

ISSUES PAPER 10

ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT AND THERAPEUTIC TREATMENT SERVICES

ROYAL COMMISSION CONSULTATION PAPER



CHILD MIGRANTS TRUST

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1. Introduction

The Child Migrants Trust (CMT) is a specialist, professional social work agency established in 1987. Although based in Australia and the UK, the two countries where most of its work is conducted, CMT is an international agency. The history of the Trust is well documented on the CMT website, while previous submissions on issues involving redress and police responses indicate some of the complexities of the Trust's work.

One of the distinguishing features of the Trust's approach has been its sustained attempt to raise public awareness about this dark chapter in the history of those countries involved. This has been achieved by a series of television and radio documentaries and dramas, books, national and international conferences and a major film.

The national apologies in Australia and the UK during 2009/10 were the climax of many of these productions as well as the struggles for recognition by the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families (IAFCM&F) who campaigned for parliamentary inquiries in both countries.

In addition, well over a thousand former child migrants have reclaimed their identity and been reunited with their families after several decades of cruel deception and separation. All these restored families provide equally powerful testimony in regard to the work of the Trust and its guiding principles.

Indeed, a major task for the Trust is to restore trust and promote recovery in those who suffered from abuse during their childhood, a critical period of their development. It takes great courage to seek help, particularly with regard to matters of sexual abuse, and it requires both knowledge and skill to navigate the long road ahead towards recovery.

The challenge remains for the spirit and symbolism of these public apologies to be translated into a more informed and responsive debate regarding historic abuse in its many forms if we are to break free from its terrible legacy.

I have been assisted in the writing of this submission by Ian Thwaites, Assistant Director (Services) and Mervyn Humphreys, Assistant Director (Policy).

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2. Child migration – background complexities

Many former child migrants experienced sustained, serious sexual abuse by multiple perpetrators throughout their childhood in both Australian and UK institutions. This has had a devastating long term impact on their lives and resulted in complex layers of personal difficulties affecting many critical aspects of their adult lives.

Adult survivors consistently report feelings of shame and a sense of guilt in relation to childhood sexual assault by adult perpetrators. These entrenched feelings permeate their sense of self-worth, and have often been exacerbated by decades of silence and a lack of language or social justice concepts to help them transfer the responsibility onto adult perpetrators. The insidious dynamics of sexual assault whereby victims are groomed over long periods to accept the blame as part of the perpetrators' self-protective strategy creates a heavy, life-long burden for survivors of childhood sexual assault.

The childhood experiences of former child migrants frequently included a complex matrix of factors, many of which led to trauma and loss with predictable, long term, adverse consequences. Across the total child migrant population, childhood institutional sexual assault is often a major factor given the abusive cultures within the institutions where child migrants were placed.

However, for most former child migrants, the assaults were perhaps more damaging because of the wider context of their childhood ordeal. This featured multiple losses, extreme emotional deprivation and a lack of personal or family identity which might have produced some external validation or security.

Whilst they share some similar experiences with other care leavers, such as the prevalence of damaging institutional abuse, former child migrants are unique as young children deported from their country of birth through government policy, with consequent major obstacles to rebuilding personal, family, cultural and national identity.

The complex arrangements governing their legal status, which involved British, Australian federal and State governments left former child migrants with no clearly identifiable government department taking responsibility.

Similarly, records detailing family background and the circumstances of their separation rarely accompanied the children to Australia and have been largely inaccessible, held in overseas archives. In the late 1980s, when CMT commenced its work, some deporting agencies were unaware of their own history in child migration policy and were unresponsive to requests for access to historic records.

Even basic records of identity, such as full birth certificates, were largely unavailable to former child migrants and not accessible through Australian sources. The usual historic practice was to send only a 'short' birth certificate with the children on their arrival in Australia. These records, usually held on State government files, gave no information about the names of parents and seemed to confirm the deception told to most former child migrants that they had no parents or relatives, or none who were actively involved with them.

Prior to the establishment of CMT, most post-war child migrants did not have Australian citizenship – but were unaware of that fact or of the potential risks of holding only long term residency status, particularly if they left the country for an extended period. Most still believed the deception they were 'war orphans' without family in the UK, and few had access to reliable, accurate information about their family background or the circumstances of their separation from family and deportation under the child migration schemes.

Low and often abusive standards of historic practices of both secular and faith based agencies involved in the deportation of children added significantly to their long term problems. Reinforcing myths ('you are a war orphan' or 'you were abandoned by your parents'), whilst failing to provide correct information about their origins often consolidated a strong sense of stigma and isolation, and provided no pathway for recovery. These untruthful statements were often pronounced as judgements upon the character of the children themselves and delivered in a cruel and punishing way that left lasting feelings of shame and lack of self-worth.

When CMT was established in 1987, many former child migrants described an overwhelming cluster of problems that had severely impacted on their ability as adults to establish healthy relationships or develop a solid, positive identity based on a truthful narrative. The impact of childhood deportation alone, within a void of deception and confusion was devastating and long lasting.

Many explained their circumstances in the language of a hurt and bewildered child: ***'I must have been sent away because I was bad.'***

3. Common presenting needs of former child migrants

- No formal document of identity, such as a birth or baptism certificate
- No proof of arrival in Australia, and no understanding of the mechanics of child migration, or who authorised their deportation.
- Former child migrants had not been granted Australian citizenship, despite a lifetime paying taxes and some having seen action in the Australian armed forces.

- Distortions or deceptions about the existence of family in the UK, and stigmatising labels such as ‘orphan’ or being told ‘your mother was a prostitute.’
- Historic institutional files which might hold vital family information were in most cases held overseas, without any clear protocol for access.
- Residual impact of serious physical, sexual and emotional abuse and deprivation in institutional care within institutions across Australia, affecting interpersonal relationships and sometimes impeding the development of positive attachments.
- Damaging psychological consequences of cruel and humiliating institutional practices, such as harsh and violent physical punishments, treatment of children who suffered enuresis, the impact of long term bullying and the lack of warmth, comfort or any form of individualised care.
- Impact of heavy child labour and educational deprivation, leading to lack of literacy and numeracy skills with consequent obstacles for employment opportunities and ability to provide for their own future.
- Serious medical neglect across Australian institutions, including critical issues such as failure to provide reading glasses or hearing aids.
- Separation from siblings also deported from the UK but then sent to different institutions across Australia, sometimes leading to decades apart.

Frequently, former child migrants are desperate to find their mothers and fathers. Many spoke also of the pain of living with the injustice of institutional abuse, and lacked the words to describe their experiences of assault at the hands of multiple perpetrators within residential institutions.

Betrayal, shame and confusion arising from abuse by those who were responsible for their care left many former child migrants with overwhelming feelings of isolation and lack of trust.

Perhaps most damaging for many were the continuing relationships of dependency on those very organisations that had failed in their duty of care to provide safety in childhood, and continued to deceive and control former child migrants as adults. These relationships were often characterised by an historic imbalance of power which did not encourage development of an individual sense of well-being or an independent adult identity.

4. CMT service model

CMT observes the fundamental principle that all direct client work with adult survivors of childhood abuse requires both trust and safety. The lack of individual affirmation and the betrayal of trust by those in authority and, indeed, responsible for their daily care is a universal feature of former child migrants' institutional experience.

CMT's service aims for a warm welcome in a homely setting as an antidote to a childhood spent in a cold, harsh institution. In many ways, and wherever feasible, attempts are made to provide the opposite of what many former child migrants experienced in institutions. The service is planned to be explicitly safe for people who have experienced childhood trauma and designed to avoid obvious or subtle triggers that might raise anxiety and consequently reduce opportunities for engagement and recovery.

Instead of the stripping away or denigration of their specific individual and family identity, former child migrants are enabled to discover more about their family and reunite with them in a planned and meaningful way.

Instead of being treated as a category or a group, former child migrants are given a personalised service. Not in a standard office or a building which has an institutional atmosphere, but in a house with comfortable chairs and a culture of respect and regard for child migrants and their families.

CMT clients are encouraged to actively contribute to the presentation of the premises to encourage a sense of ownership. For example, the roses in the front garden of the Perth office were planted by former child migrants who also painted the sign outside the front door.

CMT offers a multi-stranded range of services, apart from counselling, which permits former child migrants to choose when or whether to disclose any episodes of childhood sexual abuse. They may wish to develop a relationship with a social worker looking at their family origins through historic records, or their queries about obtaining a passport or citizenship. If this proves a positive experience, they may then decide to move on to more sensitive or troubling issues. They do not have to 'dive in at the deep end.'

The gradual, step by step approach may be especially significant for those for whom childhood sexual abuse has damaged their sense of trust in adults, especially those entrusted with their care or in positions of authority.

For example, in addition to therapeutic services related to restoration of family and identity, or preparation of statements of institutional historic abuse, CMT offers clients opportunities to participate in group work discussions relating to a range of issues arising from the consequence of their experiences.

The provision of historic photographs and documents relating to their journey to Australia, institutions and sometimes images of the children themselves provide opportunities for former child migrants to involve and inform their adult children and families about their early lives.

CMT has been a leader in bringing to the attention of governments their responsibilities to fund independent, specialist services to address the multiple needs of former child migrants and their families.

Since the 1990s, CMT has assisted former child migrants prepare their testimony for national and local parliamentary inquiries and redress schemes.

Similarly, CMT has assisted former child migrants with appearances before a range of inquiries addressing institutional abuse, including the Australian Senate and Forde Inquiries, the Northern Ireland HIA, and the Australian Royal Commission.

Key workers at the Trust have shown dedication to the cause of social justice for former child migrants over decades. If, at times, this has meant working well beyond the limits of formal contracts without adequate premises or resources, then that was accepted as par for the course.

Similarly, humanitarian workers in conflict zones would prefer better facilities but they do the best they can with what is available. This is mentioned only to make the point that former child migrants should have solid grounds for expecting that their interests remain at the heart of the Trust's work. It also provides a much needed sense of continuity for former child migrants who feel safer within long term relationships, and is especially relevant for those for whom recovery takes place over many years with occasional setbacks.

CMT's service model is based around principles of professional practice and is geared to promote recovery and avoid the risk of reinforcing a victim status. A focus on acknowledgement and advocacy alone can sometimes limit personal growth and opportunities for recovery by replicating competitive institutional relationships.

Perhaps the most damaging issue for many former child migrants is the fragmentation and confusion surrounding their early lives, permeated by major gaps in knowledge and distortions about their identity.

Whilst we cannot restore or repair a childhood damaged irreparably by predatory sexual assault, we can counter both confusion and bewilderment with clear information and an accurate account of family context which may strengthen identity and bring about a measure of confidence and recovery.

The healing benefits of family relationships and a sense of attachment and belonging are frequently cited by former child migrants as making the greatest positive difference in their lives. For some, it is transformative and helps them face more painful issues relating to historic institutional abuse.

5. CMT service principles

Independence from agencies involved in child migration, which are associated with perpetrators of abuse or oppressive practice is a fundamental principle. This is a vital issue for people abused in institutional care. It provides therapeutic safety and helps to develop trust and confidence. Its importance as a key value has been accepted by the Australian Government, evidenced by the insistence on 'arms-length' distance from past care provider agencies in their Find and Connect tender funding.

Many former child migrants report feeling a diminished sense of respect or safety in their relationship with past residential institutions, due to their limited control or access to their private and personal information. In response to this issue, CMT makes an explicit statement about the importance of confidentiality to promote an environment of safety that provides opportunities for adult survivors of abuse to develop trusting therapeutic relationships.

CMT services are provided by professionally qualified social workers, with experience in counselling related to identity, loss and recovery from historic institutional abuse. CMT does not use unqualified workers or volunteers in the provision of its social work service.

Expertise in counselling models including trauma informed practice - given the high incidence of PTSD across the client population - provides a clinical framework for service delivery. CMT staff employ relevant theoretical models in their practice for assessment and intervention, including theories of attachment, children's development, family systems and loss & mourning.

Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse consistently report pervasive feelings of intense shame which leave them isolated with major difficulties of trust and an overwhelming sense of pessimism and despair.

A key therapeutic approach to reframe these emotions and beliefs can be drawn from child development theory to help them understand the powerlessness of a child under the control of adult perpetrators upon whom they are totally dependent.

Long term institutional damage requires individual, bespoke models of intervention that take account of each client's strengths and support systems alongside their early history of broken attachments and exposure to abuse. Service delivery is built upon a case planning model involving assessment and goal setting. Key components often include family research, sharing sensitive documents and research outcomes, supporting initial family contacts and other aspects of family reunion practice.

Therapeutic services are geared towards promotion of recovery through a justice/empowering model that helps former child migrants to 'join the dots' towards a more accurate, comprehensive understanding of their past and key decisions by various agencies and institutions with responsibility for their care.

An emphasis on individual development, personal responsibility and autonomy from past abusive/oppressive relationships helps to promote a sense of freedom, self-control and well-being.

Flexible and responsive services are offered for as long as needed, to allow clients to work at their own pace over an extended period towards recovery. This is particularly important for clients whose families are fragmented, as they often need support through multiple family reunions over a period of years.

The ability to travel is crucial to enable services to be delivered in person wherever possible and, at least, for an initial meeting or to provide sensitive information at critical times. CMT social workers operate from offices in Melbourne and Perth, visit Sydney on a monthly basis and travel to other capital cities and regional centres to meet with clients as needed. CMT staff provide support in person to help former child migrants prepare their statements of testimony and in appearances before Royal Commission private sessions.

Stability of agency workers over long periods, permitting the development of long term working relationships with clients, has been an important strand of both casework services and campaigning work.

Practical resources are provided to enable former child migrants to take full advantage of new developments, for example the Family Restoration Fund managed by CMT which provides resources to facilitate overseas reunion travel. This has been available since 2010 and has supported almost 900 reunion visits to the end of October 2015.

Development of a long term client advisory group to provide consultation with CMT staff regarding policy development, priorities and direction has been an essential strategy to ensure that services are relevant and responsive.

CMT works closely with the International Association of former Child Migrants and their Families, hosting joint events and working closely together on matters of policy and campaigning.

Varied opportunities for clients to participate in media, cultural and campaigning activities to promote their own justice agenda, have been identified by clients as an important strand of their recovery. CMT encourages former child migrants to challenge common myths and misperceptions regarding child migration as a way of taking control of their own history and legacy.

6. Tangible service outcomes

CMT considers that counselling alone is usually insufficient to address the multiple issues facing most former child migrants. Rather, counselling is a tool to assist former child migrants develop new insights and integrate the positive developments relating to identity and reunion with family.

Similarly, counselling is a critical skill when assisting former child migrants to manage the painful process of revisiting their childhood trauma to prepare statements of testimony for the Royal Commission or other Inquiries into historic, institutional abuse.

While it can often be difficult to measure outcomes in terms of 'change' through counselling services alone, a significant part of CMT's work with former child migrants is focussed on family and identity restoration. The Trust's work brings about new or renewed relationships with family members and seeks to establish a shared understanding of their family's past and individual perspectives on personal, family and cultural identity.

Following CMT's work, former child migrants have choices to engage with relatives on a range of levels, and for many, this is a tangible measure of recovery. Subtleties of newly restored relationships can, of course, be very complex. The potential for warm, embracing relationships with a shared future is usually the goal, and many former child migrants achieve that level of connection. The Family Restoration Fund provides three reunion visits and, in addition, family members will often make return visits to their child migrant relative after a year or two.

Regardless of the quality and sustainability of relationships, which depends on many variables, CMT provides former child migrants with a more detailed appreciation of their past, especially the context of their original separation from family and, if possible, a stronger, more accurate insight into the lives of their mother and father.

CMT assists former child migrants to understand their family medical histories, an increasingly important issue as they become older and genetic issues are more significant in preventative healthcare management.

The impact of receiving a birth certificate following decades of uncertainty or denial can be enormous. The knowledge they now have official proof of identity and a better understanding of their early life events often places former child migrants in a stronger position. It is often only after these identity tasks have been resolved and family has been found that some former child migrants feel sufficiently safe to explore painful childhood issues of institutional abuse.

CMT negotiated special arrangements with the Australian government to simplify the citizenship application process and waive the cost for former child migrants during the legislative review in 1994. Resolving citizenship or residency status and assisting former child migrants to obtain Australian citizenship and a passport are often major positive achievements that bring about a more coherent and clear sense of belonging and identity.

7. Secondary Abuse

CMT has developed the concept of 'secondary abuse' as an explicit description of the continuing negative impact of the historic power imbalance between former child migrants and the institutions in whose care they were abused as children. This term is rarely described in text books yet is a powerful factor in the continuing pain, suffering and injustice observed by CMT over almost three decades of independent, specialist therapeutic practice.

The term 'secondary abuse' in this context does not relate to a quite separate concept which refers to adults abused as children going on to harm others as a result of their own damaging experiences.

The Trust has encountered many examples of institutions compounding the original harm arising from historic abuse by their present day attitudes and practices.

These range from subtle undermining through continued institutional attitudes and processes, to more serious breaches including denial of historic abuse, inappropriate use of authority and failure to observe confidentiality. Such practices all carry the potential for retraumatisation.

CMT has evidence of failed family reunions where lack of independence or poorly informed practice that takes no account of the agency's historic abuse of power has led to further devastating outcomes (secondary abuse).

The fear of rejection is a constant anxiety for many former Child Migrants. Family reunion work is highly specialist. We would recommend strongly that this work requires independence from those agencies with past involvement in child migration.

We all have a shared responsibility to ensure we make sound, ethical decisions on these vital issues. This is where hope exists for many former Child Migrants and their families.

Unethical past agency practices have contributed significantly towards many former child migrants' adverse experience in several ways. These include deceptive and oppressive practice regarding records and family information, denial about historic abuse and protection of perpetrators, and continuing imbalance of power which leads to dismissive or abusive relationships.

There are countless examples of poor historic practice related by former child migrants describing their institutional experiences.

Sadly, there are also many contemporary examples which underpin the Trust's position regarding the critical importance of independence.

8. The impact of secondary abuse

For an adult survivor of childhood institutional sexual abuse, there can be little more damaging than the experience that even after fifty years or more, the perpetrators continue to wield control over significant areas of their life.

A clear example is the reality that most institutions still hold vital historic files that may contain the key to locating family or understanding the context of their childhood.

However, there are many other ways in which some agencies continue to exert power and control over former residents. These can include social events and institutional reunions, agency newsletters that promote a sanitized view of the past, or more direct routes such as offers to provide counselling or family reunion services.

Impact of exposure to organisations or individuals associated with childhood institutional abuse can include:

- Triggering trauma linked to historic, authoritarian, abusive relationships;
- Reinforcing a sense of powerlessness and despair;
- Activating feelings of rage that cannot be safely expressed and often bleed into other interpersonal relationships with partners and children;
- Preventing or delaying former child migrants from seeking help and losing the opportunity for recovery.

The continuing power imbalance, between adults who were abused as children in residential care with staff or representatives of those institutions, and its negative impact on many former residents' ability to advocate for themselves, is now better understood.

Yet it has not been fully recognised in social work literature, and the profession has failed to take a stand that past service providers with a history of child abuse should not in any circumstances seek to directly provide therapeutic services to those they have already abused. These are basic, fundamental principles of ethical practice.

The combination of vested interests and likelihood of covering up past oppressive or abusive practices determines that whilst past providers may have some level of ongoing responsibility, they should not provide direct services to those people who were abused in their care.

CMT considers this issue is of such importance that government should legislate to enshrine these practice principles in regulation.

9. Examples of contemporary secondary abuse by agencies and institutions

The following examples are provided to illustrate the continuing abuse of power and its impact on former child migrants meeting with representatives of the migrating agencies.

Towards Healing:

At the point of negotiating the financial offer, the Provincial of a religious order told a former child migrant: 'There's not much in the kitty...that money is coming out of our pensions'. This has occurred at least twice, once witnessed by CMT. Obviously, we do not know how often this was repeated when we did not accompany the former child migrant through the internal hearing process.

- Sessions have often been held in institutional buildings with clerical staff in full religious clothing, triggering anxiety and trauma.
- Refusal to even discuss incidents of sexual assault by lay staff such as gardeners or handymen without encouragement to pursue investigation or identifying other justice routes: 'That's nothing to do with us!'
- This has included an example of sexual assaults spanning five years by a priest who was a regular visitor to a Melbourne institution.
- Insistence that offences by perpetrators from different religious orders are dealt with in separate sessions, requiring repetition of painful disclosure before a new panel from the same church.
- Minimisation of serious abuse; for example, reference to children being flogged with canes and straps as 'misdemeanors'.
- Imposition of a 'reconciliation' agenda which highlights 'forgiveness' or 'healing' but omits any mention of investigating offences to achieve a measure of justice. The inappropriate use of apologist words that dilute the abuse and the explanations offered that religious staff were poorly trained and overworked.
- Similarly, referring to former child migrants' disclosures as 'your memories' rather than evidence of historic abuse, results in strong expressions of disgust and anger at the process.
- Many former child migrants resent that they must submit to the charade of 'reconciliation' to access modest levels of redress.

Other examples:

- A request by a former child migrant for his historic file to be sent to CMT was refused. Instead, the entire file was posted to his home and left on the doorstep so that he arrived home to find pages of sensitive, confidential information blowing around his front garden.
- A former child migrant in NSW reported he was told by a representative from a faith based agency that his family could not be traced because his birth certificate had been 'washed overboard in a shipping container accident.'
- Another former child migrant told the Trust that she only used certified photocopies of her birth certificate because 'mine is one of those orange ones, the nuns told me that means I'm the daughter of a whore.' This is a good example of both identity fraud - giving someone a false identity - and the long term impact of a deliberate lie on a vulnerable child and adult.

- A former child approached CMT for help to retrieve her institutional file, after being told by the unqualified agency representative that she was: ‘...a troublemaker, who would not want to see what was recorded about her family back in England.’ For many years, former child migrants from this institution were required to meet with a former staff member to access their institutional files. There were many reports of confidentiality breaches, and harassment of those who expressed criticism of the institution to the point that some were afraid to ask for their records. These records have now been placed in the State Library with the necessary access protocols established.

These issues highlight some of the risks for former child migrants of continued engagement with sending agencies and institutions. There are specific concerns relating to their involvement in redress processes arising from historic abuse.

Obvious conflicts of interest arise for any organisation reviewing its own past practices where damages claims may impact on its reputation and financial liability. Often such processes are driven by lawyers and public relations concerns, and the agency will seek to minimise responsibility and the public record of its role in historic child abuse.

Clearly, this motivation of damage limitation is at odds with the needs of former child migrants seeking redress for institutional abuse and exploitation.

Many institutions have shown a culture of protecting the reputation of staff and former employees rather than the needs of vulnerable children in their care, even in the face of serious criminality and serial offences. The evidence before the Perth public hearings into Christian Brothers’ institutions, for example, highlighted their persistent denial of virtually continuous paedophile activity, documented back to 1920, yet minimised during the Slater and Gordon action in the mid-1990s as ‘just a few rotten apples in the barrel’.

This self-protective culture compounds dismissive attitudes during the last century where children in care were to be seen and not heard; their complaints were often dismissed as lies consistent with their reputation as being of poor character, and even basic standards of safeguarding and external accountability were frequently ignored. Collusion and corrupt practices between statutory authorities and the institutions rendered ineffectual any monitoring of standards, whether legislated or not.

Authoritarian regimes are described as virtually universal across institutions receiving child migrants. Many – probably most – former child migrants continue to feel intimidated and powerless when confronted with institutional staff or their representatives.

A culture of harsh, unjust and brutal punishments without opportunity to speak up as a child has left its mark on many former child migrants' ability to advocate for themselves. This reality is often reflected in present day interactions where agency staff are quick to assert that former child migrants 'are believed'.

Present day acceptance by the institutions of the reality of their legacy of historic abuse is a very recent development. Former child migrants express a wariness that 'the agencies have been dragged, kicking and screaming, to the negotiating table.'

Many former child migrants have felt affronted by the agencies' continued denial until very recent times; their sense of injustice has been reinforced by the very limited amounts offered through institutional redress schemes.

The explicit 'reconciliation' agenda expressed by many agencies is not straightforward and requires further scrutiny.

On the face of it, such sentiments appeal to the general public as an honest approach to putting things right. However, the agencies' history of denial, their protection of perpetrators, even serial offenders, and the severity of criminal abuse are entrenched factors in the minds of many former child migrants. Few can ignore a lifetime of reprehensible conduct or a public relations strategy designed to ensure survival of the institution as its first priority, rather than hearing the grieving, hurt child within the adult.

The Trust promotes a Human Rights framework to assist former child migrants develop a better understanding towards recovery from their abusive childhood ordeal. This assists former child migrants to build and take control of their own coherent, tangible narrative that offers insight and understanding into areas of identity, loss and historic institutional abuse.

This practice framework provides a platform to assist former child migrants to campaign for justice and recognition. Such activity offers clear benefits for embracing a stronger identity, recovery from the powerlessness and silence of an abused child, and to learn from the past rather than repeat it.

10. Conclusion

We have consulted with former child migrants through the International Association who endorse these concluding remarks. In particular, the Association is painfully aware of the litany of adverse consequences of secondary abuse. It regards the many years of denial of misconduct by all those agencies responsible as a classic example of the terrible impact of secondary abuse. This has resulted in justice being delayed, families not being found where records have been concealed and hope being diminished.

After almost thirty years of working with Britain's former child migrants and their families, providing specialist services to those whose childhoods were lost to abusive, cruel regimes, our strong view is that the following two principles should be adopted.

1. There needs to be a culture change so that independence is seen as a key requirement in services for those who have suffered historic abuse. This means that agencies which contributed to the problem of historic abuse should not be involved in providing services to those who were abused while in the care of those agencies.
2. There needs to be a similar cultural change in relation to the question of secondary abuse. Secondary abuse compounds the original crime and significantly inhibits recovery. It is another powerful reason which underlines the need for independent services.