

Detaining Kids is never the answer

Despite repeated calls by the United Nations, medical bodies, hundreds of charities and community groups, both major political parties in Australia continue to believe that it is politically necessary to punish a small number of highly vulnerable people at extraordinary cost.

Australia's policy has traumatised children so much that they are giving up eating and trying to kill themselves. Of the 109 children detained on Nauru, none have attended school since Sept 2016. All have been there over 4 years.



“I treated severely unwell children that I repeatedly recommended for transfer to a specialist hospital. Instead they were left for months to deteriorate further. Such neglect cannot be justified and is morally and ethically wrong”
- Dr Vernon Reynolds

Children as young as 7 and 12 are experiencing repeated incidents of suicide attempts, dousing themselves in petrol, and becoming catatonic.

The father of a 12-year-old refugee girl who attempted to set herself on fire on Nauru says she is not receiving medical treatment and is refusing to eat and drink. The girl's father is also trying to care for her 13-year-old brother, and their mother, both of whom are seriously mentally ill.

On August 18 – four days before her attempted self-immolation – R was seen by an IHMS psychiatrist, who diagnosed her with a major depressive disorder.

“Currently R is losing a lot of weight, she is not speaking, and refusing all food and water. She does not sleep at night. Her desire to die is very high. R has stopped going to the toilet by herself ... when she does sleep she wakes up with nightmares, screaming and sweating.”

Doctors warned nearly two weeks ago that the 12-year-old girl, R, needed to be moved urgently off Nauru, but those clinical recommendations have been overruled by the Australian Border Force, and she remains on the island.

Australian Border Force is blocking up to 50 overseas medical requests for critically sick kids, arguing that symptoms of Traumatic Withdrawal Syndrome are ‘behavioural’ and children don’t need treatment.

There is a solution to the man-made refugee crisis on Nauru – and six years on, it is clearer than ever that it is the only possible solution: the suffering must end, and Australia must bring them all here now.

We cannot give these people back their lives. Yet it is surely our duty to try.

Please call/contract your local Federal MP, Senators, and Scott Morrison, LNP (02) 6277 7700; Bill Shorten, ALP (02) 6277 4022

References are on our website: www.adelaidevigil.com

Contact us with any questions at AdelaideVigil@gmail.com



Adelaide Vigil for Manus and Nauru