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**Survivor written account booklet**

*E ngā mana e ngā reo, tēnā koutou kia ora tātou.*

*E mihi ana ki te hunga i puta oraiti i ngā tāwharau o te kāwanatanga me ngā whare o te whakapono.*

*Nei rā he huarahi hei whakaarotanga mā koutou, ki te tuku kōrero a-tuhi rānei ki mua ki te aroaro o te Ratonga Wheako Mōrehu*

*Māna anō te runga rawa koutou e manaaki e tiaki.*

*Greetings with respect and humility.*

*We acknowledge survivors of care in state and faith-based institutions.*

*This is an opportunity to submit your experiences to the Survivor Experiences Service in written form.*

*May the author of creation guide and care for you.*

**About this booklet**

This booklet has been developed by the Survivor Experiences Service to help you write about your experience of abuse in the care of State or faith-based institutions.

Being ‘in care’ means the State or a faith-based institution had responsibility for your care. This could include being in:

* foster care and/or whāngai
* care and protection residences
* youth justice residences
* children’s homes
* psychiatric hospitals
* health camps
* disability institutions
* schools and early childhood institutions
* faith-based care
* but it is not necessarily limited to these types of care institutions.

There is a consent form on page 6 that you need to complete so we can use the information that you share with us. There is a form that begins on Page 7 where you can write about yourself and your experience.

***Please do not complete this survivor written account booklet if you have already shared your experience in a private session with a Kaitakawaenga from the Survivor Experiences Service.***

**Information about the Survivor Experiences Service**

The Survivor Experiences Service provides a safe, supportive, confidential place for survivors to share their experiences of abuse in care, to support healing. Survivor experiences shared with the service can be brought together to deepen understanding of abuse in care and how to prevent it. In sharing their experiences, survivors may also be referred to other services.

For more information go to the Services Website <https://survivorexperiences.govt.nz>, or free call the Service’s Contact Centre on 0800 456 090 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. If you are in Australia, you can call 1800 456 032 between 8.30am to 4.30pm (NZ time) Monday to Friday.

**Before you complete this booklet**

You have been in touch with our Contact Centre and registered as a survivor before receiving this booklet. This is to ensure you have appropriate wellbeing support organised and in place. The Contact Centre can also answer questions about submitting your written account and other support, or tautoko we can offer at any point in the process.

**How to use the patai or questions in this booklet**

There are some questions/patai in this booklet to help guide you when you write about your experience. You do not have to use them if you do not want to – just write about the things that you want to tell us. You can tell us as much or as little as you want to.

Before you write about your experience, it may help to think about what you would like to say, which parts of your experience are most important for you to share, and to put your experiences in order.

It helps the Service to understand your experience if you can write about your life before going into care, your time and experiences in care, and your life after care. This may include the effects of abuse on you, your whānau/family, communities, and culture. We would also like to know what you think needs to change to prevent and stop abuse in care from happening in the future. Of particular interest to the Service is if you have engaged in a redress process, how That was for you, and what your ideal redress experience would look like.

**Support/tautoko for you**

We know that it takes courage to speak out, and we thank you for sharing your experience with the Service. We will treat you and the information you share with us with sensitivity and respect. It will only be seen by Survivor Experiences Service staff who need to see it for their work.

We want to make sure you have the support and tautoko you need while thinking and writing about the abuse you experienced in care.

We recommend you consider having someone with you while thinking about what you may write, while writing about your experience, and/or after you have written it. People who could provide support are:

* whānau/family, a friend, kaumatua, or someone else you trust
* your counsellor, psychologist or registered mental health professional
* a Māori/Pacifika non-government organisation
* a Survivor Experiences Service wellbeing advisor or other staff.

There are other supports or tautoko available to help you provide a written account. We encourage you to talk with us about the different support available, for example:

* helping you to think through what you might write about
* help with writing your account or someone to do the writing for you
* having someone with you so you are not alone while thinking about your experiences.

Thinking about historic or current trauma will impact people in different ways and at different times. For example, it may be several weeks or months following your written submission that you find yourself struggling with sleep, flash backs, low mood, or anxiety. If this happens to you, please get in contact with us and we can talk about support options.

If you need support, or tautoko please free call the Contact Centre on 0800 456 090 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. If you are in Australia, you can call 1800 456 032 between 8.30am to 4.30pm (NZ time) Monday to Friday. You can also see our website for further information: <https://survivorexperiences.govt.nz>.

***If at any time you are feeling distressed and need help urgently, please call 111 or your mental health provider.***

**How the information in this booklet will be used**

There is a consent form on Page 6 that you need to complete so we can use the information that you share with us to inform this Service’s mahi/work.

If you give your consent for the Service to use your information, we will remove your name and any other information about you so you cannot be identified. We will also remove names of any other people you may write about.

Your information may be used in many ways, such as:

* To encourage other survivors tell us their experience of abuse in care
* To identify themes or institutions that may be reported by the Service
* To create summaries of survivors’ experiences and survivor statistics
* To raise awareness of survivors’ experiences
* To inform reporting to Government
* To report abuse and abusers to the Police

**How to fill out this booklet**

You can fill out this booklet:

* electronically on your computer, or
* by printing it out and completing in your own writing with a ball point pen.

You can complete the consent form by signing or printing your name in your own handwriting or by typing your name.

**How to send us this booklet**

Once you have written about your experience and completed the consent form you can send it to the Service by email or freepost.

**Email**

Save the booklet and consent form to your computer and email them as an attachment to: [MyAccount@survivorexperiences.govt.nz](mailto:MyAccount@survivorexperiences.govt.nz) . We will email you to let you know we have received your booklet. If you do not hear from us within 3 working days, please call our Contact Centre on 0800 456 090 between 8.30am and 4.30pm. If you are in Australia, you can call 1800 456 032 between 8.30am to 4.30pm (NZ time) Monday to Friday.

**Mail by Freepost**

Post the completed booklet and consent form to us using the prepaid, addressed envelope you received with your Written Account Booklet.

If you would like us to write to you to let you know that we have received your written account, please give us your postal address and we will reply to you within 10 working days.

My address is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

You can also send your booklet to us through your support person, which may include staff from the Service.

**Survivor written account – Consent Form**



Please read the statements on this page carefully.

If you understand and agree with all the statements

please sign, print or type your name at the end of the page.

We need to ask you for your consent to use the information that you share with us. It is important that you understand what we are asking you to agree to. If you have any questions or pātai please contact the Service on free call 0800 456 090 or email [contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz](mailto:contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz). If you are in Australia, you can call 1800 456 032 between 8.30am to 4.30pm (NZ time) Monday to Friday.

1. I understand that I can choose whether I want to complete a written account about my experience of abuse in care.
2. I have been given enough information and time to decide whether I want to share my experience.
3. I understand that I do not have to use or answer any or all of the questions in this booklet. If I want to, I can just write about the things that I want to tell the Service.
4. I understand that I can change my mind about sharing my experience of abuse and my information with the Service by phoning or emailing the Service.
5. I understand that the information in this booklet will be kept secure, and that access to it will be strictly limited to Survivor Experiences Service staff who need it for a specific purpose.
6. I agree to the Service and organisations assisting them with their work (eg, identifying themes) using the information about me and my experience.
7. I understand that my personal details will not be published, and that the Service will make sure that no-one is able to identify me or anyone I mention.
8. I am aware that my private session information will be held confidentially by the Service until it is safely moved to the Government Archives where there will be restricted access.
9. I understand that what I write in this booklet is confidential, with four important exceptions:
10. If I give the information from my written account to someone else. This includes sharing any notes I made or talking or writing about it with someone else.
11. If I write about a serious risk to the health and safety of myself or anyone else, the Service will tell someone (e.g. a mental health service or the Police).
12. If I write about serious criminal offending that is ongoing or planned, then the Service will tell the Police.
13. If the Service is ordered by a Court to give it information. The Service will only give the information it has to, to meet the terms of the order.

By writing my name and the date below I understand and agree to the information in this consent form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact details (e.g. email or phone number if you have one):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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This page is for you to write about your life and experiences.

You can use the questions as a guide or use the blank pages at the end of this booklet.

It is up to you how and what you write here.

**Survivor written account – your experience**

It helps the Service understand your experience if you can write about your life before going into care, your time and experiences in care, and your life after care. This may include the effects of abuse on you and your whānau/family, and communities. If you cannot recall specific dates and times that is okay.

We would also like to know what you think needs to change to prevent and stop abuse in care from happening.

Of particular interest to the Service is if you have engaged in a redress process, how that was for you, and what your ideal redress experience would look like.

The questions/patai below are guides or suggestions. You do not have to use them if you do not want to – just write about the things that you want to tell us. You can tell us as much or as little as you want to.

**1) What was your childhood like?**

For example, you could tell us about where you grew up, your whānau/family, any disabilities or health issues.

**2) Why you were put in care**

Do you know why you were put into care? Do you think the decision to put you in care was the right one?

**3) What happened to you in care?**

Can you tell us about the abuse against you including where? How old were you? Did it happen more than once? Were others in care with you being abused too?

**4) Who abused you?**

If you want to, can you tell us who abused you. What was their role (e.g. children’s home staff, psychiatric hospital staff, clergy, other residents)? You can name people, but you do not have to.

**5) What were the impacts of your abuse in care?**

Can you tell us about the impact your abuse in care had on you at the time and throughout your life. Can you also tell us about the impact your abuse in care had on your whānau/family, communities, and culture.

**6) Did anyone know?**

Were you able you tell anyone about the abuse? If so, who did you tell, and what did they do? Did you want to tell anyone but could not or were stopped from doing so?

**7) How could you have been protected from the abuse?**

Who or what do you think failed to protect you from the abuse? This could be a person, an institution, a policy or way of working, or something that did not happen but should have.

**8) Thoughts for the future?**

Please share any thoughts you have about what would you like to see happen to protect others from abuse in the future.

**9) Putting things right**

Have you made a claim for compensation (e.g. money, counselling) from anyone for your abuse in care? If not, what has prevented you from doing so? Did you get any help from anyone? If you made a claim, how did you feel about the process? What, if anything, would help put things right for you (e.g. restorative justice)?

**10) Do you want the Police to know?**

If the Police do not know about your abuse already, the Survivors Experiences Service can help you make a referral to the Police for investigation if you want to do this.

The Police will investigate all referrals of incidents of abuse and communicate with you directly about their investigation.

You can talk about this referral process with us on NZ 0800 456 090 between 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday or from Australia on 1800 456 032 8.30am to 4.30pm (NZ time) Monday to Friday.

**11) Is there anything else you would like to tell us?**

You can use these blank pages to tell us anything else you would like to. If you have not used the booklet’s patai, or questions above to help you write about your experience, you can also use the **blank pages below** to write about your experience in any way you want to.

You can also share your experience with us in other ways. For example, you may want to write a poem, draw a picture, or send us a video (e.g. using sign language).

Thank you for sharing your experience. We appreciate the time that you have taken to share this taonga with the Survivors Experiences Service.