



## **Participant Information Sheet**

**Project Title:** Meaning-making, social action, and politicised victimhood: personal and political dialogues on child sexual abuse

**Project Summary:** You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Rebecca Moran, a PhD Candidate at Western Sydney University, under the supervision of Dr Michael Salter, Senior Lecturer in Criminology at Western Sydney University. The project seeks to understand people's experiences of making a victim submission to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, with a focus on the ways people make meaning of their experiences, and how this impacts on both personal recovery from trauma, and on political processes such as the reform of system responses to child sexual abuse.

### **How is the study being paid for?**

The project is funded by Western Sydney Universities Higher Degree Research program.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to participate in one audio-recorded interview. This can be in person, or via telephone or Skype if this is preferred. The interview will focus on the experience of telling your story to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and what this means to you. The focus is not on experiences of childhood sexual abuse, and you will not be asked to provide details of what happened to you. The researcher is experienced at working with trauma survivors, and your emotional wellbeing will be prioritised. To support emotional safety, you will also be asked to have a telephone conversation with the researcher prior to your interview, to discuss what will help you to feel safe, both during and after your interview.

### **How much of my time will I need to give?**

Your interview will take approximately two hours, and your pre-interview telephone conversation with the researcher will take 15-30 minutes.

### **What benefits will I, and/or the broader community, receive for participating?**

Participating in this research project is intended to be a validating and safe experience for you, and it is hoped that you will find it meaningful to reflect on the experience of telling your story to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This project also aims to be a space for survivors to have a voice, and to be listened to. The benefit for the broader community will be the development of greater understanding of what participation in a public enquiry means for survivors, and what survivor testimony means for social and political processes.

### **Will the study involve any risk or discomfort for me? If so, what will be done to rectify it?**

Although the focus of interviews will not be on actual abuse experiences, the researcher is very mindful of the lasting traumatic impact of child sexual abuse, and the potential for emotional distress or discomfort when talking about related experiences. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and respect, by a researcher with extensive experience in working with trauma survivors. All aspects of the project will prioritise the trauma informed practice principles of safety, choice, control, collaboration, and empowerment for survivors (Kezelman & Stavropoulos, 2012). As noted above, prior to your interview, you and the researcher will work together to develop a personalised plan to protect your emotional wellbeing. This might include changes to the interview venue or interview length: for example, you might prefer to talk via Skype rather than in person, or you might prefer two one-hour interviews rather than a single two-hour interview. You can ask to stop the interview, or to take a break, at any time. The safety plan will help you to identify available supports should you wish to talk to someone after your interview, such as friends and family, counsellors, and services like the Blue Knot Foundation and 1800 RESPECT. The researcher will call to check in with you the day after your interview.

### **How do the researchers intend to publish or disseminate the results?**

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that the participant cannot be identified, except with your permission. Interview recordings will be labelled with a pseudonym or code name, and all identifying details (such as names and locations) will be removed when the interview is transcribed. A research summary report will be provided to Blue Knot Foundation, Broken Rites, Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN), and Tuart Place. Research summary presentations will be offered to Blue Knot Foundation, Broken Rites, Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN), and Tuart Place. If you would like to be notified of any such presentations so that you can attend, please fill in the relevant section of the Consent Form.

### **Will the data and information that I have provided be disposed of?**

Please be assured that only the researchers will have access to the raw data you provide and that your data will not be used in any other projects. Please note that minimum retention period for data collection is five years post publication. The data and information you have provided will be securely disposed of.

### **Can I withdraw from the study?**

Participation is entirely voluntary and you are not obliged to be involved. If you do participate you can withdraw at any time before data analysis commences, without giving reason. Once data analysis is underway, the information you have provided will have been de-identified and broken into themes, and will be difficult to remove from the dataset.

If you do choose to withdraw, simply contact the researcher by email and say that you would like to withdraw. Any information that you have supplied will be deleted: this includes the audio-recording and the written interview transcript.

### **Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you can tell other people about the study by showing them the advertisements, or by providing the researcher's contact details. They can contact the researcher at [r.moran@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:r.moran@westernsydney.edu.au) to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain a copy of the information sheet.

### **What if I require further information?**

Please contact Rebecca Moran at [r.moran@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:r.moran@westernsydney.edu.au) should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether or not to participate.

### **What if I have a complaint?**

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through Research Engagement, Development and Innovation (REDI) on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 or email [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au)

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form. The information sheet is for you to keep and the consent form is retained by the researcher/s.

This study has been approved by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H12332.

Reference: Kezelman, C., and Stavropoulos, P. 2012 *'The Last Frontier': Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Complex Trauma and Trauma Informed Care and Service Delivery*, Adults Surviving Child Abuse