
From:
Sent: Friday, 27 November 2015 12:29 PM
To: Advocacy and Support
Subject: services for child abuse survivors

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO SEXUAL CHILD ABUSE
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.....

I received email from 'Heal for Life' asking to make a contribution of services needed TO help survivors of childhood abuse. As known there are many different forms of abuse apart from sexual and include such as psychological & emotional, neglect and physical abuse. Unfortunately they all have similar impact for the victim/survivor, and while the Royal Commission may focus on sexual abuse all abuse is extremely harmful to society as a whole. I believe the impact of sexual abuse will lead to emotional abuse or vice versa making any type of abuse inappropriate and dangerous to the human soul.

Firstly, may I say Liz Mullinar helped change my life forever when I was given the opportunity to spend healing time at 'Mayumarri'. I was given the chance for reassurance and courage to face my fears and travel my journey in an encouraged, supportive way. I will never forget the moment it became very clear what had been happening in my childhood, why, what and who was there to cause such damage to my existence in not deserving of good times in life. We as survivors need 'Heal for Life' forever, knowing we can visit at any time when triggers affect our wellbeing to function, when our space is invaded, our empowerment is taken from us either sexually, physically or/and emotionally

While a child is trying to adapt to their environment and stages of childhood it is difficult enough without the added confusion of witnessing grown adults treating each other with contempt or expressing their anger onto them. It is little wonder children would miss childhood development, feel vulnerable, lack self-confidence, feel unloved, develop trust issues, become aggressive and angry which could lead to violence, struggle with schooling and further studies. Difficulty in forming positive comfortable relationships can deter employment or socialization or even feel positive and secure about their future; along with mental health issues these are just a few restrictions for survivors to overcome early or later in life.

For myself personally, there was no known help or support while my sister and I were growing up, school didn't know why our education suffered or why my sister in particular misbehaved or why so distant when spoken too.

Even today I mention to doctors, community workers, psychologies etc. there is still not enough knowledge and support for survivors let alone victims. Do we ever question why there is so much domestic violence, children and babies being murdered by parents or their partners, rape, bullying in our schools, workplaces, social interaction or around our home environments. Why people commit these crimes and what has or is happening for the perpetrator.

Much more needed to be available before perpetrators can even act on their headspace.....

- 1) Education in schools or community (Prevention programs) to help young people recognize signs a parent or family member may not be coping well at home. This in turn could provide the tools to help children reach out, recognize their own feelings, fears and worries, safety or insecurity.
- 2) Programs/workshop for survivors and most important ongoing support to gain the same opportunities and services available in ways of employment, volunteering, home help, socializing, forming trusted relationships.
- 3) Providing necessary training to health professionals on the impact to the brain and mental health issues of a victim of childhood abuse and trauma. Having the skills to interact appropriately and

provide the correct referral necessary for long-term support.

- 4) Fund more Advocacy Services to help empower victims /survivors to reach a better place in their lives, feel protected, listened too, not judged but encouraged for a life journey.
- 5) Intervention programs for men in many ways and support. Males are the majority perpetrators and not enough is developed for men to understand the psychological effects on victims or their own children. To recognize and realize the impact of their own childhood abuse is NOT a sign of 'weakness' but strength.
- 6) Appropriate training and Police power to act on reporting of incidents. Child Abuse is no different than Domestic Violence and the impact to families and individuals are the same.
- 7) Funding to provide men facilities (homes) and not expect women or especially children to change their environment. More protection for victims in their homes and provide tools and knowledge of rights and safety.
- 8) Adequate changes to legal policies to meet victim needs.
- 9) Retreats like 'Heal for Life' provided especially for men. Facilities in around Sydney, support groups, safe havens, specially trained staff and volunteers.

With all due respect to the men and women who continue to provide facilities etc.; I would hope survivors can be empowered to move forward by being involved in some way (if wanting to) to support new/other victims /survivors in knowing the true impact on a personal basis.

Kind Regards