

# Breaking free

asca

Adults Surviving Child Abuse

The Newsletter of Adults Surviving Child Abuse | ISSN 1836-6899 | September 2013

## Community Support for Blue Knot Day



**BLUEKNOTDAY**  
**28 OCTOBER 2013**

Planning for Blue Knot Day is well underway, with less than a month to go. This year is focused on the importance of positive relationships in recovery and what individuals and communities can do to help.

ASCA invites you all – survivors, community members, churches, religious groups and leaders to support Blue Knot Day, 2013. **BLUE KNOT DAY** is an Australian national day on which ASCA, the leading national organisation for adult survivors of all forms of childhood trauma and abuse, calls on all Australians to unite in support of the 4-5 million Australian adult survivors. **For all the information you need to Get Involved** please visit [www.asca.org.au/blueknotday](http://www.asca.org.au/blueknotday)



This Blue Knot Day, we are calling on individuals and communities to take action and support recovery. We know from our research that with the right support people who have experienced childhood trauma and abuse can and do recover. Community support is a vital part of that process.

In the week of 28th October to 3rd November help ASCA raise awareness, tackle stigma, foster hope and promote recovery.

*Blue Knot Day will be celebrated on Monday October 28, 2013 and activities will be held in the week from October 28 to November 3.*

### BLUE KNOT DAY RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE GET INVOLVED

More information on how to get involved and events see page 3.

With less than a month to go you can still get involved! Here's how you can show your support:

- Host a **SAUSAGE SIZZLE** outside your local Woolworths and fundraise on behalf of Blue Knot Day, it's easy! >>MORE
- Host a **BLUE KNOT MORNING OR AFTERNOON TEA** and collect gold coin donations (perhaps have cupcakes with blue knots as decoration!) >>MORE
- Order some **BLUE KNOTS OR FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS** just for yourself, family and friends and/or sell merchandise at your event. >>MORE
- Enter in a fun run and **FUNDRAISE FOR ASCA** by making us your charity of choice! Create a fundraising page on our fundraising platform to promote your event & receive donations. >>MORE
- Ask your **LOCAL LIBRARY** to spread the word and display a poster. >>MORE
- Ask your **LOCAL CHURCH** to hold a minute's silence or a Blue Knot service to raise awareness about the effects of childhood abuse/trauma and recovery. >>MORE
- Become a **BLUE KNOT DAY AMBASSADOR** >>MORE
- Like our Blue Knot Day **Facebook page**, check out our **Flickr pics**, follow us on **Twitter**. >>MORE

**REGISTER YOUR ACTIVITY** – To register your Blue Knot Day activity, download your Event Registration Form from our website [www.asca.org.au/blueknotday](http://www.asca.org.au/blueknotday), complete and return it to [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au)

Send us information on an event you have organised to [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au) and we will place it on our BKD events calendar!

**DONATE** to Blue Knot Day visit [www.givenow.com.au/blueknotday](http://www.givenow.com.au/blueknotday)

# From the Editor



As a new intern to ASCA this month I hit the ground running undertaking the privileged task of editing September's *Breaking Free* newsletter. And what an exciting time to be Editor! In this edition we countdown to ASCA's annual day of recognition for survivors – Blue Knot Day (28 October) with a call to get involved and support local events and church services held in support of the estimated 4-5million Australian adult survivors of childhood trauma. ASCA continues to advocate for the needs of survivors through the media (see Royal Commission page 4 & 5, ASCA in the news page 6) and Cathy our President highlights that "the way the issue of child abuse is discussed publicly is critical". And finally, thank you to Melanie who shares her journey of recovery in her story "The greatest freedom – freedom from shame" on page 7.

Thank you to the entrants of our 'Untangle the Knot' photo competition. We are excited to announce the winner on Blue Knot Day, 28th October and look out for the winning picture in next month's newsletter.

Our WORKSHOPS offer pathways to assist recovery for adults who have experienced childhood trauma in various forms, and for the carers and professionals who support them. For an updated schedule of workshops see page 8.

**Fiona Thomas | Editor**

## Taking care of business

The countdown to Blue Knot Day has begun. Our Events and Marketing team have been busy promoting the day and, in fact, the entire week of 28th October to 3rd November.

This month's issue of *Breaking Free* is dedicated to Blue Knot Day and you will see that there are many ways that you can get involved in this important day.

Our calendar of events already has a diverse range of activities that are being organised around Australia, and we encourage everyone to get involved and contact us with your ideas for activities and events that celebrate this important day and support ASCA.

One key activity will be the ASCA morning in Wynyard Park, Sydney on Friday 1st of November. Our team will be in the park between 7.30 and 10.30am selling Blue Knot pins and friendship bracelets, and speaking with morning commuters as they head off to work. ASCA's presence in the park will raise awareness and spread the message that with right care and support, recovery is possible. We'll also be promoting the important work of ASCA.

If you live in Sydney this will be a great opportunity for you to meet ASCA's hard working staff and some of our dedicated volunteers. Please come by and say hello.

**Mark Bebbington | COO**



### ASCA Administration

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9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Professional Support Line: 1300 657 380

9am – 5pm, Monday to Sunday

Donations can be made online at [www.asca.org.au](http://www.asca.org.au) Donations to ASCA of \$2 and over are tax deductible.

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Thomas Keneally AO

### Ambassadors

Anthony and Chrissie Foster  
Rose Parker

### Have your contact details changed?

If your contact details have changed, you can update them at [www.asca.org.au](http://www.asca.org.au) (or contact ASCA on (02) 8920 3611 if you do not have access to the internet or email).

### Forgotten your Username and Password?

If you have forgotten your username and/or password, go to join/login on our website and click on **Forgot your User Name?** or **Forgot your Password?** as appropriate.

### Follow Us

[www.twitter.com/ascaorg](https://twitter.com/ascaorg)

[www.facebook.com/AdultsSurvivingChildAbuseASCA](https://www.facebook.com/AdultsSurvivingChildAbuseASCA)

### Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter have been included to allow our members to consider a variety of therapeutic options and spiritual views. ASCA does not support any particular spiritual stance over another; nor does it uphold any particular therapy as superior. The Editorial Team accepts responsibility for all editorial comment.

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# Blue Knot Day

## Blue Knot Day Calendar of Events

### ASCA HOSTED EVENT

#### ASCA will be in Wynyard Park!!

Friday 1st November, 2013, 7.30 – 10.30am

Join us and show your support for Blue Knot Day. Come down to Wynyard Park, York Street, Sydney and purchase your Blue Knot Day bracelet or pin! Find out more about ASCA and our work.

To donate to our event please visit [www.justgiving.com/blueknotday](http://www.justgiving.com/blueknotday)

For more information contact us on 02 8920 3611, [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au)



### PUBLIC EVENTS

#### Blue Knot Day Afternoon Tea

Saturday 26th October, 2013, 2.00pm – 4.30pm

The Coffee Club Springwood, QLD

Cost will be \$20.00 with \$15.00 covering afternoon tea. There will be a raffle, guessing competition and Blue Knot Day merchandise will be available.

Cinderella Drive, Springwood QLD

For information please contact Janelle Miller: 0413 431 205

#### Back on our feet – Trauma aware yoga

Monday 28th October, 4.00 – 5.00pm,

Tuesday 29th October, 1.00 – 2.00pm

1 hour gentle yoga class, with movement, breathing and relaxation. Small class, maximum 10 people.

Cost \$10.00 with proceeds donated to ASCA. Bookings required.

Level 1, Surry Hills Library & Community Centre, 405 Crown Street, Surry Hills NSW

For bookings please contact Jacqui Brady – [yoga.therapy@me.com](mailto:yoga.therapy@me.com)

#### Walking the Labyrinth and A Pathway to Healing & Recovery

Wednesday 30th October, 2.00 – 6.00pm

Drevesen Park, Manly Esplanade, Manly QLD

Free event. Participants can donate gold coins for the rocks that make up Labyrinth. 2.00pm gathering time. 2.30pm onwards, formal proceedings including welcome & prayer ceremony; walking the Labyrinth; art making & the Labyrinth will stay assembled until 6pm.

Prior to event, there will be a series of workshops to paint rocks for Labyrinth.

For information please contact Kiri Edwardson or Maria Wagner on 07 3396 3128 [office@integrateplace.com.au](mailto:office@integrateplace.com.au)

#### Blue Knot Day Morning Tea

Thursday 31st October, 10.00am – 2.00pm

Gold coin donation for morning tea. Blues musical entertainment.

Interrelate, 138 Darling Street, Dubbo NSW

Di Frost: [DiFrost@interrelate.org.au](mailto:DiFrost@interrelate.org.au)  
[www.interrelate.org.au](http://www.interrelate.org.au)

#### A Blue Knot Day Church Service

Sunday 3rd November, 10.00am

South Sydney Uniting Church, 56a Raglan Street, Waterloo NSW

This service will include special prayers – grieving, beseeching and hoping for all adult survivors of child abuse as well as a Eucharist. Visitors are very welcome.

For enquiries contact presiding Minister: Rev. Andrew Collis. 0438 719 470  
[sshandrew@bigpond.com](mailto:sshandrew@bigpond.com)

Preacher: Rev. Elenie Poulos

#### Blue Knot Day Church Service

Sunday 10th November, 7.00am Early Service, 9.00am Main Service with Guest Speakers

St Marks Anglican Church Casino Corner Barker and Wests Streets, Casino NSW

The church will be decorated in blue ribbon and we will have a guest speakers, Vicki Dobrunz from Heartfelt House and Kevin Hogan, Nationals Federal seat of Page attending. Morning tea will be provided.

For enquiries please contact Mr Robbie D.N.Gambley [robbiegambley@yahoo.com.au](mailto:robbiegambley@yahoo.com.au)

### PUBLIC FAITH BASED EVENT – ALL WELCOME



#### Prayers of lament and support for all who have been abused

**WHEN:** 10.30am  
Saturday 2nd November

**WHERE:** Pitt Street Uniting Church, 264 Pitt St, Sydney NSW

This is a public event for all who want to grieve with, and for, those who have been betrayed and wounded. We will listen to the testimony of survivors of child abuse as told to playwright Alana Valentine and reflect in silence or with gentle music.

**The Lament Service** is in support of Blue Knot Day.

For enquiries please contact Heather Robinson: 0400 378 319  
[hero101@bigpond.com](mailto:hero101@bigpond.com)

Register details of your event to let others know what's happening and the full range of activities at [www.asca.org.au/blueknotday](http://www.asca.org.au/blueknotday)

- Follow Blue Knot Day on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Flickr](#).
- Visit our Blog [www.blueknotday.com](http://www.blueknotday.com)
- Contact us: **02 8920 3611** or [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au)
- DONATE to Blue Knot Day visit [www.givenow.com.au/blueknotday](http://www.givenow.com.au/blueknotday)



## Royal Commission Update

The Royal Commission is well underway with almost 5,000 calls being taken on the 1800 line, 400 people having been heard in private hearings and the first public hearing now completed. The new Abbott government has confirmed its support for the Royal Commission with a spokesman for Mr. Abbott's office saying "the incoming government has the same level of commitment to the royal commission" as the Gillard and Rudd governments.

"As a community, we must have zero tolerance for the sexual abuse of children," Mr. Abbott said.

"Wherever abuse has occurred, it must be tackled and it must be tackled vigorously, openly and transparently. Victims must be allowed to heal, and perpetrators must be brought to justice."

For full article click [HERE](#).

## Update on Public Hearings

The first public hearing of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ran in the week commencing 16 September 2013 in Sydney.

Five institutions were the focus of the first public hearing: Scouts, HACS and two State agencies – the NSW Department of Community Services and the NSW Commission for Children and Young People – who had responsibility for checking people who worked with children, together with the NSW Police Force.

Public hearings are open to the public to attend or can be watched live on the Royal Commission's website.

Transcripts from each day of the first public hearing are available [HERE](#).

Three more public hearings are scheduled in 2013:

- The second public hearing, in the fortnight beginning 21 October 2013, will examine the responses of YMCA and the Police to allegations made in 2011 that Jonathan Lord sexually abused children in the care of YMCA.

- The third public hearing, in the fortnight beginning 18 November 2013, will examine the handling of complaints and civil litigation concerning child sexual abuse in the North Coast Children's Home by the Anglican Diocese of Grafton in 2006 and 2007.

- The fourth and final public hearing for 2013, in the fortnight beginning 9 December 2013, will hear evidence about the establishment, operation and review of the Towards Healing process by the Catholic Church. In addition, it will explore how that process works in practice with evidence from a number of people who have participated in it.

Investigations are already well underway for public hearings in 2014.

Should you wish to engage with the Royal Commission:

Call: 1800 099 340

Email: [registerinterest@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au](mailto:registerinterest@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)

Write: GPO Box 5283, Sydney NSW 2001

Website: [www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au](http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)

The Royal Commission operates between 8 am and 8 pm across all Australian time zones.

## ASCA's unique role in supporting people engaging with or affected by the Royal Commission



ASCA continues to play a key role in the Royal Commission, providing training crucial to the operation of the Royal Commission and to other services funded to support survivors around the country. In addition it will be providing trauma informed training for workers and organisations around the country over the next two years. The schedule for this training is still under development. The current schedule can be found at [www.asca.org.au/workshops](http://www.asca.org.au/workshops)

ASCA's 1300 line plays a unique role in supporting people engaging with or affected by the Royal Commission in addition to its standard service. The counselling team has a depth and breadth of experience in supporting survivors of complex trauma and a trauma informed approach to care, including survivors of child sexual abuse. That forms the backbone of our 1300 phone service.

If you are a survivor of child sexual abuse who is considering engaging with the Royal Commission, or a survivor of any form of childhood trauma, a supporter/partner/friend of a survivor, or a health professional needing information, please call 1300 657 380. This line is now operating Monday to Sunday, 9am – 5pm. Our expert team provides short-term telephone counselling support and referrals to trauma-informed health practitioners around the country to support survivors on their journey to recovery.

## Haunted by private anguish behind public outcry – Peter McClellan, The Australian, 6th September 2013

It is now well known that the sexual abuse of children has been widespread in the Australian community.

However, the full range of institutions in which it has occurred is not generally understood and neither, in my view, is the devastating impact on victims' lives.

That impact is now emerging very forcefully within the private sessions of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse being held nationwide.

The Royal Commissions Act 1902 was amended so the commission could hear from people – in private and in surroundings in which they feel secure – stories of childhood sexual abuse.

Each private session requires one or two commissioners to be present, two commission staff to carry out the necessary organisational tasks and a trained counsellor to provide support.

Before we began, a psychiatrist advised us that individuals would probably require one to 1 1/2 hours to tell their story and, because of the need to safeguard the health of commissioners and staff, it would be possible to hear only four stories in one day. We were further advised that a commissioner should not sit for five continuous days in any week.

Many people who have come to the commission have suffered greatly. Many have received counselling at various stages of their lives, many have thought of suicide and some have attempted it. Many people, including those who suffered abuse 30 or 40 years ago, break down in the course of telling their story and require the assistance of support people to be able to continue. The recounting of those stories is often traumatic for the persons telling the story.

As at today:

326 people have told their story to a commissioner.

423 are waiting to do so.

Nearly 1000 are to be assessed for a private session, the majority of which will be heard by a single commissioner.

We receive an average of 23 new calls a day and perhaps 10 of them will lead to a private session. I expect that rate to increase once public hearings start. Many people will be hesitant about coming forward until they are satisfied that they can trust the commission's processes.

Some preliminary themes have already emerged. It is clear that the damage to young boys and girls who, because of their age, are unable to resist an abuser or report the abuse, may be life-changing.

It is common that people who have been abused in a school setting, although this may occur elsewhere, will experience significant difficulties. They may be unable to concentrate on school work; they lose faith in their teachers and in the school; and they may come to feel alienated from friends and family. Indeed, what many may consider to be low levels of abuse can have catastrophic consequences. Both boys and girls are left with a distrust of adults and difficulties with intimacy.

Boys may be left with confusion as to their sexual identity. This can manifest in lifelong difficulty in relationships and in other aspects of their lives. I have no doubt the impact of sexual abuse on the lives of the abused is not well understood by the general community.

In my role as a judge I have been called on to review many of the sentences imposed on people convicted of the sexual abuse of children but I readily acknowledge that, until I began my work with the commission, I did not adequately appreciate the devastating and long-lasting effect abuse can have.

As we move into public hearings, it will be important that the media provide effective reporting of the evidence as it comes forward.

There will be many stories, some shocking. But the telling is important because those stories may resonate in a way that will enable the community to respond to the issues more effectively.

Peter McClellan AM is chairman of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This is an edited extract of a speech delivered at Bravehearts White Balloon Day Lunch in Brisbane.

Article available [HERE](#).

### **SBS Interview | 16 September | Child abuse survivor says inquiry 'a good start'**

The President of Adults Surviving Child Abuse, Dr Cathy Kezelman, says she hopes the Royal Commission into child sex abuse will lead to more accountability for perpetrators and increased support for child abuse victims.

"What we have for the first time is the possibility for people to be heard in private sessions and also for forensic inquiries into the impediments and blocks in institutions," she says.

"And that is formal, in terms of proceedings and informal in terms of culture. That has meant that children have not been protected, have been harmed, and that has meant that institutions have been protected and not children".

She says the inquiry is limited though, as it's only looking at child sexual abuse in institutions.

"It's not looking at other forms of abuse and it's not looking at abuse and trauma in childhood that occurs outside of institutions, in the family, in the home, in the community - external to institutions".

She says 63 per cent of people are abused by family members; 20 per cent by members of the extended family; 10 per cent by family friends; 18 per cent by institutions, and 2 per cent by strangers.

"We know that the vast majority of people are abused by someone they know and many of them are abused by members of their immediate family".

Dr Kezelman hopes the inquiry will lead to more accountability for perpetrators.

"The best outcome is that we would have eroded a lot of the stigma around child abuse,

that people can speak out, that there will be mandatory reporting of crime, that children who are at risk of harm, or being harmed, will be protected and be believed.

"That there will be justice for survivors. That there will be accountability for perpetrators and for people complicit in covering up crime and that as a society, we work together to eradicate what is a massive scourge of child abuse".

Dr Kezelman, who is a survivor of child sex abuse herself, hopes the inquiry will also lead to better support for people who've experienced such trauma.

"All children and adults who are victims of all sorts of abuse need the right care, need professionals who understand the particular needs of survivors of this sort of trauma".

Article available [HERE](#).

# ASCA in the News

## **NEWS ABC | 16 September | Royal commission's public hearings into child sexual abuse to begin in Sydney**

Make no mistake, few institutions caring for children in Australia are likely to be spared the scrutiny of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Public hearings begin in Sydney today and the commission's chief Janette Dines says it will look "very broadly at institutions".

"We're looking at all sorts of institutions that have responsibility to look after children, and this week there are five institutions whose conduct will be examined," she said.

They include Scouts Australia, a New South Wales Government department, the Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service and its former head, Steven Larkins.

We believe the public will be shocked to begin to learn just how difficult life has been for people who have experienced child sexual abuse in an institution.

### **Janette Dines**

In coming months the Salvation Army, YMCA and Catholic Church could be among the institutions whose conduct will be examined by the commissioners.

Part of the royal commission's terms of reference is "to bear witness to the abuse and trauma inflicted on people who suffered sexual abuse as children in institutions".

Ms Dines says the public should prepare themselves for the shocking details.

"We believe the public will be shocked to begin to learn just how difficult life has been for people who have experienced child sexual abuse in an institution," she said.

"We also think people will be shocked to learn the broad range of institutions where child sexual abuse has occurred in the past, and I think the other thing that will shock people will be the severity of physical abuse that often accompanies sexual abuse."

She says victims and survivors of child sexual abuse have come forward in their thousands.

"We've had an overwhelming response – 5,000 have called the royal commission and at least 2,000 of those have expressed interest in coming forward and talking to the royal commissioner," Ms Dines said.

### **Thousands of victims come forward**

Four hundred people have given evidence in private hearings, another 400 people have registered to give evidence in private and another 1,000 people are waiting to hear if they will get a hearing.

Twenty-three people are coming forward every day and on average 10 every day are under serious consideration for a private hearing.

### **Abuser's rise to trusted roles**

The royal commission's first public hearing will examine how a paedophile was given trusted roles involving children.

Steven Larkins was jailed last year for possessing child porn, and has pleaded guilty to committing indecent acts against two children.

But until he faced court last year, Larkins had been one of the nation's most senior leaders in the area of child protection.



Dr Cathy Kezelman from Adults Surviving Child Abuse says it is a very big undertaking.

"What we hear from people who have been engaged in private hearings, they're feeling heard, they're feeling respected and people are getting a chance to tell their story," she said.

"They've had their feelings validated. That's crucial for survivors.

"Survivors really struggle with trust so as they watch the commission unfold; more people will be coming forward. People who have worked in the industry are not shocked by the numbers sadly.

"It's an enormous number of Australians who have been impacted."

Article available [HERE](#).

## **News.com.au | 20 September | Child abuse survivors' group responds to paedophile story**

AN article, published by [news.com.au](#), about how to recognise a child sex offender sparked controversy.

Dr Cathy Kezelman, president of Adults Surviving Child Abuse, has written the following response, which [news.com.au](#) publish in full:



"With the commencement of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse the issue of childhood abuse is being reported, spoken about and thought about far more often than ever before.

Though it is groundbreaking for the Australian society to be more aware of the issue and to have increased conversation about it, it is now more critical than ever before to have accurate reporting from the media about child sexual abuse.

Quite frankly, I was shocked at [news.com.au](#)'s piece 'Could you spot a paedophile?'

The very title evokes fear, as do the images, and it lacked tact and sensitivity.

Although the longstanding stigma and

taboo is being eroded – and that is to be welcomed – the challenge for those reporting or speaking about child abuse in the public arena is how to increase community awareness while minimising the risks of re-traumatisation for those affected and secondary traumatisation for members of the community.

During the life of the Royal Commission, such exposure will permeate Australian society.

It will be particularly challenging for survivors, their families and friends, yet also potentially impact us all, with greater risks for those with maximal exposure to the disclosed traumatic material – including those involved with the Commission, journalists and community members with their own histories of unresolved trauma.

*Continued on page 7*

## “The greatest freedom – freedom from shame”

For a great deal of my life I felt like an outsider looking in. I had become so detached along the way; detachment became my means of survival. By the time I reached adulthood, in theory, I hardly recognised or understood myself or even my most basic needs. In fact I don't think I felt entitled to any needs.

I believed that when I grew up I would be able to make sense of the things I couldn't understand as a child. My family life and my childhood experiences were so full of sexual abuse, chaos and drama that I found it almost impossible to live. Feeling alone, ashamed, fearful and confused became my emotional landscape.

My imagination became my first and greatest escape. An escape from feeling stuck, trapped and hopeless in my life. I used my imagination to be anyone, anything and anywhere other than who or what or where I was. That's how I survived, until I turned thirteen.

At thirteen, life was all too much, surviving my life was too hard, and I began having suicidal thoughts and entertained the idea of how. The day came when I was well and truly ready for my life to be over, I felt as if no one cared, I felt as terribly alone as I have never felt before or since. I often think back to that day and the power of a single act of kindness and the monumental difference it can make. At a time when I most needed to know I mattered, I mattered to somebody who didn't even know me, at a moment in time and not a moment too soon.

Something changed in me that day, and although I harboured ongoing feelings of wishing the ground would swallow me whole, the desire to end my life was replaced by drug and alcohol abuse.

I decided somewhere along the way, I needed to tell the truth. My truth. As a result I've lost a lot, not everyone is able or wants to hear it. For some people it's almost as if you are throwing fire at them. They see the truth as an insult or an inconvenience for which they have no time, regard or patience. Many are overwhelmed by it.

It's so easy to lose your way in this world. I was lost before I ever knew any different.

Born into a family that had already lost its way. They, more than any others, were challenged by my telling of the truth. What happened in those four walls was meant to stay there.

In my twenties and in early recovery from drug and alcohol abuse I could no longer hold it in or continue to suffer silently. It was killing me one way or another. The truth continued to spill out over a period of years; even when it became apparent that my life as I had known it was being shattered. Along the way I lost all hopes and dreams that I had long held, that if I could only tell about what happened then I would be ok. Instead I discovered the price of telling the truth. The



cost was high. I became willing to exchange that for my freedom and continue to do so.

Somehow beyond even my own belief I am able and willing to share my story. My silence was allowing others to hide and deny the hurt they were causing and it was allowing me to continue to hurt myself.

I have learned to be ok with not being ok. Some days that's been gold. Other days I have longed for the numbness of denial back again. For the most part I have gone from strength to strength with the understanding that I could no longer hold back the truth, any more than I could hold back the tide.

It is meant to be, that the truth comes from and through me and out into the world. I was meant to be free. The greatest freedom of all is the freedom from shame. Shame that I carried like a burden for so long for something I never did wrong. I gave the shame back to the people it belongs, I carry it no more.

I have discovered and rediscovered myself, many times, and continue to grow into myself more and more as life unfolds, always using creative expression as a means of travel and healing.

**Melanie Lee**

**If you would like to share your story for publication in a future edition, please submit a first person narrative of no more than 750 words to [newsletter@asca.org.au](mailto:newsletter@asca.org.au) All submissions will be reviewed by our editorial team and may be edited for content or length. We may not be able to accept all submissions for publication.**

### Continued from page 6

Child sexual abuse evokes very strong emotions in those bearing witness.

It's normal to feel shocked and disgusted, horrified and angry, devastated and numb.

It is important therefore to keep to the facts and educate rather than use information and images which invoke fear, in what is already an emotionally-charged issue.

It is important to tackle myths such as that around the relationship between the abused and abusers – the majority of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse do not go on to become perpetrators (as we can see in: 'Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice no. 440).

As a society we need to work together to address the scourge of child abuse; we need to be alert to situations in which children are

at risk of harm or being harmed and report them to the appropriate authorities.

The way this issue of child abuse is discussed publicly is critical to the shifts needed for our children to be safer, victims and survivors of all ages to be heard and find the support they need, with justice to prevail."

Article available [HERE](#).



# Workshops

Registration for 2013 Workshops now open  
 Registration for 2014 Workshops opening soon  
[www.asca.org.au/workshops](http://www.asca.org.au/workshops)

All ASCA workshops are grounded in the latest research presented in ASCA's *Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery* [www.asca.org.au/guidelines](http://www.asca.org.au/guidelines) To find out more about our workshops, check the schedule and to register go to [www.asca.org.au/workshops](http://www.asca.org.au/workshops) or call **02 8920 3611**. For all enquiries email [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au)

## Workshops for Health Professionals

### One Day Workshop for Health Professionals – working with adult survivors of complex trauma

ASCA's one day workshop for health professionals is grounded in a substantive research base, which identifies and outlines effective responses to complex trauma.

#### This workshop covers:

- Understanding complex trauma – prevalence and impacts
- Neurobiology of attachment
- Supportive relationships
- Self-development and self-care
- Coping strategies – adaptive/risk factors
- Reflective practice and vicarious traumatisation
- Practice guidelines for working with adult survivors of complex trauma
- The workshop has been designed for health professionals including doctors, social workers, psychologists, mental health nurses, counsellors/therapists, psychiatrists and other health care professionals

Date	Location
21 February 2014	Adelaide
28 February 2014	Darwin
14 March 2014	Hobart
28 March 2014	Newcastle
4 April 2014	Ballarat
11 April 2014	Gold Coast
16 May 2014	Bunbury

**Full-day workshop:** 9.00am – 5.00pm.

**Cost:** \$250 / Concession \$190

**Professional development endorsement:**

ACMHN- 7 ACMHN CPE Points AASW – 7 CPD hours

## Workshops for Survivors

ASCA's survivor workshops provide survivors and those supporting them with a safe space in which to learn about the impacts of childhood trauma, in all its forms, and possibilities for the process of recovery. They discuss ways in which trauma in childhood can impact current or past behaviours, feelings and/or physical and psychological health. They also build on existing strengths to foster a sense of hope and optimism about the recovery process and provide tools for positive change.

These workshops are open to all adult survivors. It is possible for survivors to bring a support person along to this workshop.

**Cost:** \$25.00

ASCA's philosophy is for our workshops to be accessible to all survivors. If you are experiencing financial difficulties please do contact us on **02 8920 3611** or email [events@asca.org.au](mailto:events@asca.org.au)

Date	Location
23 November 2013	Sydney
1 March 2014	Darwin
15 March 2014	Hobart
5 April 2014	Ballarat
17 May 2014	Bunbury

## Trauma Informed Training for Workers

This whole-day training provides information and tools to assist workers in their daily interactions with clients who experience the effects of unresolved trauma. Trauma comes in diverse forms, including childhood trauma of all types. Research shows that many people who access a wide variety of services are impacted by it. The training explains why 'trauma informed' practice is necessary, what it involves, and how its core principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment can be integrated into existing ways of operating. It addresses how to reduce the possibility of re-traumatisation within services, and the benefits of a trauma informed approach for both clients and workers. It also equips participants with basic knowledge and skills which can be applied and adapted to their role/s within their particular service settings.

#### Full-day workshop:

9.00am – 5:00pm

**Cost:** \$25.00

*(Due to funding from the Federal government allocated to help support those coming forward as a result of the Royal Commission ASCA is able to provide these workshops for a nominal fee.)*

#### Professional development endorsement:

AASW – 7 CPD hours

Date	Location
8 November 2013	Brisbane
15 November 2013	Melbourne
22 November 2013	Sydney
20 February 2014	Adelaide
21 February 2014	Wollongong
27 February 2014	Darwin
13 March 2014	Hobart
27 March 2014	Newcastle
15 May 2014	Perth

## Workshops for Carers

This workshop is designed for partners and supporters (carers) of adults who have experienced childhood trauma and/or abuse. It introduces the concept of a 'trauma-informed' approach to interpersonal relationships, and builds on the core principles of a trauma informed approach to assist individuals who are partners, supporters and/or carers in their interactions with adult survivors of childhood trauma/abuse.

#### The workshop is divided into three parts:

- What is a 'trauma-informed' approach? What it involves and how it is Helpful.
- Is trauma and what are its effects? (Key points of which to be aware)
- Core principles of a trauma-informed approach to interpersonal relating, and
- These can be implemented in offering support to adult survivors of childhood trauma/abuse.

Date	Location
22 February 2014	Adelaide
9 March 2014	Newcastle
12 April 2014	Gold Coast

**Cost:** \$50.00

## ASCA In-house Workshops

ASCA workshops are now available in-house on request for organisations seeking trauma-informed training and/or professional development for working with adult survivors of childhood trauma.

#### Workshops cover topics such as:

- Principles of trauma
- Complex trauma vs. single incident trauma
- Practice guidelines for working with adult Survivors of complex trauma
- Unresolved trauma (prevalence and impacts)
- Coping strategies – adaptive/risk factors
- Attachment, supportive relationships and self-care
- Neuroplasticity and recovery

ASCA in-house workshops provide many benefits as your team can request the topics which interest you and use the time to focus on issues pertinent to your clients and practice. Workshops of one day, two days and half day duration are available.