

# MEDIA RELEASE

9 November 2011

## **Forget Me Knot Day important for child abuse healing**

Forget Me Knot Day on 19 November is a national awareness raising campaign encouraging community conversation to help survivors overcome their trauma and sense of shame by creating a more accepting and open environment around the issue.

Dr Johanna Lynch, who specialises in caring for survivors of childhood trauma, said days like Forget Me Knot are important in raising awareness about child abuse and neglect. "Awareness is a big thing in helping people recover; it helps survivors behave as if they do not have anything to be ashamed of – to feel like they can talk about it," she said.

"It is a big step from taking blame and guilt to get to the place where they can say I was not to blame

"Survivors come to me thinking they are going crazy and once they understand the biology of memory and how it affects behaviour – they feel relief. Understanding how people get triggered by innocuous events.

Dr Lynch will be a speaker at Churches of Christ Care's Forget Me Knot event on Saturday 19 November at Princess Theatre, Woolloongabba.

Voice of survivors will protect children being abused or abused in the future. Will effect changes in how we managed parenting , teach parenting and how we turn a blind eye to abuse.

Founding director of Integrate Place, Dr Johanna Lynch is a general practitioner with post graduate training in grief and loss and ongoing professional education in trauma and attachment. Her unique skill set facilitate the promotion of mental health in a primary care setting. She has a special interest in survivors of childhood trauma and facilitating each person's growth within their community.

Dr Lynch is currently undertaking postgraduate research at University of Queensland into best practice in primary mental health care assessment.

Dr Lynch also serves in the community in a variety of ways, including lecturing to trainee GPs in grief and loss, contributing to radio discussions on FM 96.5 radio and giving talks to other local community organisations. She is a past board member of Womens Forum Australia.

Dr Lynch is a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and a Member of the Australian College of Psychological Medicine and the Cannan Institute.

Churches of Christ Care is hosting an event on Saturday 19 November to honour survivors of child abuse and neglect.

The Forget Me Knot Day event will bring together survivors, therapists and counsellors for a day of healing at Woolloongabba.

Forget Me Knot Day encourages Australians to unite in support of the more than two million adult survivors of child abuse and neglect, in all its forms. Forget Me Knot is an initiative of ASCA (Adults Surviving Child Abuse).

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Churches of Christ Care Director David Swain said the event will be a sensitive day acknowledging the people who have been abused as children.

“Child abuse is not a topic that sits comfortably with people but it is an issue that needs to be spoken about especially for people who have survived the horror of being abused; acknowledging their pain plays a big part in the healing process,” Mr Swain said.

Churches of Christ Care is a leading provider of foster and kinship care in Queensland. The organisation works in partnership with the Department of Child Safety caring for child under protection.

“We care for thousands of children who have been abused by their parents or significant care giver. They come to us traumatised, and we work with a team of professionals through our Pathways program to help them rebuild their lives,” Mr Swain said.

“Through our model of care we not only teach the skills necessary to live a fulfilling life but also to develop good relationships.

“However, we recognise that many children in the 60s and 70s did not have this support. These people have grown into the adults of today who feel forgotten and abandon by the services of the past.

“Forget Me Knot Day is a step in recognising their pain was not adequately cared for and that as a community, we want to help them heal.”

Vikki Roubin, author, counsellor and teacher, will be the Queensland event’s special guest speaker.

Vikki, author of *Wobbly*, knows what it is like to feel unsupported and misunderstood. With a life strongly shaped by a longstanding battle with mental illness, Vikki wants to encourage all women to live their best life.

Mr Swain said there will also be survivors talking about how they have triumphed over child abuse and what tools they have used to aid the healing process.

“People like Jenny Clough, who is a survivor of over 12 years of abuse and she will be sharing her story. She first spoke about her experiences at last year’s Forget Me Knot and is so passionate about helping others move on with their lives,” he said.

To aid the healing process, a therapist will be conducting a session on art therapy. Art Therapy uses art media to express and communicate feelings and thoughts that are hard to put into words.

*\*David Swain, Vikki Roubin and Jenny Clough are available for interview.*

**Forget Me Knot Day will be held at Princess Theatre, 8 Annerley Road  
Woolloongabba from 9.30 to 11.00am**

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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 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.