

10<sup>th</sup> February 2012,

To the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs:-

Adoption has been practised in almost every country and culture throughout history and remains an emotive and complex issue.

At NAAW, we acknowledge that Australia, like many other nations, has a shameful history in relation to many past adoption practices – especially the forced removal of children from their parents and families. We are aware of the incredible trauma and pain this has caused to so many of our community and the ripple effect of those distressing and most regrettable practices has had on our society.

Our volunteers at National Adoption Awareness Week have experienced through our outreach to our community and the email we receive, contact with a number of very distressed people whose lives have been seriously affected by such poor practice. Consequently, we recommend support and resources be provided to address the pain experienced by this sector of our community and their experiences acknowledged by the wider community.

National Adoption Awareness Week (NAAW) is a community of people touched by adoption in some way. We recognise that adoption it is a legitimate part of the solution to provide loving and permanent families for children when other avenues of care have been exhausted.

Through our work, NAAW aims to encourage a more supportive, positive, and inclusive adoption environment within the Australian community and to see transparency and best practice policies and procedures that honor the rights of the child when adoption is appropriate.

To assist transparency and provide awareness regarding past practices, we intend to report the senate's findings and field any resultant inquiries to professionals in the adoption and trauma field.

Adoption and permanent care is just one of the areas that NAAW believes needs the urgent attention of our policy makers when it comes to the needs of vulnerable children, both here at home and internationally.

National Adoption Awareness Week Board

**National Adoption Awareness Week**

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