

## 9.

## Responses to the Inquiry

## Activity sheet

To answer the discussion questions below, you will need to research the various ways that different groups have responded to the recommendations of the *Bringing them home* report. Read the speech *Australian Government responses to the Bringing them home report*, or research the report at:

[www.humanrights.gov.au/social\\_justice/bth\\_report/index.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/bth_report/index.html)

Some of the things people in the community did in response to the *Bringing them home* report were:

- organised meetings where members of the Stolen Generations told their stories
- organised 'sorry registers' where people signed their names to say they were sorry for past actions for governments which allowed children to be removed from their families and communities
- wrote to newspapers and politicians expressing sorrow
- joined groups like the National Sorry Day Committee and the Australians for Native Title
- marched in support of reconciliation

Working in groups of four, discuss and add three other things people in the community can do to help the children who were forcibly removed from their families and communities to 'return home'.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

### Class discussion

The following list includes some of the things governments, churches and the police have done in response to the report's recommendations:

- Motion of Reconciliation in Federal Parliament where the mistreatment of many Indigenous Australians who were forcibly removed from their families and communities was acknowledged.
- Most Australian State Parliaments issued a formal apology to the 'Stolen Generations' and acknowledged responsibility for the policies and practices which allowed for the forcible removal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and communities and acknowledged responsibility for unjust laws and practices made by many government departments including the police department.
- Allocation of \$63 million over a four year period to provide:
  - mental health services including counselling
  - family reunion services
  - parenting support
  - support for the preservation of Indigenous language
  - support of the preservation and development of Indigenous arts and culture
  - archiving project to preserve historical records and oral history recordings.
- An additional \$54 million was allocated by the government in 2002.
- Apologies were made by all major Christian denominations for their involvement in the removal and institutionalisation of many Indigenous children and a commitment to redress these injustices from some churches.

Discuss the things that governments, churches and the police have done in response to the recommendations with your classmates. Make a list of any other things that governments, churches and the police could do to help achieve reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

**Note:** For recent developments and updates on what recommendations have been implemented from the *Bringing them home* report log on to the Social Justice section of the Commission's website at: [www.humanrights.gov.au/social\\_justice](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice)

## Creating posters

1. In your groups plan a campaign together with an Indigenous group to raise community awareness in response to the recommendations of the *Bringing them home* report.

Use the table below to help outline your campaign:

<p><b>Name and objectives</b> Identify the objectives of your group or organisation.</p>	
<p><b>What are the issues you are trying to address?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the issues or events you are concerned about.</li> <li>• Why are these issues important to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Identify your audience?</b> Who are you trying to influence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the government</li> <li>• the local community</li> <li>• individuals</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Identify the desired outcomes for your campaign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What changes do you want to take place?</li> <li>• Why are your desired outcomes important for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people?</li> </ul>	

2. Plan and design a poster which promotes the message you wish to promote to raise awareness. Carefully consider:

- your message – keep it simple
- the design – use images, fonts and colours which are appropriate
- the text included on the poster – be succinct, but make sure you include enough information to inform viewers about the issues you are concerned about.