

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 22 July 2021 9:42 PM  
**To:** forcedadoptionsinquiry  
**Subject:** Submission from [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] I am 61 yrs old & lost my son to adoption on [REDACTED], 42 yrs ago. When I found out I was pregnant the shame & guilt that was put on you was so hurtful, you had no support it was just expected that you wouldn't keep your baby, being from a small country town was the worst part for my mother, the shame to the "family name" was all I can remember her saying. I was taken to 'Kedesh' the home in Kew for unmarried mothers, what a terrible feeling it was to be left there, you weren't to see or talk to anyone you knew the fear they might find out you were pregnant. 'Kedesh' was a friendly place & everyone was very polite to you. I remember the night I went into labour like yesterday, I was taken via taxi to the Mercy Hospital, the lady in charge at 'Kedesh' travelled with me, I was dropped off in the lane way of the hospital all alone now, feeling so confused not wanting this to happen, not now please I am not ready for this yet, I guess now I knew it meant I would lose my baby. The labour seemed never ending a very cold room, I didn't seem to have anyone you could talk to about what was happening to you, I remember the delivery seemed to be so many people just watching on, why didn't anyone of them understand what you were feeling, so often I go back & ask myself why didn't anyone help me. My mother arrived back in Melbourne the morning I gave birth, she said "to support me", I understand the real reason now, it was to make sure I didn't keep my baby, all she was worried about was herself as she once told me "if your father has a heart attack & dies you killed him", or "don't bother coming home with that baby". I remember one amazing nurse whom I asked did I have a boy or girl? Nobody told you anything, she did tell me & gave me a card with his blood group on it, she also told me his weight, length hair colour & he was a placid baby (I still have this card), she was the only person to show myself & my baby any respect, to hear a baby cry was like is that my baby, my milk came in but no baby to feed. I can't remember to this day walking out of the hospital, I do remember sitting in the social workers car crying her words, "do you want to go & have a cuppa before going back to the home", me thinking you idiot I just left my baby boy in the hospital, this still haunts me to this day. I have suffered depression, panic attacks etc for the past 42 yrs, but have only now admitted to it or understand what was wrong with me the past 12 months. 32 yrs ago I joined an adoption group here in [REDACTED] I received an update on my son when he was 11 yrs old, but no support offered to you after receiving the information. Our son found us 21 yrs ago he is a caring & wonderful man, it has been a big roller coaster ride with many ups & downs, with no support available to us both, he has ceased contact with us a few times I guess we get so use to having to let go of our babies, we except this is how it is & we just have to be patient with them & whatever they want or give us we take it. You learn to hide all of the pain, grief etc from everyone you cry alone somewhere safe, the shower, you weren't suppose to show your true feelings of loss. The reunion is hard work not to put too much pressure on him but to show him you did & still do love him, he was never forgotten. 2 months after losing him, his father & myself were together, we have been married for 40 yrs & had 3 daughters & a son, even having another son never took that pain & loss away from our first son, when our first daughter was born I couldn't let her out of my sight in hospital, I realise now it was the fear of losing her. You remember the family member comments when our son found us of "don't forget he has his Mum & Dad", no wonder we feel we can't love our lost children. I do have a wonderful & unique bond with my son, I am so proud of him & forever thankful to him for his love & respect he shows towards me, it has been a hard road at times lots of patience & respect for each other, what I can say now it is ok to love my son, I can't pick my son up & cuddle him as that little baby I have lost forever, he is a grown up man now, the missing piece of the puzzle has been found & finally placed where it belongs, the sad long journey for us both together at last as family, hopefully complete as mother & son. The last 2 months I have reached out for myself & seeing a psychologist, that pain & shame I had hidden has come to the surface, after 42 yrs I realise I suffer from P.T.S.D. (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), my psychologist has started E.M.D.R. treatment I wish I had started it years ago. I also applied & received my hospital records 2 months ago, reading this information explains missing pieces of what happened to me, especially reading in capital letters 'SINGLE GIRL NOT KEEPING BABY' or 'BABE FOR ADOPTION'. Thank you for reading my submission, hopefully out of it all maybe some help towards some counselling could be made available to both sides of adoption, for our grief, most birth Mum's felt we didn't have a choice, it was taken from us, I personally lost a part of me forever, I have my son in my life now but their wasn't a day & still isn't a day

when I don't think about what life could & should have been with my son with me, ongoing support would be a massive help to us all, the fear of worthlessness you live with every day is ongoing but we try each day & keep going with life, some days you just think & feel how do I keep going, when will all this pain end, but you then realise it won't stop you have to live with it forever.

I have reached out for help for myself it takes a lot of courage to do so, to find the right help available to you is another step, not many understand the grief involved with adoption.

Thank You.