

Supporting Forgotten Australians

Information for organisations and services

Why do we empathise with an abused child, but not the adult they grew into? Childhood trauma lives inside a person. It can change them forever.

Forgotten Australians* are the adults who, as children, grew up in Australia's child institutions. The greater portion were abused either physically, sexually, emotionally, humiliated, neglected and/or abandoned – many experienced all forms of abuse and now manage chronic Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The person before you right now is a Forgotten Australian. What happened to them was not their fault. Please treat them with empathy.

Forgotten Australians can find it difficult to:

- stand in a queue
- be touched without permission
- be spoken down to
- have their movement restricted
- sit with their back to a door
- explain how they feel
- complete documentation.

You may wish to say something reassuring.

Forgotten Australians need to feel safe and heard when reaching out for support.



Forgotten Australians are not looking for sympathy. They want your understanding and support.

Please consider incorporating policies within your organisation or service to allow Forgotten Australians to identify themselves.

* Forgotten Australians may also be known as 'Pre-1990 Care Leavers' and other names.

Contact Open Place

If your organisation or service would like to know more about Forgotten Australians and how to support them, please contact the Open Place Community Education Coordinator to arrange a free presentation.

Call (03) 9421 6162, email info@openplace.org.au or visit openplace.org.au