

**Submission  
No 97**

## **INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA**

**Name:** Mr Shane Bouel

**Date Received:** 23 July 2023

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Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to submit my views and experiences as a child of adoption and forced adoption in Queensland, with a focus on the traumatic aspects of adoption on the infant at birth and their life. I wish to shed light on the glaring hypocrisy exhibited by state governments, including NSW, regarding their inaction towards adoptee advocacy and the significant emotional trauma caused by forced adoption.

#### The Trauma Aspects of Adoption on Infants:

As an adoptee, I have borne witness to the profound trauma experienced by infants who are forcibly separated from their biological families. The emotional scars from this traumatic event can manifest throughout an adoptee's life, impacting their sense of identity, belonging, and emotional well-being. Despite advancements in understanding the psychological impact of forced adoption, all state governments across the nation, including NSW & Queensland, have failed to take significant actions to address these issues.

#### Adoption and Forced Adoption: Hidden Agendas and Inaction:

The inaction and indifference of state governments, including NSW, towards adoptees and forced adoption raise concerns about hidden agendas to marginalize and silence this vulnerable community. The absence of respect, acknowledgement, and inclusion of adoptee experiences in initiatives like Multicultural Queensland Month is a glaring oversight that perpetuates feelings of abandonment and invisibility. State governments must address forced adoption and its long-lasting impacts, ensuring that the unique challenges faced by adoptees are recognized and addressed.

#### Disregard for Birth Certificates:

In the 21st century, it is disheartening to witness archaic policies surrounding adoption that persist in Queensland and other states. Adoptees are deprived of accurate representation of their biological families on their birth certificates, perpetuating the deception that adoptive parents gave birth to them. This deliberate erasure of adoptees' heritage and identity denies them the right to know their true parentage, leading to feelings of confusion and disconnection from their origins. It is essential for all state governments to recognise the psychological and emotional consequences of such policies and take decisive actions to provide adoptees with accurate birth certificates that reflect their biological heritage.

Young children, especially those who have experienced trauma or loss, may struggle to form secure attachments with their adoptive parents or caregivers. Trusting others and forming healthy relationships may be challenging for them due to early life experiences.

Adoption indeed sits at the centre of complex relationships and dynamics. For a young vulnerable child who has been adopted, understanding and navigating relationships can be

extremely challenging and emotionally taxing, even disorientating. Children placed in adoption may face unique circumstances that can affect their ability to determine what constitutes a proper relationship and how the behaviour of others impacts their experiences. Basically, they don't know what is normal.

In light of the above concerns, I strongly urge the Select Committee on Birth Trauma to expand the scope of the inquiry to include adoptee advocacy and the trauma aspects of adoption on infants and their lives. The emotional trauma experienced by adoptees as a result of forced adoption is a pressing issue that requires immediate attention and meaningful reform. I call upon the committee to advocate for concrete actions that protect the rights and well-being of adoptees in NSW, Queensland and other states, fostering a more inclusive and compassionate society for all.

Furthermore, I urge NSW and other state governments to recognize the urgency of this matter and take decisive actions to rectify the injustice endured by adoptees. It is time for state governments to stop turning a blind eye to adoptee advocacy and take immediate action to address the trauma caused by forced adoption. Adoptees deserve to be seen, heard, and included in discussions concerning their well-being and rights.

I am appalled and disheartened to be called Australian.

Regrds

Shane Bouel