

# Sorry Day and the Stolen Generations

*Warning. This article may contain the names and images of Aboriginal and Islander people now deceased. It also contains links to sites that may use images of Aboriginal and Islander people now deceased.*

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, [Bringing them Home](#) report.

The first [National Sorry Day](#) was held on 26 May 1998 - one year after the tabling of the report [Bringing them Home](#), May 1997. The report was the result of an inquiry by the [Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission](#) into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.



The [public and political debate](#) about the removal of children was marked by intense [political activity](#) since the mid-to-late 1980s. In 1992 Prime Minister Keating acknowledged that 'we took the children from their mothers' at a speech in Redfern. In 1994 legal action was commenced in the Supreme Court of New South Wales. These [children who were removed \(PDF, 45 KB\)](#) came to be known as the [Stolen Generations](#)

To read more follow the link to: <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/sorry-day-stolen-generations>

## Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples

*Wednesday, 13 February 2008*

**The SPEAKER (Hon. Harry Jenkins)** took the chair at 9 am and read prayers.

### **APOLOGY TO AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

**Mr RUDD** (Griffith—Prime Minister) (9.00 am)—I move:

That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations—this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

To read the full speech follow the link to: [http://www.aph.gov.au/house/Rudd\\_Speech.pdf](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/Rudd_Speech.pdf)