



Unfinished Business

Final report of the 'Unfinished Business: Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation' forums, held between May and September of 2008 in Aboriginal communities throughout Victoria.

December 2008

Stolen Generations Victoria

Stolen Generations Victoria

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Stolen Generations Victoria Ltd was incorporated on the 17 June 2005, following recommendations from the Stolen Generations Taskforce Report. The taskforce was commissioned by the Victorian Government and identified the need for an independent, community controlled Stolen Generations organisation for Victoria.

Stolen Generations Victoria is a non-profit community based organisation focused on addressing the needs of any person of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent removed or separated from their community, family, language, land and culture (or majority thereof).

Stolen Generations Victoria currently receives funding only from the Victorian State Government. Stolen Generations Victoria are rebuilding and re-establishing their place in the service sector for Stolen Generations members.

There are a number of organisations funded to provide a range of services to members of the Stolen Generations. While these services are aware of one another and refer to each other, they are not connected in a manner that would enable the provision of a comprehensive service system to members.

The development of such a linked up and co-ordinated service system is one of the challenges that Stolen Generations Victoria will undertake over the next 12 months alongside existing public education, community consultation, government advocacy and healing services the organisation is involved with on an ongoing basis.

Stolen Generations Victoria

34 Wurruk Avenue

Preston 3072

Victoria

PO Box 101

Preston 3072

Victoria

Phone: (03) 9470 3477

Fax: (03) 9470 3499

www.sgv.org.au



*Front and inside cover: 'Sorry the First Step' spelled out in candles the night before Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's historic apology.
(Photo: Alan Porritt, AAP)*

Above: Staff at Stolen Generations Victoria (back row) Brad Brown, Alister McKeich, Jade Johnson, Troy Brickell (front row) Lyn Austin, (chairperson) and Jeannie McIntyre



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Acknowledgements

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Stolen Generations Victoria appreciates the contributions of FaHCSIA and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, who provided the funding to enable us to undertake these important and significant forums.¹

Thanks to all the Bringing Them Home workers and local Aboriginal community controlled organisations that assisted in getting the word out to members and facilitating their attendance at all sixteen forums.

Thanks to the staff of Stolen Generations Victoria for their tireless dedication to the process and enabling these forums to be as successful and informative as they have been. Special thanks goes to chairperson Lyn Austin, who volunteered her time to personally connect with members of the Stolen Generations across the state.

Thanks to all members of the Stolen Generations, their partners, children, family and community members who shared their stories, thoughts, tears and ideas at the forums. This report could not have been made without your honesty and bravery.

Finally, sincere thanks to community development officer Jade Johnson for his professionalism in arranging all forums and all related needs from the packs provided to participants through to venue and food organisation and accommodation arrangements for staff.

Unfinished Business was prepared by Jeannie McIntyre (Senior Programs Manager) and Alister McKeich (Senior Policy and Education Officer).



Smoking Ceremony, Canberra, February 13 2008 (Photo: SGV Staff)

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Unfinished Business: Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation forums were organised as a means of close consultation with members of the Stolen Generations throughout Victoria.

Work performed by Stolen Generations Victoria staff since the organisation's conception in 2005 showed that the needs of those members were not being adequately met.

Members of the Stolen Generations have a number of needs and face a variety of challenges – both complex and varied. Such needs and challenges include social and emotional well being issues, poor physical health, low education and low job prospects, a lack of cultural awareness and a lack of empowerment.

16 forums were completed and nearly 200 community members consulted. The forums aimed to better understand such needs and challenges and listen to ideas and suggestions as to how better meet those needs and support those challenges - solutions put forward *by members, for members.*

On behalf of those members consulted, Stolen Generations Victoria make the following 12 recommendations:

Reparations: *That nationwide reparations, under the current Stolen Generations Reparations Tribunal Bill, be seriously considered by both the Victorian State and Australian Federal Governments.*

Brokerage: *A brokerage fund immediately be established to financially support members of the Stolen Generations. This would allow them to undertake a range of activities currently unavailable to them due to lack of resources.*

Access: *Access to health, housing, education and legal services be arranged to ensure members have their needs appropriately met.*

Headstones: *Immediate funding be provided to enable all members of the Stolen Generations who have passed away have a headstone to mark their place of burial.*

Memorials: *In consultation with members of the Stolen Generations, a memorial or memorials to be erected to remember those who have passed away.*

Common Access Guidelines: *The role of Stolen Generations Victoria in the Common Access Guidelines Project be resourced appropriately to enable better access of records for members.*

Counseling: *Culturally competent counseling services must be made available to all members of the Stolen Generations.*

Intake Forms: *Services should amend their intake forms to denote whether a recipient is a member of the Stolen Generations.*

Restoration of Culture: *Funding should be provided to enable members of the Stolen Generations to visit their traditional country on a regular basis and have access to language and cultural restoration programs. Funding should also be provided to enable the organisation of Welcome Home Ceremonies.*

Healing Centres: *Healing centres should be created in order for members of the Stolen Generations to gather and share their own sense of space in their local communities.*

Education: *Education is vital for the health and well being of members of the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.*

Treaty: *The Federal government should seriously consider negotiating a treaty with the first Australians.*

As well as the above recommendations, one of the prime aspects of this report is to state that issues concerning the Stolen Generations are felt and experienced across the wider Aboriginal community. To address the above recommendations will assist not only those first generations Stolen Generations members, but all Aboriginal families and communities.

Almost every Aboriginal family in Victoria has been affected by past child removal policies in some way. Alongside massacre, war and disease, the removal of Aboriginal children in Victoria for over 100 years has been one of the biggest contributors to Aboriginal dispossession and dislocation. Thus, the Stolen Generations experience is still widely felt and is demonstrated in the 'gap' that exists between Aboriginal non-Aboriginal health, wellbeing and life expectancy.

Stolen Generations Victoria has a small team of committed staff members who are engaged on a number of levels to further the task at hand. Some of our activities include consultation with State and Federal government representatives; healing and support work with members and their families; education in primary and secondary schools; and community education.

With close links in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, Stolen Generations Victoria is an organisation uniquely positioned to address and achieve the 12 recommendations. To assist the Stolen Generations is to assist the Aboriginal community at large and will go a long way towards reconciliation, and will turn a symbolic gesture – ‘sorry’ – into one with substance and a lasting commitment to change.



Uncle Talgium 'Chocko' Edwards (Photo: Alison McColl-Bullock, iCatching Photography)

Introduction

'Unfinished Business: Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation'

Between May and September 2008, Stolen Generations Victoria facilitated the 'Unfinished Business: Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation' forums. The forums aimed to communicate directly with members of the Stolen Generations within Victoria, hear their stories, share their tears and ascertain their needs.

Bringing Them Home (the 1997 report which first heralded the plight of the Stolen Generations), informed the community that the Stolen Generations' needs are complex and varied. Stolen Generations Victoria's report, entitled *Unfinished Business*, highlights those needs as found in Victoria over ten years on, as voiced by members of the Stolen Generations living in communities throughout Victoria.

This is not simply an issue of a hundred years ago. Victoria was one of the first states to formally institutionalise Aboriginal child removal policies (1869) and one of the last to dissolve them (1989). That being the case, almost every Aboriginal family and community in Victoria has in some way been affected by such child removal policies.

The Forums

Sixteen forums were held throughout Victorian communities with 198 members of the Victorian Aboriginal community attending of which 97 were first generation members of the Stolen Generations. The remainder were the partners, family members, adult children and supporters of those members.

The forums were arranged in partnership with the Bringing Them Home Program and their workers (BTH workers). This provided an opportunity for Stolen Generations Victoria to connect with staff from the BTH program and also for members of the Stolen Generations to meet collectively with their local BTH worker.

Members were able to discuss and share ideas, views and opinions as to how the BTH workers can assist and support members in the future. The forums also provided an insight into the limitations experienced by BTH workers and exposed a range of capacity issues within the program.²

The forums were a huge success. For many members, this was the first opportunity they had been offered to meet others who had also been removed as children and provided with an opportunity to have their voices heard. There were a few tears, many shared stories and of course, lively discussions as how best members can be assisted in their 'journey of healing' by the Victorian and Federal Governments, the Aboriginal community, and Stolen Generations Victoria.

Members also believed that responsibility lay not only with government, but with organisations including churches instrumental in various abuses perpetrated once the removals had occurred. These organisations must now make contributions toward the healing of past injustices.

Unfinished Business

Unfinished Business provides government, and other relevant organisations, with an understanding of members' needs. It also provides practical and achievable recommendations to enhance our collective desire to see improved outcomes for members of the Stolen Generations.

Members of the Stolen Generations reacted to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Apology on February 13, 2008, with an array of emotions – joy, celebration, anger and tears. Whatever the reaction, all members would agree the apology was extremely important, well overdue and greatly appreciated.

However, an apology is only the first step. *Unfinished Business* offers insights and raises questions about the next steps - what priorities should be considered to continue the path of reconciliation? How does government – both State and Federal - move from the symbolic to the practical (and very necessary)?

Unfinished Business outlines the major themes raised at the forums and provides a number of recommendations for consideration. These recommendations are grouped according to theme and coupled with an action plan where relevant.³



Stolen Generations Victoria members, family and staff celebrate the Prime Minister's apology, February 13, 2008 (Photo: SGV Staff)

Closing The Gap

Closing The Gap

Although the 'Close the Gap' policy of both the Federal and State governments had not been formalised when the forums were planned, it became quickly and sharply evident that recommendations arising from the forums were aligned with the principles found within this policy.

'Close the Gap', initiated by the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Oxfam Australia, is a policy briefing paper which "provides solutions towards solving the health crisis facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders."

The paper went on to say:

"a comparative analysis of national health data for Indigenous populations in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America (USA) finds that Australia ranks bottom in the league table of first-world nations working to improve the health and life expectancy of Indigenous people. The key health indicators make it plain:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders die nearly 20 years younger than non-Indigenous Australians. This is in stark contrast to the USA, Canada and New Zealand where the life expectancy for Indigenous people is approximately seven years less than the non-Indigenous population.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infant mortality is three times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians and than 50 per cent higher than for Indigenous children in the USA and New Zealand.
- These health indicators are not only a national scandal: they are an international scandal when compared to recent health advances in Indigenous populations in other first-world countries." 4

The Australian Federal government, led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, and the Victorian State government, led by Premier John Brumby, recently signed a commitment to 'close the gap' and address these significant shortfalls in Indigenous health and life expectancy.

It is the firm belief of Stolen Generations Victoria that the implementation of all recommendations made by *Unfinished Business*, both State and Federal governments will more readily achieve their commitments. This belief becomes particularly poignant when remembering that almost every Aboriginal family and community within Victoria has in some way been affected by past child removal policies. These effects continue to this day.

At all forums, the trans-generational impacts of the Stolen Generations were discussed. It has long been known that child removal effects not only the first generations, but second and third. This will arise in many ways; most notably, many members spoke of their inability to forge close relationships with their children and also experienced parenting difficulties due to their own upbringing. This, in turn, can be then passed down to their children.

This being the case, the majority of points made under the parameters of Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation can be applied to members' families and communities. Although members of the Stolen Generations are of prime concern and priority, it must be recognised that the challenges they face are shared; in turn, the recommendations offered in *Unfinished Business* must be made with due consideration for family and communities.

Members of the Stolen Generations face numerous social and emotional problems as a direct result of their childhood experiences, such as welfare dependency, substance abuse, relationship and parenting issues, and premature death, often from suicide. Many also continue to suffer from loss of identity, feelings of profound grief and loss and abandonment, fear of authority and a lack of trust and security, resulting in mental health issues (such as depression and bipolar disorders) and a range of physical health issues including diabetes and heart disease.

These complex disorders have an impact on Aboriginal communities across Victoria. Family and community members, children and grandchildren all experience a degree of difficulty in their lives as a result of past child removal policies. This manifests itself in terms of poor health, poor social and emotional well being, lower opportunities in education, fractured family relationships, and of course, disposessions and disengagement from land, culture, community and language.

All of these facets contribute the 'gap' that exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Victoria. The recommendations contained in *Unfinished Business* provide ways to address these 'gaps' and contribute towards rehabilitation and reconciliation. If the state and federal governments are serious about 'closing the gap' they would do well to consider and implement recommendations made in *Unfinished Business*.

The Forums

Purpose

In the lead up to the forums, members clearly stated they wanted an opportunity to come together and talk about what they would like to see as the next steps following the apology – ‘sorry’ being the first step on the journey of healing and an important step towards lasting reconciliation.

As stated in the introductory paragraphs, many members of the Stolen Generations have intense and complex needs and many of the recommendations made in *Bringing Them Home* have yet to be realised. The purpose of the forums was to discuss with members how best to address these needs, specifically by:

- Reflecting on the apology made by the Prime Minister on 13th February, 2008 and deliberating on the phrase ‘unfinished business’.
- Providing an opportunity for all members of the Stolen Generations to discuss ideas and provide direction to the organisation under the headings of reparations, restitution and rehabilitation – the ‘Three Rs’.
- Bringing together Stolen Generations Victoria staff, Bringing Them Home workers and members of the Stolen Generations to critically engage a plan of action.

Unfinished Business and the ‘Three Rs’

The title ‘Unfinished Business’ communicates that, while the apology was appreciated and well overdue, it is *not* the closing chapter in that part of our nation’s history. It also accurately reflects the fact that Stolen Generations Victoria still want to see the implementation of all 54 recommendations made in *Bringing Them Home*, a task which is a long way from completion.⁵

The ‘Three Rs’ have all been taken directly from recommendations made by *Bringing Them Home*:

- ‘Reparations’ refers to an acknowledgement of injustice and the need for these injustices to be rectified through methods such as monetary compensation.

- 'Restitution' refers to the restoration (as best possible) of things that were lost through separation – culture, language, land and community.
- 'Rehabilitation' refers to the serious mental, physical, social and emotional problems many members face, and the need for these health issues to be addressed.

Presentation

The forums were held in functions centres and in the Aboriginal cooperatives. Morning tea and lunch were provided in order to make the forums a relaxed occasion and assist members to feel comfortable.

All forum attendees received an 'Unfinished Business' t-shirt and bag with a range of information pamphlets, brochures and handouts from organisations such as Link Up Victoria, Koorie Heritage Trust, Public Records Office and Stolen Generations Victoria.

All forums began with an acknowledgement of country and a general introduction to Stolen Generations Victoria for those who may not be familiar with the organisation's activities.

Members were informed as to the purpose of the forums and a power point presentation was shown in order to demonstrate some of the activities Stolen Generations Victoria are involved in and to promote discussion as per 'Unfinished Business' and the 'Three Rs'.⁶

The presentation highlighted the need for Stolen Generations Victoria to rebuild and re-assess its activities and the importance of community consultation in that process. It was also noted that Stolen Generations Victoria adheres to the original recommendations made in the *Bringing Them Home* report and that the organisation were working with the Bringing Them Home workers in order to assess and address members' needs.

The need for local support groups in each area was discussed and members were asked what they would like to see in a support group. These support groups are in the process of being set up in each regional area to meet the needs of members in that community.

The Common Access Guidelines and the Wilam Naling report were then presented, demonstrating that Stolen Generations Victoria members will be able to access official records, such as birth certificates or government papers, via the organisation. Under the Common Access Guidelines, members will also be provided with professional support when obtaining such records, given the sensitive and emotional nature of some documents.⁷

Discussion

Reparations, Restitution, Rehabilitation

In order to gain a clear understanding of members' views, ideas and needs, a discussion was held under each heading of the 'Three Rs' – reparations, restitution and rehabilitation.

Each of the 'Three Rs' were discussed and members were asked for their ideas, concerns and questions as to what Stolen Generations Victoria can do on behalf of them in relation to each of the themes.

The forum notes reveal each point made by members (and noted by SGV staff) as per their thoughts as to each 'R'.⁸

Overall, many of the answers and ideas presented by Stolen Generations members were very similar, highlighting specific needs consistent throughout each community. Recommendations that relate directly to members' answers are made later in this report.

It was also interesting to note that, as a side product to the forums, recommendations and suggestions arose as to how best improve the Bringing Them Home program to more suitably meet members' needs. This is also discussed later in *Unfinished Business*, in Appendix 2.

Reparations

The 1997 *Bringing Them Home* report recommended that reparations be granted to all members of the Stolen Generations. Reparations include (but are not restricted to) funding for education, assistance to return to country, the establishment of language, culture and history centres, as well as monetary compensation.

Monetary compensation, as recommended in *Bringing Them Home*, should be awarded as per the van Boven principles, which require 10 heads of damage be addressed.⁹

In Australia, the Stolen Generations Reparations Tribunal Bill addressing the need for comprehensive repatriations is currently under review following the rejection of Senator Bartlett's 2008 Stolen Generations Compensation Bill.¹⁰

These issues were discussed, as was the example of Bruce Trevorrow's personal injury claim (and subsequent victory) in South Australia alongside the recent case in Tasmania in which the state government awarded compensation to over 100 claimants.

Members were encouraged to voice their opinions regarding reparations, and how best the government, and other organisations, could address this aspect. For the majority of members who participated in the forums, the following represents their views regarding reparations:

- A national reparations scheme be introduced which addresses the specific needs of the Stolen Generations including land, return to country, health and well being, education and community development. Monetary compensation should also be included in this.
- Should monetary compensation be granted, a national compensation scheme should be introduced similar to the one in Tasmania. However, it was noted that, should such a scheme be implemented, the Federal Government was not therefore absolved from any further responsibility with regard to the future needs of the Stolen Generations.
- The process of submitting a personal injury claim (as in the case of Bruce Trevorrow) is too long, complex and emotionally destructive for the majority of members.
- Members require legal advice with regard to their rights as potential claimants, and require more information regarding the parliamentary process with respect to reparations and compensation laws.
- Other forms of reparations were recommended. For many members, cash payments were not a priority, but a fund to address needs specific to the Stolen Generations. These included: provision of appropriate health services; funds to purchase land to create healing and cultural centres (where members can feel safe and supported); educational scholarships; funds to travel to visit family or attend funerals.
- Many members noted that while they could get support for the original reunion with their family and or country through the Link Up program, there was no subsequent support to maintain the connections made. There is a definite need for brokerage funding to be available to enable members to maintain connections to their family and country.

- Many members expressed their desire to see headstones placed on unmarked graves and for memorials to be erected to acknowledge past members of the Stolen Generations.
- The need for a treaty to be negotiated if true reparations were to be made was identified very strongly in one of the forums.

“Closing the gap - the gap in health and life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people - is about equality. Reparations are about justice.”

Restitution

The experience for most members of the Stolen Generations is that they lost a great deal in the process of their removal. This includes links to land, language, culture and community.

Other aspects of their life were also lost in the process. The physical and psychological health of many members has been affected and there are also lost opportunities in education and employment as a direct result of members' experiences.

Restitution aims to re-establish (to the fullest extent possible) those things that were lost as a result of being forcibly removed as a child. This can be achieved in a number of ways, as discussed by members around the state:

- Links to family should be re-instated with assistance and support. This can be difficult in a practical sense and disruptive and challenging in an emotional sense. Counselors and social and emotional support workers should assist this process. Family History services (such as Koorie Heritage Trust, National Archives Australia and the Public Records Office of Victoria) can assist with tracing family members but there is a need for ongoing emotional support throughout the reunion process.

“It all comes back to having our land
and our own sense of place.”

- Personal records, identification papers and certificates should be more readily available, without cost and with assistance. Support should be available for those members accessing their records, as some records contain sensitive and offensive information. Easier access (and emotional support) assists in re-establishment of identity for members.
- Links to community need to be re-established. Often members are isolated within the Aboriginal community as they are not 'known'. Members suggested that the Aboriginal community should be made more aware of the challenges and issues Stolen Generations members face.
- Members also suggested that data should be collected by services on the number of Stolen Generation' people that are requesting a service. Intake forms could have a field that identifies if a person is a member of the Stolen Generations.
- Links with culture, land and language need to be addressed and re-established as much of this has been lost. There were many suggestions as to how to address this, including: welcome home ceremonies; camps; establishing cultural centres; provision of 'cultural education classes' in which elders and community members could present on topics such as language, art and music; documenting oral histories.
- Education. Many members feel that their chances to receive quality education (and therefore future employment opportunities) has been lost as a result of their experiences. Education and training should be made available to the members and their families in order to re-instate and increase opportunities in the future.
- Return to country. Members should have assistance and access to their traditional lands. This can be a complex issue as some members were transferred interstate as a child and therefore have financial difficulty getting back to country. Suggestions were also made to visit other traditional lands and meet members of the Stolen Generations from other areas, such as the Kimberley.

"We need to pass the culture on to the kids. I'm worried that my lack of knowledge about my own culture means my children - and my grandchildren - will miss out. It will all be lost."

Rehabilitation

As already stipulated, many members experience physical and emotional well being challenges as a direct result of their removal from family, community and culture at a young age. Such ailments range from poor physical health to depression, anger management issues and many other symptoms.

Other effects that removal has had may be found in parenting difficulties and a fear that the member may have their own children removed as well. Often, the persons' own removal and displacement from family generates difficulties within the person's own family, which may result in increased chances of second generation child removal.

The following points were discussed in relation to members' rehabilitation:

- Need for counselors. This was almost a universal request from members as they feel as if their needs in this area are not being met. Members of the Stolen Generations have a variety of basic and complex needs which require ongoing counseling by a sensitive, holistic and professional counselor who has a good understanding of members' needs.
- Need for support groups. Many members felt that a monthly support group would address their needs. Many members stated they felt isolated in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and would feel more comfortable speaking about their experiences to other members, in a safe, supportive environment.
- Interim certificate of Aboriginality. Many members, due to difficulties in accessing records, do not as yet have the right documents to prove their Aboriginality. This problem is compounded due to the fact that many members are not 'known' in the Aboriginal community which also creates a block to obtaining a certificate of Aboriginality and therefore access to Aboriginal services. Many spoke of a need for an 'interim' certificate that would allow them access to those services for a time until their certificate of Aboriginality can be issued. Some members, removed due to their Aboriginality, are now required to prove they are Aboriginal, which can be difficult due to the lost connections resulting from forcible removal.

“There is a need for counselors to be elders who have
'been there' and really understand.
Elders were traditionally the ones you could talk to.”

- Holistic healing projects. Many members spoke of the need for holistic healing projects such as trips to the country, community events, cultural awareness training, music and art projects, and bush tucker camps. This type of healing was considered as a necessary step forward for members on their 'journey of healing'.
- Many members have begun to document their experiences as part of their 'journey of healing'. Some want the opportunity to publish their stories but require support to both organise and fund this.
- Community education and interaction. Many members felt that their difficulties were compounded as the Aboriginal and mainstream communities did not fully understand their experience or, at times, accept them into the community. Some members told how, when finding out their Aboriginal past, attempted to make connections with their local Aboriginal community but were rejected. This compounded an already existing low self esteem and other problems. Members felt that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community awareness should be raised.
- Healing Centres. Almost all members stated that healing centres should be established to address specifically the needs of members of the Stolen Generations. Many ideas were suggested as to the form of the healing centre (bush camp, land, community centre, historical building, cultural centre) but all members agreed that they were in need of a space where they would feel safe and accepted.

“Rehabilitation is required for the whole family.
Our children are affected with things like drug problems -
but it's also about showing affection to kids,
being a good parent can be difficult
- this can become cyclical”

Recommendations

1

Reparations *That nationwide reparations, under the current Stolen Generations Reparations Tribunal Bill, be seriously considered by both the Victorian State and Australian Federal Governments.*

After an initial rejection of Senator Bartlett's 2008 Stolen Generations Compensation Bill, a revised Stolen Generations Reparations Tribunal Bill was introduced in to the senate in September 2008. The new bill calls for reparations to be granted to members of the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

Reparations will include, but not be limited to, monetary compensation and will be decided upon by a six person 'reparations tribunal'. This is proposed as a nationwide scheme to be implemented by the Federal government.

2

Brokerage *A brokerage fund immediately be established to financially support members of the Stolen Generations. This would allow them to undertake a range of activities currently unavailable to them due to lack of resources.*

A brokerage fund could easily be established to support individual members with whatever they wanted to achieve. For some it may be assistance to purchase a computer; for others internet access; some members have requested funds to publish their story; some members require funding to visit family or community (beyond the first reunion) or attend a family funeral.

True self determination means members should be able to determine how they wish to spend brokerage funds within the parameters of 'Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation'.

Guidelines about how much and how often an individual member will be able to apply for funds and what purposes will be supported will need to be developed. Stolen Generations Victoria will administer this fund and will ensure all members of the Stolen Generation have equal access to this fund.

3

Access *Access to health, housing, education and legal services be arranged to ensure members have their needs appropriately met.*

Stolen Generations Victoria is currently exploring how we can better support member's access to services. This may even include the option of having services (such as counseling) operate out of our premises on a part-time basis. We are aware this will benefit our Melbourne members; however, other arrangements need to be explored for those members living in rural areas.

Another example would be the introduction of a 'Gold Card' for members of the Stolen Generations. This could be considered by governments to assist members in receiving priority access to a range of services they require yet currently find they have limited or no access to.

Services such as these include health care, housing, education and legal services. These services have been identified as those that member's experience the most difficulty in accessing.

4

Headstones *Immediate funding be provided to enable all members of the Stolen Generations who have passed away have a headstone to mark their place of burial.*

Those who had their identity stolen in life should have the right to an identity in death. It would be easy to ensure that no grave of a member of the Stolen Generations, or their immediate family, went unmarked.

During the forums it was mentioned time and again - the number of unmarked Aboriginal graves. To provide such graves with a headstone would go a long way towards the healing process.

Were funds provided to Stolen Generations Victoria, arrangements for the creation and placement of headstones would be made with, as a first priority, an Aboriginal owned business. Where this was not available, a company that would apprentice Aboriginal youth into the craft of masonry and creating headstones would be considered, as a means to develop skills within the Aboriginal community.

5

Memorials *In consultation with members of the Stolen Generations, a memorial or memorials to be erected to remember those who have passed away.*

The establishment of memorials to acknowledge those members of the Stolen Generations who have passed away should be erected on a number of sites.

Stolen Generations Victoria will undertake to collate all the names of members of the Stolen Generations who have passed away and whose family would like their names to be included on this memorial.

Stolen Generations Victoria will also liaise with local Aboriginal communities to erect local memorials as per the wishes of those community members. Funding for the memorial and engraving of names would be required.

6

Common Access Guidelines *The role of Stolen Generations Victoria in the Common Access Guidelines Project be resourced appropriately to enable better access of records for members.*

The Common Access Guidelines Project currently being undertaken by the Public Records Office of Victoria requires Stolen Generations Victoria to have the capacity to undertake the critical role of determining who will be able to access this service.

To undertake this responsibility competently, the required resources must be made available. This service will greatly assist members to be able to access their records in a streamlined and well supported manner.

This includes assisting members with obtaining records from a variety of sources, and providing adequate support to those members accessing and reading sensitive and potentially life changing material for the first time. Currently only limited services are in place and there is no mandatory system in place to ensure members are not left reading distressing material on their own.

7

Counseling *Cultural competent counseling services must be made available to all members of the Stolen Generations.*

Counselors, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, must be made available to all members of the Stolen Generations to access when needed. Currently there is only very limited access for ongoing counseling and members rarely receive counseling when they first identify the fact they actually require it.

Stolen Generations Victoria is ideally situated to enhance some of the existing services, particularly within the Bringing Them Home program. Stolen Generations Victoria would welcome the opportunity to work with OATSIH to enhance the delivery of services by that program. Stolen Generations Victoria is firmly of the view that a State-wide Coordinator, working in partnership with the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Regional Centre, is crucial to enhancing the services of this critical resource.

8

Intake Forms *Services should amend their intake forms to denote whether a recipient is a member of the Stolen Generations.*

This will assist in understanding service demand and to identify gaps in services. Since the introduction of forms that identify whether or not a person is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, a greater understanding of both the demand for services, and the provision of services, has been achieved by governments and service agencies.

Much of the annual government reporting, in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, is dependent on the collation of this data by various agencies.

Currently, data cannot determine how many Aboriginal people involved in these services are members of the Stolen Generations.

9

Restoration of Culture *Funding should be provided to enable members of the Stolen Generations to visit their traditional country on a regular basis and have access to language and cultural restoration programs. Funding should also be provided to enable the organisation of Welcome Home Ceremonies.*

Currently the definition of 'reunion' under the Link Up program is limited and does not enable members to have all their restoration needs met. Funding is required to allow members ongoing access to traditional lands in order to restore lost culture and language and to reconnect with family and community.

Programs should be made available whereby members who have lost knowledge of their language and culture have the opportunity to reconnect with these facets of their Aboriginality. These could include education programs, or visits to other Aboriginal communities to learn and share.

Stolen Generations Victoria would work with local Aboriginal communities to arrange 'Welcome Home' ceremonies for those members who were lost to the community as children. These ceremonies, if well planned and supported, will facilitate significant healing, not only for those members removed but their families and community.

10

Healing Centres *Healing centres should be created in order for members of the Stolen Generations to gather and share their own sense of space in their local communities.*

Across the state different communities had a range of ideas about what would best meet their needs and these should be heard and respected. A one size and shape healing service will not work.

Further consultation with members of the Stolen Generations should be undertaken to determine what form a healing centre should take in their community. Funding to enable these to be established and maintained should be then provided.

Stolen Generations Victoria is well positioned to undertake the necessary consultation and ensure that the needs of the local community regarding a healing centre are met.

11

Education *Education is vital for the health and well being of members of the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.*

This requires education on two levels: the education of the community about the Stolen Generations (so that people can have better understanding of the issues and difficulties members may face); and education for the members themselves, in order to have greater job opportunities for them and their families.

Due to the fractured upbringing of many members of the Stolen Generations, adequate schooling was not achieved. This has caused an obvious lack of employment opportunities, which eventually filters down to their children and grandchildren. Education programs and access to education should be funded for both the member and their families.

12

Treaty *The Federal government should seriously consider negotiating a treaty with the first Australians.*

A government Taskforce is established with Stolen Generations' member representatives from Aboriginal communities across the nation to work towards a treaty with the Aboriginal Community and Government.

This is clearly a long term project and will require significant political will and funds to be realised. It will however, once and for all, reconcile Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia.

Conclusion

The Way Forward

On May 26 1997, the Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal children from their families released the Bringing Them Home Report. This report contained 54 recommendations of which, in 2008, only a handful have been implemented.

Stolen Generations Victoria is uniquely positioned to work with government and other relevant agencies to change this unfortunate state of affairs.

With the Government's commitment to 'closing the gap' and improving life outcomes for Aboriginal communities, this report offers a way forward to achieve positive outcomes for members of the Stolen Generations.

Stolen Generations Victoria will continue to work with a range of organisations to better meet the needs of our members. We will continue to work in partnership with Government toward achieving these outcomes.

In the words of Kevin Rudd, the Prime Minister of Australia, who, on February 13 2008 made an historic apology to members of the Stolen Generations:

"Let it not become a moment of mere sentimental reflection. Let us take it with both hands and allow this day, this day of national reconciliation, to become one of those rare moments in which we might just be able to transform the way in which the nation thinks about itself, whereby the injustice administered to these Stolen Generations in the name of these, our parliaments, causes all of us to reappraise, at the deepest level of our beliefs, the real possibility of reconciliation at large." 11

Members of the Stolen Generations, their children, families and supporters, need to see that the apology was not merely sentiment, and that the commitments made on that day toward closing the gap and embracing the oldest living culture in the world are fulfilled.

Endnotes

1. A detailed account of this expenditure can be found in Appendix One
2. Suggestions for improving the Bringing Them Home program can be found in Appendix Two
3. Stolen Generations Victoria are still strongly committed to the implementation of all recommendations made by the 1997 *Bringing Them Home* report; therefore, *all* recommendations made herein are consistent with those of *Bringing Them Home*.
4. *Close the Gap: Solutions to the Indigenous Health Crisis facing Australia* (Oxfam Australia, April 2007)
5. All 54 recommendations made in Bringing Them Home can be found online: www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/bth_report/report/appendices_9.html
6. A copy of this powerpoint can be found in Appendix Three
7. The Common Access Guidelines are an initiative recommended in the Wilam Naling report ('wilam naling' meaning 'knowing who you are' in Boon wurrung/ Woi wurrung language of the Kulin nation). The guidelines recommend that agreements be made between organizations such as Births, Deaths and Marriages, the Koorie Heritage Trust, the Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) and Stolen Generations Victoria, whereby members of the Stolen Generations can access government, private and personal records through a system much simpler than that already in place. Such a system recognizes the difficulties for many people in obtaining records, and that 'knowing who you are', through the obtaining and understanding of personal records, is a vital step in the 'journey of healing' for many members. Stolen Generations Victoria, in partnership with PROV, are currently working towards implementing the Common Access Guidelines.
8. Detailed notes from each individual forum can be found in Appendix Four
9. According to the van Boven principles, upon which recommendations for monetary compensation were made in *Bringing Them Home*, ten 'heads of damage' should be addressed when determining a monetary amount in individual cases. Each individual case should be assessed, and compensated, according to whether, in the claimants traumatic experience, the claimant suffered: racial discrimination; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; pain and suffering; physical, sexual and/ or emotional abuse; disruption of family life; loss of cultural rights and fulfillment; loss of native title rights; labour exploitation; economic loss; loss of opportunities. (See Chris Cunneen 'Reparations and Restorative Justice' in Heather Strang and John Braithwaite eds *Restorative Justice and Civil Society*, Cambridge University Press, 2001)
10. It is interesting to note that the Canadian government has approved monetary compensation for that country's indigenous Stolen Generations.
11. 'Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples', Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra, February 13, 2008

Expenditure

Budget for Unfinished Business: Reparations, Restitution and Rehabilitation

Funding Provided:

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria	\$30,000
FaCSHIA	\$16,500
Total	\$46,500

Expenditure:

May 26 Forum Costs:

Facilitation and Catering	\$4235
T-shirts	\$2280
Show Bags	\$1080
Entertainment	\$3137
Total	\$10,732

May 26 Federation Square Costs:

Fed square and catering	\$4919
Entertainment	\$9431
Total	\$14,350

Shared Forum and Fed Square:	\$4,250
Total:	\$29,332

Unfinished Business Regional Forums

Project Workers Salary:	\$6009
Venue Hire and Catering:	\$7710
Accommodation:	\$2000
Travel Costs	\$2209
Total	\$17928

Grand Total:	\$47,260
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Bringing Them Home Program

The Bringing Them Home Program

The Bringing Them Home (BTH) Program is funded by the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH). The program provides workers within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) across Victoria provide support to individuals, families and communities affected by past removal policies and practices.

BTH staff respond to the needs of a broad range of clients, including those removed and those who were left behind, as well as the children, grandchildren and relatives of all those affected by separation policy and practice. Currently there are 15 BTH workers across the state.

Because the inter-generational effects of removal practices are widespread and cause emotional harm throughout families and across generations, entire Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are potentially in need of counseling due to the effects of past removal policies. The BTH workers are employed on a full-time or part-time basis and their main role is to respond to the needs members of Stolen Generations.

Bringing Them Home Workers

At a number of the forums it was noted that some of the Bringing Them Home workers were unable to fully meet the needs of members due to under resourcing and lack of support.

The demands on the local Bringing Them Home workers are high and involve a number of duties and in some cases, high levels of travel. Many BTH workers are not trained counselors and are often required to undertake a role for which they are under skilled and not adequately supported.

This not to suggest that BTH workers are unable to perform well in their job, but that they would be able to better fulfill their role and meet members' needs with the proper training, assistance and support.

What's already in place?

Stolen Generations Victoria is working in partnership with Bringing Them Home workers to ensure that all members of the Stolen Generations have access to a support group. Support groups currently meet on a monthly basis in Melbourne and Echuca and assist members in healing through discussion and group activities.

Stolen Generations Victoria have identified some capacity issues for some Bringing Them Home workers and will undertake to provide group facilitation training to those workers and develop appropriate debriefing and support mechanisms for workers over the coming months.

There are also issues in members being able to attend activities organised by the support groups. Many members are fearful to travel on their own by public transport and funding for a bus or cab fund is required to ensure all members wishing to engage in their local support group are able to.

Suggestions for improving the Bringing Them Home program

- A Bringing Them Home state wide coordinator to be based with Stolen Generations Victoria and work with all the Bringing Them Home workers to assist them in ensuring the delivery of high quality and consistent services to members across the State.
- Appropriate levels of resource be made available in each Bringing Them Home location. This will involve the availability of both male and female workers and the establishment of support networks for the BTH workers, both informal and formal.
- An understanding of the travel aspects of the role and the out-of-hours requirements of the role and ensuring workers are appropriately remunerated on these counts.
- Given the holistic view of need of members of the Stolen Generations, Bringing Them Home workers must be adequately trained and prepared for their roles. This should include relevant training as counselors (grief and loss) and also the ability to respond to drug and alcohol issues, anger management issues, gambling issues and an ability to identify when a member's mental health needs are in need of a psychological or psychiatric intervention.
- All Bringing Them Home workers should have basic first aid training, given the range of serious health needs members of the Stolen Generations experience.

Unfinished Business Powerpoint

UNFINISHED BUSINESS



REPARATIONS, RESTITUTION AND
REHABILITATION



STOLEN GENERATIONS VICTORIA


- Currently we are rebuilding
- Reviewing our Activities and Developing our vision for the future
- Exploring linkages and partnerships with services that support Stolen Generations Members
- Developing Information for Members regarding Compensation and other areas of interest
- Reconnecting with the service sector and listening to what you want.

STOLEN GENERATIONS VICTORIA

- Revisiting the 54 recommendations under the Bringing Them Home Report and listening to your priorities in regard to these.
- Exploring how we can contribute to supporting and strengthening the work of the BTH workers across the state.
- Working with BTH workers to establish/enhance Stolen Generations Support groups in communities.
- Establishing a list of counsellors to be available to work with Stolen Generation members.

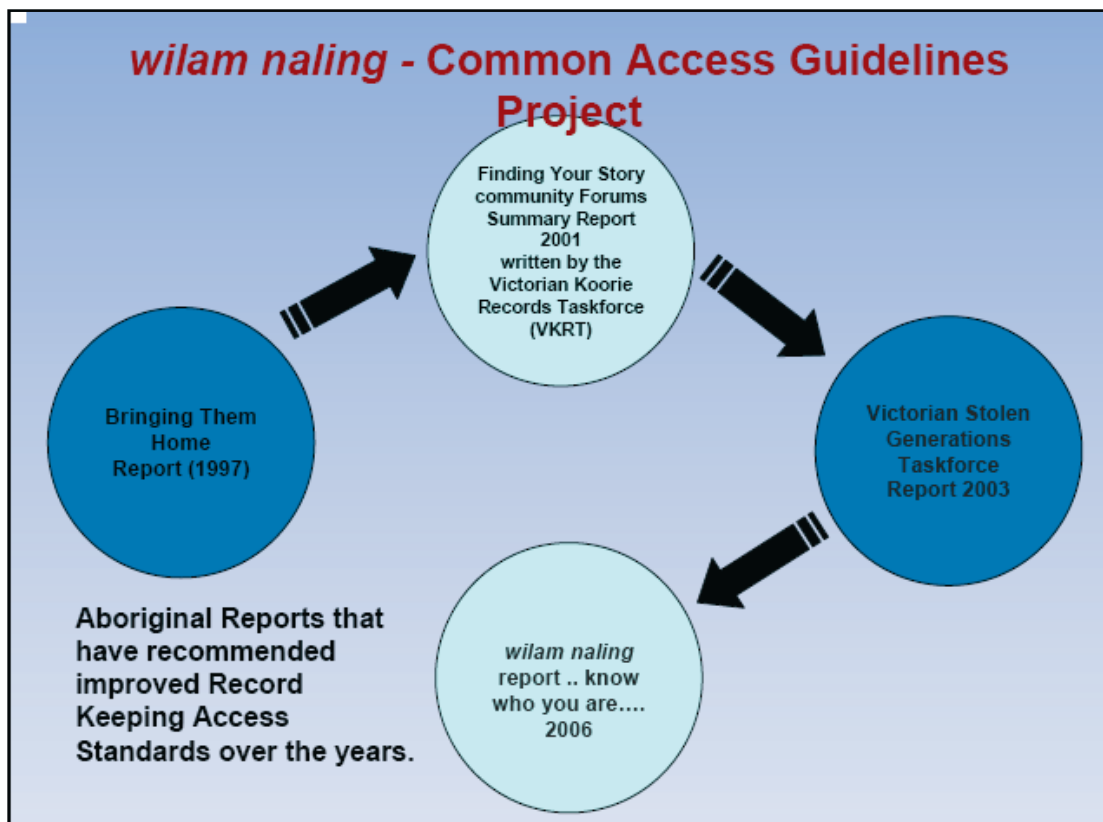
STOLEN GENERATIONS VICTORIA

- Support Groups
 - What would you like to see?
 - Information and advice?
 - Activities and outings?
 - Counselling?
 - Other suggestions



wilam naling
Common Access Guidelines Project

An initiative of the Public Record Office Victoria and Stolen Generations Victoria following the *recommendation by the Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce to the Victorian Government*



wilam naling - Common Access Guidelines Project

The wilam naling ...Knowing who you are.... Report was released in 2006.

The report contains 10 recommendations aimed to improving access to records of the Stolen Generations in Victoria.

This report was developed by the partnership between PROV and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, to address the recommendations from Chapter 16 of *Bringing Them Home* report relating to archives and records.

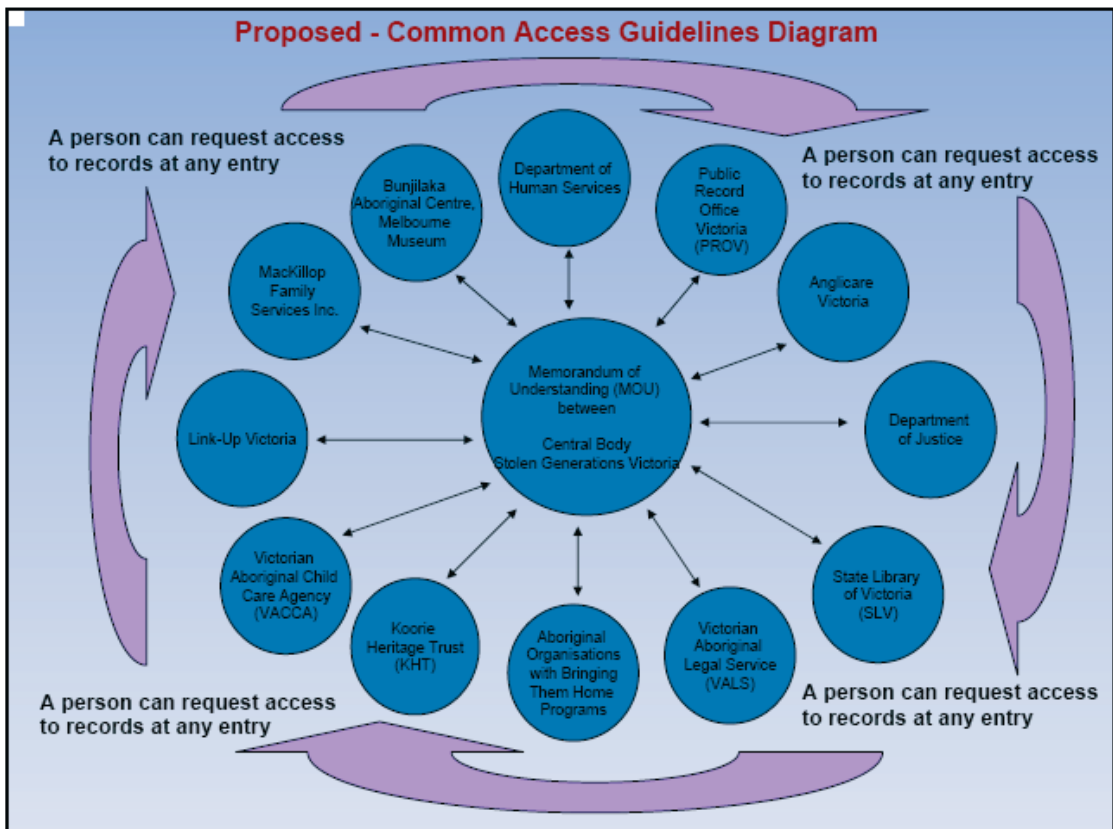
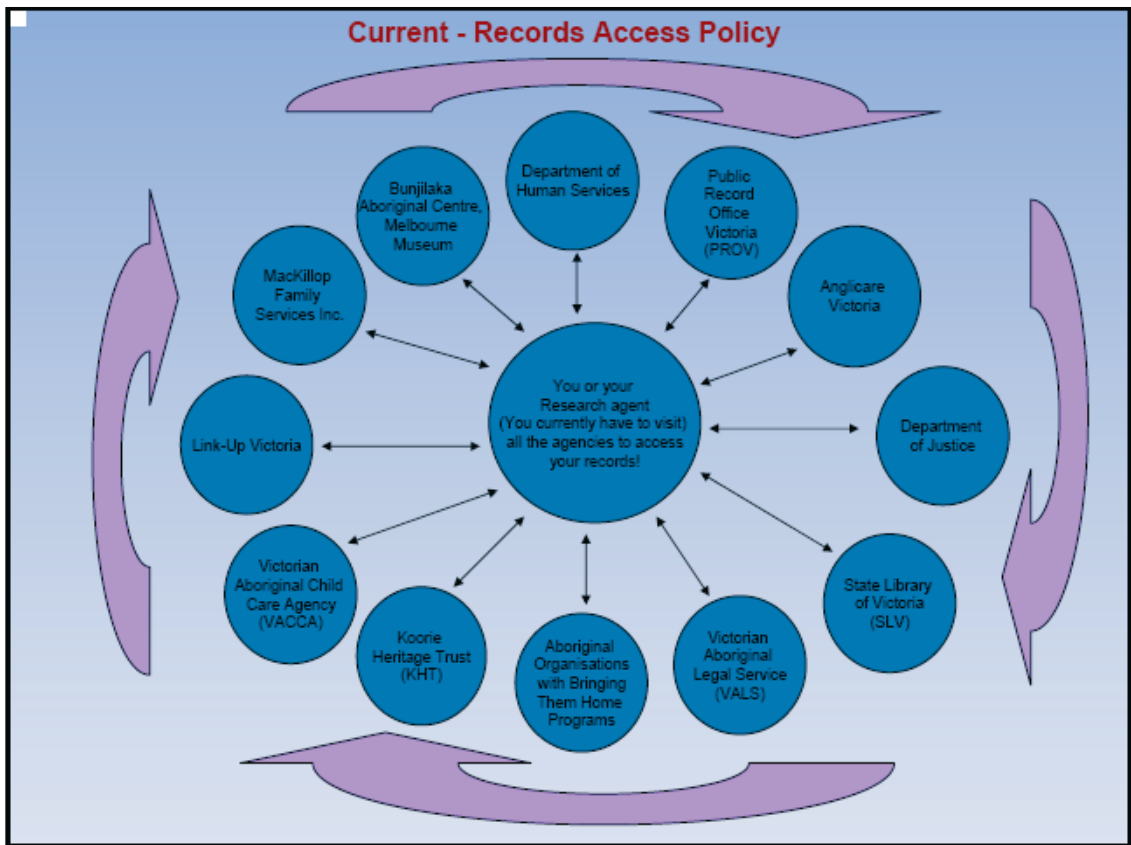


wilam naling - Common Access Guidelines Project

Recommendation 1:

That Victoria establish a new access framework for records affecting Indigenous people. The framework should comprise:

- the establishment of an Information and Referral Service for members of the Stolen Generations wishing to locate their records, delivered by Public Record Office Victoria.
- the Information and Referral Service entering into a series of memoranda of understanding with service providers and government and non-government record-holders that will regulate the processes for release of information.
- the universal adoption of Common Access Guidelines by all record-holders to govern the release of information to Indigenous people.



REPARATIONS

Acknowledgment and Apology

- on February 13 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said SORRY to members of the Stolen Generations.

Guarantees against repetition

- Rudd stated:

“A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.”

REPARATIONS



VICTORIAN APOLOGY

- **17 September 1997**
Mr. Jeff Kennett, Premier
- "I move:
That this house apologises to Aboriginal people on behalf of all Victorians for the past policies under which Aboriginal children were removed from their families and expresses deep regret at the hurt and distress that this has caused and reaffirms its support for reconciliation."

RESTITUTION

Returning what has been lost as much as possible.

Land, culture and language restitution

The purpose of restitution is to re-establish, to the extent possible, the situation that existed prior to the perpetration of gross violations of human rights. The children who were removed have typically lost the use of their languages, been denied cultural knowledge and inclusion, been deprived of opportunities to take on cultural responsibilities and are often unable to assert their native title rights.

Assistance to return to country

Language, culture and history centre

Indigenous identifications

REHABILITATION

- Measures of Rehabilitation
- **Rehabilitation** shall be provided and will include medical and psychological care as well as legal and social services
- Healing Services
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing
- Counseling Services
- Place

REPARATIONS

- Monetary Compensation
- Compensation** shall be provided for any economically assessable damage resulting from violations of human rights and humanitarian law, such as:
- (a) Physical or mental harm, including pain, suffering and emotional distress;
 - (b) Lost opportunities, including education;
 - (c) Material damages and loss of earnings, including loss of earning potential;
 - (d) Harm to reputation or dignity;
 - (e) Costs required for legal or expert assistance.

Forum Notes

Notes were taken by Stolen Generations Victoria staff at each forum. Detailed notes for each forum can be found in the following pages.

Forums included:

Melbourne May 26
Sale July 17
Echuca July 22
Traralgon August 1
Shepparton August 8
Ballarat August 14
Bendigo August 18
Gunditjmara August 18

Wodonga August 20
Geelong August 26
Gippsland, Lakes Entrance September 2
Mildura September 4
Swan Hill September 5
Heywood September 10
Healesville September 11
Melbourne September 19



Ballarat Forum.

Pictured above, from left to right, top row: Brad Brown; Uncle Ron Bruton; Cecilia Matthews; Uncle Murray Harrison; Lyn Austin; Lisa Wandin; Corina Wandin; Michael Clark; Vicki Peart; Barry Walters; Nora Walters (Photo: SGV Staff)

Melbourne May 26 Group 1

Restitution

Rehabilitation

<p>Compensation for all Stolen Generations Members in cash / kind for individuals and families</p> <p>Free education for all Indigenous children to have a choice - books, uniforms, etc - accessible, equal and cultural essential</p> <p>Flags to be symbolic, practical strategies</p> <p>Teach non-Indigenous cultural awareness training - teaching the true history</p> <p>Pay the rent!</p>	<p>Language - VACL to have more resources</p> <p>Constitution - Federal and State</p> <p>Customary law - standing recognised and legal system</p> <p>Cultural heritage - better protection and review system</p> <p>Throw out Native Title Act</p>	<p>Mental health Nurse for all children across the Border all ages</p> <p>Art therapy for both black and white</p> <p>Drop-in spaces 24 hours - also to help supporters involved</p> <p>Spending time with the Elders is important</p> <p>Children to be involved especially as they are the next generation</p> <p>Going back to country not just for the funerals but for time out and show country</p> <p>Identity for rehabilitation</p>
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Melbourne May 26 Group 2

Restitution

Rehabilitation

<p>Acknowledgement, Apology</p> <p>Monetary compensation, Lost opportunities</p> <p>Stress of children, Family breakup</p> <p>Separation of families</p> <p>Domestic violence</p> <p>Physical and emotional damage</p> <p>Sexual abuse and mental harm</p> <p>Denial of emotional wellbeing</p> <p>Social isolation</p> <p>Lack of education</p> <p>Policy and practices - past and present (DHS and Child Protection Unit)</p> <p>Loss of culture, land, heritage, family, kinships, raised out of family</p>	<p>Loss and denial of land, culture, identity and family</p> <p>Develop services for assistance to help stolen generations with culture, language and aboriginal history</p> <p>Cultural centre's</p> <p>Journey home - to people's land and country</p> <p>Re-uniting children/families of the stolen generations</p> <p>Better services to be developed for stolen generations members and their families</p> <p>SGV to develop new services for members URGENTLY</p>	<p>Healing, gathering, place of retreat, place of healing for stolen generations and their families</p> <p>Respite (for stolen generations members and their families)</p> <p>Reconnect to land, to country</p> <p>Smoking ceremonies</p> <p>Social and emotional wellbeing</p> <p>Positive parenting - enhance parenting skills</p> <p>Access to legal services</p> <p>Support all stolen generations members</p> <p>COMPENSATION is part of rehabilitation</p> <p>Denial - and the loss of everything</p>
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Melbourne May 26 Group 3

Restitution

Rehabilitation

<p>Reparations</p> <p>\$??</p> <p>Give them a house – for inheritance</p> <p>Mammon – woman</p> <p>Universal – natural</p> <p>\$\$ value – artificial</p> <p>Dehumanise</p> <p>Economic Base</p> <p>Industries – jobs (environmental)</p> <p>Indigenous law – Heal it Day</p> <p>Constitutional amendments – to reflect healing – every day women’s business, Koori Elders Day, Australia’s first treaty – recognition – unity – united peoples</p>	<p>Connection</p> <p>Identity</p> <p>Belonging</p> <p>Equality</p> <p>Custodianship</p> <p>Totems / Food</p> <p>Extended Family</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Harmony</p> <p>Caring / Sharing</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Love / Soul – spirituality not substance abuse and/or addiction</p>	<p>Good organic food (not chemically enhanced)</p> <p>Human rights</p> <p>Freedom of passage – must be able to grow with country not religion</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Justice</p> <p>Religion</p> <p>Tree of life – not church</p> <p>Creation made</p> <p>Habitat creation</p> <p>Heal mother – heal all</p>
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Melbourne May 26 Group 4

Restitution

Rehabilitation

<p>Reparations</p> <p>Reparations for those people who have lost or kept identity to or for yourself</p> <p>How do you put a price on so much that has been lost - family, language, culture and identity?</p> <p>Claiming back land for sense of place.</p> <p>Money in order to maintain house and land, money for children to go to school</p> <p>Stolen Generations Children scholarships Australia wide</p>	<p>Land, Want the opportunity to pass land onto children and future generations. Not to be sold or reclaimed by government or private organizations/ individuals</p> <p>Land for a sense of healing, a place for family.</p> <p>Memorial – healing place</p> <p>Children to have a space to learn culture and can practice</p> <p>Culture, Land = restoration of culture Land = restoration of language, Should not have to pay to re-learn</p> <p>Records (State and national) should be made freely available for people to get copies</p> <p>Identification important. Work with state records departments, proof of identity and Aboriginality.</p> <p>Get the organisations to work together.</p>	<p>Healing Centres: Review of Health (Drug and Rehabilitation Centres) services</p> <p>Services to treat people humanely, services are not appropriate and are treating people as numbers</p> <p>Social and emotional wellbeing</p> <p>People are dying and problems persisting because of lack of good services</p> <p>United organizations and services. Why are all the services separated?</p> <p>Services for children</p> <p>Comes back to having own land and sense of place</p> <p>services for children to access</p> <p>Location of services – need services in the communities</p>
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Melbourne May 26 Group 5

Rehabilitation

Restitution

Reparations

Research other payouts – Uncle Bruce
 Rights to the land and carry out culture and living off the land
 Compensation free to be used as the people and communities
 Regardless of any compensation, no amount of money will ever change the fact of the injustices that have been imposed on Indigenous communities and people.
 Monetary compensation a “must for all Indigenous people not just SGV

Importance of belonging and knowing the culture
 Language and learning centre’s & cultural beliefs
 ongoing support to link up families
 governments have to adequately fund and resource programs
 more counselling in place
 more qualifications to Indigenous communities to assist their people
 more ongoing support for SGV members ad family members and descendants

Day of remembrance as a special day and time to keep the memory alive
 Two special days one for Apology Day – 13th February and one for Sorry Day – 26th May.
 13th Feb should be a day of recognition
 Ongoing services, healing centre’s, healing camp

Melbourne May 26 Group 6

Rehabilitation

Restitution

Reparations

Stolen Generation’s compensation court – where all processes are more defined and accessible. Panel should be Indigenous people only.
 Legal fees should be free to Aboriginal people (Government subsidized)
 Education to be more diverse for Aboriginal children
 Develop funding opportunities for special and talented
 Rebuild the education system – suitable for Aboriginal learning ways

Correct history (the true story)
 Australian flag should be re-designed to acknowledge Aborigines as the first people of this land
 Australia Day should also celebrate Aboriginal people – not colonization
 Birth certificates to identify Aboriginal identity/ Aboriginality
 Learning centre’s for Aboriginal people to teach the language, dance, etc

Skilled Aboriginal people
 Aboriginal place of healing (building) run by Aboriginal people
 More Aboriginal specific counselling services
 Koori Helpline – specific for Aboriginal people
 Equivalent wages – as non-Indigenous people
 Aboriginal voice within government (1 in each state)

Melbourne May 26 Group 7

Reparations

Accountable Government and Churches
Need an understanding of what the word reparation actually means
Travel costs – pay to cross lands to go back to own country
Public transport
E-tag – Aboriginal land toll
Compensation now/ no more having to justify what how and how much more?

Restitution

Marumali training needed in more outlets – Queensland based – possibly develop program by SGV
Diploma of Narrative Therapy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (for Group counselling)

Rehabilitation

First Aid in Mental health training for Aboriginal people (change the name!)
Empower people by above examples thereby spreading the process
Aboriginal cultural education for Aboriginal people and wider community
Records around Stolen Gens people be kept at SGV for access by community

<p>Legal Support. Need legal advice information: To have SGV members meet with Solicitor's to explain the legal process to prosecute against mental abuse and/or physical abuse suffered while under the government care as a State Ward or suffered from Foster Parents during adoption.</p> <p>Access to Family History Records. Stolen Generation members are experiencing identity crisis: Who am I? Where do I belong?</p> <p>Access to other Records Offices would be beneficial to all SG members, as some members are not registered in Birth's Death & Marriages, due being born in country and not local or state hospitals.</p> <p>MOU's with these agencies to change legislation to make SG Member exempt from eligibility requirements.</p>	<p>Access to Personal Records. Some members are still awaiting to view records which may state in detail: Last known location of family. Which other family member's that have been removed. Last know location of parents or family members. Community Presentations & Information Day. This information day would be an opportunity to highlight the sensitive issues for SG Members.</p> <p>This would inform other community members to more aware of identity problems arising from questioning one's eligibility and entitlement of services & facilities Encouragement of all family members' participation at events. A greater opportunity to: Re-establish family connection. Some family histories & stories to be shared. (E.g.) Family Totems may not be common knowledge, sharing cultural knowledge with fellow country women & men. Workshops To invite Guest Speakers to address: Indigenous Human Rights. Legislation & Laws. Access to other Information. Funding & Facilitation of Services Information of: How to access funding for community project & events. Education trips, etc.</p>	<p>More contact with Link Up – Staff To have more Reunions with family members. Interstate travel required. To be informed of eligibility requirements for reunions. To have other community support & partnership building. To create more employment opportunities via: MOU's & community planning with Council's / Shires & Community Members. Counselling Services. More options to be available: To have Indigenous & Non-Indigenous Counsellors available. Family Support Services Practical Support to be provided, To improve the quality of life some SGV member may require assistance with: Financial Planning & Counselling Services. Furniture Replacement & Repairs maybe required. Groceries, food hampers other financial assistance for families. Establish SG Support Group Information sessions for members & their family members to be involved. Groups Excursions: local, state & interstate. To inform all community members what entitlement there are able to access. Family Group Counselling To have the options of : Men's Groups Counselling. Women's Groups Counselling. Family Group Counselling. To have more BTH staff available. Some SG member's need to built a rapport with staff, to have the option of: Female Staff or Male Staff member available would address this.</p>
<p>Closing Comments: Participants who are SG members were supportive of the idea of the support groups so this is worth pursuing</p>		

Echuca July 22

Restitution

Rehabilitation

<p>Legal Education: PILCH The information presented at a legal education forum would enhance the knowledge of all effected Stolen Generation members & community members they reside with.</p> <p>This would be a great opportunity to educate all indigenous community members of their rights and how to assert them.</p> <p>To inform SG members about the process for submitting a Personal Injury Claim for compensation.</p> <p>Eligibility for payment – State Ward, etc</p> <p>Koori Only Meetings An innovative idea to host private community meetings, without the influence of Non-Indigenous interference.</p> <p>An opportunity to democratically vote for which agenda items should be discussed in the private or public sector.</p> <p>Family Decision Making</p> <p>A Possible Forum for all family members to attend.</p> <p>To give SGV Members an opportunity to address family & community members about which issues are underlying their journey of healing.</p> <p>Men’s, Women’s and Family Forums which are to be mediated by certified Indigenous Staff only.</p>	<p>MOU’s with Local Businesses & Mainstream Services. This would prove to provide all community businesses & community members with a better understanding of: How to support SGV Members appropriately, *if assistance is requested.</p> <p>Register option: to be available on new community membership forms</p> <p>Options such as these will help community organizations recognize who is and how many Stolen Generation members reside in their community.</p> <p>This may help with funding requests and offer other avenues for financial support.</p> <p>This option has not been available in the past. Options that state indigenous background should also include: Are you a Stolen Generation Member? Y/N</p> <p>Are you a mother or father a Stolen Generation Member? Y/N</p> <p>Are you a descendant of a Stolen Generation member? Y/N</p> <p>All Stolen Generation Members need to assert their Native Title Rights. And become decision makers for their traditional country.</p> <p>Common Access Guidelines to utilize the SGV Seal to authenticate confirmation of Aboriginality.</p> <p>Superannuation: Early Access. A well know health fact that Indigenous people have a life expectancy gap of 15yr, then too the European Australians.</p> <p>SGV should push Superannuation companies to lower their entitlement ages down 15yrs, so their Indigenous members can improve their quality of life, along side their family members.</p> <p>Theatre Group to be established Another medium to express or present stories & family history through theatre.</p>	<p>Support Groups</p> <p>A request to have indigenous trained Counsellors available.</p> <p>* Cultural differences with Non-Indigenous Counsellors may not be effective or beneficial to all parties involved.</p> <p>Request to SGV to facilitate Indigenous Cross Cultural Training. Member had requested for SGV to lead the:</p> <p>Interview Selection.</p> <p>Cross Cultural Training</p> <p>Refer successful counsellors to all Indigenous organizations Invitations to Stolen Generation Members & their families.</p> <p>This could be a new rule brought into any Indigenous Communities Constitution:</p> <p>To invite SG member to participate at a Community Gatherings.</p> <p>Another opportunity for SG to learn about Community, Family Values & Traditions.</p> <p>Is the formal acknowledgement of Aboriginality from your community members: Elders, Respected Community Leaders and the families associated with them?</p> <p>Centre Of Healing To be located on each town or city, a central point, garden area or building.</p> <p>A place which all community members will respect.</p> <p>Where SG members can visit, without disturbance or interference from other community members.</p> <p>(a) Recognition of SGV Members whom has passed on and / or never made it back home.</p> <p>(b) Monument of Remembrance.</p> <p>(C) Minute Silence(a) There are numerous stories about members whom did not make it back home at all. Siblings and other family members would like to acknowledge their brothers and sisters who past on while in the care of State Wards, Religious Groups, Foster Homes or in Police custody.</p> <p>(b) To erect a statue or monument for SGV member’s to remember their memory & reflect on their life</p> <p>(C) To have a special monument for remembrance, A Minute Silence during 26th May or 13th Feb or other suggested dates that significant to SG community members.</p>
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Closing Comments:

The Echuca group is very proactive with a combination of workers, activists and community members. This group is seemingly leading the way on this journey of healing. The group also wishes to run their meetings the traditional way with message sticks. There are others who wish to do the same. Person with sticks holds the floor until the sticks are passed on. Members are forming bonds with each other.

Traralgon August 1

Restitution

Reparations

The issues surrounding compensation were discussed, and the examples of Bruce Trevorrow, Tasmania and Queensland were given. Attendees commented that it seemed like a difficult thing to go through, but that there should be a national compensation fund, similar to Tasmania, but one that, once paid, did not absolve the government from further responsibility.

All attendees agreed that the community needs reconnection with land and identity, don't know enough about own land/culture/language. Angry about not having land, but it's difficult to think about this kind of stuff as people are spending their time simply surviving and struggling. No culture to pass on – how do we get that back? Yarns and stories. But this is difficult, there is no cultural centre, people don't know their own culture. Language – some language out here, but not too much. With so many different languages, which ones do we teach? Certificate of Aboriginality difficult to obtain

Rehabilitation

Healing services – the need for counselling, a psychiatrist. Nowhere to go for people to talk, no services. Perhaps we could get counsellors to go down for the day? Not bothered whether the counsellor was Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, just would like someone to speak to. Lack of support for the mother who had her children taken from her. Always having to repeat the same stories to different people. BTH worker needs more support. Make the services in one place. All the services are spread out everywhere. Do we need an office/ building specifically for SG members? Perhaps the coop is not big enough. A healing centre would be good.

Closing Comments:

Attendees agreed they should have had the forum at the Coop. Possibly provide transport options as well. Perhaps people lacked a bit of understanding as to what the meeting was for. Aboriginal community needs better understanding of SG issues. Everyone really positive about the forum, and if anything, stated that having the chance to voice their opinions and thoughts was "good for healing".

Shepparton August 8

Restitution

Reparations

Issue of compensation didn't really come up

Certificate of Aboriginality an issue for many people to get hold of
Common access guidelines a good idea in order to assist people with confirmation of Aboriginality
Seemed like some confusion throughout the community with regard to the terminology of 'Stolen' – people using the terms 'Taken Away'
The community requires more understanding as to the issues faced by members of the Stolen Generations, including even basic definitions and identification of who those people are
Many people seem unwilling to come forward as an SG person.

Rehabilitation

Healing services required specifically for SG persons. Health staff on the Coop would do well to ask (sensitively) about a person's history, as, if they find out the client is of SG background, may assist in the health worker to understand and identify certain problems/ challenges the client might be facing
Services like Link Up no longer really applicable as people and families are already 'linked up' and those that haven't don't necessarily want to. There is a need for other services, healing and also finding identity

Closing Comments:

Overall, community needs a bit of education/ understanding as to definitions/ issues/ history of the Stolen Generations
Different people have a different conception as to what the 'Stolen Generations' are/were.

Ballarat August 14

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Reparations

People wanted to know more about compensation. Seemed like there was very little understanding as to the different forms of compensation and what they mean.
 Need an understanding of the legal side of things – good that Cecilia came, as she is a solicitor.
 We need to remind the state that Kennet said sorry and put that on the current agenda
 How do Kooris get involved in the decision making/ political process/legal process?
 People need information
 Reparations/ compensation need to help people out over time, not just a lump sum.
 Scholarships for education – what could have been

Common access guidelines – how can we access our records?
 Return to country would be good, especially for one member who was from WA
 What about people who have passed away? Need to find identification and acknowledge them in some way – a memorial or headstone. How do we find information of those people who have passed away?
 How do we acknowledge those people who have passed away in the fight for land and culture?
 How do we trace history?
 How do we get people's land back?
 Books and CD's of language – need to get language back, but how? There are difficulties – such as the number of languages.

Who is giving the healing services? Who will deliver them?
 Aboriginal or non- Aboriginal people?
 There is a need for counselors to be elders who have 'been there' and really understand. Elders were traditionally the ones you could talk to. No good having whitefellas doing it who don't understand, but whitefellas ok if they have the experience.
 Support group could be an avenue for doing this
 Rehabilitation required for the whole family. Children are affected with things like drug problems, but also showing affection to kids, being a good parent can be difficult – can this becomes cyclical
 Parenting skills – do we need advice and assistance with this?
 Lots of kids still being taken away, they are the children of SG people
 Perhaps get VACCA to speak at forums, support groups

Closing Comments:

People very keen to get a support group together, there was a good response for that
 People were after a copy of the PM's apology, so it was good we had one in the bags.
 Cecilia wants to start a women's group – family violence is an issue. Cecilia told her story from growing up in NZ
 Could SGV support the BTH worker?

Bendigo August 18

Rehabilitation

Restitution

Reparations

<p>Issues for DHS in Bendigo.</p> <p>Sense that nothing has changed.</p> <p>Stories about DHS not supporting Aboriginality</p> <p>Turn over of DHS Staff is significant. Families are concerned about how many times they have to tell new workers their story. The change in staff impacts their understanding of the issues.</p> <p>Strong sense that compensations should be available to all.</p> <p>Recognition that lengthy court cases does nothing to enhance a member's life and that there should be a nationwide reparations scheme that is equal for all.</p>	<p>Talking language Left Hand writer Culture and Identity Education in Schools – Aboriginal Program in the school</p> <p>Give culture to the kids. Members are concerned that their dislocation and lack of knowledge about their culture means their children and in turn their grandchildren miss out.</p> <p>Reconnect to community Go to different cultural centres to learn about your culture</p> <p>There is still the need to bring people home. Feel like strangers in our own community. Further education of Aboriginal services to be more welcoming and accepting of members returning to community.</p>	<p>Psychological issues- need for family work</p> <p>Need for healing- limited options for counseling. No BTH worker at present for Bendigo mob.</p> <p>Outreach programs for people, members can find it difficult to seek out help.</p> <p>Common ground- more supports within community</p> <p>Need for counseling while seeing the lawyers. This is not currently available</p> <p>Maya Healing circle More opportunities for people to get together – men's healing women's healing Develop sense of belonging</p>
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Closing Comments:

No BTH worker currently available to support the Stolen Generations members in this community.
 Significant need for support and healing services.
 Concerns that the Prime Ministers guarantees about repetition cannot be fulfilled without significant change in practices by DHS in this area.

Gunditjmara August 18

Rehabilitation

Restitution

Reparations

<p>Art and radio programs a good way to express some of the SG issues. Perhaps a trip organized that could unite elders from other communities.</p>	<p>A lot of SG members would really like to return to country in order to find out more about where they come from, what their history is. Finding identity – is it possible to have a book which has pictures and stories in it that could be used to confirm identity?</p>	<p>Perhaps get a bus together that could take people down to the records office. Can the KRU mob get people's records ready if they have advanced notice?</p>
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Wodonga August 20

Reparations

People need more information on compensation.
Need for monetary payments as well as ongoing support services.

Restitution

A lot of SG members would really like to return to country in order to find out more about where they come from, what their history is.
Finding identity – is it possible to have a book which has pictures and stories in it that could be used to confirm identity?
Perhaps get a bus together that could take people down to the records office. Can the KRU mob get people's records ready if they have advanced notice?
Art and radio programs a good way to express some of the SG issues.
Perhaps a trip organized that could unite elders from other communities.

Rehabilitation

Learning and listening to the elders' stories so that they are a shared experience
Although there are aged care and mental health worker in Wodonga, there is no one who is specifically for SG members. Perhaps the existing workers could receive added training?
Need for understanding amongst the Koori community and for the children, so they realize it is not their fault.
Emotional support
What do the children/ grandchildren think? Difficult to express the situations to children. Many SG members have never said anything about their experiences. (eg Aunty Rita's story – many people had never heard this).
A lot of guilt and misunderstanding in families
There are difficulties even as kids/ grandkids
Getting the younger generation to understand
Got to trust the counselors, not feel like you're getting pushed around. Everything too departmental
Lots of SG women are too shy, too shamed to come forward.
Caught between two worlds.
Poetry and art as a way forward.
Healing camps
Get a big canvas together for everyone to paint on together
Have a barbi or some kind of get together

Closing Comments: Everyone agreed it was worthwhile getting together, everyone seemed to think it was good having both the young guys and the elders talking together – a very good learning experience for all; There is definitely a need for a support group for SG members; Wodonga requires their own BTH worker as it is too far a space for Shepparton BTH worker to cover. It was reported that many of the Wodonga people did not know who their BTH worker actually was.

Geelong August 26

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Why can't compensation fund be available for Practical Support for SGV members?
 SGV Member would require financial assistance to attain the correct amount of funding to continue the journey of healing in their place of residence.
 Current funding amounts have had a negative impact on clients who are requesting & require a full time BTH Staff member to be available for assistance.
 Current Funding Agreements need to be renegotiated & increased to ensure (5) five week days of support to their local SGV Members.

The Local, State or National Government Departments should financially support the costs associated with education & training support needed by Stolen Generations Members.
 All SGV members need to have some form of legal understanding of what polices & procedures are in place to access your personal history records.

Community Education: Some communities need to have a information presentation to inform all community members of which language & terminology is deemed as appropriate when working with Stolen Generation Financial Support to Local Communities for Practical Support. Programs, further education development such as:

- *Literacy & Numeric Classes.
- *Introduction to Internet.
- *Home Improvement Skills.
- Parental Skills Support.
- Anger Management.
- Time Management Courses.
- Multi Lingual Training.
- Further Skill Development in areas recognized by our SGV members.

Loss of Wages & Superannuation:
 SGV should be pushing State & Federal Government to change policy for Aboriginal & Torres Strait People.
 As the Indigenous Population has a higher mortality rate for elders over 50, why can't SGV & other Indigenous Community Controlled Health Organizations to rally together & push for change to retirement policy from 60-65 years of age down to 50-55 yrs, thus much improving the quality of life for our elders who have endured so much pain & anguish for more than 3 decades of Non-Indigenous Government interaction.

The establishment of Local Support Groups would empower SGV members to become decision makers about their Journey of Healing.
 SGV Members are able to address which gaps in service delivery that needs to be addressed?

Members are able to work in Small & Large group capacity via establishment of Sub Groups:
 1. Family Support Group.
 2. Men's Support Group
 3. Women's Support Group

With full funding or Sponsorship Support from other involved organizations, the increase to budget would enable further education for SGV Members & extended family who have been affected.
 Trans generational impact of the White Australia Policy & Procedures.
 A State or National Calendar of Events & Training that is available for Stole Generation Members & Family of Stolen Generation Members.

Common Access Guidelines:
 PROV Simon Flagg is currently devising a new partnership of understanding called Common Access Guidelines.

Records Access Policies: If SGV members choose to register with SGV, access to records will have no fee to be charged.

Access to Records, File Documents, Person Case File which had been recorded before during or after Government induced incarcerations or in the care of State Wards or Foster/Adoption homes.

This is a common understanding and partnership agreement between two or more organizations for information distribution to family members or individuals. These individuals are currently researching their family origins & need some flexibility in negotiating which documents may be accessed with to help identifying their family history & background.
 Better access to records
 Better access to finding your story. (Know who you are!)

Returning back to country:
 Some members may need different support mechanisms to ensure a family reunion. This is where all are aware of Language & Body Language through previous consultation with mediators & family members willing to reconnect with family members for the first time.

Rehabilitation Money to be available via Scholarship for SGV members to choose in which support is required.
 Education, Health, Sport, Food & Expenditure.
 SGV Member of the Support Group will be able to determine which public speaker or assistance they would require in a group or individual client.

Other Partnership building exercise, with local or state businesses or corporate organization may help release the stress of Funding or Support options, such as:
 Utilizing Local Councilors,
 Bus Services – Excursions

To have the choice to choose which service is required.
 Geelong SGV member elected to have more community gatherings, which will incorporate the more activities & interaction from all participating on the day.

Plays & Theatre Group interaction with the public, this gives some SGV members an opportunity to express their personal history to other community members who never knew about some SGV member's childhood memories.

Interstate Trip for all SGV members to participate in Cultural Activities that will be supported via other organization such as Drug & Alcohol Free Activities sponsored by Anti-Drug & Alcohol Agencies.

Acknowledge Sporting Achievements and to be presented by Stolen Generation Members.

Legal Support & Contact Lists:

Some SGV members have suffered different degrees of Physical & Mental Abuse. SGV Members need to know which avenue would suite their needs.

example: *Criminal or Civil Suite,

*Personal Injury Claims.

* Victims of Crime Claim.

Witam Nailing Information Kits

Recognition of Past Elders & Brother & Sisters, Aunties & Uncles, Mothers & Fathers whom have passed on before the National Apology 13th Feb 2008.

Present family members would love to pay their respects by reburial of family members whom past on during their encounter in State Ward Homes.

SGV Member might never have had an opportunity to reconnect with their parents, Emotional Support needs to be implemented before this occurs.

Geelong August 26 cont.

Rehabilitation

Restitution

Reparations

<p>Educational Scholarships ; Some members are upset with government, as most government officials think that reparations should be paid directly to all stolen generation members, however some SGV members would prefer to have Educational Scholarships to be available to their family members to utilize in the way they feel necessary to their educations development. Scholarship uses: TAFE, (Books, fees, software, etc) University Courses, Self Improvement Courses. Accommodation while studying. Transportation while studying. Meal requirements during study. Establishment of Support Groups: Most family members would require emotional & psychological support before moving off into a group support environment. Women's Support Group or Men's Group or Children's Group. Family Support Group.</p>	<p>Reconnection with family may be a painful or difficult situation for some participating family members. Some SG Members may have never been around due to being removed to hear or be taught about the Family/Tribes/Clan Spiritual & Religious Beliefs, Morals, Hunting & Gathering Techniques. Basically to be taught how to mix with family they have never met Indigenous Identification: Koori Passports, Interim Confirmation of Aboriginality would be preferred for some SGV Members, due to not being born in a hospital, instead behind a birthing tree and not registered with Births, Deaths & Marriages. This cause a whole range of identification problems for any SGV Member looking to improve their quality of life: To open a bank account you need one hundred points of Identification. To purchase other products via Internet or Shop Front you need identification. Police can hold or arrest you for not holding any identification. A National Accredited Identification Card would ensure all Indigenous People are respected as Traditional Owners of this Land. Oral History & Documented History: To ensure Bloodline Links to Family Tree's, SGV Members need to have access to Cultural Center's such as: Koori Heritage Trust, National Archives Australia, Public Records Office Victoria, State Library of Victoria and other vital family history document holders.</p>	<p>Medical & Physiological Services: Their must be a Full time Male & Female BTH Staff members are to be employed at Local Indigenous Co-operatives or Health Service Providers. Education & Self Improvement Training, their must be other forms of information distribution to community members, Women's day, Men's Day, Family Day for participants. A Community Cultural Day would be an opportunity to invite all community members to participate in a cultural event in their local community & local environment. Smoking Ceremonies, Welcome Home Ceremonies and other ceremonies. The choice to utilize which community services you (SGV member) would like to use. Personal & Business Assessment: Self Assessment of Identity To implement a self assessment which would help recognize which area of support & improvement are required to attain a better quality of life. Sharing Stories – personal account of childhood in the care of Government Officials & State Wards. Some members may be able to draw strength from one another. Also an opportunity to interact with other SGV Members of the community.</p>
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Closing Comments:

It had been a very educational & empowering day for the five attending Stolen Generation Members of the Geelong Region. The idea of establishing a month support group meeting had been welcomed with open arms. SGV had the impression that all attending are ready & willing to start their Journey of Healing ASAP.
The information presented had placed the process of journey of healing back into the hands of the Stolen Generation Members, as they know which services would be appropriate for their regional area.

Geelong needs to acquire it's own BTH worker, as the past arrangement had not been properly advertised through out the Geelong region. Due to the BTH position currently empty, there was a lack of consultation with other Geelong SGV members.

The concept of Partnership building & gathering support from other local businesses & Organizations, weather mainstream or Indigenous, the ideas seemed to bring a spark into the conversation & topics that were address at the tranquil Eastern Park Gardens of the Geelong Conference Centre.

Gippsland, Lakes Entrance September 2

Reparations

Members are addressing the need for Practical Support to gain a better quality of life:

- Some members only have limited access to Practical Support Services within their town or region.
- Limited funding & Under resourced BTH Staff are limited to supporting area clients due to only being permitted to service clients 2 to 3 days per week.
- Other funding or financial support need to be available from Local State & National Government Departments, example: DHS, DOJ, FacSIA, etc.
- Another form of Reparations is for SGV member to be involved & employed at local shires & councils, mainstream businesses such as: Retail, Commercial, Sales, Industries, etc.
- SGV members have requested to be involved with local affairs, such as:
 - Waterways, to be come caretaker again of their land in which they have blood links too.
 - Parks Victoria, Involvement with local flora & fauna gives some
 - A sense of pride in their land, identity and connection to land and country and the lore/laws that govern them.
 - Fire Department, It would give any country man, women or child a great sense of pride to be the lands caretaker once again.
 - Any indigenous person whom has links to the country would feel obliged to look after their land which has cared for us before time.
 - Education & Training:
 - All training must be state & nationally accredited; with the opportunity for fulltime employment after training has been completed. Give our trained role models in fulltime employment in their local town.
 - Establish a Brokerage Fund:
 - All members have requested practical support to be available:
 - Funeral Fund for unmarked graves of SGV siblings whom never returned home while in the care of State Wards, Foster Homes & Religious Group Homes facilities.
 - Fuel Allowance for SGV member to attend funeral services of family members they have not yet been able to establish family link with the deceased family member.
 - Accommodation requirements for attending:

Restitution

Access to documents, files & paperwork:
 A member requested to have access to a book called "My Heart Is Breaking", it has local history of Gippsland Local Indigenous Families, who have disappeared from the region. The book had been compiled from Local Police & their family members Counselor Contact List:
 This list must have a complete list of Independent & Mainstream Counseling Services that are available around Victoria. Male & Female contactable staff.

This Support Group would then be able to address the Generational Problems that arise from being removed from Family, Country (Land) and Culture.
 Members would then address sub categories which affect all family members of Stolen Generation Members.

Issues & Items to address:

Anger Management: for stolen generation members & family members to acquire other tools to deal with their frustrations of suffering from years of abuse while in the care of State Wards, Foster homes or Church Group Home.

Drug & Alcohol: Counseling Services are to be accessed locally or specialist referral to other mainstream professionals or indigenous trained counseling service providers.

Cultural Activities: Hunting & gathering, social gatherings such as family reunions, to reaffirm connection to country.

Language Classes amongst fellow family and community members.

To have more interaction with the local theatre groups, to host a production about Stolen Generation Members.
 Calendar of Events, to be available to all stolen generation members, gives all SGV members time to plan in advance to attend any event local, state or National.

Travel, Accommodation and fuel /transportation costs could be organized 6months in advance for members to attend, Dreamtime at the G or other state or National Events.

Rehabilitation

Health Service Providers:
 SGV Members want equal rights & Access to Health Services, regardless of background or Social Economic Status or Indigenous or not!

Practical Support:
 Referral Services, access to information /Records.
 More interaction from other community health organizations and local Councils or Shires to provide other forms of assistance.

Establishment of SGV Support Groups:
 The local SGV Members and BTH staff will be financially supported to commence Support Groups before the end of 2008.

There is a need to address Trans generational problems, Stress & Emotional Support.
 Non Indigenous Staff involved in this process need to complete Cultural Awareness Training to be able to provide Culturally Sensitive Emotional Support to Indigenous Clients.

Under Resourced:
 More sharing of resources between regional & rural areas, such as able to access Health Services in other regions, instead of interstate travel required.
 Crisis Point & Priority:
 Some BTH Staff are under resourced and over worked.
 Working only two or three days a week to service the needs of SGV member. Our SGV members need 5 to 7 days support to be available, from male & female staff.
 Other funding or resources may help address the need for other financial support or sponsorship form local organizations and or businesses.

Alternatives to Medication:
 Are their any other non medical practices that SGV members may be able to access?
 Meditation.
 Hypnotherapy.
 Other alternative to reaffirm your spiritual connection,
 Smoking Ceremony, etc.
 Second & Third Generation of Stolen Generation members/Children.

After seeing the hurt & pain suffered from their elders from being stolen from their family some family members may require anger management counseling sessions to vent their frustrations and not cause any further damage to their fragile perception of society.

Gippsland, Lakes Entrance September 2 cont.

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Counseling sessions,
 * SGV Events,
 *Family Counseling Sessions.
 * Family Reunions,
 *Researching Family in other regions.
 *Education requirements, fees, bus tickets, books, equipment.
 *Car Repairs to attend appointments and events.
 * Other Services that maybe required; Transportation costs.
 Parental Leave; SGV
 Parents who may require additional assistance to attain a better quality of life, training or counseling for Parental Skills, which may stop the cycle Trans Generational Issues of anger management, etc.
 Family leave &
 Counseling area maybe able to address the accommodation & travelling expenses but an area needs to be formalized & supported by local & state government.
 After Hours Support:
 The need for after hour's facilities & support staff has been requested. Low Income Families will be requiring financial assistance or other practical support to ensure all family members are accommodated.
 *Groceries, *Bills, *Health, *Household Duties, *After school activities.
 Other partnership
 Building between local & state organizations. Possibility of partnership between local food suppliers.
 Compensation:
 Set Up Foundation of Family Base,
 House, Household other items that contribute to the well being of all family members associated with Stolen Generation Member who are parents,
 guardian's siblings or a community member who is requesting assistance form their local aboriginal Health Service Provider.
 Legal Education for
 SGV Members and their families. (PILCH)
 Many families have been affected by the Government Policies that removed many indigenous & Torres strait islander people from their homes, land, culture and indigenous communities.
 After seeing what mental health damage and societies acceptance of the post treatment has been suffered by family members, the children & extended family members, the personal injury claim information needs to be distributed more rapidly to every Indigenous Communities in Australia.

All SGV members must be able to access a counselor, male or female before they receive their case file, documents, or records. If members aren't emotional prepared & supported, the information could be detrimental to their emotional health and to the emotional health status of their family members.
 For all SGV members to assert their Identity of Native Title Rights as decedents of Traditional Owners.
 Establish or Support current Keeping Place to continue Culture, Language of area. Where to be established?
 Bairnsdale/ Latrobe Valley
 Family History to be made publicly available at Cultural Centre?
 Interim Certificate of Aboriginality to be available for SGV members whom have returned to country and require access to indigenous service providers.
 For all community members to be formally invited to attend any community gathering or social events as a participant or volunteer or staff member.
 As a form of Support to the Stolen Generations Victoria: Specific Sponsorship days, etc
 NAIDOC, Feb 13th and May 26th all transport for Indigenous & Torres Strait People to be free?
 Non-Indigenous People support free transportation days which acknowledge SGV.

An opportunity to improve their interpersonal skills with family & community members.
 Improving one's social & communication skills may improve their quality of life for all family members and community members. As they now have the tools to deal with the personal issues that influence their quality of life.
 In the case of some SGV members (as every story for each Stolen Generation Member in different and should never be put under just one category).
 All Stolen Generation Members need to reconnect with family & country, some SGV members need to be nurtured & mentored back into every day family life, how to communicate respectfully with other community members.
 This is all due to the fact the Stolen Generation members were denied their social skills & community interaction all from radical and racist government policies.
 Some SGV members need to attain an adult spiritual understanding of their country, land and family not from their childhood understanding which has painful memories that need to be addressed to move forward from the hurt & pain these memories contain.
 Local Community Education Ideas:
 The possibility of creating a local information days or community participation at Community Information Sessions; this gives SGV an opportunity to educate the local community members (indigenous & Non-Indigenous) about the issues that SGV face in their local communities and what the right duty of care should be practiced when working with:
 Assisting or providing a service to any stolen generation members within their community, region, facility or workplace environment.
 Education.
 Is it possible to have more Indigenous appropriate education, local history & local knowledge to be taught by local indigenous community members?
 Training:
 Adult Learning Alternatives to be readily available.
 *Secondary Alternatives.
 *University Alternative.
 *TAFE Alternatives.
 *KODE Alternatives.
 *Adult Learning.
 *School Leavers Skill development.

Gippsland, Lakes Entrance September 2 cont.

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Loss Of Wages:
 There are some cases were a Stolen Generation member had been employed as workers, farm hand, etc and had not been paid any amount when other documents & family member say otherwise. Maybe ground for legal action to be pursued.

Superannuation: SGV member have been working long after their expected retirement date. Due to no Birth Certificate was available when born out in the bush, then given a non-indigenous name & date of birth. This SGV member has the right to access their Superannuation now.

Superannuation:
 It has been proven with today's Health System that Indigenous People do have a much higher mortality rate that our non-indigenous population.

To ask Government & Superannuation Companies to make their Policy culturally sensitive to the needs of the Australian Indigenous & Torres Strait People.

Push for Stolen Generations Tribunal.

For many State & Territory Governments, this could be another avenue for compensation to address by Supreme Court Judges in a Court System that is final and Federally respected.

This could stop further definitions of compensation claims to adhere to federal legislation.

A separate judicial system that will recognize all factors of being removed, that contributed to the identity crisis that Stolen Generation Members now face on their everyday lives, lets Bring Them Home.

xii. Victims Of Crime Fund.

Is another form of compensation form our members to be paid for their hardship, pain and suffering they have had to endure over a ten to fifteen year period , no longer shall any SGV member suffer in silence.

War Criminals are still being charged with war crimes, why can't the abusive carers & institutional staff be accountable for their racist & demeaning manner towards children. Crime against humanity.

Other Funding Alternatives:

- * Local Community Sponsorships.
- * Grants Local Shires or Councils
- * State Government departments.
- * Federal Funding.
- * Corporate Sponsorships.
- * International Sponsorship.
- * Local Music Industry.
- * Australian Media Association.
- * Australian Actors Guild.
- * Private & Corporate Sponsorship.
- * Taberare Casino, Gaming Industry.
- * Donations and Taxable Donations.
- * Fund Raising.

Scholarships:
 Suggestion to have all children of Stolen Generation Members to be provided with an education or sports scholarship, which will take pressure of the parents to provide financial assistance for children to pursue further education opportunities.

Specialist Care:
 All SGV members should have full access to specialist Care and referral facilities wherever they are able to be attained.

- * Private Health.
- * Public Health.

Closing Comments:

It was brought to Stolen Generations Victoria attention that BTH Staff are: Under funded to work only 2 or 3 days week, when our SGV members require 5 to 7 days assistance from their BTH worker. Some BTH staff provide this service during weekends, but are not paid for their hard work and continuous community support.

More funding opportunities need to be accessed to give BTH staff more resources and financial support to empower their SGV members and their families with the educational knowledge which can improve the quality of life for all affected by the forcible removal of indigenous people from land , culture & community.

Mildura September 4

Reparations

The government is accountable for conducting & implementing the forcible removal of Stolen Generation children from their families and Communities. Currently have PILCH looking at the Personal Injury Claim form and they are researching all aspects of Australian Law & Legislation which are not culturally sensitive to indigenous people whom were forcibly removed. Compensation equivalent:
Some members have requested to have paid compensation, but another alternative had been to purchase land or property on Country, as Healing Centre for SGV members to practice lore's/laws, customs away from mainstream society interference.
It gives SGV members an opportunity to reflect at their own pace & time. Training & Counseling can now be conducted on country and with Indigenous content. To have a primary camping area for cultural activities, untouched by non-indigenous community members.

Establish a State Funeral Fund:
Head Stone for Unmarked graves of unreturned children of Stolen Generations, who passed away in the care of State Wards, Adoption Agencies.
Memorial Park / Memorial Plaque for Remembrance Day for Stolen Generation Members, which day to commemorate? Feb 13th or May 26th or Jan 26th?
Other Shire & Council supported programs- Training & Development.

Other Reparation Suggestions:

*Gold Health Care Card:

This card would offer:
free access to health care facilities around Australia.
Free access to public transportation.
Free access to education facilities.
Other free access to essential services that would improve the quality of life of any SGV member & their family

Recommendations to Victorian Government Officials it had been suggested to have a SG rep from each region or town to formally present and handover the SGV Members recommendations to government. This would give the government a better understanding of which recommendations should prioritize and acted upon immediately.

Restitution

Land to be given back to the Stolen Generation Members to reaffirm connection to land, culture & Country. This would enable SGV members to participate in culturally relevant exercises such as:

Support Group Sessions.
Invited Guest Speakers.
Language & Art Classes.
Dance & Song Sharing.
Social & Communication Programs.
Small Group Sessions which have other supports systems in place to ensure participation:
Anger Management,
Drug & Alcohol Counseling
Education & Training:
One on One Family History Tracing and Research mentoring.
Supervised visits to Government Document holding facilities such as: KHT, NAA, State Library of VIC, PROV, etc.

Community Gatherings: to host more:

Welcome home Ceremonies.
Community Days.
Social Days.
Sporting Day. AFL,
Statewide Support Group meeting would be a great opportunity for all Victorian SG members to meet, greet and support via a statewide SGV network.

William Nailing Report:

As some SGV members are still finding out their origins, they are always looking for family connection to address their identity crisis.

Access to records, is the main priority. The Common Access Guidelines is the understanding between all relevant document holders, that all document holders can be accessed when registered with one organization (SGV) instead of registering with all 12 to 14 agencies. A central link to access records held by Government Departments.

Finding Family Interstate:

Need access to interstate records holding departments. NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages.
NSW Link Up.
Hospitals & Medical Reports.

Rehabilitation

54 Recommendations, 11 have been address: Sorry is the first step to starting a new understanding with Australian Federal Government and the Indigenous People of Australia.

Nutrition, Emotional & Psychological Damages inflicted upon SGV Members.

Healthy Food Alternatives: Healthy Natural Diets need to be advertised.

Eg: Bush Tucker, Maintain balance between Indigenous & Non-Indigenous Diets. (And to be made readily available)

Male & Female counseling services are to be made available to all community members.

Establish Support Groups

Each region or area is to establish a Support Group that will be financially funded from Stolen Generations Victoria.

Catering,

Venue Hire,

Meals

Transportation costs will be covered by Stolen

Generations Victoria.

Guest Speakers \$ per day rate.

Access to documents & fees should also be covered by SGV Ltd.

Partnership with other groups can also be established to complement other linked programs.

Men's, Women's and children groups can also be established from this main support group.

How DO we get the message out?

Other Information Distribution Ideas:

Make information available via Community Staff members.

Make it mainstream available via Information Health Care &

Social Services.

Public Notice via local newspaper.

Prevention & Cure Notices to be distributed to all community members.

To educate the Local Community about what the local history which has been recorded via Adoption Records, Medical History and Case File or from resources & other documents?

Brief history about the introduction of the White Australia Policy & Half Cast Act, and any other relevant legislation or Act which had been authorized by the Monarchy & Australian Government Officials.

Mildura September 4 cont.

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Closing Comments:
 Everyone agreed it was worthwhile getting together
 Everyone seemed to think it was good having both the
 young guys and the elders talking together – a very
 good learning experience for all.
 There is definitely a need for a support group for SG
 members.

More MOU's & partnerships with these agencies need to share this knowledge with all community members. With some Stolen Generation members, they have been unable to reconnect with any family member due to being removed from country, land (in some cases could be from Western Australia or Queensland, but now reside in Victoria since old enough to leave foster home or state ward care.)
 Then when family is located, these members need counseling:
 Before any reunion is to take place, to understand what morals, values and community lore/laws govern the community members that reside within the boundaries.
 During the reunion, counseling or mentoring needs to be present, to help explain terms & conditions the stolen generation members has chosen to return home to country.
 After the reunion has taken place the Stolen Generation member need to have constant communication with their counselor.
 In other cases some families units only consist of One Parent with two or more children. With this family unit structure their parent has no other adult to confide in other than their children, (who aren't psychologically or emotionally prepared to listen to their parent's childhood memories.)
 This is where Group Counseling Session may be helpful, but other issues also need to be addressed:
 An evaluation of the family members to gauge Maturity Levels and other aspects of Psychological Abilities.
 This will give a better understanding as to which family member needs assistance in a group, family, sibling or individual counseling session.
 The underlying hurt, pain & suffering needs to be addressed and other family members need psychological & emotional support to deal with their childhood & history. This is a large burden for any young child to deal with. It could change the perception of any person especially if they were a Government Worker. Hence trans generational problems of:
 Anger Management, Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Stress & Anxiety, Depression,

Life on a Government Mission, stories form the life & lives of our elders.
 * Growing Up on a Mission.
 *What the rules & regulations were.
 *Indigenous Practices allowed/not allowed.
 *Punishments received.
 *Hunting & Gathering Practices.
 *How to maintain links with country?
 This information is still not community knowledge and with more community interaction, the awareness of the Stolen Generations plight will be better understood from other non-Indigenous country men, women & children.

Swan Hill September 5

Reparations

To develop a Cultural Centre within the local community:
 Location suggestion:
 Swan Hill Artefacts at Pioneer Settlement.
 This Cultural Centre would house the following:
 Language Restitution Classes.
 Cultural Stories about local area.
 Local Artefacts.
 To host Welcome Home Ceremonies.
 Computer Room at Cultural Centre.
 Head Stones for Unreturned SGV Members & Unmarked Graves of SGV members:
 Many SGV siblings are still in mourning for their family members whom passed away whilst in the care of State Wards & Church Group Homes & Foster Homes never made it back home.
 Many SGV Siblings may be interstate, where some SGV members have requested a head stone to acknowledge the family members or to rebury their loved one back on their Country to be laid to rest respectfully.
 Head Stone Training:
 This is an opportunity to have Indigenous People to be trained & qualified in the art of Stone Masons & Head Stone Carving.
 This program would enable all Indigenous community members and family to be recognized at any gravesite in the Victorian Region or local surrounding area's.
 In the past there had been an Iron Works, Wood Turning and Stone Mason partnership within the Swan Hill Region.
 It did not receive large community support and has since then been closed down with the local TAFE unit.
 This could prove to be a valuable commodity for the Victorian Aboriginal Community & with possibilities of attaining interstate clientele for Unmarked Graves of Stolen Generation members.
 Other forms of further education in other industries included are:
 1. Cultural Tour Groups.
 2. Arts, Crafts, Artefacts & Paintings Stalls.
 3. Information Technology Training.
 4. Administration Skill Training.
 Retail,
 Sales,
 Hospitality,
 Building Industry.
 Other suggestions.....

Restitution

For members to gain access to their records, case file & medical history, Public Records Office Victoria (PROV) are developing a Common Access Guidelines called the Common Access Guidelines.
 This procedure is making it easier for any Stolen Generation member to register as members with Stolen Generations Victoria, who can then access their information without further registration with other Government or Agency that is currently a document holder of their family history.
 SGV will liaise with all other Services that were involved with the removal of Indigenous Children from their families, community, land & culture.
 Organizations such as: KHT, PROV, NAA, State Library of Victoria, Link Up, Anglicare, etc.
 Service Fees:
 Some organizations will require a service fee to access you records, such as:
 Photo Coping Fee.
 Viewing Fee.
 Mailing Fee.
 The information contained in these case file may be written in a discriminatory language, which may be more detrimental to the Emotional & Psychological Health of any SGV if they have not been counseled and prepared to read such detailed information about their childhood.
 Some cases have seen 3 family members were removed at the same time, but the information contained in the case file might only have information about the oldest sibling. (SGV members need emotional & psychological support by BTH Staff & Counselor when reading their case file, always.
 SGV members need to have support before, during and after they receive their case file. No member should ever be allowed to read their case file without some type of support from their BTH Worker.
 As some SGV family members do not have Birth Certificates, (usually the oldest sibling) their younger sibling may now be able to access their other siblings records via the Births, Deaths & Marriages:

Rehabilitation

Establishment of Support Groups:
 Each local indigenous community must establish a local Support Group for SGV members.
 Each group will set their own agenda items.
 With Access to Counselors.
 BTH Staff member to be present.
 The group will decide which topics are for discussion- Depression, Anger Management or to invite a guest speaker to attend & inform the group with the information that they requesting
 Cross Cultural Training & Education:
 All Non-Indigenous Staff (health care staff, Medical & Dental Receptionist, Administration Officers, Case Workers & especially Doctors are to attend local cross cultural training before working with any Stolen Generation Member.
 All Counselors must attend before working with any Stolen Generation members & their extended family.
 Members have been requesting to have more access to records via:
 Local Library's resources.
 Internet access at Community Centre or Healing Centre.
 State Department Document Holders- NAA, PROV, BD & M, etc.
 Family & Community Meetings:
 With PM Kevin Rudd's Sorry speech,
 "Injustices of the past must never happen again....."
 No Indigenous children shall be removed from their local Indigenous Community"
 This statement is has concerned many SGV members who know of Indigenous Children still being removed into Non-Indigenous Families today.
 Family members are still being removed from Indigenous families and the communities that they reside in.
 SGV members are concerned that currently removals are still breaking laws & protocols of current Legislation.
 SGV member want to address this issue by forming an Elders Group to make an overall family decision about which family to let the children reside at.
 The local community would prefer to be involved with the State Child Protection Agency & the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, to ensure that the family decision making process is in order for family to care for family members.

Swan Hill September 5 cont.

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

For All SGV members to be exempt from Taxes.
 To have Equal Opportunity Commission to be help host a Community Information Session in the town hall for all Community members & business owners to attend and be informed about the current situation of the Local Laws & Policies that are in place to protect it's Indigenous & non-Indigenous people from legal action.
 Compensation & Claims:
 The only form of compensation for SGV members in Victoria is to submit a Personal Injury Claim, via the courts in Victoria & NSW.
 Cultural Sensitivity:
 This will be an emotional journey & is very upsetting for many, as the SGV claimant will be questioned from other Legal Staff whom are not indigenous and have had the opportunity of being brought up by their parent and extended family members.
 Some SGV members do not have the privilege to remember that far back as some people had been removed at a very young age and don't know their ties at all.
 Other SGV member maybe able to recall different place they stayed in and some have chosen not remember or have blocked the terrible memory out due to suffering a lifetime of hurt, pain & identity crisis.

Certificate Authority Form accesses:
 Birth Certificate.
 Death Certificate.
 Marriage Certificate.
 Change of Name Cert.
 Single Status
 All states & territories should unify and present Federal Government with the argument:
 " Since the introduction of Federal Policies which affected all Indigenous People since the first landing, all Australian States & territories should be accountable too Federal Laws, not separate State & Territory Laws which are interpreted via a Non-Indigenous Judge with no understanding of the many different cultural & spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous People."

Other forms assistance, information distribution, members need to know this information!
 What are our rights, entitlements as an Indigenous Community Member & as a stolen generation member?
 Education Support, Literacy & Numeracy.
 Mentoring.
 Transportation.
 Sports & Recreation.
 Personal Skill Development.
 Life Skills Development:
 * Parental Skills.
 *Cooking.
 * Domestic Hygiene.
 *Financial Planning.
 It had been suggested for all SG members to have a Gold Care Card.
 This card would enable all SG Members and their families to gain free access to other Health Service Professionals within Victoria.
 Access to Specialists, Private Health Care Doctors, etc.
 No Sporting Fees.
 No School Fees.
 Free Travel :
 Certain limited trips per year.
 Unlimited trips per year.
 A holistic approach to access the services required to attain a better quality of life and to be able to access these facilities in their local area or region.

Heywood September 10

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

All BTH staff are to have the following, to maintain their Support Groups and other essential services that any SGV member will need to start or complete their journey of healing:

Long Term Funding to employ full time or part time BTH Positions to service SG members 5 days a week.

A treaty to be written between each local Council /Shire and Indigenous Community would prove to be a great step forward for each Local Community Group:

It shows the Federal & State Government that each township, council or shire and local Indigenous community can work together for reconciliation & to address the gap's in service delivery.

This practical event can show the other community groups & state, territories that some of Australian Policy & Laws can be address via other avenues and partnerships.

More Legal Options are to be made available:

Need more options with regards to lawyers – perhaps get other lawyers as well as PILCH?

Healing is a human right, while compensation is justice.

The Australian & State Government need to have the following laws federal:

For all SGV members who suffered from Physical & Mental Abuse whilst in the care of Government Child Protection Agencies such as: Anglicare, State Wards, Independent Foster Homes, and Religious Groups –Catholic Churches to be paid reparations for the Physical & Emotional Scars that have impacted them.

Ten Heads of Damage – Criteria.

When formally addressed this will give all SG members & all Indigenous people of Australia confidence and respect in the Australian Justice system.

This action would also prove to be an emotional & much needed acknowledgement for many elders and family members who have waited for over 50 years for the past wrongs to be addressed by the Federal Courts &

It had been suggested to host a community gathering or events such as:

Welcome Home to country ceremony. A community gathering which hosts a traditional welcome and be for Stolen Generation Members to participate and be recognized by Local Indigenous Community members.

Another opportunity to host Cultural Camps, which encompass different types of interaction with local Indigenous community members of: Cultural Fishing Practice of Eel Traps.

To have more Staff employed at the local Health Service Providers such as: Male & Female to be available, 5 days a week.

The need to prioritize family reunions for some SGV members, this would give a good indication as to which avenue that SGV member would chose to pursue.

For established Support Groups to:

Have book writing classes for members to record their history for other family members & for future family generations to access t his archive information.

There is a need for access to Male & Female counselors and to be Indigenous or Non Indigenous Counselors for a variety of reasons:

To provide culturally sensitive staff to help address & maintain rapport with SGV members.

To establish a Local SG Support Group which will determine: How often the group will meet?

Monthly, Second Month, etc

The SG Members will decide: Where the group will meet?

Some members may select to host the Support Group in a private location, away from any local Indigenous Organization due to:

“Breach of Confidentiality” .

Some SG members may have other family members working at the organization and would not like any other family members to be aware of their other abusive or verbal abuse they suffered whilst in the care of the Government during their removal from childhood.

Each SGV member is at their own different stage in their personal journey of healing,

A good relationship between the SG Member and the BTH Worker need to be established, so the BTH Worker can involve the SGV member in a supportive group atmosphere environment.

Closing Comments:

When each Indigenous Community has established their local Support Group, Heywood SGV has requested to have more guest speakers to be involved with the Support Group. Such as: Local Employment Agencies; Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Cadetships, Any Employment Opportunities.

Local Library – access to computers internet access, some offer free access, only if you are a local library member.

Winda Mara SGV members would prefer to have other Non Indigenous Support from all surrounding areas, municipalities, shires, councils. It is essential for Support Groups to have regional support and to keep all involved parties well informed of any progress or and help raise the SGV profile locally and generation more regional participation.

Healesville September 11

Reparations

Restitution

Rehabilitation

Compensation required, but 'culturally sensitive' compensation. Need for 'no proof' compensation.
 Compensation needs to be made accessible
 Lack of funding to provide resources to families to be able to look after Aboriginal children
 Money not the issue, more the access to resources and need for more resources
 Need for land
 Perhaps have a 'Gold Card' for access/ privileges to services
 Memorials/ official acknowledgements for those members of the Stolen Generations
 Finances to visit family members in other states, or funerals
 Donations for community projects

Problems accessing records and there is a great sensitivity to records – counseling should be provided for people as they open and read their records
 SGV should assist with counseling when opening records and also should assist with accessing records
 Common Access Guidelines – everyone thought this was a good idea
 International context – how do people get information or documents from overseas? (some people were taken to UK, Canada, NZ)
 Does SGV look at the non-Aboriginal side of things?
 Sharing stories so that other people can understand the experiences and those people be understood
 Cross-cultural training
 Localised treaties within the area
 Teaching children to live in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world (without forgetting either culture)

Support groups would be great – ideas were floated about excursions to KHT, PROV and NAA. Support group would be good to be able to speak with other members of the Stolen Generations and to assist with communicating with family.
 Members have difficulty accessing the local Aboriginal community
 What would people like to see in a support group? Ability to meet others, to share experiences, access and enhance cultural education in the community, access to cultural awareness in services –perhaps a cultural awareness training session?
 Interim certificate of Aboriginality a good idea to access services
 Need for counseling services
 Examine why kids are still being removed – intergenerational trauma leads to problems in the community – perhaps the support group could look at this
 Perhaps gain funding from corporate sponsors

Closing Comments:

Overall people were very keen on the idea of the Support Group and potentially what SGV can do as an organization.

Melbourne September 19

Reparations

Worries about children still being taken and getting lost in the system – and the community letting it happen - and the need to break this cycle – does SGV need to have a meeting with VACCA?
Community should have family meetings to intervene when children are at threat of being taken away
Need more options with regards to lawyers – perhaps get other lawyers as well as PILCH.
Healing is a human right, while compensation is justice

Restitution

Perhaps SGV could offer 'life skills' or 'parenting skills' but in the Koori way.
Need support and education about taking care of children
Have 'Stolen Generations Member' as a category on a certificate of Aboriginality interim form. This needs to be done also for children as well.
Native title rights – people should be informed about their native title rights. People have been moved around a lot and so there can be no sense of belonging. Because people are from another country it can make it hard to go back as you do not know the community there.

Rehabilitation

There is a need for counselors for a variety of reasons
People need assistance to remember things they have blocked out from their minds
There can be difficulties in paying bills, rent and those kinds of things.
Healing should not just be about medicines/ doctor – patient relationships, but holistic, traditional healing. Eg a social, cultural, healing camp with smoking ceremonies. There are camps for everything else but not for Stolen Generations. Would partners be allowed or not?
People feel ostracized by both black and white communities – this can lead to all sorts of problems.

Everyone is at a different stage of healing.

Closing Comments:

A disappointing turnout, perhaps the majority of people who were interested in the forums attended in May.
Jennifer and Alex drove down from Bendigo – they had already attended the Bendigo forum but wanted to participate more.
Both the idea of the support group and the CAG (as explained by Jade) were well received.

A lot of discussion around accessing records (and the difficulties in doing so) and also certificates/ confirmation/ interim certificates of Aboriginality.



Stolen Generations Victoria

"Restoring to us what is rightfully ours"

34 Wurruk Ave

Preston 3072

Victoria

Phone: (03) 9470 3477

Fax: (03) 9470 3499

