

# AFTER THE APOLOGY

## SCREENING KIT

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FILM SCREENINGS

**SORRY** MEANS YOU DON'T DO IT AGAIN.



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# ABOUT THE FILM

## SYNOPSIS

Four Aboriginal grannies each face their own battle to challenge government policies to bring their grandkids home. Their grassroots actions spearhead a national conversation to curb the skyrocketing rates of child removal.

Suellyn thought FACS would only remove children in extreme cases until her own grandchildren were taken in the middle of the night. Hazel decided to take on FACS after her fourth grandchild was taken into state care. Jen Swan expected to continue to care for her grandchildren but she was deemed unsuitable by FACS, a shock not just to her but to her sister, Deb, who was, at the time, a FACS worker. The rate of Indigenous child removal has increased at an exponential rate since Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered the apology to the 'stolen generations' in 2008. Hazel started GMAR as a response to the rising rates of child removal and along the way she has been joined by families across Australia in the battle to bring the kids home. Together are not only taking on the system, they are changing it.

## CREDITS

Writer and Director	<b>Larissa Behrendt</b>
Producer	<b>Michaela Perske</b>
Editor	<b>Matthew Walker</b>
Director of Photography	<b>Marden Dean</b>
Animation Director	<b>Marieka Walsh</b>
Composer	<b>Caitlin Yeo</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Emma Bortignon</b>
Production Company	<b><a href="#">Pursekey Productions</a></b>



# BACKGROUND ON THE ISSUE

**"I want the audience to feel for the people whose stories we hear. I want them to understand what underlying issues are leading to the epidemic rates of child removal. I want them to be angry, ask how can this be happening today and know they can help Aboriginal people and their organisations to make a difference.**

**After The Apology is a call to arms."**

**Professor Larissa Behrendt**

**Director/Writer of After The Apology**

Hosting a screening of AFTER THE APOLOGY is an opportunity to engage people in a conversation about the alarming rates of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care. The film aims to engage the audience and compel them to take action to ensure kids grow up safe in their own families, cultures and communities.

When the ground-breaking Bringing Them Home report into Stolen Generations was released in 1997, people were shocked to learn Indigenous children represented 20% of all children living in out of home care.

Twenty years on, Indigenous children are still being removed from their families at even more alarming and epidemic rates. The reality is that the forced removal of Aboriginal children has never ended since colonisation. Child removals today are a continuation of Stolen Generations. Indigenous children now represent 35% of all children living in out of care.

When children are being removed, only a minority are being placed with their extended families. Instead, they are often placed with non-Indigenous families who have little capacity to create a sense of cultural belonging. Indigenous families are being discriminated against and their children are being removed unjustly and usually without any prior consultation with extended family.

Some state governments, such as Victoria, have made recent commitments give more of a role to Indigenous organisations in managing 'out of home care' services and have increased investment into early intervention services. But the child removal crisis is getting worse in all States and Territories, Indigenous people have no control over the decision to remove children and communities struggle with chronic homelessness, unemployment and access to other basic services. There is a national push to move children into long

term foster placements soon after removal, and to ease restrictions on adoption

If no further action is taken, the number of Indigenous children in out of home care is likely to triple by 2035. This is a major crisis requiring urgent attention and action.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have grown up safe, well and cared for in their families, communities and cultural traditions, for thousands of years. Evidence shows the value of unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child rearing practices, alongside the critical importance of continuity of cultural identity to the wellbeing of Indigenous children.

The solution to the issue is more responsibility from the Aboriginal community and a greater support network for families. An approach of self-determination is required, a key recommendation of the Bringing Them Home report. Aboriginal controlled organisations need to be properly resourced so they can support families in their communities.



# HOW TO HOST A SCREENING

Here are some tips to help make your **AFTER THE APOLOGY** screening run smoothly

## PLANNING THE EVENT

Finding the right space to host your screening:

To host a local cinema screening sign-up online with [Demand.Film](#)

Best-case scenario is a cinema screening, but community spaces, school halls or boardrooms work too - anywhere there is access to a digital projector. For this option you need to request a public screening license. [Sign up here.](#)

- If you're hosting a screening in a venue outside a cinema, you'll need to set up an online ticketing system. Here are a few suggestions:  
[eventbrite.com.au](#)  
[foktu.com](#)  
[trybooking.com](#)
- If possible, give yourself about six weeks to plan and promote the screening.
- Get a few people together to help with the event.
- The film runs for 85 minutes.

## PUBLICITY

Start publicising your event as soon as possible  
Set up a Facebook event page (make sure it has the RSVP or ticketing link!)

Tag the After The Apology film Facebook page so we can help spread the word.

Distribute marketing materials - send an email, put up posters in strategic areas.

Let your local newspaper and radio station know about the event.

Send out email invites to friends and email lists. See page 8 for an example invite and MailChimp template.

## TECHNICAL CHECK

Make sure you get access to a good projector.

When you receive the DVD or online link to After The Apology, check it is working as it should. If you have time, play the whole film. If you don't, test it at random scenes (beginning, middle and end). Make sure you can hear it properly and the sound is clear and constant.

Check that the room where you are doing the tech check and screening is dark!

Do a tech check in the actual room you're going to screen the film in. Sit in different seats in the audience area to make sure everyone can hear and see the film properly.





## SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY OR WORKPLACE SCREENINGS

You can host an event any time that suits your calendar. However, consider aligning your event with a significant date such as:

- 14–20 May 2018: The [Family Matters Campaign](#) National Week of Action
- 26 May: Sorry Day
- 27 May – 3 June: [National Reconciliation Week](#)
- 8–15 July: [NAIDOC Week](#), held annually to celebrate the histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

If you are not part of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation, consider partnering with one to host your screening.

If your workplace has a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) you can also use the screening as an opportunity to raise awareness and support for your RAP.

You could use your screening event to fundraise for a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation such as Grandmothers Against Removal (GMAR). If you're hosting a fundraiser for an organisation, make sure to let them know about your screening so they can help spread the word.

## RECRUITING A SKILLED FACILITATOR

Make sure you have a skilled and informed facilitator to lead any post-screening discussion. Key characteristics of a good facilitator should include:

- Active listening skills.
- Ability to acknowledge and be responsive to the diverse experiences of people in the room.

- Ability to foster a culturally safe and respectful listening, questioning and sharing environment. Doing so includes actively recognising, and being sensitive to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's personal and cultural prerogatives and understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need not be expected or obliged to share details of their personal experiences and cultural knowledges (See Resources for Screening Discussions section on page 9).
- Ability to re-focus discussion if it goes off-topic.
- Ideally facilitators should be provided with an opportunity to view the film prior to the screening and background information on the issue they will speak to following the screening.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SPEAKERS

Speakers should have expertise in the issues raised in the film. Choose someone who is skilled at sensitively talking about the material in the film.

Consider inviting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and community members in the first instance.

The questions in the discussion guide (see page 11) can be used as a starting point for speakers and for an audience discussion.

# SCREENING EVENT PLANNER

Here is a suggested screening event planner with tips to help you plan a successful screening.

## SIX WEEKS OUT

- Set date and time – we encourage you to host a screening in the Family Matters Campaign national week of action from 14–20 May, but anytime that suits your community is good.
- Book a cinema screening through [Demand.Film](#)
- If you're arranging a screening in a venue other than a cinema, such as your local community centre or library, you can do so from 26 May 2018. In that case, you will need to contact the filmmakers to arrange a [public screening license here](#) and you will also need to book a venue.

## FIVE WEEKS OUT

- Lock in any speakers.
- Arrange all equipment needed for your event – get access to a good quality digital projector.
- Develop a promotion plan – contact your local media, get posting on social media and send out invites through email contact lists – include your ticket links!

## FOUR WEEKS OUT

- If you're hosting a Q&A, do you need a microphone for your speakers and for audience questions?

## 3 WEEKS OUT

- Put up posters and distribute fliers.

## 2 WEEKS OUT

Contact your local newspaper and radio stations by phone. Keep promoting your event on social media.

## 1 WEEK OUT

- If hosting a screening in your own venue (not in a cinema) do a tech check at the venue to make sure the film doesn't have glitches.
- Ideally play the film through in full. At the very least, play the film at random scenes (beginning, middle and end). Is the vision clear? Is the sound coming out of the speakers consistently and clearly?

## DAY OF YOUR SCREENING EVENT

- Once everyone arrives, consider formally opening the event with an Acknowledgement of Country and/or Welcome to Country before introducing the film.
- If you're hosting a screening in your own venue, do another tech check at the space (at least a few hours before).

## THE DAY AFTER

- Thank everyone who helped organize the event.
- Send an email to the audience thanking them for coming and letting them know key actions they can take to support the campaign (see page 09 for ideas to take action).

# PROMOTING YOUR EVENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an easy way to let your community know about your screening.

## EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Here's some suggested posts to help you promote your event on social media. If you're posting on Facebook, tag [@AfterTheApology](#)

Make sure to include the [After The Apology trailer](#) in your posts.

These are some hashtags you could also include:  
[#AfterTheApology](#) [#StopStolenGenerations](#)  
[#StopStealingKids](#) [#SorryMeansYouDontDoItAgain](#)  
[#GiveOurKidsBack](#) [#FamilyMatters](#)

Come to a special screening of After The Apology hosted by [\[insert organisation\]](#) on [\[insert venue, date & time\]](#) followed by a Q&A with [\[insert speakers\]](#). The film follows four Aboriginal grannies who each face their own battle to challenge government policies to bring their grandkids home. Their grassroots actions spearhead a national conversation to curb the skyrocketing rates of child removal. [\[insert ticketing website URL\]](#)

Come and be a part of the national conversation to curb the skyrocketing rates of Aboriginal kids in out of home care and find out how you can support the campaign to keep kids safe with their families, culture and communities. After The Apology screening one night only [\[insert venue, date and time or add ticketing website URL\]](#)

Come and see Larissa Behrendt's After The Apology to support the campaign to stop the alarming rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids being removed from their families and to ensure these kids grow up safe, well and cared for in their families, communities and culture. Screening one night only. Get your tickets here [\[insert venue, date and time or add ticketing website URL\]](#)

Come and see After the Apology, screening one night only [\[insert venue, date & time\]](#) There are more Aboriginal children being removed from their families than ever before. 10 years on from former-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's apology to Stolen Generations the numbers of Aboriginal kids in out of home care have more than doubled. Sorry is supposed to mean you don't do it again. [\[insert ticketing website URL\]](#)



10 years on from former-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's apology to Stolen Generations, there are double the number of Aboriginal children being removed from their families. Aboriginal families are questioning what the apology means. Sorry is supposed to mean you don't do it again. Come and see After The Apology screening one night only on [\[insert venue, date & time\]](#) featuring a Q&A with [\[insert speakers\]](#). Support the campaign to keep kids safe with their families, communities and culture. Reserve tickets here: [\[insert ticketing website URL\]](#)

# SENDING AN EMAIL INVITATION TO YOUR NETWORKS

(NB: If doing a group invite, for privacy reasons address the email to yourself and be sure to BCC the email address list)

[MailChimp](#) is an App that helps you to create email campaigns. If you use MailChimp, we've created a template you can adapt. Just [click here](#) and add it to your template folder. Alternatively, here is a suggested email invitation.

**Subject:** You are invited to a screening of AFTER THE APOLOGY

Dear (Name)

After The Apology by filmmaker Larissa Behrendt follows the story of four Aboriginal grannies who each face their own battle to challenge government policies to bring their grandkids home. Their grassroots actions spearhead a national conversation to curb the skyrocketing rates of child removal.

We invite you to a special screening of the film at [insert place] on [\[insert date\]](#).

The screening will be followed by a discussion with [\[insert speakers name if you have one\]](#).

On 13 February 2008 former-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a national apology to the Stolen Generations. 10 years later there are more Aboriginal children being removed from their families than ever before.

Aboriginal children are ten times more likely to be placed in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children and Aboriginal families are questioning what the apology means. Sorry is supposed to mean you don't do it again.

Come and watch this powerful film and support the campaign to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal kids in out-of-home care and ensure that all Aboriginal children grow up safe, well and cared for in their families, communities and culture.

You can RSVP/purchase tickets here [\[insert ticketing web link to RSVP or purchase tickets or email address - be sure to let people know if any of your ticket sales are being used to fundraise for a cause\]](#)

Check out the film trailer here [\(hyperlink the trailer if possible\)](#).

For any questions please contact the event organisers at [\[insert email address\]](#).

We hope to see you at the screening.

[\[insert name of individual or organisation\]](#)



# LISTEN, LEARN, STAND UP & TAKE ACTION

Here's some ideas on how you can support the campaign to stop continuing stolen generations and the extreme over-representation of Indigenous children in out-of-home care.

## LISTEN & LEARN

Educate yourself about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, perspectives and histories. Check out the publications from [UTS Jumbunna Institute for Education and Research](#).

Learn more about the alarming rise of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, why this is happening and what can be done to turn it around.

## In Depth Analysis

[Reading Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence: Aboriginal Child Removal in 2017](#), Dr Hannah McGlade

[Stolen Futures: Aboriginal child removal and the NT Intervention](#), Padraic Gibson

[NTER Took the Children Away](#), Dr Thalia Anthony

[Bringing Them Home Report - Part 6 Contemporary Separations, Chapter 21 - Child Welfare and Care and Protection](#)

## Shorter articles

['Saving the Children' are the three most dangerous words uttered by white people](#), Amy McQuire

[Indigenous kids are still being removed from their families, more than ever before](#), Larissa Behrendt

[Why I chose to quit my job in Aboriginal child protection](#), Debra Swan

[We can not wait another decade to take meaningful action](#), Dr Paul Gray

[A White Woman Took My Baby](#), Dr Chelsea Bond

[This Sorry Day we'll raise the voice of Indigenous children past and present](#)

[The Family Matters Campaign publications](#)

## STAND UP

To casual racism. [Racism. It Stops With Me campaign](#).

## TAKE ACTION

Get involved in the [Family Matters campaign](#).

Write to or call your State and Federal Minister and let them know you want to act to eliminate the over-representation of Indigenous kids in out-of-home care and that more funding needs to go to support Indigenous run prevention programs that support families and ensure self-determination, a key recommendation of the Bringing Them Home Report is applied in government policy.

Get in touch with a Grandmothers group or other grass-roots organisation campaigning on this issue (see the list of groups on the next page).



## Individually

Sign and build support for this petition calling for fundamental reforms to stop the mass removal of Aboriginal children and ensure Indigenous self determination in child welfare.

You can sign and share the [online petition here](#).

Seek endorsement for the petition from any organisation you are involved in eg community group, church group, trade union.

Sign up to Family Matters Campaign. [Take the pledge and get involved in the campaign](#).

Write to or call your State and Federal Minister and let them know you want to act to eliminate the over-representation of Indigenous kids in out-of-home care and that more funding needs to go to support Indigenous run prevention programs that support families and ensure self-determination, a key recommendation of the Bringing Them Home Report is applied in government policy.

Get in touch with a Grandmothers Against Removals group or other grass-roots organisation campaigning on this issue.

[Grandmothers Against Removals Facebook Page](#)

[Grandmothers Against Removals NSW Facebook Page](#)

[Bundjalung – Ballina GMAR Facebook Page](#)

[My Struggle My Fight Facebook Page](#) – Film about forced removals in Cherbourg

[Brisbane Aboriginal Sovereign Embassy Facebook Page](#)

[Grandmothers Against Forced Removals South Australia Facebook Page](#)

[Shut Youth Prisons Mbartwe – Alice Springs Facebook Page](#)

[Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation](#)

## At work and in community

Host a screening of After The Apology in your workplace. Consider screening the film to coincide with Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week or NAIDOC or as part of your workplace's commitment to its Reconciliation Action Plan.

GMAR and the Family Matters' campaign have developed some excellent state-specific community resources guides to support communities in responding to child protection issues. [Check them out here](#).



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

Here are some useful tips and resources for having a group discussion at your screening event of *After the Apology*.

## DO YOUR RESEARCH FIRST

Do some critical research before you begin to help you prepare for a group discussion.

*After The Apology* may raise themes that are could be sensitive to audience members, particularly Aboriginal people. If possible, invite local Aboriginal leaders and community members to participate in the discussion.

It's important to recognise, and be sensitive to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be at your screening discussion to ensure that their engagement with your event is met with cultural safety and respect.

While Aboriginal attendees may be interested in playing an active role in the event's planning and discussion sessions, note that they should not be expected or obliged to share their personal or cultural knowledges. Check out the links to resources created by Reconciliation Australia in the next section on creating a culturally safe, respectful and inclusive screening event.

Consider inviting appropriate representatives from your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, with whom you have already developed strong personal relationships, to guide the discussion. You may also wish to seek guidance from peak bodies that deal with matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, such as the Family Matters Campaign and to the Stolen Generations, such as The Healing Foundation.

At the very least, talk to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to gauge their perspectives to ensure you set up a respectful and meaningful dialogue.

For more information you can also explore the *After The Apology Website* .

## RESOURCES FOR SCREENING DISCUSSIONS

This resource from Reconciliation Australia can help you to create a culturally safe, respectful and inclusive screening event.

- [A Guide To Facilitating Culturally Safe and Respectful Reconciliation Screenings and Discussions](#)

## GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Q.** How did you feel as you watched the film *After The Apology* and why?

**Q.** What were your first reactions and what personal assumptions or experiences do you feel triggered this response? Did the film strengthen and/or challenge any of your prior attitudes or understandings?

In June 2007, there were 9054 Indigenous children in out of home care; by June 2016 the number had risen to over 16816. Indigenous children are ten times more likely to be placed in out of home care than non-Indigenous children. Australia's shameful history of The Stolen Generations caused a breaking down of family ties, of cultural, of language, and of connections to country.

**Q.** Discuss why historical perspectives must be considered, enduring injustice and how the atrocities of colonization continue to affect the lives of Aboriginal people today.

**Q.** What does the documentary tell us about the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the face of continued and enduring injustices?

**Q.** After viewing the film, what do you see the major flaws are in the Child Protection System. Discuss the role of structural racism and how this contributes to unjust removal of Aboriginal children from their families.

All evidence tells us that children do much better in their own family environments. Henceforth, Aboriginal children are best cared for by Aboriginal children. While kids sometimes might need to be taken from their parent, they do not need to be taken away from their whole family.

**Q.** Discuss the Aboriginal Placement Principle and why there is an emphasis on ensuring Aboriginal children live with Aboriginal families.

**Q.** A key recommendation of the *Bringing Them Home* report was self-determination. Discuss why Aboriginal control of decision making in areas like child protection is so important to ensuring improved outcomes for Aboriginal people.

In the film, the Mallee District Community Services in Mildura (MDAS) is a great example of a successful Aboriginal-run initiative. In 2016 MDAS had 56 families in intensive case management. None had children permanently removed from their care.

**Q.** Discuss the reasons why this organization has been so successful, the role of community-run organisations and the role of early intervention support services.

**Q. Important:** Discuss ways audience members can take action (see *Listen, Learn, Stand Up and Take Action* on pages 9-10 for ideas).