

## Inquiry Submission - Children in Institutional Care

4 August, 2003.

The Secretary  
Senate Community Affairs References Committee  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Secretary,

### My Mother was an Inmate in Parramatta Girls' Home at Fourteen.

It is Tuesday the fourth of August, 2003. I'm sixty years of age and have just visited Parramatta Girls' Home for the first time, trying to make sense of what happened to my mother, and why.

My mother Hazel was forced to give me up at birth, after being incarcerated in Parramatta Girls' Home for two years and four months. My mother was Aboriginal and would have been seventy-eight years of age had she lived.

Hazel and I met in September 81' and the shame and pain of what she'd been through in the Home poured out of her. It was the first and last time my mother felt able to do this. My experience had to take a back seat.

My mother never recovered from what she'd been through as a child in 'that dreadful place,' called Parramatta Girls' Home. She blamed herself for what she'd been through, for being Aboriginal, and for losing me. Is it any wonder she wasn't able to bond with her subsequent children, and with the one she'd been forced to give up?

I owe it to my mother and myself to write this submission, so that these past violations and injustices that are intergenerational are acknowledged and addressed, so that they can never be repeated again.

My endeavours to access my mother's personal records whilst at Parramatta Girls' Home have been thwarted by bureaucratic red tape [**Freedom of Information**].

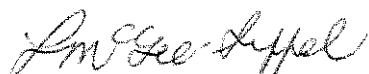
A recent attempt at the State Archives in Kingswood resulted in numerous phone calls to various government departments with each department only too willing to suggest a further two phone numbers that might be helpful. All to no avail!

The numbers included persons @ adoptions, community services, dept of corrective services, juvenile justice and other services I didn't know.

Is it any wonder that these departments absorb so many staff and the public are left with unanswered questions.

I have not given up - I will continue to search for what happened to my mother whilst under 'State Care.'

Yours Sincerely,



(Ms) Lorraine McGee-Sippel

*[Faint, illegible text]*

P.S. I am an adoptee, my birth mother is dead, my grandparents are dead and so is my natural father. Who may I ask is the bureacracy protecting?