



## Welcome to the June edition of Breaking Free

Welcome to the June edition of Breaking Free. Without doubt, this year continues to present lots of challenges for our society and the world at large. Against the backdrop of COVID-19 and political unrest, voices which were previously silenced are now demanding change. The Black Lives Matter movement has shone a light across western society, spreading beyond police brutality, and across the full spectrum of racial discrimination and inequality and the trauma that entails. Our lead article this month looks at the collective trauma related to discrimination and how it crosses generations such as with our First Nations People. Hopefully this significant shift in public sentiment will enable us to build a harmonious community, in which fewer people and groups of people experience individual, collective and intergenerational trauma.

We have also included a new fact sheet around intergenerational trauma.

Lastly, we would like to thank everyone who kindly donated to our end of financial year donation drive. We raised over \$20,000 which will go directly to funding Survivor Workshops, helping us meet the overwhelming demand. Once restrictions are eased due to COVID-19, we hope to get these life-changing workshops underway as soon as possible. We can't begin to express our gratitude for your contribution.

**Take care**  
**From the team at Blue Knot**

If you have any comments about what you have read in this issue, contributions for the My Story section, or suggestions for future issues, please contact the editor at [newsletter@blueknot.org.au](mailto:newsletter@blueknot.org.au).



# Racism and Collective Trauma

“Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to realise our need of one another.” Desmond Tutu

More than 5 million Australian adults have experiences of interpersonal trauma (trauma between people). Interpersonal trauma, which is repeated, extreme and ongoing is called complex trauma. Complex trauma can occur at home, in the family, in services or in institutions. It can also occur within society and it can affect entire nations or peoples. When it affects groups of people or nations it is called collective trauma. Collective trauma is often spurred by intolerance and discrimination.

Complex and collective trauma both also relate to abuse of power, inequality and injustice. Sadly, as the world grapples with the threat of COVID-19 many people are experiencing collective trauma, which in many cases is based on racial discrimination. Racial division is not new, but it has been brought front and centre as a result of the brutal death of George Floyd, at the hands of the police. As a result, many people around the world are protesting and asking the question: When will people who are different – in this case ‘people of colour’ be safe and protected from violence and brutality?

As a result, the world is facing a crisis of collective conscience. The Black Lives Matter movement has arisen with a background of the global pandemic. In so doing it provides a critical time for reflection and change,

and within Australia, an opportunity to stand in solidarity with our First Nations people as well, and question our conscience, as individuals and as a nation, as to our own inaction, and in some cases, violent abuse of power.

Our First Nations People have experienced generations of trauma. Some are the effects of colonisation and its policies. An example is the forced removal of children. This has broken important bonds between families and kin. It has also damaged connection to the land and place. This has caused a loss of cultural identity and safety, across generations. This is a time for us to listen and hear our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, to understand the trauma they have experienced and continue to experience.

The conversation which has begun must continue because in Australia, the land of opportunity, opportunity needs to be shared. As a society as we battle Coronavirus together so too it is time to for all Australians to stop and take stock of the collective and individual trauma experienced every day by so many of our First Nations peoples. Until we address the root cause of injustice, discrimination, compounded disadvantage, nothing will fundamentally change. The opportunity is now, as the cost of inaction is extreme.

Download our new Fact Sheet on Intergenerational Trauma here:

<https://www.blueknot.org.au/Portals/2/Newsletter/June%202020/Intergenerational%20Trauma%20Fact%20Sheet/2.pdf>





## Update on Training and Organisational Services

The Training and Services Team will be focused on planning to return to face to face training in the coming months. We know the community are eager to see our upcoming calendar and we hope to be able to share very soon. It will be offered in line with government restrictions so may look a little different for now, but all the details will be in our upcoming calendar.

Consultations on organisational training are still occurring and one of the team would be happy to speak further about what we can provide for you and your teams. We offer packages of training and supervision to integrate both theory and practice. This supports teams to unpack key themes in a safe and meaningful way to take back to the workplace.

Supervision both group and individual, are open and the team are still taking enquiries and bookings. If you want to organise your supervision before the end of the financial year we are taking pre-payment.

For any enquiries please contact us by email at [training@blueknot.org.au](mailto:training@blueknot.org.au)





\* Trigger Warning: This article may contain content that could disturb some readers. You may choose not to read it. If you do read this story and reading it causes you distress and you need support, please call the Blue Knot Helpline on 1300 657 380 (9am-5pm AEST, 7 days).

## Podcast Review - Bessel van der Kolk



“The single most important issue for traumatized people is to find a sense of safety in their own bodies.” - Bessel van der Kolk

There are many wisdoms to ponder in this hopeful and rich conversation with Bessel van der Kolk about overwhelming experiences, occurrences we name as “trauma”. Possibly the most potent is the way the conversation empowers each of us to understand the way our bodies have been shaped by the brain’s attempts to take care of our bodies, and how to support our brain and body to reclaim a sense of safety: through the power of love, through the power of caring and human connection, commitment to oneself, knowledge that you cannot know the glory of life, without also knowing its darker places.

The nature of traumatic memory does not support people to develop a narrative: evoked images, sounds or physical sensations are the way the body experiences the world as unsafe. Trauma is imprinted in areas of the brain that make it hard to speak about, so the path to recovery invites us to speak, but also to bypass language, through exploring the way the experience is held in our body.

Trauma emotions are often expressed as intense experience, and we can shut down these feelings through external substances, like drugs and alcohol or internally, to cut off from the often intolerable sensations in our bodies.

Van der Kolk’s work at the Trauma Centre in Massachusetts identifies many practices that can effectively support recovery by supporting the body to restore a sense of safety. Discharging stress hormones through movement, participating in sport, engaging in art, poetry and

performance and singing, drumming or dancing: supporting our body’s natural urge to shift our energy through physical activity. Breath and heart rate become better synchronized with the ancient practice of yoga or martial arts, or tai chi or qi gong, practices that activate the parts of the brain that support regaining ownership of your internal experience, also helping the body to release the stiffening that can accompany difficult early life adversity.

Crucially the conversation explores the capacity to be agents in our own recovery, to own ourselves and observe our bodily experience: the foundational experience of elementary body functions a body that can eat, sleep, rest, breathe, feel safe and to move. To have stared adversity in the face, to bear suffering and yet to retain our humanity and our faith: survivors having the courage to remember, but also to transcend.

Van der Kolk is a psychiatrist specialising in traumatic stress and is globally recognized for his contribution to understanding trauma and exploring effective recovery. A link to his book *The Body Keeps the Score* and other book recommendations are available on our website here: <https://www.blueknot.org.au/Resources/Books>

Please feel free to call our Helpline Counsellors on 1300 657 380 9am-5pm 7 days a week AEST to explore the way Blue Knot can offer support.

Listen to the podcast here: <https://onbeing.org/programs/bessel-van-der-kolk-how-trauma-lodges-in-the-body/>



# An Inspired Artwork



Thank you Kate Miller for sharing this beautiful artwork with us. Kate was inspired to paint something for herself because she had just moved into a new home during the lockdown. She normally paints for others for their offices through her art group. The medium is acrylic and the "canvas" is the side of removalist box (cardboard). Her 4 year-old son wanted a rainbow in the painting and the bottom of the trees to be as they are.



# Call for Study Participants

## An Exploration Of Adult Survivors Of Childhood Experiences Of Trauma: A Retrospective Study Of The Impact Of Companion Animals.



The University of Queensland would like to invite interested participants in research that focuses on the connection between animals and people. In Australia, 62% of households have a pet living with them.

Maybe you have a pet living in your home now, or maybe you had a pet living with you when you were a child. This research aims to explore how past traumatic experiences may have been helped by the presence of a pet. The pet does not necessarily have to have lived with you. This research focusses on the attachment you felt to a pet when you were a child and how you feel toward a pet as an adult.

Download the information sheet for more information on the study: <https://www.blueknot.org.au/Portals/2/Newsletter/May%202020/Participant%20Information%20Sheet.pdf>

Go here to complete the questionnaire: <https://survey.app.uq.edu.au/Companion-animal-attachment.aspx>





## National Counselling and Referral Service (NCRS) – expanded purpose

The National Counselling and Referral Service is now not only supporting people affected by the Disability Royal Commission. It is a key trauma-informed support for people with disability, family members, carers, advocates and workers who have experienced or witnessed abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation during these difficult times. Anyone who wishes to access this support does not need to make a submission or have any prior involvement with the Disability Royal Commission.

If you are living with disability (or are a family member of or caring for a person with disability) and

- have experienced abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation
- are currently experiencing abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation
- are distressed or anxious about coronavirus
- are affected by the Disability Royal Commission

You can call the National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468.

This service operates from:

- 9am-6pm AEST/AEDT Mon-Fri and
- 9am-5pm AEST/AEDT Sat, Sun and public holidays.

### WHO THE SERVICE IS FOR:

- people with disabilities who have experienced violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation anywhere
- parents, guardians, other family members of a person with disability
- carers of a person with disability
- advocates for people with disability
- service providers or agencies working with people with disability
- employers or colleagues of a person with a disability

### WHAT THE SERVICE PROVIDES:

- professional short-term counselling and support
- a gateway to frontline counselling services
- supported transfers to and from the Royal Commission, advocacy and legal support services
- information and referrals about other useful services
- information about trauma and distress and why people can feel overwhelmed

### HOW TO CONTACT THE NATIONAL COUNSELLING AND REFERRAL SERVICE (NCRS) SUPPORTING THE DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

There are a number of different ways you can contact NCRS depending on your accessibility needs, and the type of service you require.

**Telephone:** Contact 1800 421 468 or 02 6146 1468 to speak with one of our counsellors for short term counselling support and referrals.

**Video Conference (VC):** VC is available to people who have restrictions around their ability to contact our counsellors via telephone. Please contact us first by email at [ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au](mailto:ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au). You can call us yourself or with a support person on 1800 421 468 AEST to discuss accessing this service. This service is available for a single session with a focus on linking you with local and ongoing supports.

**Webchat (WC):** Webchat is available for people who require support, information or referrals. Webchat is found at the bottom right of the screen on our website. It is not a counselling service. Please refer to the Webchat Terms and Conditions for further information should you choose to use this service.

**SMS:** SMS is available to people who have been in contact with us by phone or webchat and can be used to provide people with information or referrals. SMS contact 0451 266 601. It is not available for counselling support.

N.B. This is a separate service from the Blue Knot Helpline which provides counselling, support, information to people

with experiences of childhood trauma and for support around applications to the National Redress Scheme.

If in crisis, in need of immediate support or concerned for your safety:

Call Lifeline on 13 11 14. If you are currently experiencing any form of violence or abuse, or are concerned for your safety, call 000.

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT WHEN YOU CALL THE NATIONAL COUNSELLING AND REFERRAL SERVICE:

- Our counsellors are here to listen and support you
- Everyone's experience of trauma is different, and everyone has different needs
- Counsellors will provide support in your call based on your needs
- Counsellors can refer you to longer term supports for ongoing counselling
- If you need an advocate, counsellors can refer you to an advocacy service
- Counsellors can also provide information about trauma and its impacts
- We try to answer each call when it rings and usually do
- Sometimes we won't be able to answer straight away and you will be on hold until the next counsellor becomes available
- If you cannot wait on hold you are welcome to email our counselling team or have a support person email requesting that we call you back and we will do so as soon as possible

### ACCESSIBILITY

If you find it difficult to hear or speak you can contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS). Please phone 133 677.

If you find it challenging to use the telephone, you can contact the National Counselling and Referral Service supporting the Disability Royal Commission using video conferencing. To do so please connect with us first via email at [ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au](mailto:ncrscounsellors@blueknot.org.au) or by calling us yourself or with a support person on 1800 421 468 AEST to discuss accessing this service.

If you require support in another language you can use the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) free of charge by:

Calling the National Counselling and Referral Service and asking for an interpreter. The counsellor will make the arrangements, or Calling TIS on 131 450 and asking to be connected to National Counselling and Referral Service on 1800 421 468.



# New Fact Sheet - Intergenerational Trauma

This fact sheet provides a brief summary of the characteristics of intergenerational trauma, and the impact it has on individuals and groups of people, including when it crosses multiple generations when it is known as transgenerational trauma.

## BLUE KNOT FOUNDATION FACT SHEET: INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Recent research “has not only chronicled the existence of intergenerational trauma but has demonstrated some of the epigenetic, molecular, and biochemical mechanisms responsible for such transmission” (Levine, 2015: 161)

- When people who have experienced or witnessed trauma have not had an opportunity to heal from that trauma, it can be transferred to the next generation. This is known as intergenerational trauma.
- Trauma can also be transferred to subsequent generations i.e. beyond just the next generation (Atkinson et al. 2010). When trauma is transmitted across a number of generations, it is known as transgenerational trauma (Atkinson, 2002).
- Cycles of trauma can occur when the impacts of trauma are passed from generation to generation.
- Transgenerational trauma extends beyond the individual, the family and challenges with personal and caregiving relationships.
- The ongoing effects of colonisation, dispossession, racism and the trauma experienced by the Stolen Generations are the basis of transgenerational trauma for Australia’s First Nations peoples.
- The Stolen Generations are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who as children, between 1910-1970, were forcibly taken away from their families and communities to be raised in institutions, fostered out or adopted by white families.
- In Australia, transgenerational trauma often impacts the children, grandchildren and future generations of the Stolen Generations.
- Whole groups of different people (e.g. holocaust survivors, refugees and asylum seekers) also disproportionately experience **collective** and **transgenerational** trauma. Collective trauma is trauma which happens to a whole group of people or society.



Blue Knot Helpline **1300 657 380** | [blueknot.org.au](http://blueknot.org.au) | **02 8920 3611** | [admin@blueknot.org.au](mailto:admin@blueknot.org.au)



## PM slams 'reprehensible' redress holdouts

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is "not kidding" when he says institutions refusing to join the national child abuse redress scheme will lose public funding.

Mr Morrison and Social Services Minister Anne Ruston have threatened to cut off future funding and possibly tax concessions if organisations fail to sign up by Tuesday's deadline.

"Anne Ruston and I are not kidding. We expect people to sign up and if you don't want to sign up then I won't be signing any cheques," he told Sydney radio 2GB on Monday.

Mr Morrison and Senator Ruston on Friday wrote to 25 institutions, urging them to do the right thing and join the scheme.

"All institutions are doing in not joining is doubling down on the crime and doubling down on the hurt," they said.

"We consider it to be reprehensible that you have failed to sign up to the scheme."

The financial sanctions being considered include stopping future public funding and suspending organisations' charitable status and tax concessions.

"Be aware, failure to sign up to this program means I will ensure that there will be no further public funding that they'll be eligible for going forward," Mr Morrison said.

"I'm certainly prepared to do that and even prepared to consider their charitable status."

The Victorian government has also threatened to cut off state funding for organisations that don't join the scheme.

"Time's up," Victorian Attorney-General Jill Hennessy tweeted on Monday.

"We've already said no funding for institutions which do not sign up, and we'll explore every sanction available for those evading their responsibility to survivors."

The non-participating institutions will be named and shamed on Wednesday, when Senator Ruston announces what action the federal government will take against them.

The Jehovah's Witnesses is among the organisations that have refused to sign up, arguing it does not have the institutional settings of other faith-based institutions that the redress scheme is designed to cover.

The 25 institutions that received the letter were either named in redress applications or the child abuse royal commission, and were holding up compensation for 103 survivors.

Survivor support group Blue Knot Foundation president Cathy Kezelman said not joining the scheme was indefensible.

"Institutions which have failed to commit to joining the national redress scheme are showing that the same appalling lack of accountability and failure of moral rectitude that enabled children to be sexually abused on their watch continues unabated," Dr Kezelman said.

Religious, community, charity, education and sporting organisations have had two years to join the scheme, and must at least by Tuesday provide a written commitment to do so.

Legal service Knowmore principal lawyer Anna Swain said survivors hoped institutions did the right thing, but expected some victims would miss out on compensation and acknowledgement.

"There will be many people who are left incredibly distressed and disappointed," she said.

By mid-June, the scheme had received 7133 applications and made 2501 payments totalling almost \$202 million.

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## Missed opportunity by Catholic Church to fund support for victims of child sexual abuse

Dr Kezelman AM June 23, 2020

The request by some dioceses of the Catholic Church asking priests and employees receiving JobKeeper payments to pay up to 50% back to the Church has massively missed an opportunity. That opportunity is to show that the Church has truly changed by calling for donations to build a fund to support victims of child sexual abuse.

The Church purportedly stands to support the vulnerable and yet it, with many people missing out on JobKeeper and struggling to survive, has lobbied for remuneration for its own. And now it has asked its clergy and employees to donate back to itself, an organisation of enormous wealth and power.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted the Church as the institution with by far the worst record of child sexual abuse.

This record related not only to the number of established and alleged victims, but to the institutional risk minimisation processes which arguably were led from the top.

Countless victims were retraumatised in the process of seeking support and justice. The lack of accountability and failure to provide adequate redress to survivors was notable. The Melbourne Response and Towards Healing – both programs reportedly established to support victims – were experienced by many as being created to protect the Church and its deep coffers.

It is time for the Church to actually show that it has changed and to take this opportunity to financially support those harmed under its watch. Blue Knot Foundation is today calling on all Church dioceses to establish a meaningful fund which gives back to the Church's victims. Anything less is indefensible and morally reprehensible.

### ABOUT DR CATHY KEZELMAN AM

Dr Kezelman AM is a medical practitioner, mental health consumer advocate and President of Blue Knot Foundation National Centre of Excellence for Complex Trauma. She worked in medical practice for 20 years, mostly as a GP. Under her stewardship Blue Knot Foundation has grown from a peer support organisation to a national centre of excellence combining a prominent consumer voice with that of researchers, academics and clinicians advocating for socio-political trauma-informed change and informed responsiveness to complex trauma. Dr Kezelman was awarded an AM "for significant service to community health as a supporter and advocate for survivors of child abuse" in 2015.





## Whistleblower says abuse claims can't be aired at disability inquiry without protection

The public servant was involved in the closure of a privately owned facility they liken to a '19th century asylum'

A whistleblower who wants to expose claims of neglect and abuse in a supported boarding house says they cannot give evidence at the royal commission because it is unable to protect their identity.

Following calls from advocates and later the commission chair, Ronald Sackville, the Morrison government has been under pressure to introduce laws also used for the child sexual abuse royal commission that would permanently seal confidential submissions.

But it is yet to bring forward legislation, leaving the commission unable to guarantee witnesses confidentiality after the inquiry has handed down its final report in April 2022.

A public servant who spoke to Guardian Australia on the condition of anonymity said they were involved in the audit and closure of a privately owned facility where it is alleged residents lived in what they likened to a "19th century asylum".

Some of the nearly 30 residents – who lived with intellectual and psychosocial disability, including a few who also had substance abuse issues – had their heads shaved because of lice and slept in soiled, mouldy beds in rooms which in certain cases smelled like vomit and faeces, the person claimed.

When the facility was finally shut down, the owners had their licence revoked and were forced to repay some of the residents, who forked out most of their disability support pension to cover the cost of their substandard food and accommodation.

But the case, which predates the full rollout to the NDIS, was never made public and the person is frustrated by a lack of action against the proprietors.

They also believe these types of assisted boarding houses, which are normally home to some of the most marginalised people with disabilities, are poorly regulated and should be banned.

"They (the owners) just had to pay back some money to the clients. It was appalling," they alleged. "The sights and the smells, they just never get out of your head."

The allegations come amid public anger following the shocking case of the Adelaide woman Ann Marie Smith, whose death in "degrading" conditions has prompted a police investigation and a national independent inquiry.

Smith was receiving full-time care at her own home through the NDIS, but she was malnourished when she was finally taken to hospital and died a day later.

The use of assisted boarding houses – or supported residential facilities – as accommodation for people with disabilities has been strongly criticised by peak body People With Disability Australia. Although the facilities are privately run, they can sometimes receive government funding or subsidies.

The public servant, whose current job involves auditing such facilities, said most residents were "extremely marginalised" and, like Smith, do not have "families or community connections ... that are going to keep them safe".

"Many of these people will be NDIS participants," they said. "Their plans are then being facilitated by proprietors of these houses."

The whistleblower said they had access to documents including letters from medical professionals and photographs of the facility that could be considered by the commissioners if their submission was permanently sealed.

"Bedding, sheets were unwashed, soiled, mouldy," they claimed. "We found mattresses with springs extruding so a person could literally roll over and be stabbed by a spring."

"There was a room where there was only a mattress and someone was residing in there. They said that was the client's choice."

"In a look on their finances, they were only spending under \$20-a-week per person on food, and there were numerous instances where people were given the wrong medication or not given their medication at all," it was also alleged.

At the facility that was shut down, one resident who had an intellectual disability died from pneumonia, although the facility was not implicated in the person's death in a subsequent coroner's report viewed by the Guardian.

Another resident was overcharged thousands of dollars, although the money was later paid back, the person claimed.

They said they would lose their job if they spoke on the record because they did not have approval from their employer to provide the evidence to the commission.

The Greens senator Jordon Steele-John said: "I have

people contacting my office all the time – people who have lost all faith in the system because of the violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect they, or their family, have suffered – wanting to know when it will be safe for them to tell their stories," he said.

"The government has already wasted the best part of a year, out of a royal commission process that has only been scheduled to take three years."

The attorney general, Christian Porter, said: "The government recognises the importance of witnesses being able to give evidence safely and in confidence at royal commissions."

"I am now carefully considering options as to how we can best achieve that certainty."



## Trump niece's bombshell book to detail family 'trauma, neglect and abuse'

Publisher says Mary L Trump, a trained psychologist, describes 'a nightmare of traumas and destructive relationships'

New details have emerged about a book by Donald Trump's niece, which its publisher says will "explain how her uncle became the man who now threatens the world's health, economic security, and social fabric".

According to Simon & Schuster, Mary L Trump will describe "a nightmare of traumas, destructive relationships, and a tragic combination of neglect and abuse" that explain the inner workings of "one of the world's most powerful and dysfunctional families".

In turn, it was reported on Tuesday night that Trump is considering an attempt to stop the book being published, akin to his decision earlier in the day to go to court over former national security adviser John Bolton's imminent tell-all.

News of Mary L Trump's *Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man*, which is set to be released in July, broke on Sunday evening. Further information, including the title, then appeared on an Amazon page.

According to the blurb, "a trained clinical psychologist and Donald's only niece" will "shine a bright light on

the dark history of their family" and offer a "revelatory, authoritative portrait of Donald J Trump and the toxic family that made him".

Mary Trump was reportedly a key source for the New York Times' Pulitzer prize-winning coverage of the family's tax affairs.

The Amazon blurb says she "spent much of her childhood in her grandparents' large, imposing house in the heart of Queens, where Donald and his four siblings grew up.

"She describes a nightmare of traumas, destructive relationships, and a tragic combination of neglect and abuse. She explains how specific events and general family patterns created the damaged man who currently occupies the Oval Office, including the strange and harmful relationship between Fred Trump and his two oldest sons, Fred Jr and Donald."

Fred Trump Jr, Mary Trump's father, left the family business and died in 1981, aged 42, of heart problems arising from alcoholism. Mary Trump has a brother, Fred III.



Donald Trump's surviving siblings are Maryanne Trump Barry, a retired judge, Elizabeth Trump Grau, a retired banker, and Robert Trump, a businessman.

Mary Trump studied English at Tufts and Columbia and clinical psychology at Adelphi University in Long Island, New York. In 2000, she gave a rare interview to the New York Daily News, in which she said her "aunt and uncles should be ashamed of themselves" for their behaviour over Fred Trump Sr's will, and their treatment of her nephew, who has cerebral palsy.

According to the Daily Beast, she signed a non-disclosure agreement which said she could not discuss litigation over that will or her relationship with Donald, Robert or Maryanne. Citing an anonymous source, the Beast said the president had mentioned the NDA in the last few days.

Mary Trump has expressed opposition to her uncle on Twitter, in a rarely used account which on Tuesday featured a prominent picture of Black Lives Matter Boulevard, a street near the White House which was renamed after Trump ordered an assault on peaceful protesters so he could stage a photo op at St John's church.

The president's niece now plans to offer "unsparing detail (on) everything from her uncle Donald's place in the family spotlight ... to ... the appalling way Donald, Fred Trump's favorite son, dismissed and derided him when he began to succumb to Alzheimer's".

As the blurb says, "pundits, armchair psychologists and journalists have sought to parse Donald J Trump's lethal flaws". Previous such titles include Trump on the Couch and The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump.

According to Simon & Schuster – which is also behind Bolton's tell-all and Bob Woodward's Trump books – Mary Trump "has the education, insight, and intimate familiarity needed to reveal what makes Donald, and the rest of her clan, tick.

"She alone can recount this fascinating, unnerving saga ... because she is the only Trump willing to tell the truth about one of the world's most powerful and dysfunctional families."

Former Trump adviser Sam Nunberg told the Beast that Mary Trump's book would worry the president more than that by Bolton, because "it's about family, it's a personal betrayal ... I've never seen something like this."

Bolton's book, *The Room Where It Happened*, is due out on 23 June. On Tuesday, the Trump administration asked a federal judge to block it, arguing Bolton had breached a contract and risked exposing classified information. Most observers suggested the gambit is unlikely to work, given first amendment protections of free speech.

In a statement, Simon & Schuster said Trump's lawsuit was merely aimed at quashing "a book it deems unflattering to the president".

*Too Much and Never Enough* is set for publication on 28 July.



## Disability Royal Commission Seeking Insights And Expertise From Disabled First Nations People

On Tuesday the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability released another issues paper which is specifically seeking information about the experiences of First Nations people with disabilities.

With growing global attention on racial inequality, discrimination and stigma, the commission wants to hear their stories about what changes are needed within all societal settings including welfare, housing, health, employment and education.

Download Audio here: <http://de9znd9hicg5y.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/11061846/Damian-Griffis-Interview-2.EDITED.mp3> <http://de9znd9hicg5y.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/08000000/money20indigenous20nnah20.jpg>





## New survey reveals the financial costs of COVID-19 for people with disability

Luke Michael | 10 June 2020

### More than 90 per cent of people with disability have seen their expenses increase

People with disability are facing financial hardship and going days without food during the COVID-19 pandemic, new research reveals.

A survey from People with Disability Australia (PWDA) found that nine in 10 people with disability have experienced increased expenses due to the ongoing pandemic.

The 204 survey respondents reported spending more on food and groceries (58 per cent), healthcare (31 per cent), internet and phone (26 per cent), and sanitising and hygiene equipment (20 per cent).

"(A) rise in groceries plus having to travel for medical appointments is putting me in financial hardship," one respondent said.

Another added: "I have to go with no food some days so I can pay for my medications and transport is expensive."

El Gibbs, PWDA's director of media and communications, said many of these people already lived in poverty and relied on income supports such as the Disability Support Pension (DSP).

"But those on the DSP were not eligible for the coronavirus supplement that would have gone some way towards alleviating these increased costs," Gibbs said.

Another key issue identified for people with disability was the continuation of essential supports during the pandemic.

Gibbs said the switch to telehealth options was a good move, and should remain available in the future.

"Our survey showed that both (National Disability Insurance Scheme) and non-NDIS supports were affected by the pandemic, with over 40 per cent of people with disability reporting less support," she said.



"We are pleased to see the rapid move to using telehealth facilities, and our survey shows that many people with disability have accessed healthcare in this way."

New banning powers outlined to protect NDIS participants

These findings come amid an announcement that the Morrison government will look to ban unsuitable providers and workers from entering the NDIS.

NDIS Minister Stuart Robert said on Monday that the government would introduce legislation to expand the NDIS quality and safeguards commissioner's power to prevent potentially dodgy people from working with scheme participants.

Robert said the commissioner would be able to apply banning orders to people even if they were not currently working in the NDIS.

"This means workers who have left the NDIS, including where they have been fired due to unsuitable behaviour, can be banned from re-entering the field," Robert said.

"The amendments also mean the NDIS commissioner can use information from sources outside the NDIS, such as a person's conduct in aged care or child care work, to ban an unsuitable person from entering the NDIS in the first place."

PWDA has welcomed the announcement, with Gibbs telling Pro Bono News it was the first step towards improving the safeguards for people with disability that use the NDIS.

"The recent death of Ann-Marie Smith, and other abuse of people with disability, have exposed the many gaps that exist in the current system," she said.

"The next step needs to be ensuring that the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission has the powers and resources to proactively investigate and conduct random spot-checks on disability support providers."

Gibbs added that the Disability Royal Commission also needs to hold a holistic inquiry into all safeguarding systems, inside and outside the NDIS.



**Breaking Free** is Blue Knot Foundation's monthly eNewsletter for survivors of childhood trauma, their supporters and community members. For feedback or to contribute, please email [newsletter@blueknot.org.au](mailto:newsletter@blueknot.org.au) or call (02) 8920 3611.



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