

# CBERSS: Christian Brothers Ex Residents and Students Services

1995 – December 2005

**Other Names:** • C-BERS

## Details

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'CBERSS' (Christian Brothers Ex-Residents and Students Services) was established in 1995. It was set up as an independent agency to advocate for and provide a range of services to people who had been in Christian Brothers' institutions or schools as children and who had suffered in some way from that experience.

Although originally set up for men who had been to Christian Brothers' schools and institutions, CBERSS later extended its services to women who had been in Sisters of Mercy or Sisters of Nazareth institutions. CBERSS was funded by the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Nazareth as a functionally independent service. CBERSS provided family tracing, literacy classes, no-interest loans, counselling and funded travel for family reunification.

The 'C-BERS Travel Fund' was established in 1995. CBERSS' submission to the Inquiry in Child Migration in 2001 outlined the fund criteria:

- British and Maltese former child migrants were eligible
- The travel fund was not means-tested
- Travel assistance was provided for one trip to meet with family or to visit the country of origin if no family could be found (or if family was found but was unwilling to meet)
- A £700 allowance was paid for living and incidental travel costs, plus a return economy airfare
- A carer was funded if the person had a disability
- Travel was provided once CBERS was satisfied that the former child migrant and the family of origin had adequate preparation for the meeting.

The average cost per former child migrant was \$6,700.

## More info

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### Chronology

- **CBERSS: Christian Brothers Ex Residents and Students Services (1995 – December 2005)**
  - CBERS Consultancy (2006 - 2012)

### Related Entries

#### Related Events

- [Inquiry Into Child Migration, Parliament of Australia \(2000 - 2001\)](#)
- [Inquiry into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants, House of Commons Health Committee, Parliament of the United Kingdom \(July 1997 - 23 July 1998\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Sisters of Mercy, Perth Congregation \(1846 - 2011\)](#)  
The Sisters of Mercy part-funded Christian Brothers Ex Residents and Students Services (CBERSS) to deliver family tracing, travel and reunification services for former residents of Sisters of Mercy institutions.
- [Family Care Society \(1989 - current\)](#)
- [Holy Spirit Province of the Christian Brothers \(1967 - 2007\)](#)  
CBERSS was funded by the Christian Brothers.

## Resources

- Community Affairs References Committee, [Lost Innocents: Righting the record - Report on child migration](#), 30 August 2001. *Relevance*: pp.180-181
- Senate Community Affairs References Committee Secretariat, Parliament of Australia, [Forgotten Australians: A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children](#), 2004
- [Maria Harries interviewed by Christine Choo in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 23 November 2011 - 28 November 2011
- Christian Brothers Ex-Residents and Students Services (CBERSS), [Submission no 49 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
- Congregation of the Christian Brothers WA and SA, [Submission no 65 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), July 2003
- Haenow, Ted, [Submission No 251 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
- Health Committee, House of Commons, [Health - Third Report](#), 23 July 1998. *Relevance*: CBERSS made a submission to the Select Committee on Health Third Report
- House of Commons Health Committee, [Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Health Committee on 4 June 1998 \(Health - Third Report\)](#), 4 June 1998
- House of Commons Health Committee, [Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Health Committee on 11 June 1998 \(Health - Third Report\)](#), 11 June 1998
- Health Committee, House of Commons, [First Special Report: Welfare of Former British Child Migrants](#), 13 March 2001. *Relevance*: CBERSS helped many former child migrants access the travel fund and reconnect with their family of origin during the life of this initial scheme
- Family Care Society, [Memorandum by the Family Care Society](#), Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Health Committee on 11 June 1998, 11 June 1998

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