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Families Australia, a national, independent, peak organisation promoting the interests of families, publishes *National Family News* on the first week of each month (except January). *NFN* contains information about the latest major developments in national family policy, services and research from across government and the non-government sectors. Back issues can be viewed at: www.familiesaustralia.org.au

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IN THIS ISSUE...

Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants,
Monday 16 November 2009, Parliament House, Canberra

National Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

The Prime Minister will deliver an Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants on Monday 16 November at Parliament House, Canberra. The Apology will be broadcast live from 11am AEDT on ABC1 simultaneously around the country. The Apology will be made on behalf of the nation, and the Government, the Opposition and other parties will participate.

The Apology is an opportunity for the Prime Minister to acknowledge publicly the nation's sorrow for the neglect, abuse and pain experienced by the adult survivors of our former institutions.

The recent Senate Inquiry - *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited* - recommends that the Commonwealth issue a formal statement of acknowledgement, regret and apology to: *Forgotten Australians* - children who suffered hurt and distress, or abuse and assault, in institutional care; and *Lost Innocents* - former child migrants.

The people who identify as Forgotten Australians are the survivors of the roughly 500,000 children who found themselves in orphanages or Homes in the 20th century, between the 1920s and the late 1970s. The Forgotten Australians were placed in orphanages or homes for a wide range of reasons. Many of those who provided testimony to the Senate inquiry in 2004 detailed systemic and systematic neglect, assault and abuse that is hard to comprehend. The Senate Committee found that there was widespread '...improper and unlawful care of children, a failure of duty of care, and serious and repeated breaches of statutory obligations.'

Lost Innocents: Righting the Record was the Senate Committee's 2001 report on child migration to Australia under approved schemes during the twentieth century. Under these schemes, the British and Australian Governments entered into agreements for the migration of children to Australia. The schemes also included child migrants from Malta and South Africa. Many of these children were placed in institutions.

The *Forgotten Australians and Lost Innocents* inquiries illustrate the consequences of inflicting emotional and physical deprivation and shocking levels of neglect and abuse on children. Children lost family connections and, without those connections, lost their identity, culture and in the case of child migrants, their country. These reports highlight the struggle these children face as adults to cope and to live fruitful and constructive lives.

Families Australia has been assisting Forgotten Australians since 2006 through its auspicing of the Alliance for Forgotten Australians – please see www.forgottenaustralians.org.au

Information about the Apology can also be obtained from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website at: www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/families/pubs/Pages/ForgottenAustraliansQA.aspx

Contact Families Australia if you require further information (02 6273 4885).

'Responding to disasters: how can we better assist families and communities?' **Families Australia Second National Oration**

19 October 2009: The second Families Australia National Oration was delivered by Ms Christine Nixon APM, Chair, Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, at Parliament House, Canberra. Drawing on her many years of community and public service, Ms Nixon provided insights into how communities and families affected by the disaster of the Black Saturday bushfires in early 2009 rebuild their lives and communities. For the audiovisual record of the Oration see: <http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au/oration/index.htm>

OTHER TOP STORIES...

Newborn and Child Survival in Australia

5 October 2009: This literature review from Save the Children Australia reveals that: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are three times more likely to die before their fifth birthday than non-Indigenous Australians; the infant mortality rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants is 12.5 per 1,000 live births compared to the non-Indigenous rate of 4.3; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants are nine times more likely to die from respiratory conditions and four times more likely to die from injuries. More at:

http://www.savethechildren.org.au/plugins/editors/tinymce/jscripts/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/media/NewbornandChildSurvivalinAustraliaSept09.pdf

Better Support for Carers

29 October 2009: The Australian Government's response to the House of Representatives Standing Committee report: *Who Cares...? Report on the inquiry into better support for carers* recognises the vital contribution of carers of people with a disability, medical conditions, mental illness and the elderly. Significant reforms to the disability service and income support systems have already been introduced by the Government in response to concerns raised by carers. More at:

http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/better_support_carers_29oct2009.htm

Family Matters # 83

October 2009: The latest issue of this Australian Institute of Family Studies publication examines: the impacts of the recession on families; joblessness family relations, and children's development; financial disadvantage and children's school readiness; and the difficulties young people leaving state out-of-home care face in accessing normative developmental and transitional opportunities, including adequate access to training and employment. More information: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/fm2009/fm83.html>

Family Relationships Quarterly #13

October 2009: The latest issue is now available. Articles include: culturally responsive family dispute resolution in family relationship centres; families, social welfare services and the global financial crisis; program spotlights cover *Getting Tough or Getting Together* and *Positive Parenting Telephone Service*. More information: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/newsletter/n13pdf/n13.pdf>

Commonwealth Financial Planning, Carers Australia and AIFS

19 October 2009: *Tyranny of distance? Carers in regional and remote areas of Australia* was released which contained findings about the health, economic and social well-being of carers living in remote communities. More: <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/?/national/news/view/1478>

November is Lung Awareness Month

30 October 2009: The Federal Government is encouraging people not to take their lungs for granted. Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease are two diseases that impact on many Australians. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr09-nr-nr196.htm?OpenDocument>

White Ribbon Day

Wednesday 25th November is your chance to participate in activities and support the elimination of violence against women. Men can 'swear' their support at www.myoath.com.au National activities and events: www.whiteribbon.org.au

Recognition for people with a disability

Celebrate the achievements and contributions to society of people with a disability on Thursday 3rd December 2009 - International Day of People with a Disability. Details of events and activities: www.idpwd.com.au

State of the Family

12 October 2009: *Beyond economics: families in the forefront*. This is the 9th report in a series published by Anglicare Australia. The essays in this edition address issues impacting on families such as protecting children and the impact of the Global Financial Crisis. More information: Anglicare Australia ph: (02) 6230 1775.

Productivity Commission

October 2009: The Productivity Commissioner has released a draft report on the *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*. The review considers the role of the NGO sector in overcoming social and economic exclusion and in so doing contributing to the wellbeing of society. Identifying ways of measuring and reporting the benefits of social

capital raising are crucial to better understanding and valuing the role of the sector. Written comments are invited by 24th November 2009, preferably via email.
http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/91717/not-for-profit-draft.pdf

CONFERENCES

8th ISPCAN Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. 15 – 18 Nov Perth, WA. More information: <http://www.apccan2009.org.au/index.html>

Australia's Welfare Conference Whose needs? How well met? 17 Nov Queanbeyan, N.S.W. More info: <http://quest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?i=077c65a7-4e76-440d-b805-e84e61273a84>

2nd National Siblings Australia Conference: Creating connections. 18 – 20 Nov Adelaide, SA. More info: <http://sapmea.asn.au/conventions/siblings09/index.html>

SPRC Kinship Care & Research Policy Forum: What we know and where we're heading. 23 Nov Sydney, NSW. More info: http://www.cnet.ngo.net.au/images/stories/11_registration_kinshipcareforum_final.pdf

Family Inclusion Network (FIN) National Gathering - Human Rights in Child Protection 28 – 28 Nov Canberra, ACT. More information: <http://www.finact.com.au/>

2nd National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Family and Community Strengths Conference. 1- 3 Dec Newcastle, NSW. More info: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/fac/conferences/ifcs2/index.html>

OPPORTUNITIES...

FaHCSIA funding rounds

FaHCSIA's Grants and Funding page is at:
<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/grantsfunding/currentfunding/Pages/default.aspx>

Family Support Program - Kids in Focus – Family Drug Support

FaHCSIA has called for applications which close on 15 December 2009. \$3.1m is available over three years. This funding is linked to the Family Support Program and the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children. *Kids in Focus* is an early intervention, family focused approach to dealing with the impacts of substance misuse on families. Contact: 1800 733 923 or email KidsInFocusFamilyDrugSupport@fahcsia.gov.au

Centre for Leadership for Women (CLW)

Applications for the Advancement of Women in the Workplace Award close 22nd December 2009. The award is announced on International Women's Day, 8th March 2010. Eligibility criteria and details for award categories: <http://www.leadershipforwomen.com.au>

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