



# Alliance for Forgotten Australians

Patrons: Andrew Murray and Jack Thompson

## MEDIA RELEASE

28 August 2008

### **Four years on, Forgotten Australians call for healing and a better response for institutional care survivors**

Saturday 30 August marks four years since the Senate released its report, *Forgotten Australians: A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children*. Senators wept as they told of the cruel and brutal treatment and criminal neglect of young children in institutions that were supposed to care for them. They spoke of the long term outcomes for survivors of that childhood abuse, including isolation, an inability to trust others, difficulty in forming and maintaining relationships, trauma and depression, low education levels, widespread illiteracy and poor physical health.

Four years on, the national coalition, the Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA), says the responses from governments are still uneven and inadequate. The Alliance, the peak body representing people who were raised in orphanages, Homes or other forms of out-of-home care in the 20th century, called today for an immediate, positive and comprehensive response to all 39 Inquiry recommendations.

Ms Caroline Carroll, Chair of AFA, said today: "As children, many of us experienced horrors in the places that were supposed to care for us: serious and often criminal physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and assault. As adult survivors, we need acknowledgement of and an apology for the harm that was done to us. We have an apology from all States now and are hoping the Prime Minister will also acknowledge and apologise for the failure of the Federal Government to protect us.

"We appreciate the operational support given to AFA by the Australian Government. We are also asking for redress and targeted services from the Australian Government and all States. Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania have instituted redress schemes; South Australia is considering its response to the Mullighan Inquiry. Victoria and NSW have not instituted any redress scheme, though there is some new funding available for services in Victoria. The NSW response has been the most disappointing."

Ms Carroll added, "The Government was our guardian, but it was most commonly the people running the institutions who inflicted the brutal abuse. We also call on those past providers who have not yet apologised and instituted support programs to do so immediately. Forgotten Australians cannot afford to wait any longer."

For further information, contact Caroline Carroll on 03 9329 1247 or 0438 460 184 or the AFA Secretariat on 02 6273 4885 or 0407 343 741.