

Welcome

Knowmore's Newsletter

A message from Jackie, CEO of Knowmore

Child sexual abuse remains one of the most silenced and stigmatised issues in Australia — yet its impact is devastating and lifelong. At Knowmore, we were established in response to the Royal Commission, and we continue to walk alongside survivors with compassion, respect, and integrity.

In October, we marked the anniversary of the National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. This moment reminds us of the strength and persistence of survivors whose voices led to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Thanks to years of advocacy by victim survivors and their supporters, more than 16,000 people came forward to the Royal Commission, with over 8,000 sharing their stories in detail. Knowmore was honoured to walk alongside thousands of them — supporting survivors across Australia as they courageously spoke their truths and helped shape lasting change.

This year, we were proud to launch our first Reconciliation Action Plan and to attend Garma, where we deepened our commitment to listening, learning, and ensuring culturally safe services for



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors.

Our Unbelievable campaign is shining a light on uncomfortable truths — that abuse is still happening today, and that too often survivors are disbelieved or left without support. Nearly 3,500 people have already signed our petition calling for free justice pathways beyond 2027, when the Redress Scheme is due to end. Survivors cannot be left without help. Together, we must ensure their voices continue to be heard. Learn more [HERE](#).

As we move toward the festive season, we recognise that this time of year can be difficult for many survivors and their loved ones. Whether you spend this season connecting with others or finding quiet moments of rest, we wish you and your loved ones a safe and joyful festive season. Warm regards,

Jackie Mead
Chief Executive Officer
Knowmore Legal Service

Yarning with Aunty

- Knowmore's Elder in Residence



Aunty Glendra (Gallindurra) Stubbs is a Wiradjuri woman. Her mob originates from the Mudgee/Dubbo and Narrandera area.

When Chris and Aunty Glendra sit down for a yarn, the conversation always comes back to the same truth – survivors know best.

In this chat, they talk about why Knowmore is creating a Lived Experience Committee – one that welcomes voices that have been previously not been centred – and how it will help shape safer, more inclusive services for all survivors.

Chris: Aunty, you've been at Knowmore since the very beginning. Why do you think it's so important that we're setting up a Lived Experience Committee now?

Aunty Glendra: Because lived experience builds trust and truth. Survivors are the experts – in their own lives, in what's safe, and in what's not. If we don't put that at the centre of everything we do, we only hear from researchers or academics. This committee will make sure survivors' voices guide our work – in practice and in policy. What about you, Chris? Why does this matter to you?

Chris: I came to Knowmore after using its services myself, and I had feedback – what worked, what could be better. This committee is a way to make sure those insights aren't lost. But it's not just for people like me – we need to think about who's not in the room. People from

communities and cohorts who've been excluded or underrepresented in the past.

Aunty Glendra: Yes, that's important. We need to make space for everyone – including people from remote areas, mob, people with disability, older survivors, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Everyone deserves to be heard.

Chris: And I think the way we work together will matter just as much as who's there. We need cultural safety, trauma-informed practice, and a genuine willingness to listen – not just to the easy stories, but the hard truths too.

Aunty Glendra: Exactly. And it's not just about listening. We have to act on what we hear. If someone tells us the intake process made them feel unsafe, we need to fix it. Otherwise, what's the point?

Chris: It makes me proud that Knowmore is serious about this – not a tokenistic group, but a committee with real influence over policy and practice.

Aunty Glendra: Same here. And we'll look after each other in the process. This work can be tough. I give good Aunty hugs – and my phone number – so anyone who needs a yarn knows they're welcome.

Chris: And there'll be food, right?

Aunty Glendra: Always food. Good things happen over food.

Chris: I think we've found our mob here, Aunty. The universe brings good people together.

Aunty Glendra: And together, we'll make sure survivors' voices – all survivors' voices – are at the heart of everything we do.

Watch the full video [HERE](#).



Knowmore's Prison Program

Reaching Survivors Behind the Walls: Knowmore's Prison Program

Knowmore's Prison Coordination Team provides vital support to incarcerated survivors of child sexual abuse, offering legal advice, social work, cultural and financial counselling to help them access justice through redress or compensation pathways.

Between January and June 2025, the team delivered support to 906 clients in custody across 80 prisons. They also organised 13 outreach events to ensure survivors behind bars can access help, regardless of where they are detained.

June marked a record month, with 90 new clients seeking Knowmore's assistance — almost half

of them self-referrals. Many first connected with the service through engagement at Dillwynia Women's Prison, Risdon Prison service expos, and Adelaide Women's Prison information sessions.

Prison outreach continues to expand, with 96 new referrals between July and August. Knowmore staff recently visited Broome Regional Prison, West Kimberley Regional Prison, and Yatala and Adelaide Women's Prisons to raise awareness about redress and alert inmates to the growing risks of claim farming.

All victim survivors deserve free access to justice and support.



Meet Chris Coombes

Chris Coombes recently joined Knowmore Legal Service in the newly created role of Lived Experience Lead — a position designed to ensure that the voices of victim-survivors remain at the heart of everything we do.

In October, we marked the 7th anniversary of the National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse.

In this video, Chris generously shares their reflections — as a victim-survivor — on hearing the apology live, how far we've come, and how far we still need to go. As Chris says:

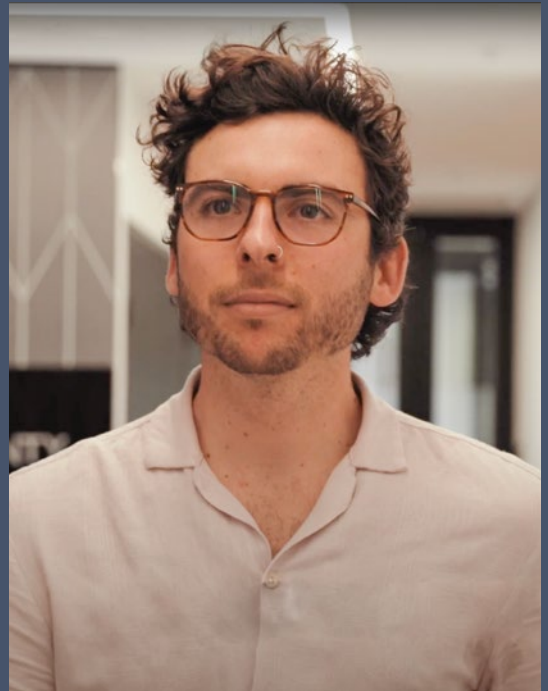
"We can't afford seven more years without bold action. This country has the resources to allow this healing to happen. Let's get to it."

Knowmore honours the courage of survivors, their loved ones, and the advocates who made that historic moment possible. The National Redress Scheme was a vital step forward — but it only covers institutional child sexual abuse that occurred before 2018.

Children who experienced abuse after the National Apology, including those being abused today, and those abused outside of institutions, have no access to redress under the current scheme.

Your support helps Knowmore continue to advocate for ongoing funding and ensure that legal and wraparound support remains available for all victim-survivors of childhood abuse — for as long as it takes.

Justice cannot have an expiry date.



Link to video is [HERE](#).

"We can't afford seven more years without bold action. This country has the resources to allow this healing to happen. Let's get to it."

When the Scheme Ends, Survivors Still Need Us

From 1 July 2027, the National Redress Scheme will stop accepting applications. For many, this marks the end of their only free, nationally available pathway to justice.

As Knowmore CEO Jackie Mead says, "Abuse didn't stop when the Scheme started, and it won't stop when it finishes." Every day, the headlines remind us that children are still being abused. The Redress Scheme was never the full solution — but without it, many survivors will be left without a safe, supported way to navigate the legal system.

Knowmore is one of the few services that walks alongside survivors offering trauma-informed, culturally safe legal and social support. The need does not end with a deadline. Survivors deserve more than a set timeframe — they deserve our ongoing commitment to justice, safety, and healing.

When a survivor takes the brave step to speak up, we're here to listen, believe, and act — your support today keeps our help free for those who need it most. Donate today [HERE](#).



Reaching out to communities: where we've been and where we're going

Knowmore staff had a busy time in August and September. Outreach for community engagement was undertaken in Cape York QLD, Wadeye NT, Walgett and surrounds NSW, APY Lands SA, Lake Nash and Boulia QLD. Members of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement team also spent time at the Koori Knockout in Tamworth to help spread the word about the various Redress Schemes available to individuals. Take a look at the action [HERE](#).

In October, staff visited Bulman, Wugularr and Barunga in NT, Newman, Tom Price and Roeburne in WA, Northern Rivers in NSW, Cape York and Cairns in QLD, and TAS.

In November, we plan to visit Coober Pedy SA, Hobart TAS, Canberra ACT and Wagga Wagga NSW.

Outreach to remote and rural areas remains a priority for Knowmore, because we are committed to providing access to our services to individuals in remote communities.



Festive Season Tips

Caring for yourself during the holiday season

The festive season is often portrayed as a time when families come together to positively connect, share and experience joy and togetherness. For many people who have experienced unsafe childhoods and family environments, this time of year can amplify trauma connected to caregivers and home; disconnection, loss and may involve spending time with people who do not feel safe.

The well intended reoccurring question at this time of year “what are you doing over the festive season?” can be a reminder that family and home are not positive or easy to talk about; which can contribute to painful reminders and feelings of disconnection from others.

If the holiday period feels difficult, it may help to prepare some gentle self-

care strategies. Try creating a “comfort plan” for yourself — perhaps lining up favourite books, movies or TV shows, preparing simple meals you enjoy, or setting aside time for journaling, exercise, or quiet reflection. It’s okay to say no to gatherings or traditions that feel unsafe. You may also want to plan safe connections with trusted friends, whether in person, by phone, or online.

At Knowmore, we understand that caring for yourself is an important act of strength. Our office will close from **Friday 19 December 2025** and reopen on **Monday 5 January 2026**. During this time, if you need support, you are not alone — there are services available to help you stay safe and connected:

13 YARN – 13 92 76

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander crisis support

Blue Knot Helpline – 1300 657 380

*Supporting adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse.
9am–5pm AEST/AEDT*

1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732

24-hour sexual assault and domestic violence support

Lifeline – 13 11 14

24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention

As the year comes to a close, please take gentle care of yourself in whatever ways you need. Whether this season brings rest, reflection, or connection, we wish you safety and peace — and we look forward to continuing to walk alongside survivors in the new year.



Knowmore

Legal Service

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Free call 1800 605 762

Hours: Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm



We recognise First Nations peoples across Australia as owners and custodians of the lands and waterways upon which we live and work. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

We recognise those who paved the way for survivors of childhood abuse to find their voice and seek justice. We stand in solidarity with those who continue to speak up, and those who are no longer with us, whose voices were silenced and never heard.

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The information on this newsletter must not be relied upon as legal advice. Seek legal advice about your own particular circumstances.