

MEDIA RELEASE



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Child abuse survivor to speak at Forget Me Knot Day event

While 40 year-old Jenny Clough may have been abused as a child, she does not think of herself as a victim but as a survivor.

From two to 14, Jenny was subjected to horrific acts of sexual abuse from family members, neighbours and a priest. The abuse left her with deep emotional and mental wounds and it was not until the birth of her daughter 11 years ago that she began to heal.

Jenny's story is confronting but its one that needs to be shared. On 19 November, Jenny will be sharing her story of hope and survival at Churches of Christ in Queensland's Forget Me Knot Day event at Woolloongabba.

"I am sharing my story because I want to help others who have been abused as children. Hearing from someone who has had similar experiences can help because you know they understand," Jenny said.

Forget Me Knot Day is a national day of support for survivors of child abuse and neglect organised by Adults Surviving Child Abuse (ASCA).

Jenny became involved with Forget Me Knot Day in 2010 when she spoke publically for the first time about the abuse she experience as a child. "I want to be recognised as a survivor of childhood abuse. I wanted to stand up and say I was not ashamed of what happened to me because I did nothing wrong," she said.

"I used to get by pretending it did not happen because every time I would tell, they would not take me seriously and tell me I was 'making up stories'. In my 20s, I was put in a mental hospital, labelled psychotic and medicated, and when I started counselling, I finally realised I was not going mad.

"Abuse catches up with you and I knew I had to face what happened to me or I would never live a normal life."

The birth of Jenny's daughter was a pivotal moment in the healing process. Jenny realised she did not what happened to her to happen to her daughter.

"I had to start looking at my stuff. My mother was abused as a child and never looked at her stuff, so she never had on her radar what could happen to me. I had to break the cycle because abuse was right through my family," she said.

Jenny said the Churches of Christ in Queensland Forget Me Knot event is an opportunity for people to be in an environment where they will be listen to and believed.

"It also raises awareness about child abuse, honouring those who have been abused and celebrating their survival," she said. "People can be all that they are meant to be, have fulfilling relationships and stop the cycle."

What: Forget Me Knot Day When: Saturday 19 November 9.00am
Where: Princess Theatre, Woolloongabba

**Jenny Clough is available for interview*

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About Churches of Christ Care

Established in 1930, today Churches of Christ Care is one of the largest, most diverse not-for-profit organisations in Australia.

Churches of Christ Care, a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland and working with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas, provides a range of care services to vulnerable persons at different stages of their life journey.

Churches of Christ Care is active in the areas of early childhood services, child protection, community and affordable housing, retirement living, community aged care, and residential aged care. We operate more than 144 services throughout Queensland and Melbourne, Victoria with the support of more than 3,100 staff and over 750 volunteers.

Services provided by Churches of Christ Care are funded by a mix of government subsidies, grants, fees and charges for our services such as early childhood services and residential aged care, and through fundraising activities.

Our services are offered to all those in need regardless of religious background. Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.