

RECONCILIATION HAS BEGUN: 68% NOW SUPPORT APOLOGY, UP BY 13 POINTS IN JUST TWO WEEKS

A GetUp! poll conducted by Galaxy Research has found that **68% of Australians now agree with the Government's decision to say sorry to the Stolen Generations – up from 55% when asked on 1 - 3 February, before the apology.**

“This poll proves that the apology was a concrete step towards reconciliation,” said GetUp Executive Director Brett Solomon. “Having experienced the historic moment, Australians have embraced the spirit in which it was offered.”

The number of Australians who support the apology has leapt 13 points since the pre-apology poll, from 55% to 68%; the number of Australians who disagree has dramatically fallen 14 points from 36% to 22%.

“This is an unprecedented turnaround of opinion in such a short time,” said Mr Solomon. “It shows that bold leadership on Indigenous affairs will be rewarded, and that ‘Sorry’ was indeed a healing moment for all Australians – the process of reconciliation has been breathed new life with this important first step.”

“The Parliament’s decision to say ‘Sorry’ has been vindicated, and this offers a strong mandate for the Rudd Government to continue to work towards the practical goals it has committed to such as closing the Indigenous health gap.”

The results show not only a turnaround in support, but also a strengthening of agreement within those who support the apology – the percentage who strongly agree up from 31% to 41%. The increase in the proportion that agree with the apology may be observed across all states of Australia, men and women, and older and younger Australians.

“The apology was a positive experience of a long-overdue acknowledgement. This poll shows it has been an effective step to begin the journey to Indigenous equality, with the nation rallying behind the act. Governments have a responsibility to lead from the front, and this experience demonstrates the power of them doing so.”

GetUp embarked on an ambitious community education campaign to address any misconceptions or concerns those Australians may have towards an apology, arming members with factsheets and asking them to call talkback radio, write letters to their local paper and engage in this important conversation with friends and family.

Before the apology GetUp members laid out 4000 candles in front of Parliament House spelling ‘**Sorry, the first step**’. “The Australians who support the apology do so in the hope it becomes a springboard for greater action to address Indigenous disadvantage,” said Mr Solomon.

For more information please contact Brett Solomon on 0407 419 320.

***About GetUp:** GetUp.org.au is an independent movement to build a progressive Australia. GetUp brings together like-minded people who want to bring participation back into our democracy. GetUp has over 240,000 members nationwide.*

GetUp! Poll

Conducted by *Galaxy Research* 15 - 17 February 2008
n=1100 Australians aged 16+

Interviews were conducted using CATI with telephone numbers randomly selected from electronic White Pages. Age, gender and region quotas were applied to the sample. Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with the Government's decision to say sorry for the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, also known as the Stolen Generation?			
	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
TOTAL	68	22	9
Sex: Male	66	24	10
Sex: Female	70	21	9
Age: 16-24	64	17	19
Age: 25-34	81	15	5
Age: 35-49	72	18	9
Age: 50+	62	31	7

	1-3 February (%)	15-17 February (%)
Strongly Agree	31	41
Somewhat Agree	24	27
Somewhat Disagree	17	9
Strongly Disagree	19	13
Neither / Don't Know	9	9

Previous poll, conducted by *Galaxy Research* 1-3 February 2008:

Q: Do you agree or disagree with the Government's decision to say sorry for the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, also known as the Stolen Generation?			
	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
TOTAL	55	36	9
Sex: Male	51	39	10
Sex: Female	59	33	8
Age: 16-24	60	31	10
Age: 25-34	62	26	11
Age: 35-49	59	32	9
Age: 50+	48	45	7