

MEDIA RELEASE

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Apology to forgotten Australians – a guide to the future and redress for the past

Anglicare Australia welcomed the Federal Government's apology to the forgotten Australians today as another step in the healing of children placed in the care but warned that without increased funding and greater community concern for family welfare, too many children will continue to enter care and suffer as a consequence.

"The apology acknowledges the many shortcomings in the system and duty of care failures which occurred in the past" the Chair of Anglicare Australia, Canon Ray Cleary said today.

"And we acknowledge the part played that various agencies associated with the Anglican Church in those sad unacceptable events."

"Indeed, in October 2004, the General Synod of the Anglican Church apologised to the children who experienced harm or neglect in its institutions."

"But words by themselves cannot be the end and today's child protection and care programs must learn from the mistakes of the past."

"It is time for Governments and the community to invest in children and families at a level which prevents children from needing to be placed in care at all."

"And, where child removal is necessary, we must ensure services are well resourced, monitored and accountable, and young people are supported into productive lives."

"That responsibility is particularly carried by the state and territory governments of Australia who must support their apologies with action."

"The hard lessons of the past must not be not forgotten."

Dr Cleary said "that taking a child away from their family was tragic at any time."

"We must put current systems under the microscope and, for the sake of those who suffered in the past, ask 'Are we confident that such mistakes will never happen again?'"

"State intervention still occurs and we as a community must share the responsibility for protecting our children and in supporting families" Dr Cleary said.

Members of Anglicare Australia provide out of home and foster care to young people in every state and territory of Australia.