

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I wish to be part of the compensation claim related to C.L.A.N. careleavers.

My father was a drover in NSW and when my mother died, he could not look after us alone, so my two brothers and myself were put into care at St. Patrick's Orphanage in Armidale, NSW. The year was 1971 and I was aged 7 years old. My two brothers were put into the same institution at the same time. We had to stay until 1973.

Whilst there I was smacked, had no appropriate clothes for the weather, locked up in a small room for minor "breaches of discipline", isolated from the outside world, never given enough food and it was very poor quality anyway and friendships with other girls was discouraged on pain of further corporal punishment. I always felt very lost and alone. I was neglected if I behaved and never shown any care or encouragement.

I still do not know of any redress scheme available to me, and heard of C.L.A.N. very recently, so I am asking for this submission to be accepted even though it is one day late.

Redress is very important to me as I feel our stories should be heard and our past suffering acknowledged. I myself am still suffering and I have great difficulties with literacy and numeracy. I find it extremely difficult to trust anyone for any reason and have been diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder. I have two children but have great difficulty relating to them and showing love, so they are quite disturbed too.

I believe I should be compensated for what I went through as it all still impinges on my everyday life. My educational standards are low, my physical health is poor and my mental health needs to be addressed. Alone, I cannot afford to correct any of these things, and though I have worked at menial jobs, I find now I am unable to work at all. Not only should the government apologise but should back this up with compensation.

It is not fair that I should continue to suffer for something that I had no say in. Neither is it fair that my children should suffer too as a consequence. Compensation will not really make up for all that I lost as a child, but would go a long way towards making my life easier now. I would be able to afford proper dentistry and find a therapist to help me cope with all my horrific memories.

Not only the government should contribute to the compensation but churches and charities involved should contribute as well, AND acknowledge their accountability in these matters.

Thank you,