

3rd April 2021

To whom it may concern,

My name is Karyn Williams, I was supposedly born 6th April 1968, but with written errors in my adoption papers this date is up in the air.

My biological mother had made the choice to adopt me and while pregnant she relocated from Perth WA to Mildura in country Victoria, I'm guessing to hide the fact of her pregnancy.

I was supposedly delivered on the 6th of April 1968, to which 4 days later my birth Mother was given my adoption papers to sign and then discharged herself from Hospital.

Unfortunately this was not the legal adoption laws, as all adoptions were to be signed on the sixth day, once the department of human services noticed the error it was then too late as my birth mother had left the state.

In turn this then left myself a state ward until the error could be amended, unfortunately this took a great deal of time as my birth mother was running from the department every time contact was made by them.

I spent the first few months of my life in Mildura base hospital, only ever to be held when changed or fed. A nurse in the ward felt sorry for me and offered to foster me until my adoption was legalized, this was approved and I was placed in her care. Apparently my time in her care was only short lived, 2 weeks I was advised, there were issues with her husband having me there so the department removed me.

From there I was placed in an orphanage in Mildura for a number of months, 4 in total, what a shocking start to an infant's life.

My adoptive parents were a middle class family from Melbourne Victoria, they already had two natural children of their own, my adoptive father had a bad start in life and then became self-made to which he wanted to give an underprivileged child a loving home.

This was met with resistance for my adoptive mother as she did not want a newborn child, hence they were awarded myself as I was just 6 months old.

Finally the department amended the clerical adoption error, to which my approved adoptive family were contacted at 5pm late one afternoon to advise them to be in Mildura the following morning to receive me, 9am to be exact.

My family were forced to drive through the night with two other small children as they were on the other side of the state, they were given no time to prepare for my arrival.

I was advised by my adoptive parents on their arrival to the institution in Mildura I was placed in, they were greeted at the door by an unempathetic woman, there were multiple screaming children to be heard. My parents were led into a room, I was on a bunk caged in with two other infants, my mother stated to me that the woman leaned over picked me up handed myself to her and then turned to lead them out the front door.

My family stated to me there was no information give in regards to my care or development. In my eyes what a disgrace, was I just human garbage.

My adoptive family then returned to Melbourne, completely unaware that already I was traumatized. Once in my families care the department only visited them on two occasions over a period of the first year of placement. Both times there were meet by young woman who hadn't even parent children themselves, in experienced of an child's development.

The case notes I have read in my adoption papers in regards to the visit were very critical of my adoptive mother, they stated that she looked on adoption as a project and with Karyn and with her she has proven a point, so was this a good placement for me.

The departments final comments was happy with the placement.

I had a normal childhood with a loving family, but as I progressed they were unaware that a storm was brewing mental within my development.

I was a clingy child, as mum would state she could never leave my sight without me running for her clinging to her on many occasions.

My adoptive parents were uneducated that I was requiring more sensitive care, I was advised of my adoption at a young age, this was meet with crushing news to me emotionally.

Once I learnt of my adoption things then went from bad to worse, apparently I stopped all communication with my family and became very withdrawn. My family contacted the department for advise and was basically unsupported in regards to how to move forward.

Overtime I moved passed this but in turn only became more clingy in fear that I was to be abandoned all over again.

The effects of this all, then set in motion my development and behavior of how I acted as I went from a child into and adult and even to up to my current age.

Even from a young age I could remember always feeling sad and unloved, my way of coping was flight or fight. I would push people away in all aspects of my life, especially in regards to relationships.

I still to this day wake every morning feeling unloved and empty inside, my life has been faced with many challenges, I have self harmed multiple times to end my life as I just wanted the internal pain to end.

Myself and parents have spent tens of thousands on psychologist's to help me bring some normality to my life, most with miss diagnosis. I was advised I was bipolar for years and medicated off my head, in turn not allowing me to think or function normally.

My parents and myself knew it ran deeper than that with my mental state, my main issue was anxiety, finally 10 years ago I was diagnosed with BPD.

Unfortunately this was a condition that many professionals refused to deal with and support me emotionally with coping skills.

Once this diagnosis came and my behavior and traits seemed to make sense then the gaps started to fill in to why I behaved this way.

Basically my behavior was due to trauma in relation to my adoption and lack of parental bond as an infant.

I have work hard personally to give myself some direction in life on how to cope daily with my fears, but there are times when I fall off the wagon so to speak and everything comes crashing down.

In my 20's I applied to human services to have my adoption papers released, as they had legalized this through the system. One day I was home early from work, a knock came at the front door and there was a postman standing there with an envelope addressed to me, upon opening this I was confronted with some of my life history as an infant in regards to my adoption.

Myself and my family were mortified that I could be just handed this with no relation to my mental health and the effects it would have on me, there was no prior warning from the department that I would be receiving my adoption papers.

Yet again limited concern for my emotional wellbeing.

As an adoptee I have faced many cruel aspects in my life, when it was brought to light in my early years at school I was adopted, other children would treat me like I was diseased and would taunt me with nasty comments. Once again no support for myself or my family on how to approach these grievances from the department.

I wouldn't wish adoption on anyone, the whole process has left me mentally and emotionally damaged my entire life, I was treated like human garbage with no support for myself and family from government departments.

All aspects in life affect me, relationships are the hardest as I constantly live with the fear I will be rejected and abandoned. If I incur a death with family or friends I suffer more as the fear of them gone crushes me emotionally, I am unable to function in life for a long period of time after the event, years to be in fact.

I have a heightened sense to lose with other people, this in turn affects me as I feel their pain as if I'm connected to their situation somehow.

I don't like my life, and still to this day fight demons in my head to how I could end the pain and suffering, I now push people in my life away as emotionally I am now aware of my triggers, so if I don't have friends then I won't get hurt.

I believe the department has let myself and my adopted family down from day one, with no concern to my wellbeing, even with the national written apology from our prime minister years ago feels like nothing but a slap in the face.

My family from day one were unaware of the struggle they would have in raising me as a child, I have hurt them all on many occasions and this to causes me great pain.

If the department hadn't stuffed up my paperwork and I was placed right at birth and not months down the track maybe my life would have been different.

If you ask me how I feel the out come of this inquiry should go I am lost for words, no support or counseling will repair the damage, as an adoptee I feel the whole issues constantly gets pushed under the carpet by the government.

As a government you have excepted fault, this in turn opens you up for legal claims financially. I am not here asking for compensation, but I believe there should be some financial payment in relation to this miss handling of adoptions. Funding another group of counselors to hear our story is just dredging up the past, we have all spoken and all now feel its time the government see it for what it is.

I thank you for your time, if my words can shed some light on the effects adoption has had on myself and others, then I'm only to grateful to voice my concerns.

Warmest regards  
Karyn Williams