



9 DECEMBER 2023

JIGSAW QUEENSLAND INC.

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Support Connect Inform Advocate

2022 - 2023

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Yet again, Jigsaw Queensland volunteers and our Forced Adoption Support Service (FASS) have risen to the challenge of supporting more Queenslanders affected by adoption. I'm proud of the commitment shown by all staff and volunteers to go above and beyond expectations, and their demonstrations of innovation when finding ways to reach more people affected by adoption and letting them know that help is available now.

Commemorative events in Canberra and states around Australia for the 10th anniversary of the National Apology in March exposed impatience amongst our cohort for the stall in progress of recommendations made in the 2012 Senate Report. These events highlighted that a decade had passed since promises were made and unsettled the adoption community in general.

Our Forced Adoption Support Service staff have reported a shift in client needs, with cases becoming more complex, requiring DNA search expertise and a need for increased levels of advocacy on client's behalf when dealing with adoption services around Australia. Staff have pivoted accordingly, identified areas of staff training required and are working towards meeting these needs.

GOVERNANCE

There have been no changes to our Jigsaw Queensland Management Committee this year and once again we have relied heavily on the dedicated work of all our volunteers and committee members to keep Jigsaw directly relevant to persons affected by past adoption.

I would like to offer a heart-felt thank you to our Management Committee team, Secretary - Lois Buch, Treasurer - Robert White and Members - Collette Glazebrook and Heather Herman. Thanks also to our Forced Adoption Support Service (FASS) CEO - Dr Trevor Jordan, Team Leader, Caroline Slade and FASS team members, Anna Crockett, Rachel Bell and Kristeen McCowie for their work this year.

Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow - President

“It is not only our longevity, but also our respect for the diversity of adoption experience that has earned Jigsaw Queensland its outstanding reputation as a trustworthy provider of post adoption support and a valued contributor to state and national discussions on permanency and adoption policy and practice. The different colours in our Jigsaw logo represent the diverse ways in which we are all affected by adoption and the unique contribution each of us can make in transforming lives. They also remind us that our colour is not the whole rainbow and that working together and supporting each other on the journey is important.” (Dr Trevor Jordan OAM, FASS - CEO)



SUPPORT GROUP REPORTS

This year peer support facilitators resumed regular supervision sessions with Andrea Lynch and have found them to be highly beneficial. The sessions will be continuing into 2024.

Open Group

Open Meetings have once again been embraced and well-attended. We've seen a number of new attendees and plenty of regular faces with participants sometimes bringing along a friend or relative for support. The open group continues to be popular opportunity for people wanting to look outside their own experience and open themselves to the perspectives of others.

Mothers' Group

The Mothers' support meeting entered its 26th year in August 2023. We continue to gather at a Mothers' Morning Tea every other month.

This year we were joined by some new mothers including some from a younger generation. We were also joined by Churchill Fellow, Jeanott Farmer in September's meeting. I would like to thank Jigsaw for having trust in me to run the meetings for the past 13 years. - Heather Hermann

Adoptee Group

Adoptee support group interest and attendance has continued to surge, with some meetings at room capacity. There is still a strong core of new and long-term attendees, with many referred from other service providers who recognise the value of peer-to-peer sharing and support.

Melissa, Trevor, Lois, Heather and Jo have yet again done a great job facilitating the meetings and we thank them for their voluntary commitment.

ADOPT PERSPECTIVE PODCAST



The final episodes of Season 4 of Adopt Perspective podcast are now live and Season 5 planning and research is well underway. The podcast continues to grow and along with the website is one of the most effective tools we have to communicate with people affected by adoption, particularly those who can't attend our peer support groups or other events for a variety of reasons.

The podcast, which is a relatively simple production with no marketing budget has accumulated 30,000 listeners in 45 countries to date. Eighty-four per cent of our listeners joined us for the first time this year. While we reduced our output of episodes, we continued to grow (+46% listeners, +68% streams & +65% followers). On Spotify, we are a top 10 podcast for 194 fans, a top 5 podcast for 165 fans and the number 1 podcast for 80 fans. Adopt Perspective podcast's rating is 5 stars across the board.

Adopt Perspective ranks in Spotify's (our host) top 15 per cent most shared podcasts globally. We are also in the top 15 per cent most followed podcasts globally - 30 per cent of our listeners also follow the podcast. Spotify tells us that 35 per cent of our listeners share us via Facebook, 23 per cent via direct link, 21 per cent via text and 11 per cent via WhatsApp. We have the most new listeners in Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, United States and New Zealand.

The podcast is required listening as part of the induction process for new employees in the child safety department of at least one state of Australia. It was used in Churchill Fellowship research into Australia's forced adoption response and was brought up in

discussions with Scottish government officials in the lead up to their own recent apology. We've been contacted by lawyers, policy makers and others involved in inquiries and reference groups who've shared that they listened to the podcast to widen their own understanding and have used them to inform their reports and recommendations.

Adopt Perspective podcast can be listened to on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Deezer, Castbox, Pocket Casts, Amazon Music, Overcast and here: <https://www.jigsawqueensland.com/podcast>.

HIGHLIGHTS

10th National Apology Anniversary Events in Canberra & Brisbane.

This year, the Federal Government commemorated the 10th anniversary of the national apology for past forced adoption policies and practices by hosting commemorative activities in Canberra on 21 and 22nd March 2023. The commemoration brought together people directly affected, along with those who tirelessly worked and continue to work, as supporters of the forced adoptions community.

The program of events consisted of a commemorative dinner on 21 March, and a statement on significant matters in the House of Representatives on the morning of 22 March. It also aimed to bring national attention to the truth of the mothers, adopted people and fathers who today still live with the consequences of this trauma.

A contingent of Queensland representatives and support people nominated by our stakeholder organisations, along with Jigsaw's representative, President, Jo Sparrow attended these events. (Photos on page 7)



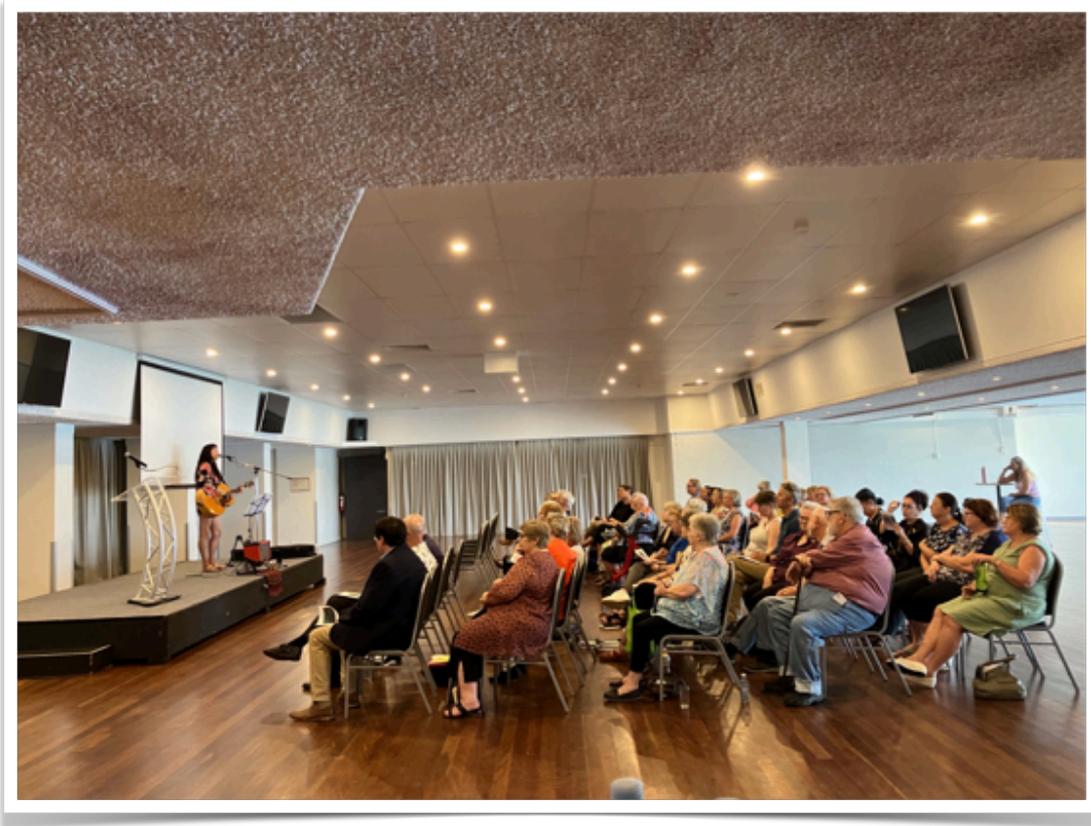
Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Opposition Leader Peter Dutton acknowledge the 10th Anniversary of the National Apology for Forced Adoptions in the House of Representatives on 21 March 2023. *(Click photo to watch video)*



Minister Rishworth - Statement on Significant matters in the House of Representatives on the morning of 22 March 2023. *(Click photo to watch video)*

Queensland Event - In Queensland, a morning tea event was held to commemorate the anniversary at Events on Oxlade Drive at New Farm. This event was organised by the Forced Adoption Support Service (Jigsaw Qld) in association with ALAS Australia,

Association for Adoptees, Origins Queensland and You Gave Me A Voice. It was funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.



Adoptee, Sophia Fletcher performs at the Queensland anniversary event.

Queensland Apology 11th Anniversary Event

A morning tea was held at The Normanby Hotel following a rose laying ceremony at Roma Street Parklands on the 27th of November to commemorate the 11th anniversary of the Queensland Apology for Forced Adoptions.

Following the rose laying ceremony, more attendees gathered at The Normanby Hotel where video messages were delivered from the Benevolent Society and The Hon Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services.

Jigsaw's President, Jo Sparrow also spoke at the event about the importance of information and support and the impact Adopt Perspective podcast guests sharing their stories has had around the world. She also urged the Queensland Government to

move forward with the call for submissions for amendments to the Adoption Act and for action on key recommendations from the 2012 Senate Report.

The event was funded by the Queensland Government and is organised by the Queensland post adoption working committee - the Benevolent Society (PASQ), Association for Adoptees Inc, ALAS Australia, Origins Queensland, Jigsaw Queensland and You Gave Me A Voice.



Jigsaw's Heather Hermann, Jo Sparrow and Trevor Jordan attend the Queensland apology anniversary on 27 November.

Brisbane Care Expo

On the 1 & 2 September, Jigsaw took the new step of securing a booth at the 2023 Care Expo held in the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. The event was a great success with many people affected stopping by to speak with volunteers and connections made with other providers. Thank you to organiser, Lois Buch for her time and skills to make this a valuable event.

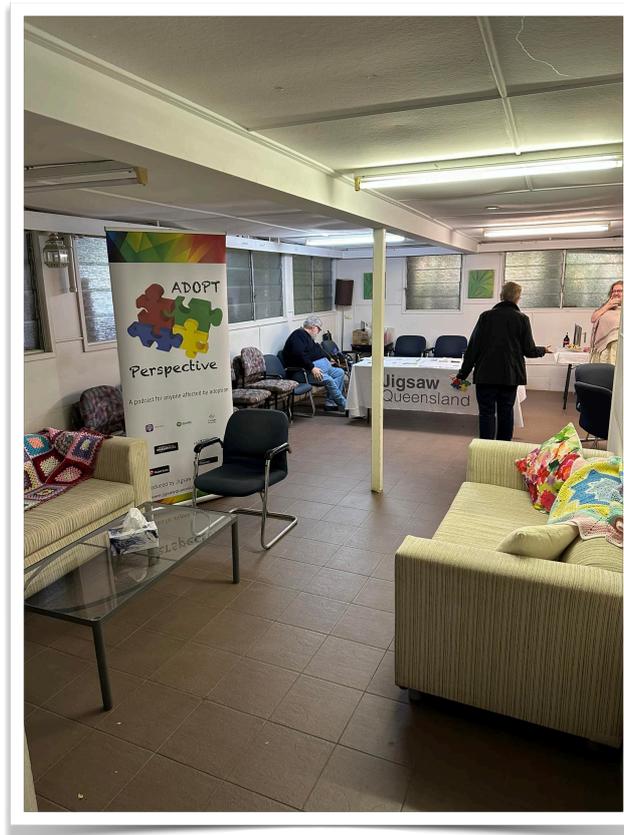


Jigsaw Management Committee members, Lois Buch and Heather Hermann volunteer at the Care Expo.

Jigsaw Open Day

Jigsaw held its first Open Day in the ground floor meeting room at SANDS House, New Farm on the 15 July.

Creating a cosy, quiet and welcoming space, the open day was aimed at providing information and guiding attendees towards supports and services on offer.



Jigsaw Open Day held in July.

Dr Trevor Jordan awarded OAM

FASS CEO was awarded the Order of Australia Medal by the Governor of Queensland, Dr Jeanette Young at the investiture ceremony on Thursday, 14 September.

Congratulations to Trevor for guiding our organisation for more than two decades.

Articulate, humble, influential and ethics-focussed, Trevor has had a positive impact

on the adoption community in Queensland and nationally. We acknowledge that he also had his own adoption journey to navigate while continuing to support others on many Saturday afternoons at our support groups.



Trevor receives his OAM medal from the Governor of Queensland, Dr Jeanette Young.

Media Coverage

This year, Jigsaw Queensland participated in a number of media opportunities, spreading the word about forced adoptions here in Australia and internationally.

- BBC Radio 4 *The Digital Human - Reunited* (13 June) - Jo Sparrow was interviewed by Aleks Krotoski about adoption and the impact of genealogical DNA testing.
- Listnr *Secrets We Keep: She, Lies & Family* podcast (10 October) - Jo Sparrow & FASS team member, Rachel Bell were interviewed about support services available in Australia and navigating adoption.

- ABC Radio National - *Life Matters* (8 August) - Jo Sparrow was interviewed alongside *Secrets We Keep* host, Amelia Oberhardt about the launching of the podcast and forced adoptions.
- ABC Radio Brisbane - Katherine Feeney (6 September) - Jo Sparrow was interviewed about adoption in the context of a larger episode about the *Secrets We Keep* podcast and family secrets.



Churchill Fellowship Research

FASS CEO Trevor Jordan and Team Leader, Caroline Slade met with Churchill Fellowship researcher, Jeannot Farmer who was visiting Australia to collect data about Australia's response to past forced adoptions. Jeannot is a mother who lost a child to adoption and she attended the mothers' morning tea during her visit. We look forward to reading Jeannot's findings in the future.

FORCED ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICE

This year, the FASS team has assisted mother's, fathers, adopted people and other family members with information, emotional support, family tracing, intermediary services and referrals.

A big shout out to our team past & present here in Queensland who have exceeded more than 20,000 interactions with 1,766 individual clients since our service began just 8 years ago. Information and support can change everything!

In December, we farewelled Anna Crockett and began the process of hiring a new team member. This year, we also welcomed back Kirsteen McCowie, our previous student placement to work on a casual basis to assist with administration and also filling in when staff are on holiday, and while we are waiting to fill the position vacated by Anna.

The FASS has worked towards educating mental health professionals and organisations about the affects of adoption and creating referral networks. Team Leader, Caroline Slade attended the Older Queensland Women's Event in Ipswich and is working with The Healing Foundation to improve their understanding of the intersectionality of Forced Adoption and the Stolen Generation and to develop a method of supporting this particular cohort.

Kirsteen has been assisting us to reach out to organisations and services that operate in rural and remote areas of QLD. We have sent information and contact details to Community Centres and jails across Queensland. This has resulted in a number of phone calls from these services wanting to know more and offers of assistance for

adoptees needing help to work with Jigsaw. The social worker from Maryborough Prison rang to discuss how it could work if we wanted to do an outreach to or for a prisoner.

Our staff maintain ongoing relationships with each state and their adoption department along with Victorian NGO's who handled adoptions. Each state has two services that support adoptees with counselling. This has now been expanded to include relationships with International Adoption Departments as well as other support agencies. They have undertaken some wonderful advocacy work for clients with Victorian, NSW and Qld BDM to obtain searches needed to locate parents when clients don't fill the traditional requirements.

Our staff have completed a number of training opportunities this year. Rachel completed a Beyond Blue Webinar on 'Working with Clients with Fear of Rejection' and 'Suicide Assist Training'. Rachel and Anna completed training on 'Working with Complex Trauma in Clients' through Blue Knot. Anna also completed training in 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Narrative Therapy' through the Dulwich Centre, and Caroline undertook training in Mental Health First Aid. The team have also sourced a provider for professional supervision through 'With Grace Therapy', on an ongoing individual and group basis.

We thank the Queensland Government's, Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services for their continuing support of our peer support services. This contribution is crucial for our volunteer engagement with all those affected by adoption.



Queensland Government