Diverse Needs:
Parents and children separated by forced adoption or removal

ELDAC
End of Life Directions for Aged Care

Since colonisation, children have been removed from Indigenous families and until the 1970s, forced adoption removed children from unwed mothers. This affected 1 in 15 Australians. Children who were removed were placed with adoptive parents, foster care or other institutions but many children suffered mistreatment with lifelong impact. This caused harm to mothers, children and the loss of their families.

Experience of disadvantage

Mothers live with trauma at the loss of their child. Children who were adopted have struggled with their identity and are left with long-term difficulties. Childhood trauma adds to health problems, depression, anxiety, and grief. Over time, difficulties in building relationships lead to isolation. Many of these children are now older and may need aged care supports, but distrust services.

Complex overlaps

On leaving care, some have struggled with mental health issues, substance abuse, and homelessness. A lack of family support makes life harder.

The impact on end-of-life care

Many care leavers distrust institutions and health care because of their experience. Facing old age and end of life, may trigger fear and distress. They need care that understands their past trauma and makes them feel safe, respected and in control.

Visit the Healing Foundation webpage to find out more.

More practical skills and awareness about forced adoption by Department of Social Services.

ELDAC is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing