The stories of the Stolen Generations and the many government Acts and Policies which were enacted upon the Aboriginal people has been neglected as a topic within the Australian education system. Yet it has in the past, and continues to have, a severe impact upon the ability of Aboriginal people to fully participate in the benefits enjoyed by other members of Australian society.

All Aboriginal families were affected by the forced removal of children and the present low social and emotional well being of many Aboriginal families in this country is a result. It is essential that students are led to an understanding of this in an inclusive Australian history.

It is suggested that any study of the Stolen Generations starts with The National Apology, a long-awaited positive move towards Reconciliation. Then students can go about investigating why it was necessary.

There may be some confusion about Sorry Day.

February 13, 2008 is the day when the Prime Minister of Australia apologised to Aboriginal people of the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian government and people for past policies and practise. It is important that this anniversary is marked as an important day in Australian history.


- Their publication Us Taken-Away Kids and other resources can be downloaded or purchased from the website.


- You can access background information and resources related to Stolen Generations, the National Apology, Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week from Reconciliation Australia’s website: [www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au) including Sorry Q&As, Kerry Fletcher’s Sorry Song, a DVD of the Apology and posters.

- The Sorry Song now has its own website at [www.sorrysong.com.au](http://www.sorrysong.com.au) where you can access the music & words to the song as well as video footage of it being performed, photos and other reconciliation resources.

- There are excellent discussion questions and activities in the Scholastic Reconciliation Kit – Upper Primary Teacher Resource Book for this topic.

- In the first episode of the ABC Children’s Television series My Place, Laura and her family are at the community centre to listen to the Prime Minister’s
apology to Aboriginal people for decades of government policy that allowed children to be stolen from their families. However, Laura is more concerned with an apology she needs to make. This is an excellent resource as it focuses on the affects of the Apology on Laura and the people around her. You will find a film clip, teaching activities and the episode download at the website: http://www.mylearn.edu.au/default.asp

- There are many Stolen Generation stories for all ages which students should read or have read to them:
  - *Tell Me Why* (good for even the youngest students)
  - *The Burnt Stick*
  - *Idji*
  - *Who Am I? : the Diary of Mary Talence (My Story series)*
  - *Khumal*
  - *The Rabbit Proof Fence*
  - *They Took The Children*
  - *Walking for Reconciliation*
  - *Wandering Girl*

- **Watching the movie, Rabbit Proof Fence** is generally considered to be appropriate for mature upper primary students. However, teachers need to preview and be aware that some students (and teachers) may find some scenes distressing. Please plan for discussion and debriefing as an essential element of your program.

- The movie *Australia* which many students will have seen has a Stolen Generations theme


- Discuss the impact of the Acts and Policies enacted upon Aboriginal people or ‘new’ Australians which were discriminatory in nature. Have students write a poem or reflection from the position of one of the following groups:
  - The Stolen Generations
  - Immigrants
  - Kanaks
  - Alien Immigrants

- Listen to songs which deal with the Stolen Generations such as:
  - *They Took the Children Away* by Archie Roach
  - *Journey of Healing* by Helen Moran & Johnny Huckle
  - *Rabbit Proof Fence* by Reno James
  - *Sorry Song* by Kerry Fletcher
  - *Stolen Children* by Kerrie-Anne Cox

- **The Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation** has produced some compilation CDs: *Remember Me, Cry Stolen, Stealern Away, Nobody’s People*, which are available via the website: www.kimberleystolenageneration.com.au

- Use the lyrics of the songs as texts for language work as well as for the Stolen Generation stories.

- Create a rebus story using information gained from the songs and lyrics.
Many Aboriginal artists have depicted the world of the Stolen Generation in their art. Have students view the art and discuss the meanings held within the works. Look at work by the following artists:

- Lin Onus
- Carol Innes
- Julie Dowling
- Sue Wyatt
- Sally Morgan
- Lance Chadd

Involves students in Sorry Day events in your city, town or community.

Hold a Sorry Day liturgy, assembly or ceremony at your school. Invite members of the Stolen Generations to attend.

**Resources:**

- Templeton, R. & Jackson, S. *Tell me why*. Magabala Books, Broome, WA, 2005
- Jacobs, C. *Khmal*
- Pilkington, D. *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence*. UQP, St Lucia, QLD, 1996
- *They Took The Children*. Scholastic, Lindfield, NSW. 2002