

From: [Robyn Flanagan](#)
To: [forcedadoptionsinquiry](#)
Subject: Response to Forced Adoption Inquiry Submission
Date: Wednesday, 17 June 2020 12:42:52 PM

I lost twin daughters [REDACTED] through adoption in 1972.
Being young, scared and vulnerable I felt powerless to assert myself to seek support.
I spent my pregnancy at a church run convent / home which felt like a holding place for mothers to provide babies for adoption.

Upon my babies' (adopted together) year of turning 18 years old I began a process with the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau to seek information and a much hoped for reunion. I learnt then that one of my daughters had died from a childhood cancer at the age of 8 yrs. Suffice to say my shock at this news was overwhelmingly hard to hear and to know, particularly as I sat on my own in a social workers office without being asked to bring a support person.

Over many years I have sought and received counselling for the ongoing loss and grief.
To date it has not always been an appropriate pairing with a counsellor and the costs have been prohibitive to receiving ongoing sessions.

I attended the Federal Apology for Forced Adoptions in Canberra in March 2013.
Whilst a gut wrenching yet sincere speech by PM Julia Gillard was received well, more is needed to be implemented by state and federal governments.

I am a member of the ARMS group and fully support all the recommendations in their submission. In particular I would like special consideration to be given to the ARMS recommendation on pages 9 to 10 Re: Death of a child Notification, ie Original family if listed on amended birth certificate could then be notified ASAP.
Another recommendation put forward by ARMS on page 12 I would like to draw attention to is access for those affected by Forced adoption to appropriate ongoing high quality counselling with financial support.

I am not seeking confidentiality and happy for my details and submission to be made public.
Thankyou for an opportunity to make this submission.
Robyn Flanagan

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Sent from my iPad