

Lillypad is a newsletter of Lotus Place NQ.  
Lotus Place is a dedicated support service and resource centre for adults who experienced childhood abuse in an institutional setting.



[www.lotusplace.org.au](http://www.lotusplace.org.au) | North Queensland | June 2019

In this issue – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Forde Inquiry Report | Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Grant Program | National Redress Scheme Contact | Forde Foundation Grants | Mindfulness Exercises | Mindfulness Exercises | Calendar of Events

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Forde Inquiry Report

Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the delivery of the *Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions* (The Forde Inquiry) report to the Queensland Government. The Forde Inquiry was the first of three significant inquiries into child protection in Queensland. It was followed in 2004 with the *Crime and Misconduct Commission's Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Foster Care (CMC Inquiry)* and the subsequent report *Protecting Children: and Inquiry into the abuse of children in foster care*; and the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (The Carmody Inquiry) commencing in 2012, with the final report outlining a 10 year road map for child protection, *Taking responsibility – A road map for Queensland Child Protection* handed down in 2013.

The Forde Inquiry stemmed from allegations during the mid' 1990s that outlined past abuse of children and young

people who were in the care of the State. Media attention and public advocacy led to a call for the Queensland Government to investigate concerns of harm in the child protection and youth justice systems.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> August 1998, Ms Leneen Forde, Ms Jane Thomason and Mr Hans Heilpern were appointed as commissioners. The Inquiry came to be known as the Forde Inquiry. The Inquiry gathered evidence from over 100 current and former residents and staff of 150 institutions through private and public hearings, written submissions, research projects and reviews of facilities.

The Forde Inquiry scanned the period from 1911 to 1999 and examined more than 150 orphanages and detention centres. Over 300 people provided information to the Commission. Many disclosed childhood experiences of emotional, physical, sexual and systemic abuse. Many

children and young people did not receive the food, clothing or education that they needed. They also noted the trauma of being separated from parents and siblings and the insurmountable impact of what they faced in their lives and wellbeing. Harsh discipline and excessive corporal punishment were noted as commonplace.

In listening to those who courageously came forward to share their experiences, the Forde Inquiry shone a light on institutional abuse and outlined the many impacts of such harm on children and young people. The Commission heard about children and young people who experienced abuse, neglect and deprivation of their rights. Many noted feeling worthless, vulnerable, stigmatised, unloved, and being denied opportunities. As adults, a significant number of former children in care reported poor personal relationships, low self-esteem, broken marriages, poverty, suicide attempts, insecurity and limited employment opportunities. This was a landmark report in Queensland's juvenile justice, child protection and social justice history.

### **Brisbane QLD Art Gallery Event**

An event, co-hosted by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and Micah Projects, was held at the Gallery of Modern art to commemorate 20 years since the report was handed down.

The Honorable Leneen Forde, The Honorable Di Farmer, Anna Bligh and Micah's Karyn Walsh all had an opportunity to speak on the day. The event was also livestreamed.



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## Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Grant Program

During proceedings at the Forde Anniversary Minister Farmer announced the new Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Grant Program.

The purpose of these grants is to continue in the footsteps of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse by revealing the truth of what happened to children and contributing to healing and reconciliation in Queensland.

The program will provide funding of up to \$10,000 for community groups and organisations to undertake projects related to truth, healing and reconciling histories of people with a lived experience of institutional child abuse across all Queensland communities from **1st October – 31st December 2019**. The total amount of funding available is \$50,000.

Activities may include projects, events or initiatives that:

- Acknowledge and raise awareness of institutional child abuse and its impact
- Support those with lived experience to speak out and share their stories in a way that is safe, supported, and promotes better understanding by the broader community and institutions
- Are of importance to people with lived experience such as events and reunions

- Develop memorials and monuments that are of significance to those with a lived experience
- Undertake research in the area of institutional child sexual abuse, acknowledging other forms of abuse
- Explore the impact of institutional child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse

Applications for the grants program will close on **Friday 2nd August 2019**

As a result, Lotus Place North Queensland is calling on anyone with an interest to please speak to Darcy about any of your ideas. In order to make a submission its important that we receive feedback.

If you are interested in providing ideas please contact Darcy on (07) 4724 2559 or [darcy.orr@micahprojects.org.au](mailto:darcy.orr@micahprojects.org.au) by no later than the **5th JULY 2019**.

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## National Redress Scheme

If you are interested in applying or finding out any more information regarding the National Redress Scheme please do not hesitate to contact Jacqueline Bisson on (07) 4724 2559 or alternatively on [Jacqueline.bisson@micahprojects.org.au](mailto:Jacqueline.bisson@micahprojects.org.au)

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## Forde Foundation Grants

Please be advised that this year's second round of grants has now closed. For those of you who did submit an application the Board of Advice will assess applications on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

If you require any assistance with the next round of grants, please do not hesitate to contact any staff at Lotus Place.

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## Mindfulness Exercises

If you've heard of or read about mindfulness meditation – also known as mindfulness – you might be curious about how to practice it. Find out how to do mindfulness exercises and how they might benefit you.

Mindfulness is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgement. Practicing mindfulness involves breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.

Spending too much time planning, problem-solving, daydreaming, or thinking negative or random thoughts can be draining. It can also make you more likely to experience stress, anxiety and symptoms of depression. Practicing mindfulness exercises can help you direct

your attention away from this kind of thinking and allow you to engage with the world around you.

Meditation has been studied in many clinical trials. The overall evidence supports the effectiveness of mindfulness for various conditions including:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Pain
- Depression
- Insomnia

There are many simple ways to practice mindfulness. Some examples include:

- Pay attention.** It's hard to slow down and notice things in a busy world. Try to take the time to experience your environment with all your senses. For example, when you eat a favourite food, take the time to smell, taste and truly enjoy it.
- Live in the moment.** Try to intentionally bring an open, accepting and discerning attention to everything you do. Find joy in simple pleasures.
- Accept yourself.** Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.
- Focus on your breathing.** When you have negative thoughts, try to sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. Sitting and breathing for even just a minute can help.

You can also try more structured mindfulness exercises, such as:

- **Body scan meditation.** Lie on your back with your legs extended and arms at your sides, palms facing up. Focus your attention slowly and deliberately on each part of your body, in order, from head to toe. Be aware of any sensations, emotions or thoughts associated with each part of your body.
- **Sitting meditation.** Sit comfortably with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap. Breathing through your nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. If physical sensations or thought interrupt your meditation, note the experience and then return your focus to your breath.
- **Walking meditation.** Find a quiet place 10 to 20 feet (3 – 6 metres) and begin to walk slowly. Focus on the experience of walking, being aware of the sensations of standing and the subtle movements that keep your balance. When you reach the end of your path, turn and continue walking, maintaining awareness of your sensations.

Simple mindfulness exercises can be practiced anywhere and anytime. Research indicates that engaging your senses outdoors is especially beneficial.

For more structured mindfulness exercises, such as body scan meditation or sitting meditation, you'll need to set aside time when you can be in a quiet place without distractions or interruptions. You might choose to practice this type of exercise early in the morning before you begin your daily routine.

Aim to practice mindfulness every day for about six months. Over time, you might find that mindfulness becomes effortless. Think of it as a commitment to reconnecting with and nurturing yourself.



The lotus flower has its origins and roots in the muddy waters below the surface, yet above the water it is a beautiful resilient flower.

After a consultative process the Lotus Flower was chosen as both a metaphor and image to represent the journey from adversity to hope.

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## National Redress Scheme

### Mackay

#### Peer Meeting with Guest Speaker

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019, from 10:00am

Jubilee Community Centre

Alfred Street, Mackay

### Burdekin

#### Peer Meeting

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019, from 10:00am

Burdekin Library - Creative Ideas meeting room

**Graham Street, Ayr**

### Cairns

#### Peer Meeting with Guest Speaker

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019, from 10:00am

Cairns City Library Meeting Room

**\*Please be advised of a return to the city library.  
The Manunda Library has no vacancies on the  
available dates.**

Abbot Street, Cairns

### Townsville

**Weekly Morning Tea** – Every Tuesday from  
10:00am

**Fishing Club and Tuesday Lunch** – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>  
June. Please arrive at Lotus Place by 9:30am.  
Details of fishing and lunch location to be sent as a  
text message one week prior.

### Reference Group

Next meeting:

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July from 10:00am

Darcy will send a text message with the phone in  
details. If you have any agenda items, please  
contact Darcy on

[darcy.orr@micahprojects.org.au](mailto:darcy.orr@micahprojects.org.au) or (07) 4724  
2559