

Bits & Pieces



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

Join us at Brisbane Care Expo

Come see us at the Brisbane Care Expo to be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (Hall 4) on 6 & 7 September from 9am to 4pm!



Lois & Heather set up and ready to greet attendees at the 2023 Care Expo event.

This is the second year we've attended the event; an expo showcasing services and products for mental health, aged care, in-home care, healthcare support, disability care, and general wellness.

The expo is an opportunity for Jigsaw Qld staff and volunteers to speak with people affected by adoption and spread the word that help is available now. It's also an opportunity to form connections with care organisations who may work with people who are impacted and make them aware of our services.

Last year, it was wonderful to also speak with members of the general public and provide information about Australia's history of forced adoptions, national and state apologies and funded services now available to support those affected.

In 2023 we noted many people dropped by the booth curious about the history of adoption in Australia or because they'd been assisted by Jigsaw in the past and weren't aware of changes in the Queensland legislation.

The Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is located on the Corner of Merivale & Glenelg Sts, South Brisbane. Entry is FREE! Paid parking is available on site and there are public transport options close by. We'd love to see you there!

Jigsaw **Queensland**

Have you been impacted by past adoption practices?

Are you a mother or father who lost a child to adoption?

Information and support changes everything!

CARE EXPO
BRISBANE

SITE P358

Support • Connect • Inform • Advocate

07 3358 6666

www.jigsawqueensland.com

Entry into the Brisbane Care Expo is FREE.

WA parliamentary inquiry recommends forced adoption survivors should be compensated.

A Western Australia parliamentary inquiry into the devastating forced adoption scandal has recommended financial redress for mothers, adopted people and some fathers.



Click the image above to read the full report.

If endorsed by the government, it would be the most far-reaching forced adoption redress scheme in the country.

Read more of this ABC News story [here](#). Read the full report, Broken Bonds, Fractured Lives: Report on the Inquiry into Past Forced Adoption in Western Australia [here](#).

Call for inquiry into and freeze on all intercountry adoptions

Senator Linda Reynolds is advocating for a broader parliamentary inquiry into inter country adoption practices, urging a halt to all international adoptions until stricter safeguards are implemented to prevent orphan trafficking.

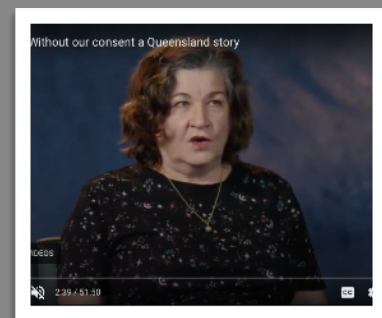


Australians adopted from South Korea, like Melbourne adoptee, Anna are questioning their origin stories. Picture courtesy of the ABC News: Luke Bowden.

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](#).



The Senator has called for the government to end its long-standing relationship with South Korea's Eastern Social Welfare Society (ESWS) after an ABC Background Briefing investigation revealed that the agency falsified documents in historical adoption cases, dating back to the 1980s.

The investigation found that scores of adoptees sent to Australia by ESWS grew up believing they were orphans, only later to discover they had been lied to. An ESWS insider also alleged the agency paid bribes to hospital workers for babies.

Lynelle Long, who was adopted from Vietnam in the early 1970s and is the founder of Intercountry Adoptee Voices welcomed Senator



Lynelle Long from Intercountry Adoptee Voices is calling on the Australian government for a public apology for inter country adoptees. (Photo supplied by Alisha Long for ABC article)

Reynolds' comments and calls on the government as a "glimmer of hope".

The above are excerpts from the ABC news article. Read the full story [here](#). Listen to the full ABC Background Briefing episode [here](#). Thank you to ABC journalist Gina McKeon for her interest and excellent investigative reporting on this issue.

Mother's Morning Tea



Our peer support groups are the cornerstone of Jigsaw Queensland's information and support service because people impacted by adoption understand one another. If you've not yet attended one of our support groups, we encourage you to give it a try.

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

If you're a mother who lost a child to adoption then our Mother's Morning Tea is the perfect fit. Held on the third Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September and November, the meeting starts at 10.00am and goes until 12 noon.



Mother's Morning Tea facilitator, Heather.

You're in safe, steady hands with peer support facilitator, Heather, who has been leading these groups for more than a decade. Heather creates a place of care and comfort, where attendees can talk openly about their feelings, share the challenges of navigating relationships, and understand the lifelong impact of adoption.

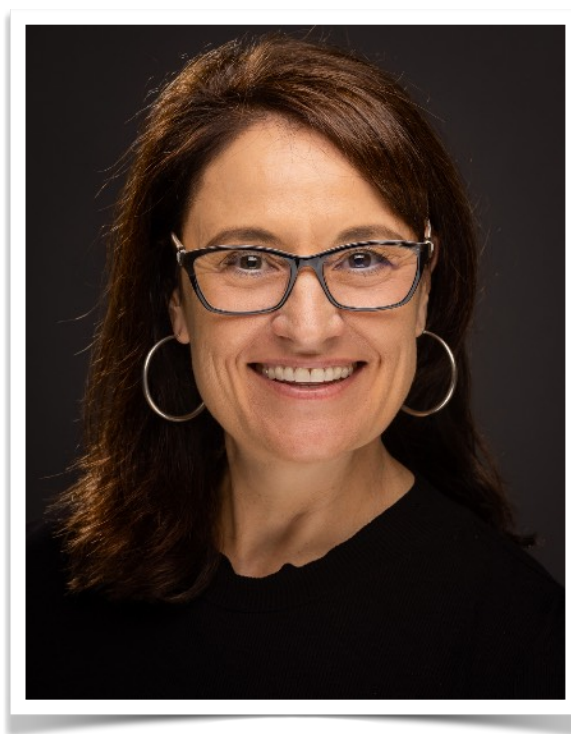
Our Mother's Morning Tea is free to attend and you can just turn up on the day. Meetings are held in our downstairs meeting room at 505 Bowen Terrace, New Farm. Attendees are from all walks and stages of life, with some young mothers as well as great grandmothers.

We have a steady stream of regulars who know the healing power of being with other mothers with shared experience. It's about talking,

listening, reassuring and supporting each other. We'd love you to join us this month.

Important note: the Mother's Morning Tea this month will be on 11 September (instead of 18 September) because Heather is cruising the high seas with her beautiful family.

Message from our CEO



Jigsaw Qld CEO, Helen Angela Taylor

My first two months with Jigsaw Queensland have been incredibly rewarding. Thank you to everyone who has made me feel so welcome - colleagues, clients and our community partners. I already knew the value of Jigsaw as a past client, having attended many support groups since July 2019. But seeing what we do from the inside, the positive impact we have on people every day, is a powerful motivation for me to keep building our support services for everyone impacted by adoption.

Heartfelt thanks to past CEO Dr Trevor Jordan OAM, and the Jigsaw Queensland Management

Committee, for their remarkable contribution over many years. The concept of Jigsaw was first created in 1976. Jigsaw organisations across the country have supported thousands of people impacted by adoption, mostly in a volunteer capacity. Our current version of Jigsaw Queensland is a proud testament to the drive and dedication of many people, and is the only remaining Jigsaw organisation in Australia.

If you feel like there's been a lot of change at Jigsaw Queensland in the past six months, you're right! But, rest assured, I have the wisdom and guidance of our Management Committee to draw upon as needed, along with the positive energy of an amazing team in the office, delivering our frontline services with commitment and compassion. We'd love to hear from you if you have any ideas, comments or feedback - just send an email to support@jigsawqld.org.au

Update on Newsletter distribution



This newsletter you're reading has been around since the early days of Jigsaw Queensland - way back when it was our only way of giving updates to members and the broader community.

We continue to publish Bits & Pieces four times a year and now it's available on our website, our Facebook page, our Linked In profile, and via email. So we've decided to cease print versions from 2025. This means the money we spend on colour printing in newsletter format as well as postage can be re-directed towards direct service delivery for anyone affected by adoption.

If you still like to feel the pages between your fingers, it's easy to print yourself at home. If you don't have access to a printer then perhaps a friend or loved one could print it for you.

That first step

Those of us impacted by adoption have our own unique story. But we share some common experiences, emotions and challenges.

Many of us try to manage the impact of adoption in silence, on our own. Sometimes the feelings are confusing, frustrating or overwhelming. Then we think of reaching out to someone but talk ourselves out of it.



'They'll think I'm crazy.'

'They won't understand.'

'I should be grateful that I had a family.'

'I can handle this. I've handled it so far.'



Or maybe we're afraid to face the feelings? If we finally allow ourselves to feel the grief, pain, loss or anger, we might lose control.

This is a normal part of the process of coming to understand how we've been impacted by adoption.

When people come to one of our support groups for the first time, and we go round the room introducing ourselves, those emotions can surge up, catch in our throat. It might be hard to speak without crying. It might be hard to say anything at all. And that's okay. New people can just sit and listen and feel what they need to feel at their own pace in their own time. There's no

pressure in our support groups to be anything other than exactly what we need to be in that moment.

The same can happen when people phone us for the first time. It might feel weird to talk to strangers about how we feel. But our Jigsaw team understands and is here to support you. You'll find, within only a few minutes, that the person you're talking to doesn't feel like a stranger. It's called 'emotional support' and something we do every day for people in every corner of the state.

A phone call might be 15 minutes of you thinking aloud, expressing your feelings, and asking questions. Or a phone call might be 75



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 Qld.



minutes of gradually sharing one piece of your story at a time, testing the waters, seeing how it feels to talk honestly for the first time about how you feel. The most common feedback we get about our emotional support are statements such as:

'Thank you for listening and understanding.'

**We are impressed by
the level of support
and assistance available
at Jigsaw Queensland.**

Adopted person, June 2024

'I can't tell you how much it means to me to find someone I can talk honestly with about what's happening in my life.'

'Thank you for your time. I feel so much better.'

So, if you've considered picking up the phone or coming to a support group, rest assured, we will support you to take that first step.

New books about adoption

Finding Mary Jane: A Tapestry of Mother's Love by Arie Baker

Arie Baker is an adopted person living in South East Queensland who took pen to paper to fill in some blanks about her adoptive story.

Finding Mary Jane: A Tapestry of Mother's Love is a mix of fiction and non-fiction, a deliberate choice made by the author as there are parts of her story she can never be certain of. Arie hasn't been able to find her mother and she discovered her father was deceased when she connected with his family.

In her Adopt Perspective Podcast episode ([3 July 2024 S5 E6](#)), Arie describes the book as the story of a young woman who is searching for her birth mother. It is based loosely on her life and it is a story of love set in Brisbane in the early 70s and 80s. You can purchase Arie's book [here](#).

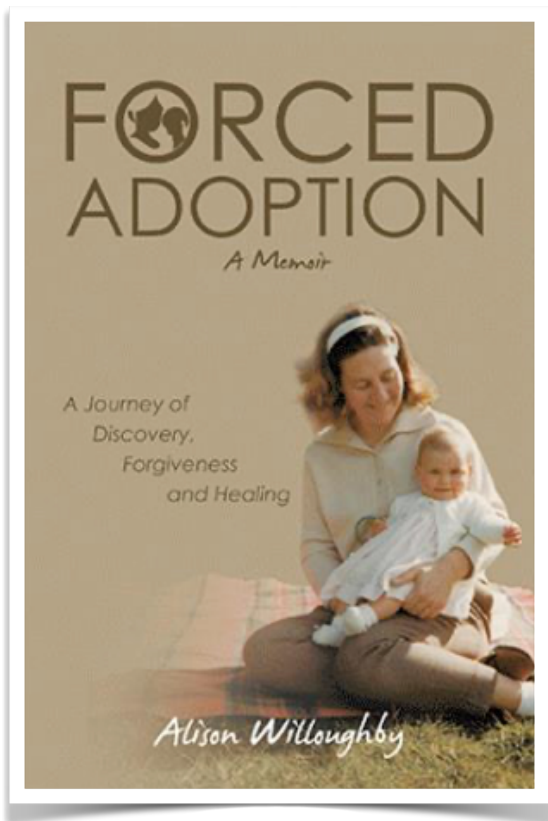


Forced Adoption: A Journey of Discovery, Forgiveness and Healing by Alison Willoughby

Allison Willoughby is an adopted person born in Melbourne in 1965, who was the first of four children adopted into her family.

Allison wrote her memoir to share her experience and healing journey with others.

In her Adopt Perspective Podcast episode ([7 August 2024 S5 E7](#)), she shared that she wanted people to know that there is a path you can take. "There's a lot of trauma in the book, but



my message is really just about healing and forgiveness.”

The book spans Allison’s birth, challenging life with her adoptive family, motherhood, reunions, and ultimately finds Allison in a peaceful place. You can purchase Allison’s book [here](#).

2024 Support Groups

Our peer support groups are a powerful way to for people impacted by adoption to learn, grow and heal. Our experienced and compassionate facilitators have lived experience of adoption.

We offer three different groups:

Mother’s Morning Tea - for mothers who have experienced separation from their children by adoption.

Adoptee Support Group - for adopted people.

Open Support Groups - are open to anyone affected by adoption. You are welcome to bring along a friend / family member for support.

All groups are held on the ground floor of 505 Bowen Terrace, New Farm. Please arrive before the scheduled time, as doors are locked once the group begins to ensure the safety and privacy of participants.

The below dates are our scheduled meeting dates for 2024. Participation at the groups is free.

Mothers’ Morning Tea - a regular morning tea from 10am to 12 noon - 11 Sept & 20 Nov.

Adoptee Support Group - (1.30pm - 3.30pm) 14 Sept & 9 Nov.

Open Support Group - (1.30pm to 3.30pm) 12 Oct, 14 Dec.

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

Thanks so much for the work you do and how you help people.

Adopted person, August 2024