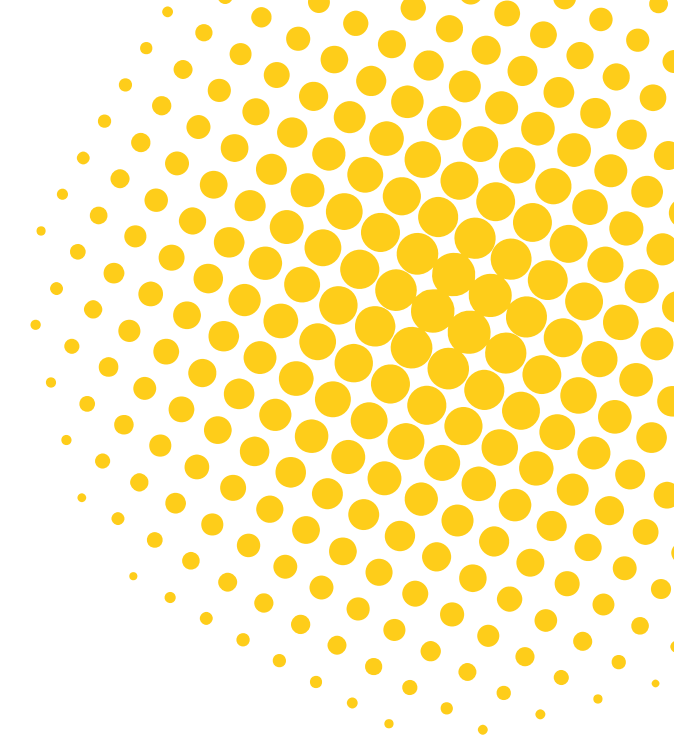


The family joins too.

How growing up in a military family impacts children



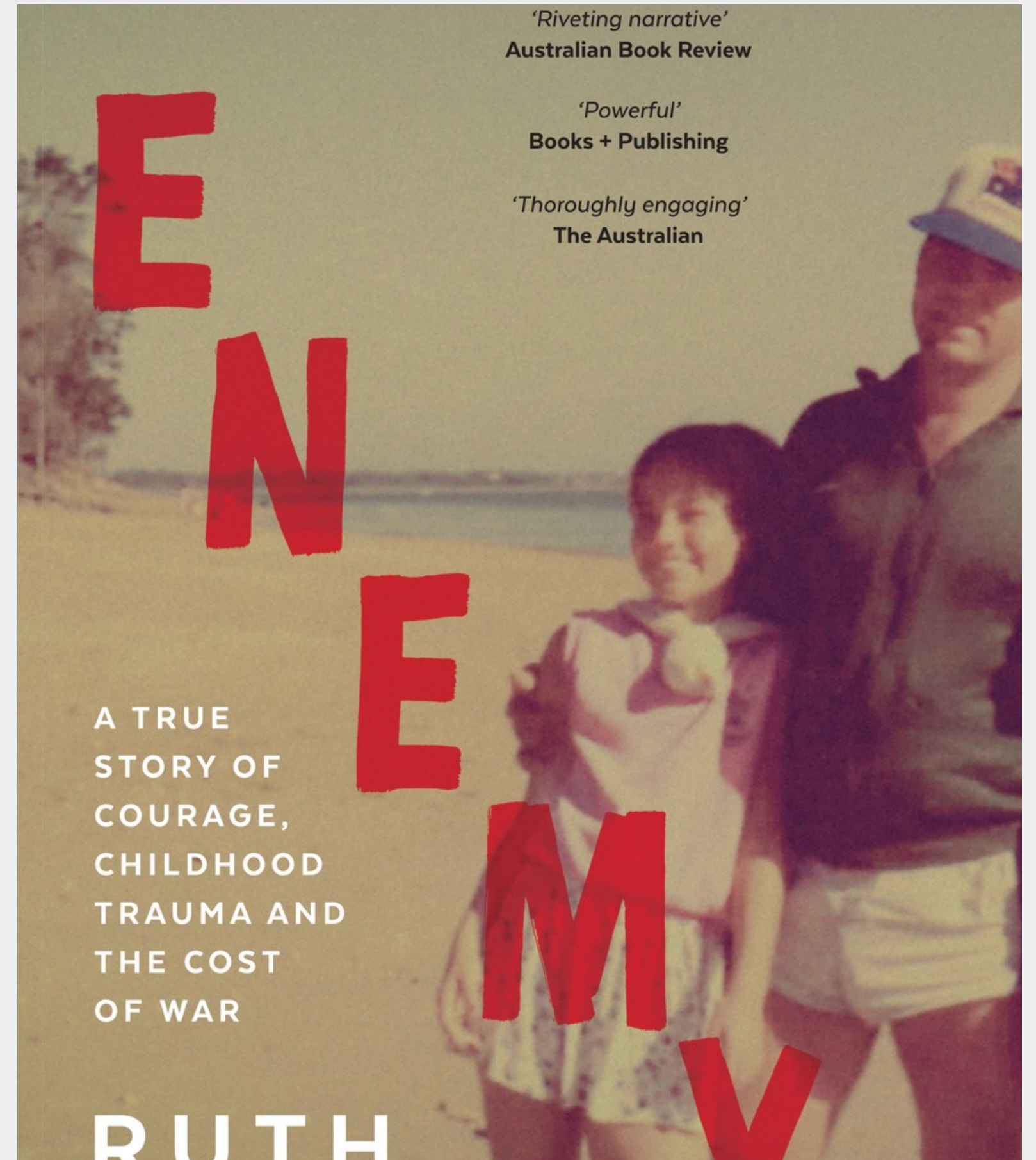


**A perfectionist and a
people pleaser who didn't
feel safe to fail.**

PENGUIN, 2016

Enemy.

My memoir about growing up as the child of a veteran.



CANBERRA

World-first Children of Veterans Summit.



WORLD FIRST EVENT

SEP 3, 2026
Children of Veterans
Summit

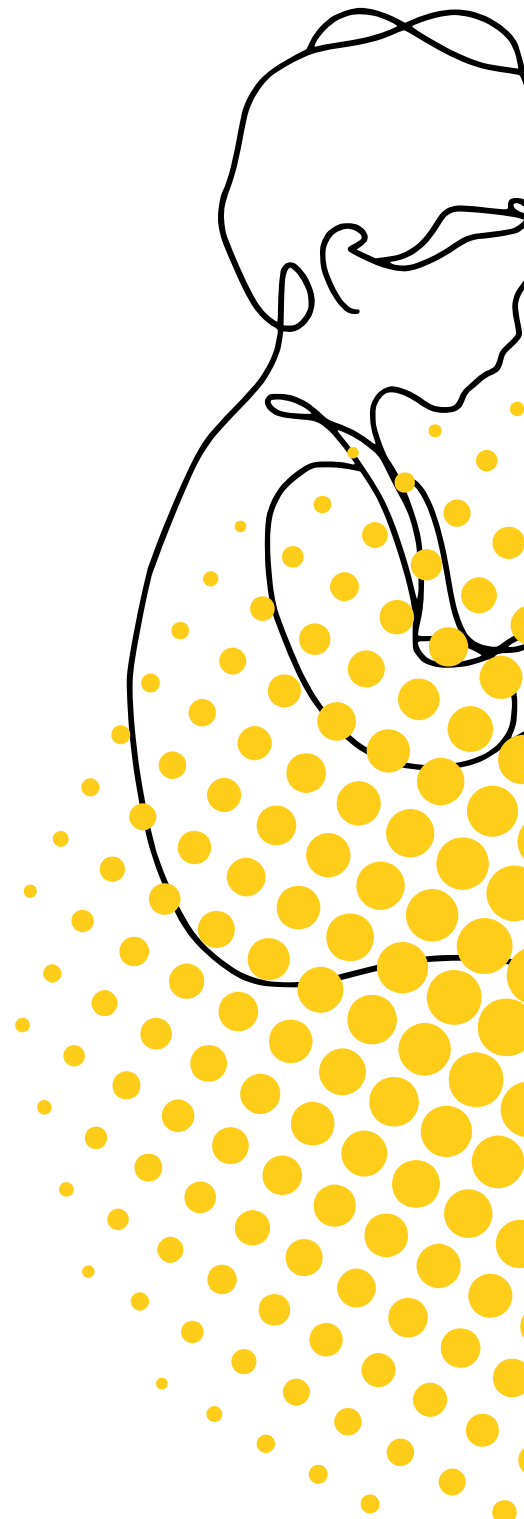
RUTHCLARE.COM

Convened by Annabelle Wilson, the Veteran Family Commissioner.

The first time in history adult children of veterans have had a chance to come together, to hear stories from each other, and to connect to others who shared similar experiences.

Military children, and the adults we grow into, remain largely **invisible**.

The fact that we rarely write or speak about our experiences is a reflection of the way we have been raised.



The military children from the Children of Veterans Summit



The military has shaped our identity, psychological development, and our relationships, both with others, and with ourselves.

The military system influence.



- Loyalty to institution and team above family.
- The family joins too — without our informed consent.
- Family framed as willing support, regardless of its own needs or risk.
- Disclosure of family issues can affect a parent's career and the family income.
- Parents trained to kill, but not trained to switch out of fight mode at home.
- Resilience, resilience, resilience — without awareness of what we are being resilient to.

What does growing up in a military family look like from the child's perspective?



Hierarchy, obedience and unrelenting standards.

1 OF 3

01

What does it look like?

02

How does this contrast with the developmental needs of the child?

03

What are the likely impacts?

Stoicism, suppression and self-reliance.

2 OF 3

01

What does it look like?

02

**How does this contrast
with the
developmental needs
of the child?**

03

**What are the likely
impacts?**

Household chaos and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

3 OF 3

01

What does it look like?

02

**How does this contrast
with the
developmental needs
of the child?**

03

**What are the likely
impacts?**



**To understand to what extent these impacts
are affecting military children,
we need more research.**

**I am the child of a veteran.
That fact will not change until the
day I die.**

Military child experiences need to be better understood, so we can reduce the negative impacts of military service on future generations.