



Making sense of the past

- reconnecting through records

Nicola Laurent, Antonina Lewis, Cate O'Neill & Rachel Tropea

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I'd like to start with a [video](#) of Frank and Samantha, who both grew up in state care, Frank in the 1940s and early 1950s, and Samantha in the 2000s.

My name is Rachel Tropea and I am the Program Manager for the Find & Connect web resource project. I'm also an archivist. I've been working on Find & Connect and its predecessor Who Am I? for six years, and it is the most important and rewarding work I've ever been involved with. I'm going to be talking about the background and research methodology behind Find & Connect – which came out of the Who am I? project and one of its major outcomes, the Pathways website.

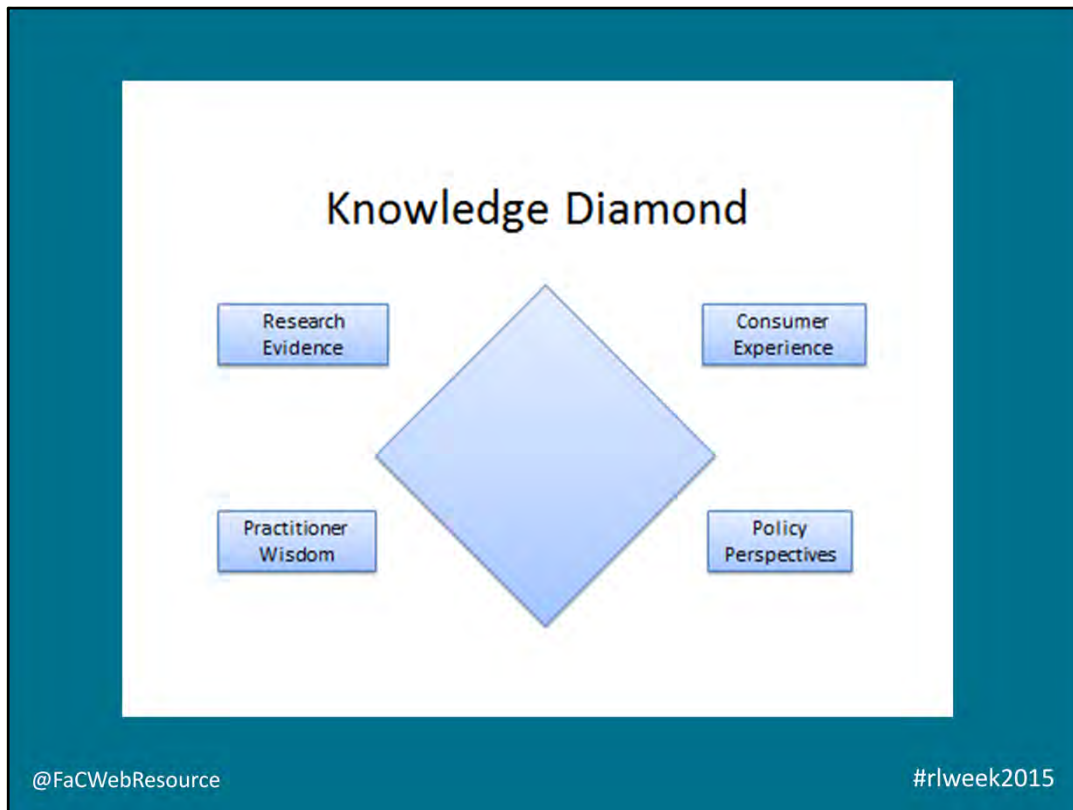
On 16 November 2009 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gave a moving apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants, for the hurt and distress suffered by them as children in institutional care, particularly those who suffered abuse. The Rudd government committed funding to among other things, an online resource that would give information to Care leavers about their time in institutional care, including access to records, and support if they needed it in locating and accessing their records.

At the time of the apology, I was working on the [Who am I? project](#), an ARC funded action research project investigating the role played by archiving and recordkeeping practices in the construction of identity for people who experienced out of home 'care' as children.

The project was conducted by researchers from the University of Melbourne and Australian Catholic University, in partnership with 15 past provider organisations (that is, those who had run the institutions such as Mackillop, Salvos, Department of Human Services), and in consultation with consumer support and advocacy groups, and Care leavers.

Inspired by the recommendations from the ['Forgotten Australians' report](#) (2004), the interdisciplinary research team explored issues of creating, storing and accessing records using tools from the fields of social work, history and archival studies.

(Rachel Tropea)



The Who am I? project adopted an action research methodology based on the Knowledge Diamond.

The Knowledge Diamond, devised by Cathy Humphreys, emphasises the importance of the exchange of ideas between key stakeholder perspectives: Research Evidence, Service User or Consumer Experience, Policy Perspectives and Practitioner Wisdom.

Workshops are fundamental to the action research process, and were conducted with participants from these four areas.

(Rachel Tropea)

Research questions from the first Who Am I? workshop

- What principles should underpin record-keeping and archival programs for children and young people currently in out-of-home care to support their on-going construction of identity?
- What are the factors which enable or create barriers to effective practice in record keeping and archival programs for front line workers, managers and organisations providing out of home care?

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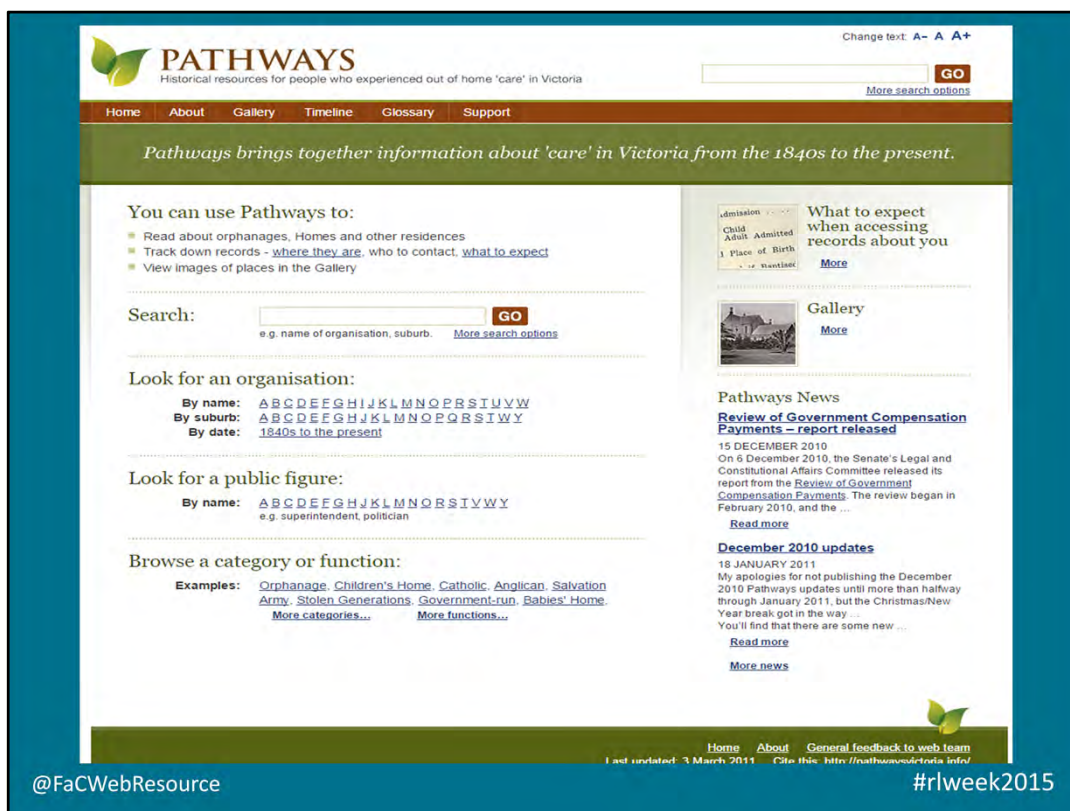
To give you an idea of a typical workshop, we would always start, as I did today, with the Care leaver perspective. The research questions were front and centre of the workshop. This slide is from our first Who Am I? workshop.

At the workshops, participants were put into action learning groups, usually in a café style arrangement, with members from the different stakeholder perspectives at each table.

People were given a discussion paper prior to the workshop. After starting with the 'consumer' perspective, the day would continue with formal presentations interspersed with discussions in action learning groups, and comments and reflections from the participants were recorded. We would write and distribute reports after the workshops, and publish our findings.

I was blown away by these workshops: I was often emotional because we were hearing pretty harrowing accounts; but to see this process in action, and the effects it had on all involved, was a very rewarding experience. The action research process led to significant outcomes including changes to work practices, and work culture, improved practices for the creation of records, and more open and better access conditions to records for those trying to piece together their past. Most importantly, a trust relationship was formed between past providers and care leavers that had previously been lacking, allowing for more nuanced discussions and further research.

(Rachel Tropea)



[image: Pathways website home page]

One of the major outcomes of the project was a web resource for Victorian Care leavers called Pathways, and the University of Melbourne's eScholarship Research Centre (ESRC) which is where I work, was responsible for this.

Pathways was a hub of information and resources about the history of care in Victoria, and it enabled people who experienced institutional and out-of-home care as children (and their families) to see where their own story fit into the broader context.

On Pathways we described the institutions where children resided, with photos; the agencies that ran them; key events that had a significant impact in the story of child welfare such as World War 1 and the Great Depression; child welfare legislation; archival collections; and the process of accessing records; in what amounted to thousands of 'context entities' in a networked environment.

Along with the workshops, we hired usability expert Roger Hudson and web designer Russ Weakley to guide us through a series of usability studies with Care leavers and support groups to ensure that the website was fulfilling its purpose.

(Rachel Tropea)



(Image: from our first round of usability workshops in Melbourne)

Our first usability study was conducted before launching the website. We sat with care leavers, and together we worked through a list of tasks based on 'wire frames' (which are print versions of various pages of the website), and recorded our findings. Next we worked with the web designer to create an online version for testing, tested again, recorded the findings, made adjustments to the website where we could, and so on. Together with the workshops and meetings, usability was an integral part of the research process and the formation of the website.

We were also guided in our research by the feedback forms on our website.

(Rachel Tropea)



This is a photo of me, Sharon Guy (Child and Family Services Ballarat), and Care leaver Ken Merton at the launch of Pathways in 2009.

Ken came all the way from Ballarat to the launch of Pathways in Melbourne, and here we are looking for his home Pleasant Creek, which wasn't in there. That's me panicking in the photo, and sending a feedback form via the website to myself to follow it up.

The upside is that Ken's query led to a major piece of research and the inclusion of disability homes on Pathways, and information about how people like Ken, who were not disabled ended up in those homes. Ken has since passed away but I will always remember how patient and understanding he was that day, and we're all very grateful that he was able to be there and have such an impact on our research.

(Rachel Tropea)

“Nothing about us without us”

Care leaver Frank Golding’s motto

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One other aspect of our method that is important to mention is our collaboration with Care Leavers.

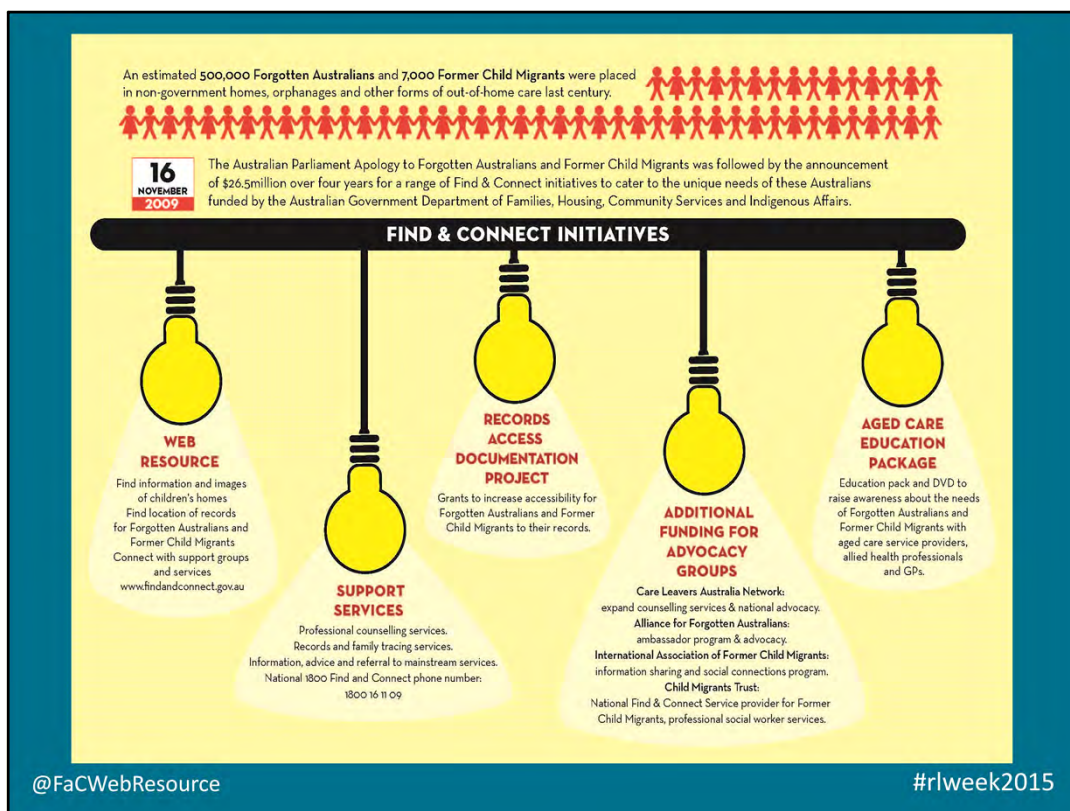
This is Care Leaver Frank Golding’s motto “Nothing about us without us”. To quote from one of his [blog posts](#):

Some professionals and academics treat Care leavers as clients to be serviced or passive subjects to be surveyed, interviewed, focus-grouped and power-pointed. Their childhood files can be plundered as a treasure trove of victims’ tragedies. The atmosphere in the air is full of condescension. As children ‘these people’ (as they are sometimes referred to) were objects of charity. As adults they are now expected to answer a new generation of questions, but without the courtesy of reciprocity—Care leavers who ask questions or demand participation are regarded as inconvenient.

Happily, Frank went on in that post to give examples of research projects that show respect for, and a willingness to work with, Care leavers. And even more happily, we were one of these examples.

Before I move onto Find & Connect, I’d like to make a point about our audience which includes a great range of people who have been affected by child welfare history: Care leavers, but also their families, descendants, and the organisations that hold records, many of whom continue to provide out of home 'care' today. They too were our research collaborators and although I won’t have time today to talk about that aspect of our research in detail, the website showcases the collections of organisations, and, it has demonstrated how more open practices can be of great benefit to the organisation and its reputation, as well as to the individuals whose lives are documented in these records.

(Rachel Tropea)




Following the apology the federal government commissioned a [scoping study](#) to investigate the establishment of a national service for Care leavers, to be known as Find & Connect.

One of the findings from the scoping study was that Pathways was an exceptional model for an Australia wide web resource, and that it should be adopted at a national level. It was, and here we are today.

This is a slide of the initiatives under the Find & Connect umbrella, including the web resource, and another project we were directly involved in, the Records Access Documentation project.

So for three years we were funded to produce a website that replicated Pathways in each state. We had historians based in each state working on content, and we hired extra archivists here in Melbourne to work on the records and informatics side of things, a Comms person, and a client liaison officer to deal specifically with the emails to the website. And we worked very closely with the newly funded support services. Stakeholder meetings were run by the federal department FaHCSIA, now known as DSS. And the Melbourne team organised and conducted workshops in each state once a year. So our staff levels grew quite significantly in this phase.

(Rachel Tropea)



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A resource for Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and anyone interested in the history of child welfare in Australia.

 **LOOK FOR Homes**

 **LOOK FOR Photos**

 **LOOK FOR Records**

There are no personal records or private details published on this site. Some people may find content on this website distressing. [Read more](#)


BLOG



[Not just paper: the importance of 'non-traditional' records](#)

Back in March 2014, when we used to publish a regular Find & Connect newsletter, our former Lead Archivist, Mike Jones, wrote a piece a...

FEATURED



[What to expect when accessing records about you](#)

If you spent time in 'care', there may be records about you. This is a guide to your rights, and different types of records and experiences.

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This is a picture of the home page at the moment.

9

1. Standards based
2. Evidential
3. Persistent and meaningful through time
4. Resilient
5. Available through multiple access and reference points
6. Geared towards person-to-person knowledge sharing
7. Structured to enable computer-to-computer data sharing
8. Public knowledge focused
9. Based on the science of networks
10. Coherent and purposeful in its interface design

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The web resource, like other public knowledge spaces produced by the ESRC, is underpinned by 10 principles, and complies with various international standards.

Description standards

- Archival materials – ISAD(G)
- Context entities – ISAAR(CPF)
- Publications and digital objects – IFLA
- Relationships – WC3 (Semantic web) and others

Import and Export standards/schema

- EAC-CPF (supporting OAI-PMH)
- others possible

Web page standards

- Dublin Core
- AGLS
- WCAG 2.0

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In 2014 we were given funding to continue to maintain the web resource till mid-2017, and our core research team went from 18 staff to three, with additional support from ESRC staff and three Chief Investigators from History, Social Work and Archives.

I'll wind up now with a couple of stats: The Find & Connect web resource consists of 16,000 interconnected pages. We have on average 10,000 visitors a month. The current Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse liaises with us and cites us as a major source. And with their focus being on records next year we expect our engagement will increase.

We have funding till mid-2017 to 'maintain' the web resource, so we're spending some of our time now researching how we get this to the stage where the community – archival community, support services, advocacy groups, and Care leavers themselves – can contribute to and maintain the resource themselves, without significant government funding and a national project team. And this includes co-creation and participatory practice; or harvesting; or similar.

Thanks for listening.

(Rachel Tropea)

Making sense of the past

'The loss of identity and connection with family is one of the most traumatic and distressing outcomes from a life lived in institutional care'.

'Forgotten Australians' Senate report, 2004

Now I have my own little biography in my hands, my world has expanded....

Priscilla Taylor, November 2012

How do you construct your identity when all the usual influences that shape your childhood – like parents! – are missing?

Joanna Penglase, *Orphans of the living* (2005)

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It's now widely acknowledged that records are vitally important to Care Leavers - one study from the UK found that many people viewed their records 'as the key to starting to make sense of both their past and present' (Pugh, Gillian, and F. Schofield. "Unlocking the Past: The Experience of Gaining Access to Barnardo's Records." *Adoption & Fostering* 23, no. 2 (1999): 11. doi:10.1177/030857599902300204).

As the quotes on this slide show, for many Care Leavers, official records are often the only thing they can rely on to get information about who they are, where they come from – because these people lack the tangible and intangible sources of information that most of us take for granted – family stories, photos, mementoes, birth certificates, school reports ...

All people need this stuff in order to construct a sense of personal identity – but for Care Leavers it is especially important. Not having a coherent narrative about one's life can have a terrible impact on a person's well-being.

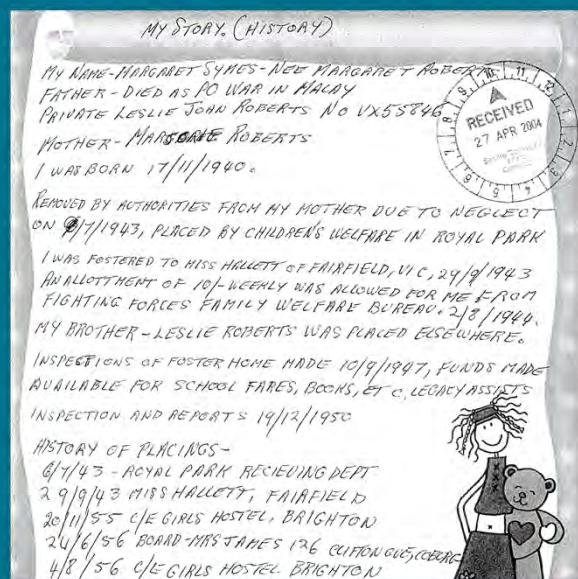
People who grew up in institutions are hugely reliant on official records. The trouble is that these records are often overly official, bureaucratic. They are often fragmented. The records are bureaucratic, they can be very judgemental and insulting. They can be totally inaccurate. Sometimes they haven't survived at all.

These official records weren't created *for* these children, they were created *about* them. And they were recorded without any thoughts that the child might come back one day and read them. They are not objective. The records exist to document and to justifying

the authorities' decision to take a child away from its home.

(Cate O'Neill)

Ward records provide a scaffold for Care Leavers' life stories



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[Image: excerpt from Submission 370 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care (2004):

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/inst_care/submissions/sublist)

Despite the many inadequacies of these official records, for many Care Leavers, they provide a scaffold for constructing and reconstructing their life stories.

They provide a way to create a coherent narrative, without which one's life can be unintelligible (see Alasdair MacIntyre, (1981) *After virtue: a study in moral theory*. University of Notre Dame Press: 191-203).

A person's sense of self depends on having a coherent personal narrative, and this narrative is also embedded in other broader narratives – of family, community, gender, ethnicity etc (see Jerome Bruner, (1991) 'The narrative construction of reality'. *Critical Inquiry* (18)1: 1–21: <http://www.istor.org/stable/1343711>).

Our broad aim for Find & Connect is to have content that can help people going through the process of reconstructing their personal narratives, and also to understand where their personal story fits in to a bigger historical narrative.

(Cate O'Neill)

"Public and private agents do not merely observe and describe reality; they shape people, events, and the environment into entities that will fit their categorizations and that are recordable" (Ketelaar, 2005).

NOTES OF PERSONALITY & BEHAVIOUR: (Underline any that apply)

disobedient attentive willing eager to help shows initiative
restless needs direction lacks concentration industrious dishonest
untruthful illmannered well behaved frank cunning unreliable
selfish quarrelsome resentful impudent revengeful bullying cruel
show-off self-opinionated unyielding seclusive shy easily led
popular qualities of leadership unstable hysterical quicktempered
morose timid excitable impulsive assertive inferiority feelings
happy active lethargic

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON PERSONALITY

Very easily led will always follow the leader in any mischief. Does not work unless you stand over him. Very cheeky and will always argue. Makes a "big man" of himself, e.g. told me he owns a Holden Monaro.

"... the files have the potential to cause their subjects severe emotional and material harm ... the records served as an instrument of the powerful and the privileged to maintain the subjugation of the vulnerable, marginalised and powerless ... the archives are *weapons of affect*" (Wilson & Golding, 2015)

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Two writers who both grew up in 'care' published an article in *Archival Science* recently which I highly recommend. Jacqueline Wilson and Frank Golding reflect on the experience of accessing their child welfare files – they talk about the ambiguous relationship Care Leavers have with these records. They can be empowering, and healing, they can restore a disrupted life narrative. But they can also revive pain and trauma. (See Jacqueline Z Wilson and Frank Golding, 'Latent scrutiny: personal archives as perpetual mementos of the official gaze', *Archival Science*, 2015: DOI 10.1007/s10502-015-9255-3).

Child welfare records are carceral records, records are a key part of systems of surveillance and social control.

Eric Ketelaar has written about recordkeeping systems as archival prisons (see 'Archival Temples, Archival Prisons: Modes of Power and Protection' (2002), *Archival Science* 2: 221–238). The subjects of these files can be trapped in this prison, the reality as it was perceived by their creators, the care providers and bureaucrats and social workers.

We want our website to have a contextual framework that allows Care Leavers to escape this archival prison, by putting these records in a new social and historical context. So there's a scaffold for constructing a life story that is empowering and free from the judgements and the silences and the stigmas of the past.

(Cate O'Neill)



Care Leavers are our primary audience. But they're not the only audience for our website.

It's been a challenge to write our content in a way that is meaningful and relevant to all these diverse groups.

The first 3 years of our project saw a team of State-Based Historians doing intense research and content development to uncover the history of as many institutions as possible around Australia. This work was underpinned by a concept that comes from oral history, the concept of 'shared authority' (see Rosser, Debra and Shurlee Swain, 'Eyes of identification: Challenges and opportunities in leveraging highly visible, multiple-level histories', *Scottish Journal of Residential Care*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2013.

<http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/2013-vol12-no1-rosser-eyesofidentification.pdf>).

Shared authority is about recognising the expertise of non-academic historians and acknowledging the immense contribution they make to public knowledge. It is about respecting and learning from the people who lived the histories we are trying to document on the Find & Connect website.

(Cate O'Neill)

“Everything is broken ...”



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[Image: screenshot from Twitter, 20 August 2015]

We are now in the second phase of the project – we have a much smaller team, and our main task is to maintain the site - content development and research has taken a back seat.

There is a lot of work involved in just keeping the website accurate. New information about homes is being uncovered all the time. More and more people are telling their stories.

The data on our website is highly curated. Unfortunately, there isn't interoperable content 'out there' just waiting to be harvested by us and linked to from Find & Connect.

In a session at the Australian Society of Archivists conference in Hobart in August 2015, Find & Connect got described as a 'bandaid'. This later got upgraded to an artificial limb which is a nicer metaphor, but you still get the idea ...

(Cate O'Neill)

DHS.3004.011.0287

ORGANISATION	GUIDE RELATED WELFARE FUNCTION	LOCATION	AUSPICE	COMMENTS
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	814 Staple Street Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1975. Listed in Department's Approved Community Services Register - 2000/001
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	1005 Ripon Street Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1976
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	12 Menay Street Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1977
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	1212 Geelong Road Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1976. Sold in 1985
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	206A Clarendon Street Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1989. Ownership transferred to the Department Dec 1989 (by the 1988 agreement by ACIA)
Ballarat Children's Home	Family Group Home	515 Chisholm Street Ballarat	Committee of Management	Established 1975. Listed in Department's Approved Community Services Register - 2000/001
Ballarat Children's Home - (Acacia)	Family Group Home	848 Howell Street Wendouree	Committee of Management	Approved 1981. establishment date unclear
Ballarat Children's Home and Family Services	Family Group Home	319 Greenhalgh's Road Dalacombe	Committee of Management	Approved 1981. establishment date unclear. Listed in Department's Approved Community Services Register 2000/001
Ballarat Children's Home and Family Services	Family Group Home	50 Brown Parade Wendouree	Committee of Management	Approved 1981. establishment date unclear

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We are working in a dynamic environment. The Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse is a significant driver.

When the Royal Commission came to Melbourne in August for its Case Study 30, into the experiences of former child residents at institutions run by the Victorian government, it showed how important the research we've done for Find & Connect is as a resource for lawyers and investigators (see Opening Address, 17 August 2015, <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/downloadfile.ashx?guid=404f8386-a4de-4a6a-bea3-dd3a850b0b73&type=openingaddresspdf&filename=case-study-30,-august-2015,-melbourne-opening-address&fileextension=pdf>). It also led to a whole lot of new information becoming available for us to link to from Find & Connect and to enrich and update our information. It's a two-way information flow, and it's dynamic and it's always changing.

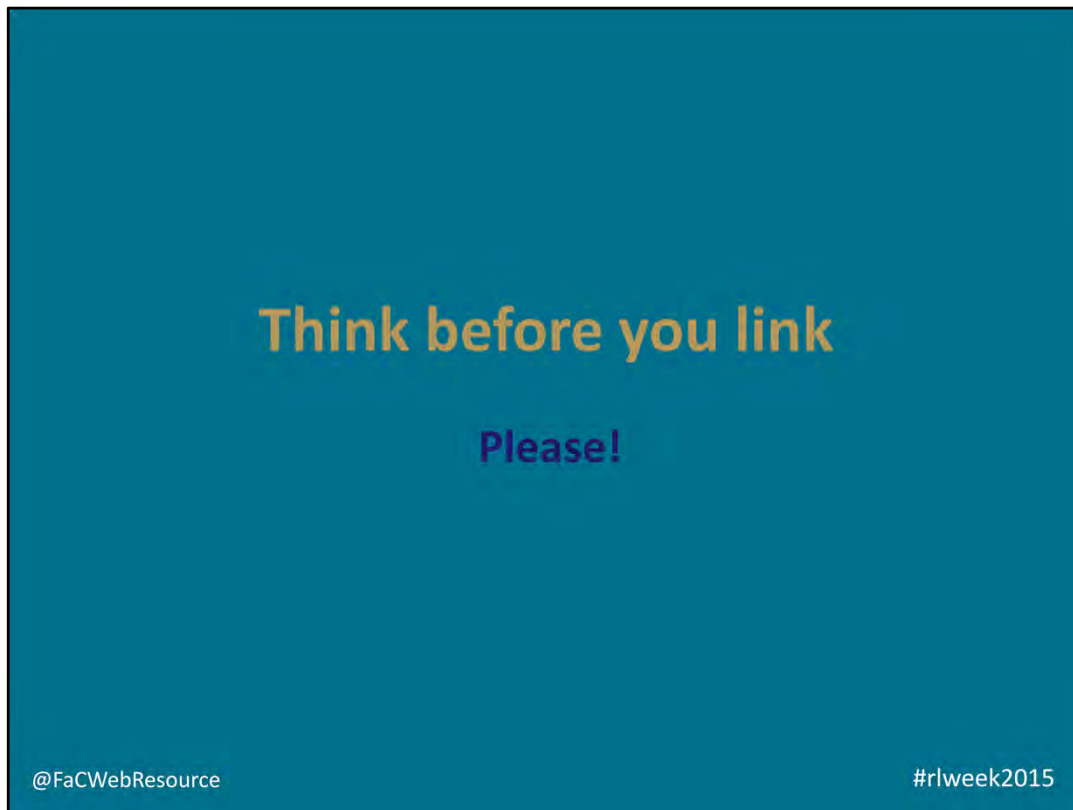
The hearings also made available vital information available for the first time – the testimony of former residents add new dimensions to the history of Victorian institutions, and provide a corrective to years of this history only being written by the care providers. The list of exhibits for this Case Study has heaps of new resources that are relevant to Find & Connect (see <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/exhibits/404f8386-a4de-4a6a-bea3-dd3a850b0b73/case-study-30,-august-2015,-melbourne>).

One of these is a data base that DHS provided as evidence ('Guide to Out-of-Home Care Services 1940-2000 - Volume 2: Data Base'. This document proved to be hugely valuable – we used it to answer a query that came in to us from a support service. One of their clients had a reference in her file to a home called 'Acacia' in Ballarat – no one knew what this home was. We didn't have it on Find & Connect. The DHS data base showed that Acacia was a family group home run by Child and Family Services Ballarat in the 1980s. We would never have been able to interpret that brief entry on the file until we had access to this document on the Royal Commission website.

We still haven't really worked out what we are going to do to make the connections between this document and Find & Connect. But it's a great example of the environment that we're working in right now and just how

important it is for these links to be made so that people can use our information to make sense of their records and their lives.

(Cate O'Neill)



So I'm going to go into the nitty gritty a bit more about some of things it is important to think about as researchers when making your research available, to ensure usability and accessibility, using the Find & Connect web resource as a case study.

Think before you link!

For Find & Connect broken links are one of the key challenges we face. Once every 6 months we regenerate Find & Connect and we run a broken link check, this will show about 200 broken links each time. Then we must spend valuable time fixing the links to improve our transparency and ensure we keep our users' trust.

We have all had that situation where you are completing research and you find that amazing sounding article in a footnote, and when you click on it, NOTHING happens, or the tedious 404 error appears. The same can happen for people on our site too...

(Nicola Laurent)

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Send message to Find & Connect support service

Some people may find content on this website distressing. [Read more](#)

TASMANIA - EVENT
Apology to Aboriginal People (1997)

Summary Full page

From 1997
To 1997
Website <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ParliamentSearch/sysquery/4cd6850b-5cda-409b-8a47-686e98be7be0:0:doc/H13AUG2.htm>

The Apology to Aboriginal People was made by the Premier, Tony Rundle, on 13 August 1997 in response to the *Bringing them home* report. An Aboriginal elder, Annette Peardon, replied to the apology. This was the first time anywhere in Australia that an Aborigine had been invited to address Parliament.

[Read more](#)

Related Entries

Related Events

- [Australian Parliament Apology to the Stolen Generations \(2008 - \)](#)
- [The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families \(1995 - 1997\)](#)
The National Inquiry led to the apology to Aboriginal people by the Tasmanian state government.

Related Glossary Terms

- [Stolen Generations \(1981 - \)](#)

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So this example is of the Apology to Aboriginal People from the Tasmanian Government. As you can see each of our entries comes with a section for related publications and a sources box at the bottom. The sources box provides a space for us to show where we got our information from, which helps promote transparency and build trust in our users.

(Nicola Laurent)

Publications

Online Resources

- 'Apology to Aboriginal People' in *Wednesday 13 August 1997 - Part 2 - Pages 35 - 86*, Parliament of Tasmania, 13 August 1997, <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ParliamentSearch/sysquery/5c56b3ff-2cb7-422c-80e9-70cbd7e3442/11/doc/>
 ⓘ DETAILS
- *Bringing them home: Report of the National Inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families*, April 1997, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-report-1997>
 ⓘ DETAILS

Sources used to compile this entry: 'Apology to Aboriginal People', in *Wednesday 13 August 1997 - Part 2 - Pages 35 - 86*, Parliament of Tasmania, 13 August 1997, <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ParliamentSearch/sysquery/5c56b3ff-2cb7-422c-80e9-70cbd7e3442/11/doc/>.

PREPARED BY: CAROLINE EVANS
 Created: 14 April 2014, Last modified: 19 March 2015

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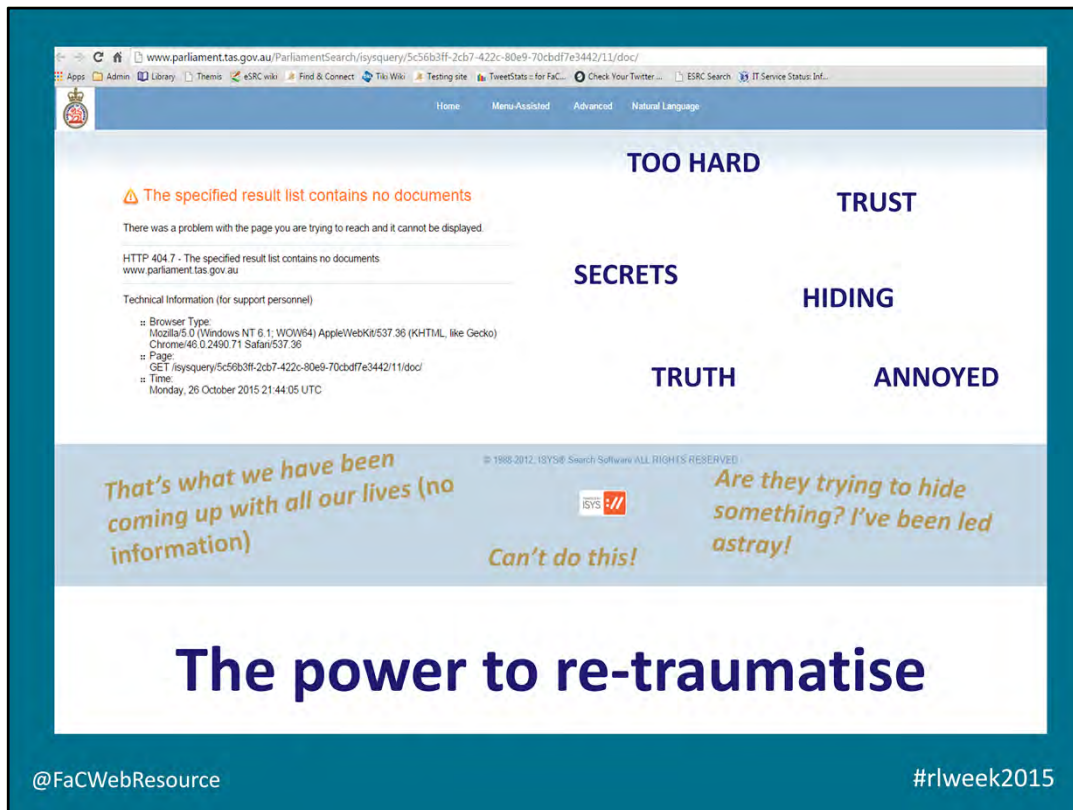
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For this entry you can see the author relied solely on one piece, something which makes sense when you read the citation. It is a copy of the actual speech that was given in the Tasmanian Parliament and is available via the Tasmanian Parliament website in their Hansard section. It all sounds good so far...

Unfortunately though this link is broken.

(Nicola Laurent)



When users go to follow this link this is what they get. Now for most of us that is just annoying. We will go and see if it is still available somewhere else, perhaps searching Google or the Tasmanian Hansard ourselves. But as you have already heard, our main audience has different needs.

When our audience group see a broken link, different thoughts come up...trust is broken. The Government must be hiding something. They never want to tell us the truth.

Broken links have the power to re-traumatise.

And while this is an extreme reaction, the same concepts can and should be applied to your research when adding sources and links to other articles. Because if you create broken links one too many times, people will lose trust in your work, they will find it annoying that they can never properly check your citations and they could stop reading it.

(Nicola Laurent)

- Is it sustainable?
- Is it a clean URL?
- Have you tested it?
- Is there a persistent link?

Permalink <https://ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/login?url=https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edspmu&AN=edspmu.S19>

Did it fail any of these?

DON'T INCLUDE IT!

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Deciding whether to use a link as a source should be more than just a yes, found any old link decision. You need to ask yourself some key questions before using it.

Is it sustainable? Does it come from a well-maintained reliable source. In our case, yes the Tasmanian Parliament website is current and regularly updated.

Is the link clean? Does it have a lot of random %, letters & numbers or generated as a result of a search? A clean or semantic URL is intended to improve the usability and accessibility of a website or web service by being immediately and intuitively meaningful to non-expert users. In our case the link was very long and full of random characters and was generated from a search.

Does the link work if you put it into your work and test it? In our case no, it instantly becomes obvious that this link will not last, but if you copy and paste the link directly it will, this is not a good test of the links usability.

Does the page have a persistent link option? Many library catalogues and archival collections will provide this option; these are the best links to use, so if there is one, please use it!

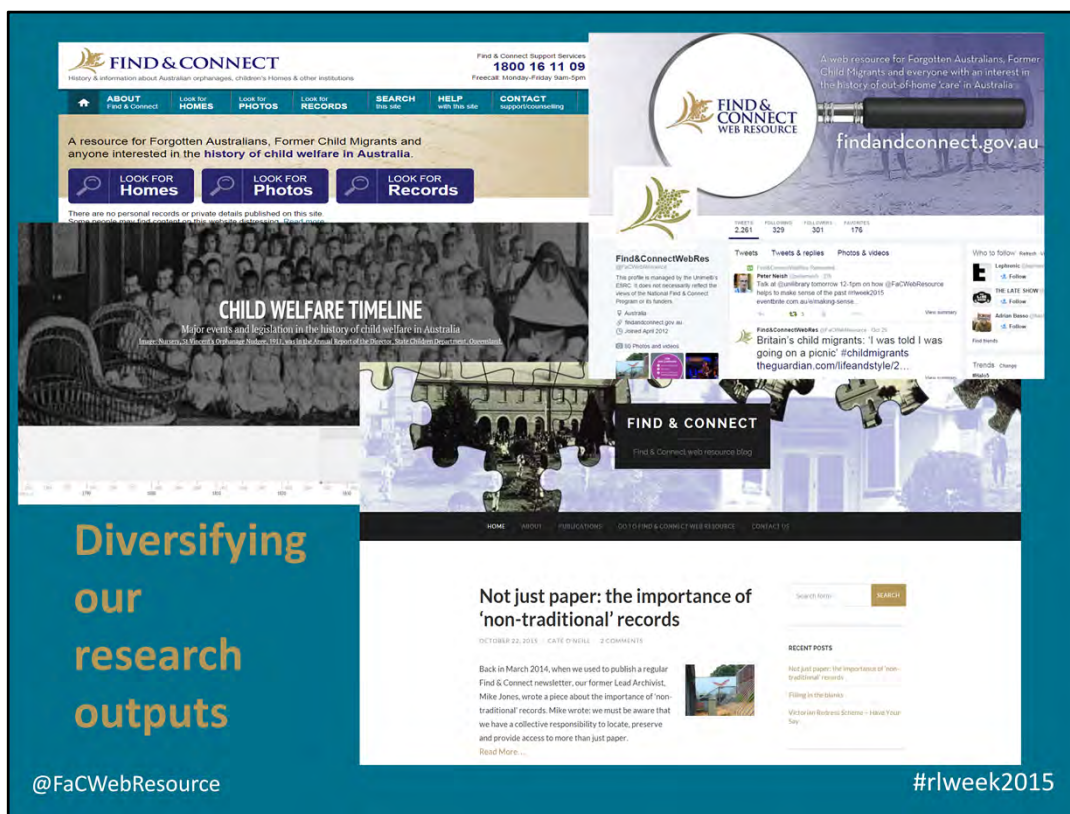
If your link fails any of the first three tests, DON'T PUT IT IN! But also try and provide feedback to the site so that they might be able to improve their links.

As you can see from our site, it is better not to include the link but just include the details, than include the link and for it to fail on people. For this entry, that is our only solution, I have contacted the Tasmanian Parliament asking if there is a way I can link to the entry directly due to its significance but they did not respond, there is no way to get a clean link from what I already have.

I bet you never thought including a link could cause so much stress and drama. But it really can, so please think

before you link!

(Nicola Laurent)



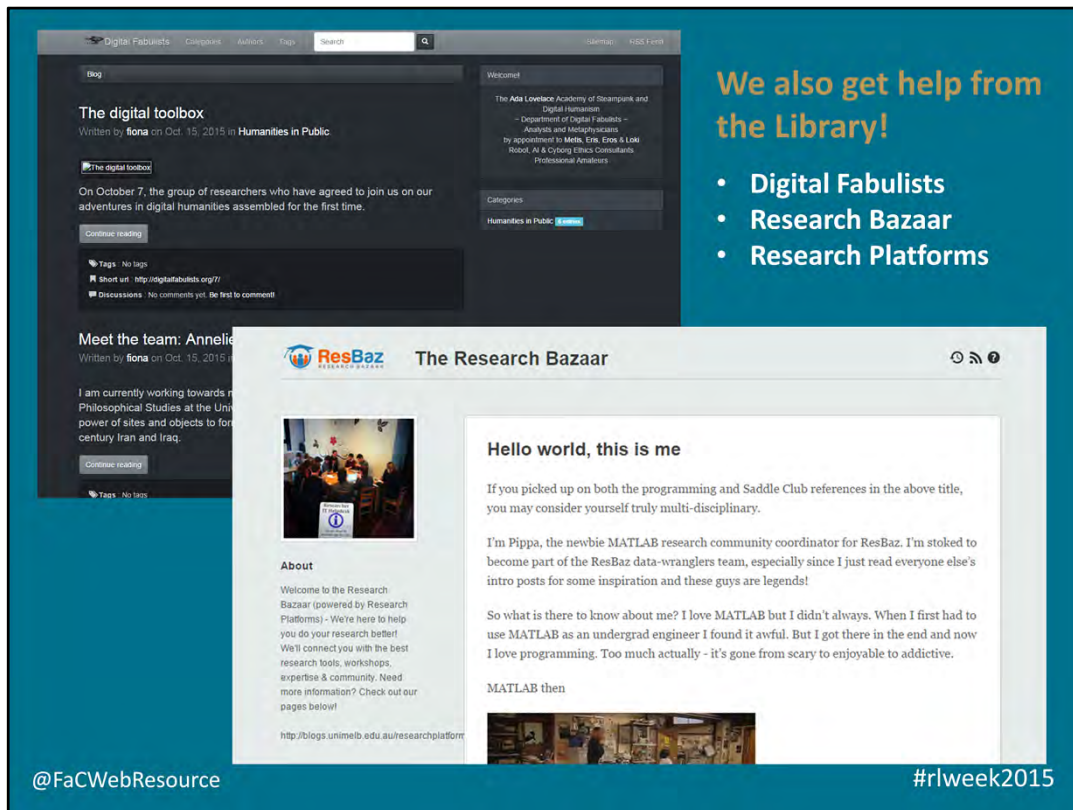
Onto the second part of my section and this bit gets a lot more fun! As has already been mentioned our site is very text heavy and verbose. This doesn't particularly suit our key audience, or look overly attractive (note it is important to recognise your weaknesses as much as your strengths) but it is important the depth of information is there for those that need the details. However we are now at a stage where we are able to try and diversify our research outputs by adding new ways to represent the information we have and finding different ways to communicate with our audience.

Twitter – you will have noticed our twitter handle throughout the presentation. Feel free to tweet us, nice things anyway! We try and tweet about 4 times a day Mon-Fri. It help us reach out to new people, particularly at events and conferences, and it has been an effective way to communicate with our audience around the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Blog – newly launched this year. Still text heavy but in a very different style, much more conversational, allows us to add pictures in with the text, a variety of topics, gets a lot of twitter interaction (and Facebook when included). We try and blog twice a month and we send out a monthly newsletter which is an rss feed straight from the blog.

Timeline – our newest experiment and the thing I am going to focus most on for my remaining minutes and is pretty much going to involve using a live link, so we know that can always end well, but fingers crossed.

(Nicola Laurent)



I am currently involved in a group called Digital Fabulists which has been established by some of the members of Research Platforms. For those who don't know they are part of the library and can very much help with your research and how to improve your outputs.

The tool that I have most recently looked at is called [timeline.js](#) by Knightlab.

(Nicola Laurent)

Timeline of Events & Legislation

Major events and legislation in the history of child welfare in Australia

1820s
[Colony of New South Wales passes child welfare legislation, 1826](#)

1860s
[Colony of Victoria passes child welfare legislation, 1864](#)

1870s
[Crown Colony Western Australia passes Industrial Schools Act, 1874](#)

1890s
[Australia's first adoption legislation passed in Western Australia, 1896](#)

1900s
[State Children Act, State of Western Australia, 1907](#)

1910s
[World War One, 1914-1918](#)

1920s
[The Great Depression, c.1929-1932](#)

1930s
[World War Two, 1939-1945](#)

1940s
[Commonwealth passes Child Endowment Act, 1941](#)
[First post-war child migrants arrive in Australia, 1947](#)

1980s
[Senate releases the report: 'Children in Institutional and Other Forms of Care: a national perspective', 1985](#)

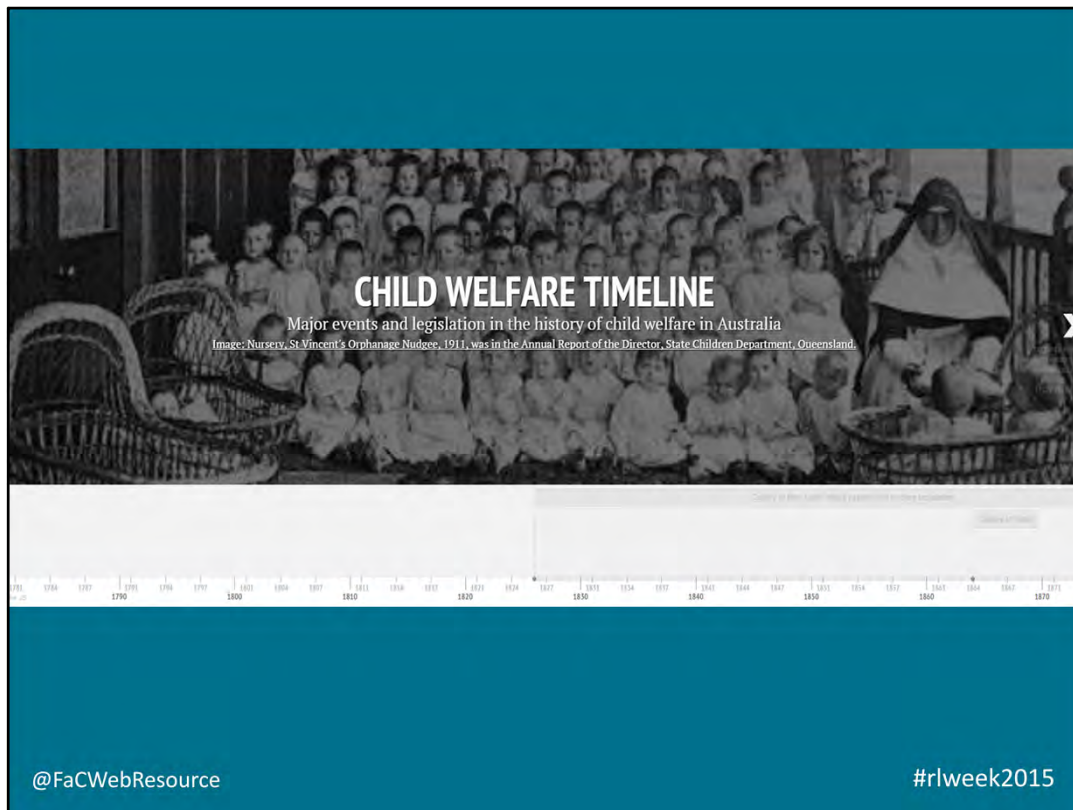
1990s
['Bringing them home' report handed down, 1997](#)
[The United Kingdom Parliament commences an inquiry into the welfare of former British child migrants, 1997](#)
[Queensland's 'Forde Inquiry' into abuse of children in institutions commences, 1998](#)

2000s
[The Senate releases its 'Lost Innocents' report into child migration, 2001](#)
[Tasmanian Ombudsman begins the 'Listen to the Children' review, 2003](#)

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My goal was to make this [Timeline of Events & Legislation](#), well just more anything I think, exciting, beautiful, engaging, I had high hopes as the data is good.

(Nicola Laurent)



And here it is! I guess you can judge for yourselves if I achieved. I certainly want to sing “don’t hate me because I’m beautiful” as I look at it. And I will tell you that making child welfare legislation look interesting is a challenge, but it was furthered by the need to ensure that the correct links and references were used to support the timeline.

But unfortunately just because it looks pretty doesn’t mean it can instantly go on the site. As we have already mentioned accessibility and usability are key components to our funding but also to successful interaction with our audience. So before the timeline can replace our current one, we must ensure that it meets the accessibility requirements, and our users find it easy to navigate and read by undertaking some usability testing.



Thank you for coming!

www.findandconnect.gov.au

www.findandconnectwrblog.info

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