult Support), Association for Adoptees, You Gave Me A Voice and Sunshine Coast Adoption Support.

Minister Camm was assisted by Director-General Belinda Drew and Deputy Director-General Max Wise as they explained Queensland Government's vision and shared departmental insights on current and future priorities, opportunities and challenges.

Across the three hours, each table discussed and reported on what we've learned from past adoption practices and how we can improve the current system.

With at least one lived experience representative at each table, it was an opportunity for us to share our firsthand knowledge over 50 years of supporting and advocating on behalf of people impacted by adoption.



*Amanda Camm MP - Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.*

The focus on lived experience was an important acknowledgment of Australia's shameful past. Our voices were heard and issues interrogated.

Minister Camm was highly engaged throughout the roundtable and keen to reassure representatives of her commitment to address the crisis of more than 2,200 children living in residential care in Queensland.

We will keep a close eye on the findings and recommendations from the Child Safety Commission of Inquiry which is due to report to government by 22 May 2026.

## Redress for Queensland



### Queensland Forced Adoption Redress Scheme

The Queensland Government recently invited individuals, businesses and community stakeholders to make submissions outlining priorities for the 2026-2027 State Budget.

Jigsaw Queensland took this opportunity to submit a proposal calling on the Queensland Government to allocate funding for the establishment of a Queensland Forced Adoption Redress Scheme.

Across Australia, momentum is building. Victoria introduced a redress scheme in 2024. Western Australia is considering an inquiry recommendation to establish a scheme, and Tasmania has recently announced it will introduce one.

These developments demonstrate growing political recognition of the harm caused by forced adoption policies and practices.

More than a decade has passed since the 2012 Senate Inquiry into forced adoptions recommended that governments consider financial redress as part of acknowledging and addressing that harm.

Our submission calls on the Queensland Government to act consistently with those recommendations and establish a redress scheme for mothers, adopted people and fathers impacted by forced adoption.

Jigsaw Queensland will continue to advocate for a redress scheme in Queensland.



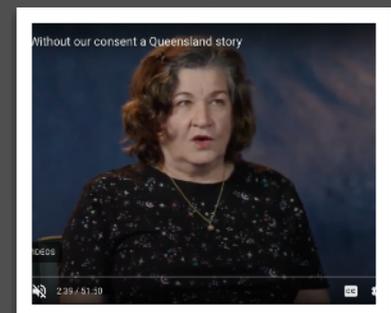
All of you at Jigsaw are amazing  
and the work that you all do,  
and the grace with which you do it,  
is so appreciated.

Adoptee, January 2026

## 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](#).



## Support for Men

*By Simone Gott (FASS Team Leader)*

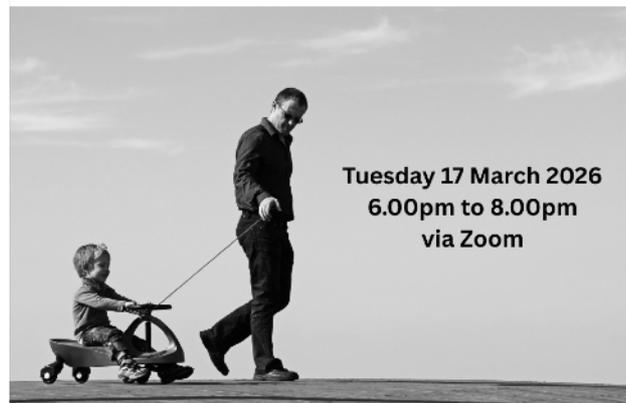
Men impacted by adoption often carry experiences and emotions that are complex and difficult to put into words. You may have spent years or decades quietly managing the thoughts and feelings that come with being adopted or losing a child to adoption. If this is you, you are not alone.

### Often men hold back from seeking support

Studies show that men often avoid reaching out for emotional support, even when they are struggling. Beyond Blue reports that only 37 per cent of men seek support when they need it. There can be many reasons for this, including not wanting to burden others or concerns about appearing weak or vulnerable.

Traditional expectations that view men as independent, self-reliant and tough can also make it harder for men to seek support. For many fathers who were disempowered or excluded from the adoption process, there can also be a lingering sense that they don't have the right to seek support or to have their experiences acknowledged. For fathers who may regret not stepping forward at the time of

## Fathers and Sons Group



Tuesday 17 March 2026  
6.00pm to 8.00pm  
via Zoom

their child's birth, the weight of that can carry unresolved shame or guilt many years later. Some men discovered much later in life that they had fathered a child who was adopted.

For some adopted people, a sense of guilt and the pressure from society to 'be grateful' for what they have can create hesitation in reaching out for support.

But you do have a right to be supported, and you don't have to navigate these feelings alone. Reaching out for support is not a sign of weakness, but a step toward taking care of yourself.

### When the practical comes first

While men may take practical steps to find answers about their adoption experience,

## 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

they may still avoid seeking emotional support, even when the process brings up grief, fear, anger or uncertainty. It can be common for men to approach adoption-related experiences by focussing on the practical tasks at hand. Taking action can feel clearer and more straightforward than dealing with the emotions that sit underneath.

You might focus on:

- Applying for your adoption records and gathering information.
- Searching for your biological relatives.
- Exploring DNA as a part of your search process.
- Planning the logistics of reunion.
- Managing whatever comes up on your own.

We often think of these practical steps as the 'outer journey' and they are important. But the 'inner journey' matters just as much. Feelings of grief and loss, abandonment, guilt, shame, fear or identity questions can shape how we see ourselves and how we connect with others. Acknowledging these emotions can be important, as they can often stay with us if we don't acknowledge them, with the potential to impact on our emotional and physical wellbeing.

This inner journey also includes managing the hopes and expectations that come with seeking answers, reunions, and new relationships with relatives. It's completely natural to want information and connection, but these experiences can be complex and don't always unfold how we expect. Taking time to explore what you're hoping for and what concerns you can make the the process feel steadier and easier to navigate.

**Jigsaw Queensland is here to walk beside you**

**'I expected someone to step up and help us to keep our baby.'**

Phil Kenward, 6 November 2024



*A podcast for anyone affected by adoption*

We understand the unique experiences men face in adoption. We also understand that it can be hard to ask for support, especially if you've been carrying the weight of these experiences on your own.

Jigsaw has created a safe, private, online group specifically for men who lost a child to adoption and men who were adopted. The Fathers and Sons group runs on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6pm to 8pm and is facilitated by psychologist, Michael Chamberlain.

It's a place where you can:

- Connect with other men who get it
- Talk about your story at your own pace
- Hear from men who have had similar experiences to you
- Share practical challenges, as well as the emotional ones, and
- Feel supported without judgement or pressure.

The next group is on Tuesday 17 March at 6pm via Zoom. If you'd like to join this group just email [support@jigsawqld.org.au](mailto:support@jigsawqld.org.au) by 5pm on Friday 13 March so we can send you the Zoom link. If you'd prefer to speak one-on-one, you can talk with one of our Information and Support Workers Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm by calling 07 3358 6666 or 1800 21 03 13 (Qld only). Whether you're feeling

unsure about the next steps or wanting to talk through something on your mind, we're here to support you.

## Video Legacy Project



We are incredibly proud to celebrate 50 years of supporting people impacted by adoption. This is a remarkable achievement for a not-for-profit organisation created from the drive and determination of countless volunteers over our first 40 years, before funding for our Forced Adoption Support Service commenced in 2015.

We will be celebrating this achievement throughout the year. Hopefully you've already spotted the first 50 Year initiative - our Video Legacy Project.

It began on 5 January this year when we posted a short video of our President reflecting on the significance of this year. We are interviewing 50 people who've been part of our journey over the years so they can share their memories and experiences.

Some people are being interviewed here at Jigsaw HQ. Others are being interviewed via Zoom.

We are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to our Video Legacy Project

and look forward to sharing a new video with you each week until the end of this year.

## Owning my Story

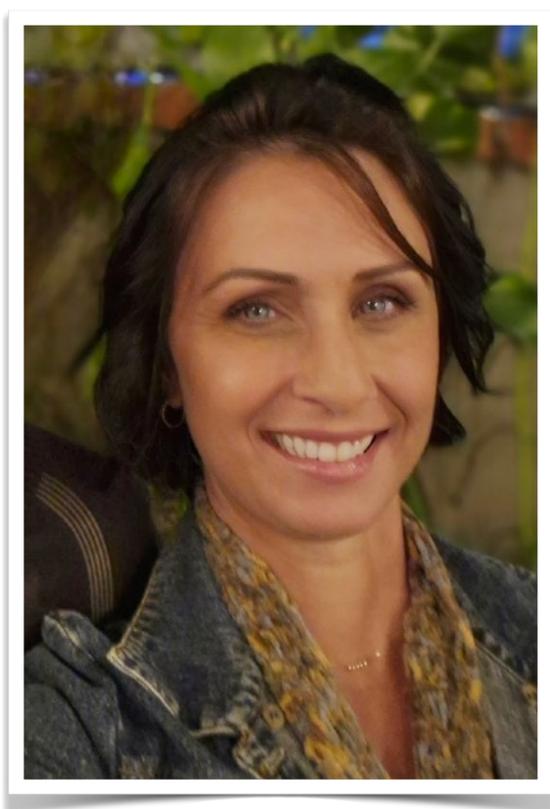
*By Tash Hope*

Listening to the Adopt Perspective podcast about adoption was unexpectedly transformative for me.

I had heard many conversations about adoption before, but these felt different, as the host, Jo is an adopted person herself and she creates a space for honest, raw, nuanced reflections that move beyond the simplified narratives of gratitude and loss. As I listened, I found myself recognising pieces of my own experience in the stories shared.

What struck me most was the courage of the guests. Speaking experiences that are often kept private: identity, belonging, navigating relationships, processing feelings of displacement, and redefining family on their own terms.

Hearing these brought up emotions and thoughts I have always struggled with. It



*Listen to Tash Hope's episode on Adopt Perspective (23/7/2025)*

reminded me that my story was not isolated or unusual - it was part of a broader, shared human experience.

When I reached out to Jo for the opportunity to be on the podcast, it was received with warmth, compassion and ease. Jo gave me options of discussion points to consider what I felt comfortable exploring. I realised that staying silent about my own journey meant missing an opportunity to contribute to a conversation that clearly mattered.

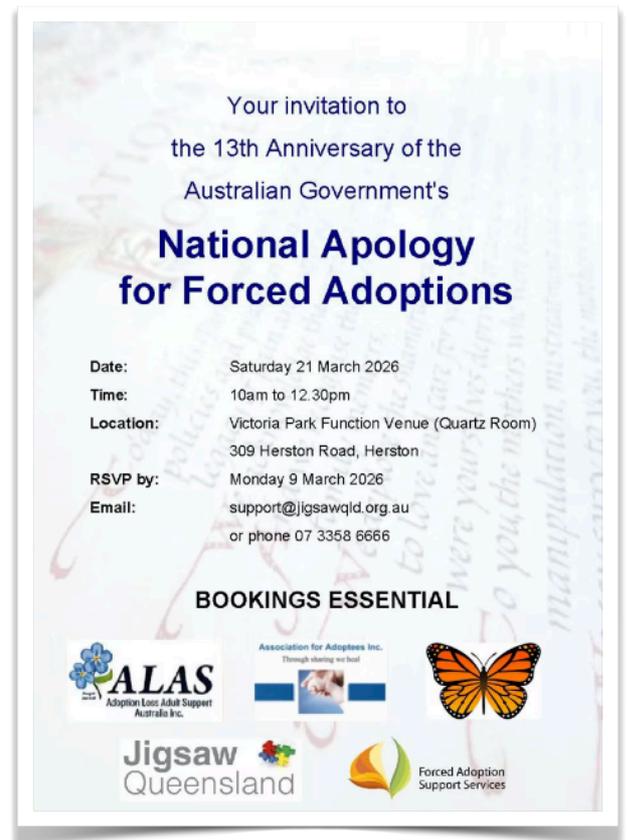
If their stories helped me feel seen, perhaps mine could do the same for someone else.

Participating in the podcast became less about revisiting my past and more about stepping into intervention. Sharing my adoption story felt vulnerable, but it was also empowering. It allowed me to own my narrative, to speak to the complexities with honesty, and to help broaden understanding of how adoption impacted me.

Once I completed my recording with Jo, I honestly felt seen and heard for the first time. So, thank you Jo and Jigsaw.

Listen to Tash's episode (23/7/2025) on all major podcast apps, YouTube and [here](#).

## National Apology



As Queensland's Forced Adoption Support Service provider, we are proud to host the annual event to commemorate the National Apology for Forced Adoptions.

This year's event is on Saturday 21 March 2026 from 10am to 12.30pm at Victoria Park Golf Club, Herston. It would be great if you can join us to reflect on this important milestone in Australia's history of adoption.

Thirteen years on from the formal apology there is still much that needs to be done to implement the recommendations

## 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](http://www.jigsawqueensland.com/adopt-perspective).

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



from the Senate Inquiry into Past Adoption Policies and Practices.

The act of coming together is a powerful way to reflect on how far we've come and honour the people who came before us.

Bookings are essential because spots are limited. If you'd like to attend, just email us at [support@jigsawqld.org.au](mailto:support@jigsawqld.org.au). If you can't attend in person, we will be live-streaming the event. Keep an eye out on our [Facebook page](#) for the link to register for live-streaming or email us and we can send you the link.

## Jigsaw Bridge Light Up

*By Lois Buch*

Hi everyone! I'm Jigsaw Queensland's Secretary on the Management Committee and an adopted person. I've been involved with Jigsaw for the past 13 years as a member, client, support group participant and peer support worker.

I spent many years working in cultural exchange programs and loved putting together events and finding ways to help people connect and reflect.

For many years I used to drive over the Story Bridge and wonder how they determined the colours each night. And more importantly, what the colours stood for! A quick Google search led me to the Brisbane City Council website, where charities could apply for and be granted the rights to light up

council assets in their chosen colours. This is a free initiative by the Council for charities and I just knew we had to apply.

In 2016, we had a wonderful Jigsaw picnic under the Story Bridge (despite the rain) to celebrate 40 years, and in 2021 in the midst of the pandemic, we lit up the Victoria Bridge and had another lovely sunset reflection over at Southbank. This year, we applied for and are lighting up ALL of the bridges!

The wonderful thing about a bridge light up is it gives you the space under the colour and the night sky to determine what your adoption journey means to you. The light up is something I know my birth mother Rhonda would have loved. I met her when I was 23 when the laws first changed in Queensland and knew her for just under 10 years. Cancer took her away at far too young an age, but I remain grateful that we found each other and had those years together. When Rhonda was around, things happened. The resilience she displayed in overcoming the tragedies in her life are still revealing themselves to me this day. She smiled and she laughed a lot; even through the tears, which is perhaps my favourite emotion. On July 19th, I will reflect on those 10 years I knew my sweet and funny Rhonda.

### Assets lighting up on 19 July 2026:

- Story Bridge
- Victoria Bridge
- Kangaroo Point Bridge
- Reddacliff Place Sculptures (Donna Marcus: Steam 2006, Wickham Terrace Car Park Architectural Wall & Breakfast Creek and Yowoggera Bridges, Newstead).

### What you need to do?

Mark 19 July in your calendar and keep following Jigsaw Queensland on [Facebook](#).



*Lois & Jo at the 2021 light up of Victoria Bridge.*

We are working on a space to gather and watch the Story Bridge aspect. We also invite you, if you prefer, to go to any of the light up sites and reflect privately.

The colours will be red, blue, green and yellow. Note: the Reddacliff Place sculptures are only allowed to reflect two colours, so will be blue and yellow only.

We have a few other surprises up our sleeves, so you'll have to keep your eyes on our socials when they are confirmed!

## Your Reunion Journey

Felicity Lawson is an adopted person whose reunion journey has spanned 33 years.

She is on a mission to write a resource book about adoption reunions to share what she's learned and to help others.

The book will focus on the Forced Adoption Era from the 1940s to 1980s and people who have been involved in reunions.

You can be involved by completing a questionnaire which will consist of free text and tick-box options.

The questions will relate to common themes in adoption; fear of rejection, shame and guilt; mismatch of expectations, lack of commonality, lack of shared history, identity issues; grief and loss; and navigating new relationships. It will also explore lessons for the future.

To find out more about Felicity's personal story and her book project you can listen to / watch her episode (25/2/2026) on the Adopt Perspective podcast on all major podcast apps, YouTube and [here](#) and / or email her at [adoptionreunion@outlook.com](mailto:adoptionreunion@outlook.com).

## 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 - 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) 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) - 11 April, 6 June, 1 Aug, 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 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. It's an informal get together via Zoom so men can talk about their experience with men who understand. Email [support@jigsawqld.org.au](mailto: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.