

## Part 2



## Chapter 12

# Introduction to Part 2

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- 12.01** The following six chapters contain evidence given by 259 witnesses to the Confidential Committee in relation to experiences of childhood abuse in a range of day and residential institutions and services. The Acts identified a number of settings and services that children attended, or in which they received out-of-home care. For the purpose of the work of the Commission and its Committees the Acts defined an institution as:
- a school, an industrial school, a reformatory school, an orphanage, a hospital, a children's home and any other place where children are cared for other than as members of their families.<sup>1</sup>*
- 12.02** Accordingly, in addition to Industrial and Reformatory Schools, witnesses applied to give evidence of their abuse in Children's Homes, hospitals, primary and second-level schools, foster care, services for children with special needs, and other residential facilities for young people. The evidence related to abuse experienced when the witness was less than 18 years of age.
- 12.03** The Industrial and Reformatory Schools were all funded by the Department of Education and managed by religious Congregations and Orders. The 161 services, schools, hospitals and other facilities reported in the following chapters were funded and managed by various statutory, private and voluntary agencies. These agencies included the Departments of Education and Health, religious Congregations and Orders.
- 12.04** Two hundred and fifty nine (259) witnesses made 289 reports of abuse in relation to institutions and services other than Industrial and Reformatory Schools. The evidence related to a period of 81 years, between 1919 and 2000, being respectively the earliest year of admission and latest year of discharge of witnesses who reported childhood abuse in these 'Other Institutions'.
- 12.05** Among the 259 witnesses who gave evidence in relation to 'Other Institutions' 51 reported abuse in more than one institution. The majority of witnesses reported more than one type of abuse. Thirty six (36) of the 51 witnesses reported being abused in both Industrial and/or Reformatory schools and one or more of the other institutions or services. Ten (10) witnesses reported abuse in more than one type of service, for example in both a Children's Home and a hospital, and 18 witnesses reported abuse in more than one facility within the same type of service, for example in two primary schools.
- 12.06** There were 161 different out-of-home care facilities identified in evidence by the 259 witnesses. The details from those reports are presented in the following six chapters, categorised by type of institution or service:
- Residential and day services for children with special needs
  - Children's Homes
  - Foster care

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1(1).

- Hospitals
- Primary and second-level schools
- Residential laundries, Novitiates, hostels and other out-of-home settings.

**12.07** The Confidential Committee's functions, procedures and method of work outlined in chapters 1 and 2 of this Report apply to all 1,090 witnesses. The general social and demographic profile of those witnesses is reported collectively in chapter 3 with more specific detail regarding the 259 witnesses included in chapters 13-18 as they apply.

**12.08** The following chapters are arranged in a form similar to the earlier chapters relating to Industrial and Reformatory schools, with some notable exceptions. The Committee decided to aggregate information in a number of instances in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. This was in part due to the fact that there were both smaller numbers of witnesses in each category and more easily identifiable services. Male and female witness reports were not segregated for similar reasons. When there were notable differences, numbers for each gender were identified, otherwise they were reported collectively.

**12.09** Another difference is that witness reports in relation to services in chapters 13-18 refer to more recent decades than the Industrial and Reformatory schools' reports. At the time of writing, services in the categories reported in chapters 13-18 continue to exist, unlike those reported in the preceding chapters, most of which had ceased operation by the 1970s.

**12.10** There was considerable variation in the length of time witnesses spent in hospitals, primary and second-level schools, Children's Homes and other out-of-home placements. A number of witnesses reported abuse that occurred in the course of brief admissions and isolated incidents of abuse perpetrated by one individual. Many of those witnesses did not wish to comment on other aspects of the service in which the abuse occurred. Other witnesses gave evidence of being abused by several people on a frequent basis over a number of years and provided detailed accounts of their life in the residential facilities.

**12.11** While there were many similarities between the reports made by witnesses in relation to abuse in Children's Homes and Industrial and Reformatory Schools there was less uniform information available to the Committee regarding the other services reported in the following chapters. Consequently, the information presented in chapter 14 more closely resembles the reports in chapters 3-11. All other chapters have less detailed information about witness demographics, everyday life in the institutions and the witnesses' current life experiences.

**12.12** For the purpose of compiling this Report persons referred to by the witnesses as being in charge in management positions are described as authority figures and may include Resident Managers, school Principals, Matrons, Reverend Mothers and Brothers in Charge.