



**Australian Government**

# National Redress Scheme

For people who have experienced  
institutional child sexual abuse

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## Survivor case study

Jan's story – an end to the waiting game



For Jan, receiving redress for the institutional child sexual abuse she experienced when she was only 7 years old has provided healing and closure.

Now 60 years of age and living in Adelaide with 4 adult children and 6 grandchildren, Jan received and accepted an offer of redress through the National Redress Scheme in 2022.

She says even though the process was difficult and took time, the outcome means she was believed, and her story was acknowledged and respected.

‘There was a long wait for my [redress] application to be processed – it took around 12 months,’ Jan says.

‘It was hard waiting and waiting for an answer. The whole concept of being believed was once again at the forefront of my mind and playing the waiting game. It’s all I have ever known – wait to be moved to another foster home, wait for my records, wait for an answer from redress.’

Importantly for Jan, she continued counselling with her long-term counsellor once she received and agreed to her offer of redress to help her accept that she deserved what she received.

While Jan understands how hard it can be for people to talk about their experiences and apply for redress, she believes the importance and healing power of being heard outweighs the difficulty.

‘I was concerned about having to tell my story once again and go through all the memories and dates of when things occurred. I wrote the redress application myself and it was checked by a counsellor at the Redress Support Service that supported me,’ she explains.

‘I was pretty sure I would not be considered for any redress and was very surprised when I received my outcome and offer of redress, particularly the amount, as I had always downplayed my sexual abuse.’

In Jan’s case, being heard also involved receiving a form of redress known as a direct personal response, in addition to her redress payment.

‘I was asked about whether I wanted to pursue a direct personal response from the institution – I did want to pursue this but not straight away. I waited a few months,’ she says.

As part of her direct personal response, Jan met with representatives of the institution. They provided personal responses to Jan’s written questions, read out an official apology and gave Jan a written apology.

‘All people involved were very respectful and showed empathy and understanding,’ Jan says.

‘It was very meaningful to me as I could see the sincerity and understanding that went into the meeting. So, although difficult to go through, it was a very positive experience for me. [Involving] all different parties and several meetings leading up to the actual apology were done very well. It was a step-by-step process that really worked.’

Jan encourages survivors, including people with a disability, to think about applying to the National Redress Scheme.

‘I would encourage anyone to go ahead with redress as it is a healing exercise and did provide me with closure and acceptance. It put an end date to all the trauma that I experienced as a child and I could move on and finally put it behind me,’ she says.

The National Redress Scheme acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions, and redress is a way of trying to make up for the harm that was done.

An offer of redress can include:

- a payment
- counselling that is confidential and culturally safe
- a direct personal response, such as an apology, from an institution.

People can choose what parts of the redress offer they want to receive.

People can apply to the National Redress Scheme by filling in a paper application form, or they can apply online through **myGov**.

It can be very hard for people with disability to talk about experiences of child sexual abuse. It is important that they feel listened to, supported and believed. Information and resources for people with disability and carers of people with disability are available at:

**[www.nationalredress.gov.au/help-support/resources/people-disability](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au/help-support/resources/people-disability)**

These resources are designed to help people with disability and their carers talk about the National Redress Scheme and understand that confidential Redress Support Services are available.

Free, independent support services are available to help with all steps of the process. Specialist Redress Support Services are available for people with disability, from culturally diverse backgrounds, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, care leavers and former child migrants.

To find out more, visit **[nationalredress.gov.au](http://nationalredress.gov.au)** or call 1800 737 377.