

# World War Two

1939 – 1945

**Other Names:**

- Second World War
- WWII

## Details

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The significance of World War Two, and the role this event plays in the history of the institutional 'care' of Australian children is an emerging area of research. It is evident that World War Two, directly or indirectly, was a factor in thousands of children's placement in 'care' in the mid-twentieth century.

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA) submitted to the Senate inquiry of 2009 about the impact of World War Two on Australian social conditions, and the consequences for many families:

*Many of the children were in these institutions because their parents were, or had been, in the armed forces. They may have lost parent/s, through death or serious injury; many children also had parents who had returned from overseas war service with untreated post-traumatic stress disorder, unable to care for their children (Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited, p.10).*

A survey conducted by the Care Leavers of Australia Network (CLAN) in 2007 found that up to half of all fathers of children who subsequently grew up in 'care' served in the Australian armed forces. Frank Golding's submission to the Senate inquiry in 2009 asserted that "Service for the nation by parents undoubtedly created unintended harmful consequences for families, and countless children were separated from their fragmented families as a result of war". (*Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited*, p.11)

World War Two also affected children in institutions during the War. Institutions were sometimes evacuated and the children relocated, sometimes due to safety concerns that the institution was in an area at risk of being bombed, and other times because the institution was taken over by the military during the War. For example, in 1942 [Berry Street](#) was taken over for use by the military, and staff and children were moved to [Beaconsfield Babies' Home](#).

The Forgotten Australians report made reference to the experiences of "repatriation wards" during and after World War Two. These children who had lost parents during the War were placed in institutions run by ex-servicemen's organisations like Legacy (for example, Blamey House in Victoria).

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [World War One \(1914 - 1918\)](#)
- [Overseas Children Scheme \(1940 - c. 1945\)](#)

#### **Related Glossary Terms**

- [Child Evacuee \(1940 - c. 1945\)](#)

#### **Related Organisations**

- [Melbourne Legacy \(1923 - current\)](#)

## **Resources**

- National Archives of Australia, [Service Records](#), 2012

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