

Response to Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I would very much like to and value being part of the hearing process and speaking on this all further if asked. I would make myself available to do so.

Experience with Domestic Violence in Childhood Culminating in Traumatic Child Removal

My experience of Domestic and Family and Sexual Violence began as a child and it has pervaded into my adult years and ultimately resulted in my Children being traumatically removed and placed under long term Guardianship orders. The abuse I experienced over an extended period affected my mental health at the time, as well as my ability to care adequately for my children including my judgement of how to create a safe environment. I fully acknowledge the errors in judgement I made during this period and the significant effect on my children.

Poor Systemic Responses and Interventions But Recovery is Possible

Notably I have undertaken considerable efforts to heal from this period, addressing my underlying trauma and I can demonstrate an exceptional change in circumstances. I would like the Royal Commission to hear my story of poor Systemic responses and interventions and to learn from what is possible for recovery.

I have encountered major failings with the Department of Child Protection, our State's public health system (SA Health) – both in Mental Health and in Drug and Alcohol aspects, SAPOL, The Department of Corrections and our Education Department.

The criminal charges I faced related to child protection concerns were unsubstantiated with the charges dropped without prejudice. Yet these charges continue to pervade my life, my future, my employment prospects and finances and most importantly my relationship with my children. I am astounded that I am the victim of Domestic Violence and because of coercive control and poor systematic responses I have been projected

as a perpetrator and the father of my children who almost took my life on several occasions has greater contact rights with our children than I do.

Inaccurate Records Harm

A major issue is the sheer inaccuracy and out of context notes that are held by the State regarding myself and there is a considerable flow on effect and consequences to decision making and other domains in my life due to this lack of professionalism, diligence and understanding of violence and its effects, largely Co-ercive Control.

The convicted domestic violence perpetrated on me affected the way that some of my notes were recorded with a series of coercive control actions, intimidation, harassment, and malicious reporting. The conviction and true nature of the domestic violence came to light and the State's attention after many of the notes were recorded. This provides considerable context. And yet my notes have not been updated or rectified to reflect the true circumstances. I believe these records should be revisited and reviewed to be an accurate reflection considering the sheer weight these records carry in effecting my life and that of my Children.

Further time and time again I have evidence of the Department allegedly falsifying records (voice recordings that contradict meetings and access visits) and they are allowed to admit this into Youth Court as heresay. This is life changing information and they are not held accountable for truth or accuracy. I have witnessed this is a collective theme. It amounts to corruption and maladministration and I have evidence that points to this that I can submit.

Lived Experience Should Be at the Forefront of Our DV Responses

Due to my lived experience, I am committed to supporting other families through my work on mentoring, policy advice, systems change and further studies in the Community sector. Notably I carry out several Lived Experience positions in the Community including being [REDACTED] the Hon. Katrine Hilyard MP – Minister for Child Protection as well as Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence. I am passionate about those with Lived Experience directing and co-designing this State's response to the epidemic that is Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

Prejudice and Stigma

I have new skills and priorities that have improved my own mental health and wellbeing and are underpinned by a drive to protect my own children and the wider Community from harm. My new skills include emotional regulation and moving beyond my childhood subconscious programming to now understand what a healthy relationship is and how to choose healthy people to interact with. I also know what unsafe behaviour not to accept and how to place boundaries and maintain them. I have new knowledge

and skills that I have not just learnt but that I implement into my daily life in action. I apply what I learn. I have healed from a lot of the trauma that was underlying my belief system and therefore my choices and behaviour and am now equipped for and can demonstrate functional relationships and living. My trauma has been addressed and I have been able to identify the root causes of my behaviour and choices and my mental health is stable. Further I am no longer in domestically violent relationships and environments and the secure life and healthy relationships I now have bolster this good emotional health. I want the Commission to hear this because our Systems tend to characterise victims of Domestic Violence as incapable of recovery and incapable of building protective capacity and I believe this prejudice and stigma needs to be addressed if we are to have interventions, programs, supports and responses that truly enable victim's recovery.

Children Exposed to Court Proceedings and Trauma and Placed in a Care Placement with Further Harm

My [REDACTED]) was a victim to Sexual Violence perpetuated by my [REDACTED]. Already having experienced the trauma of this abuse, the way this was handled was extremely traumatising for my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was exposed to the court proceedings of the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] including all the details from the [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] were able to gain access to Court Documents being in direct contact with one of my perpetrator's – my [REDACTED]'s father because the Department of Child Protection placed my Children in a home that is the [REDACTED]. Further this family itself, whom my children have been placed with until they are 18, was also experiencing evidenced Domestic Violence and were known to SAPOL for this violence and serious mental health issues. My [REDACTED] two children remain in this unsafe Care placement despite multiple attempts to raise alarm bells on my and other professional's behalf.

My [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has and is prepared to make further statements to the fact that she witnessed the male [REDACTED]) allegedly standing over the middle child screaming at them that they needed to make a statement so that she would help the case and "Save her sister" and the case for the Carers [REDACTED] [REDACTED] keeping the children. And that she was being pressured with comments like "if you do this it will help your big Sister" and "what's wrong with you?". Allegedly the [REDACTED] had also thrown a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] My [REDACTED] daughter states that the Carer is a big and loud and intimidating man and was seen to be standing over my [REDACTED] child who was crying and not wanting to make a statement whilst he was yelling at her that she had to. This is on record. A CARL Report and police report has been made as well as several requests for meetings with the Department of Child Protection regarding this

matter from myself, my daughter, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The notes of attempts to discuss this with the Department can be found in formal notes taken by the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] during meetings.

The male Carer has inappropriately spoken to my [REDACTED] child about me being unsafe and a [REDACTED] and I am concerned that my [REDACTED] feels the need to align with his views to keep safe and attached to her now primary source of care. A witness statement is available in and I am further requesting the Police Report details under the Freedom of Information act.

Further to this my [REDACTED] daughter comments that the Carer was providing the middle child with her information from the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]). This includes previous allegations regarding the perpetrator ([REDACTED]). Further to this on other occasions my [REDACTED] child witnessed the Carer get angry with my [REDACTED] daughter for saying “she wanted to go home” and “she wanted to see me (the mother)” and this including yelling and throwing physical objects [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Again, this is on record with the Department of Child Protection including in CARL reports.

I believe my [REDACTED] child was fearful and co-erced into making allegations. My [REDACTED] daughter has also stated that much of what was in the allegations actually came from the Carers words and ideas. My [REDACTED] daughter has stated “our stories do not line up” and further that I as the mother was not involved in the sexual abuse. My [REDACTED] is prepared to make a statement and/or be interviewed regarding this however I feel that she has experienced enough trauma, and it may not be trauma-informed nor child focussed to include her in this process.

The statement the alleged victim made that formed the charges contains information in it that could only have come from the Carer from the Court Documents they were privy to.

Carers are close friends with [REDACTED] and a perpetrator of violence and abuse towards myself – i.e. my daughter’s father and he has shown a long running predilection for harassment via all means at his disposal. There is a strong history of convicted Domestic and Family Violence including Co-ercive Control (Carrier Harassment) and Assault. Many records can be produced pointing towards the continued harassment and committed violent offender [REDACTED] against his victim, me. A Magistrate’s Restraining Order is in place. Indeed [REDACTED] stated after he lost custody to our [REDACTED] that he would do whatever it takes “to make me pay” and have me lose the [REDACTED] because if he couldn’t have them no one can.

Perpetrators Using the System to Harm

Malicious and false reports were made to the Department of Child Protection in the investigation periods as part of this ongoing harassment by [REDACTED]. Please note Mr [REDACTED] has been convicted of Carrier Service Harassment. The Department refuses to acknowledge, recognise or take into account this Coercive Control.

[REDACTED] who is close friends with the Carers and now has access to the middle child (alleged victim) is a paranoid schizophrenic (diagnosed after the charges by SA Health – Royal Adelaide Hospital and after the Department of Child Protection took out orders) and has an Anti-Social Personality Disorder as well as significant drug and alcohol dependency. And this provides much context because he:

Has a vigil ante however paranoid approach regarding child sexual abuse because he:

- States that he was a victim and best friends with [REDACTED] who was abused and murdered in [REDACTED] 3. He states that he was the last person to see [REDACTED].
- He states that his mother was a paedophile.
- He states that he was sexually abused by his Step Father as a child.
- Mr [REDACTED] prior to the charges being raised made online claims that his Drug and Alcohol Counsellors [REDACTED] were also paedophiles. It is to be noted that [REDACTED] are also approved DCP Foster Carers and have reported these malicious allegations and paranoid concepts to the Department. The Department would have record of this, but further [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is prepared to make a statement regarding this.
- The carers of my [REDACTED] child are very close friends with the [REDACTED] and have taken on his views that I am guilty. It is to be noted that in the past [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] have allegedly taken drugs together and that [REDACTED]) also has a poor mental health history of Borderline Personality Disorder, ADHD and Anger Management issues.. Further the carers have given access to my daughter's to the [REDACTED] against the contact determinations of the Department of Child Protection and the previous Heads of Agreement from Family Court and I am aware that he was encouraging my [REDACTED] and carers in the view that I am a [REDACTED] I do not believe the conversations around my [REDACTED] child have been appropriate, unbiased or child focussed and surmount to parental alienation. This can be demonstrated via my [REDACTED] daughter's recounts and in an account of a witness dealing with the Carer who commented in front of my [REDACTED] that I am a [REDACTED]
- The carers have been provided with the court documents full of unsubstantiated allegations and hearsay by the [REDACTED] who had been served the documents [REDACTED]). The

allegations in the court documents were never legally able to be contested (as yet) and the order was conceded too without my admissions.

- In [REDACTED] whilst on [REDACTED] attempted again to make a malicious report regarding an alleged parole breach via a Victims of Crime line that was then in turn investigated by my parole officer via the Department of Corrections and by the Parole Board of South Australia. The report was deemed malicious and a breach was not given.
- In [REDACTED]'s harassment continued when he proceeded to write on my friends and family social media accounts that I am a [REDACTED] – for example “[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Facebook account. This was reported to the Department of Corrections. I have been unable to contest the allegations in court as they were white papered, and I have been unable to contest DCP's Claims as I conceded to the orders no admissions as I was incarcerated and unable to take the case to trial as I was directed by legal counsel that it could jeopardise my criminal case. Further it is very difficult to run a [REDACTED] trial from prison. I and many professionals believe natural justice has not occurred in this case and when I am able to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I hope to raise these details in court. There have been significant issues about the assessable information raised in court proceedings including the accuracy of it that I hope to be able to contest legally.

On the [REDACTED] after a supervised visit with my children at [REDACTED] I noticed that my phone was receiving notifications from an online game called [REDACTED] that my [REDACTED] child had been playing during the visit on my phone. I could see the live chat that [REDACTED] To my understanding the chat was unsupervised and with strangers and this instantly alarmed me as my daughter was [REDACTED] at the time and vulnerable having just experienced the trauma of being [REDACTED] I shockingly saw the comment from my [REDACTED] that her [REDACTED] was being abused to. I knew that she was in the care of [REDACTED] and that the [REDACTED] could not access her but I was immediately concerned for my [REDACTED] for both the unsupervised social media and the disclosure she was making and I contacted the [REDACTED]) that night to report what I had witnessed online and I immediately contacted my support [REDACTED] to ask her advice on this and to inform her as well. A record of both the crisis call and the messages to [REDACTED] would be available. I hope to demonstrate from this, that I in no way was attempting to cover up what I had seen or heard and wanted help for my [REDACTED] immediately learning this information on the back of the allegations already in place. It is I that made the notification that brought the potential abuse of my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I wanted the potential abuse to be investigated.

Conduct of Police

As a mother who had just found out that her [REDACTED] had been potentially sexually abused by her [REDACTED] I was in absolute shock and trauma. The way that the Police dealt with that is purely shocking and amounts to abuse. I was not supported in any way shape or form when I first heard the news – not by the police and not by the [REDACTED] I was extremely distressed and I asked “who can I call for support” and the Department of Child Protection [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have never felt so alone, isolated, pressured and distressed in my life. And this conduct seriously affected my engagement and ability to work with the Department in the best interests of my Children.

Further during the investigation process [REDACTED] of the Police [REDACTED] yelled, screamed at me, threw chairs across rooms, took me out the front of the [REDACTED] police station and attempted to pressure me of camera to make statements that were untrue. I felt so overpowered and scared and I was told “there was no redemption for me” and that I was “the worst mother in the world.” This should have been a time were I was supported not abused. Furthermore, this behaviour amounted to me not trusting or working with authorities.

Prison for Recovery?!

My time being incarcerated was a pattern disruptor and it gave me the opportunity to self-reflect and investigate the cycles of abuse that I have been involved in since I was a child. This included analysing and delving into my self-beliefs, my choices, my past attraction to narcissistic people (or inability to choose healthy partners) and my co-dependent coping mechanisms all developed because of my previously unaddressed trauma. Space and distance from all intimate relationships [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] medications as well as access to new wisdom and tools gave me the equipping and clarity that enabled me to begin:

- Building self-confidence and self-esteem – I developed a strong sense of self-worth and confidence in myself. This helped me to make better decisions, take healthy risks, and advocate for myself in life with the self-assuredness to set healthy boundaries while defining an authentic life.
- To recognise, attract, create and maintain safe and healthy relationships – I learnt to trust myself more and be free of co-dependency, insecurity and the fear of abandonment.
- To gain clarity and direction – I began to heal emotional wounds, direct my energy and focus, make better decisions, and start a meaningful and fulfilling life.

- To reduce stress and anxiety – including mindfulness vs rumination, working through cognitive dissonance, and not engaging in enmeshed relationships
- To live a more meaningful life – Away from intimate abuse I began accepting myself and living a more purposeful life – even within the prison gates. I began to be content in who I am and without dependent relationships.
- To be open, honest, and transparent in my communication with authorities.

I do not believe that I should have needed to do this in a Correctional Facility where my human rights were taken away and that a therapeutic environment would be far more appropriate and fitting. In the Correctional Facility I experienced further harm and re-traumatisation. [REDACTED] I was incarcerated and my financial future was severely damaged.

Charges for Attempt to Dissuade a Witness

I offended in a very stressful and traumatic period of time in which I learnt that my child and potentially both of my [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] All [REDACTED] of my children had been removed from my care and I felt that my family, supports and financial security had been dissolved in one fell swoop let alone facing the guilt and emotions related to learning my children had deeply suffered. I did attempt to seek support but I feel I was not necessarily met with an equipped system able to fully support me, add to this my own lack of trust at the time in authority from previous trauma and during the lead up to my offending I was re-traumatised and did not respond well.

I took matters into my own hands naively and irrationally believing that it was in the best interests of my children, and I can say with certainty that I understand the ramifications of this and would be much better equipped in this situation now. I have done a lot of work to understand my offending behaviour, to learn what I could have done differently, to understand the impact of my choices on my [REDACTED] and the legal system and to atone those choices as best I can with what is in my control. Further to this, I have been committed to actively seek out that knowledge to make the necessary changes and to apply it to my every day living as well as to demonstrate it to others. In terms of the gaps that I felt were in the System's response to mine and my children's trauma – I am actively working with policy developers and decision makers in several roles to inform them of lived experience responses and needs and to help guide System change for others.

I truly believe that had the System met me with a more effective and supported response my life would not have taken this turn.

Medication and Pathologising Mental Health instead of Recognising Natural Trauma Responses

At the time of my offending I had been placed on a high dose of [REDACTED] and I note that whilst in prison I was withdrawn of all mental health medication including the [REDACTED]. This had been previously being prescribed to me from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Prison Health system noted that they do not believe that I have [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The prison health team commented that I was coping remarkably well in prison, with all the stress that I was experiencing and whilst not on mental health medication. I have remained free of mental health medication and any serious mental health issues or crises since my incarceration in September [REDACTED]. I believe my mental health symptoms were a result of the traumatic environments I was living in and unresolved or unaddressed trauma. Court transcripts will reveal this [REDACTED] was identified in my submissions.

I also believe that [REDACTED] used the medication in the home to drug me and my ability to pick up on or respond to the abuse.

PTSD, anxiety, depression, flight/fight/fawn responses are organic reactions to oppression. We need to stop pathologizing victim responses and prescribing medications that dumb down the body's warning systems – I truly believe that medicating victims renders them unable to leave DV and this really needs looking into. As a [REDACTED] about the Domestic Violence at home with my parents, I was offered no support or practical solutions and instead told to go home and take anti-depressants.

DV Abuse Effect on the Mind and Lack of Supports

At the time of my offending, I had had a previous history of domestic violence in my childhood, [REDACTED] I had then been in a Co-ercive controlling and violent relationship with the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I was both in shock and total confusion and I believe that the effects of ongoing domestic and familial violence had affected my mindset and cognitive decision-making, my nervous system and my stress responses. I had been isolated and did not at the time understand that I could reach out to people for help. I was both confused, ashamed and had been trained into thinking that the violence was my fault. I had been gaslighted and brainwashed over a considerable amount of time and this had affected my mental state. I was still also experiencing active abuse from my [REDACTED] and had become dependent on my [REDACTED]

In contrast, after offending, my time in prison; the supports I have received, being removed from the mental health medication that was affecting my cognition, clarity and my inhibitions, the professional interventions and the time and space away from unhealthy partners finally gave me the breakthrough to get emotionally and mentally well.

I began to thrive in prison and now on the outside because I am no longer in environments that distort my thinking. I have also taken active steps to address my trauma, renew my thinking processes and create new pathways. I surround myself with role models and healthy people. I have not formed dependent relationships and now understand interdependence and support within communities. I have my own stable finances and housing and I am honest and open and transparent in my communication and in regard to how I am coping. I have learnt coping skills including self-care, emotional regulation and relapse prevention around my mental health.

While not an excuse at all for the offending, it occurred when my [REDACTED] came to me with information that her [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I attempted to alert my [REDACTED] school counsellor – email to [REDACTED] and I attempted to alert the Department [REDACTED] who had opined that I was simply deflecting. I felt no one was responding to my [REDACTED] needs or my voice when I was attempting to be protective of her and her siblings and I was highly stressed because I knew that my children had already suffered and I had a lot of guilt because I had not realised what they had been experiencing as well as guilt from having the Department (I at the time felt) blame me for my [REDACTED] abuse. So I irrationally and regrettably felt that my only choice was to try and take control and I did encourage my [REDACTED] to retract the statement, with the naïve view that I could get her home and together we could re-raise the charges as I had looked up that there is no statute of limitations or recall if charges are dropped they could be raised again. The messages I sent my [REDACTED] do indicate this intention and are mentioned in the [REDACTED] proceedings. This was my albeit ill-founded attempt to help my [REDACTED] when I was feeling powerless and this was noted by my lawyer in my submissions in the court hearings. The powerlessness I felt because of my experience with domestic violence and considerable co-ercive control brought out in me this behaviour and response to a very stressful situation and this is something I

have taken a lot of effort to look at squarely in myself and to change that response with a better emotional skill set and strategies. I am also not under the constant daily pressure of stress and abuse because I have set up a healthy lifestyle for myself and my eldest [REDACTED] (with the hope of reunifying with my [REDACTED] and providing them with this stability and security also).

As part of my then lack of trust in authorities, I wish to make note that when I was briefly involved with the [REDACTED] when my [REDACTED] was a new born due to the Domestic Violence we were experiencing. I had two [REDACTED] case workers assigned to me who are the workers who were involved with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] intervention team. I note that many of the allegations/information that is my records has come from their notes and professional conduct. I found that at the time I was quite traumatised because I allege that they did not keep records accurately or appropriately nor confidentiality, were not clear around the Safety Planning including showing me the appropriate documents or stating the facts and would tell me 'not to worry' and that I could have the Father stay in the home and they would not report it and various practices which I now understand are not at all child focussed or I allege as the proper policy and procedures that should have taken place and this at the time left me very confused and unsupported. I did not properly understand the legal requirements placed on me and the ramifications of not adhering to the safety plan nor did I have the capacity at the time to understand my choices, rights and the implications and effect on my children's wellbeing when I was in survival mode. I had become dependent on my partner who was causing the harm as part of the insidious nature of Domestic Violence and was psychologically seeking to repair the attachment issues that I had suffered from my childhood. I needed Domestic Violence support and advocacy. I do not feel that the Department at the time responded to my and my children's abuse at the hand of the perpetrator in a trauma-informed way and instead sided with him and believed him and the records show this. They dismissed my truth and in time after it came to light the violence and threats I had been experiencing, my perpetrator was convicted. The notes and assessable information were all recorded at a time without the context of the actual Domestic Violence that was taking place. They were also recorded at a time when I believe those workers were clearly

stressed with the tragic [REDACTED] case and their errors in judgement in their professional capacity during the same period of time they were handling my case have been outlined [REDACTED]. Once I was moved to a different team of workers the reunification with my [REDACTED] was very fast and some of the downfalls of the previous interventions I had received were discussed and noted by the Department. This included acknowledging the malicious reporting by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that this was a physical allergy rather than the mental health episode that had been reported [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I mention this dynamic as it laid the foundation or future interactions with the Department and my irrational choice to offend.

With this background, it was [REDACTED] years before I became involved with the Department of Child Protection again. And my immediate experience of contact with them again, whilst on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. I found the departmental workers that interviewed me (and then worked on my children's case for some time) intimidating, formed quick judgments of the way I was responding in shock (which I note the UK Social Work System has a deep understanding of Mothers of Sexually Abused initial responses they quickly formed the view (without verification) that I knew of my [REDACTED] harm occurring and would not hear otherwise and I do not believe that they approached the situation in a trauma-informed manner. I do understand they are quite rightly and appropriately a risk-aversion statutory system. However, I felt an oppositional relationship was set up immediately and my part in that is very clear to me now as I was responding from my previous trauma response and with a lack of trust or belief that the department was there to support me. I was in great fear of losing my children and my stress response was at an all time high. I did not at the time have the wisdom and the emotional regulation skills to navigate a respectful and helpful relationship with the Departmental workers. I understand as well that those workers were doing their job and responsibility and the only information they had available to them was the previous biased information about me that was not in context of the Domestic Violence I had experienced that has now been convicted. I understand that they were acting in the best interests of my

children with the information that they had. I did not at the time feel or recognise that the Department was going to believe me or respond to the intimate partner violence I had been experiencing nor was the support available. I had also been very isolated by the violence and mechanisms of Co-ercive control and had incorrectly learnt at the time that the authorities were not to be trusted.

Support for the Non-Offending Parent – Systems of Shame and Blame

It is my strong view that our current Systems are not tailored to support the non-offending parent in childhood sexual abuse cases and that in our society victim blaming can occur. I am highly motivated and committed to extending my lived experience to guiding System change in this area to help other mothers and children who go through these tragic circumstances. Rather than taking matters into my own hand and trying to manipulate and control outcomes I am now advocating and communicating for change in a healthy, proactive and constructive way.

Department of Child Protection and SAPOL's Awareness of the Abuse with No Action

I was not aware of the sexual abuse allegations raised until I was alerted by [REDACTED]

In fact, the Department of Child Protection, SAPOL my [REDACTED] psychologist and her School were aware of the allegations well before me (in [REDACTED] and there is record of me seeking to attempt to find out what was happening for my daughter and what I could do about it. I did not knowingly allow the perpetrator in the home. In [REDACTED] when I was made aware of the allegations by SAPOL and DCP on the same afternoon/evening my eldest daughter was removed and within a week and half [REDACTED] were also removed. I categorically did not allow the perpetrator back into the home after I was aware of the allegations. I was horrified and distraught and took every step to separate immediately and the only time that he was in the home was with DCP and SAPOL attendance whilst he removed his essentials and left. In fact, whilst I was being interviewed by SAPOL and DCP I stated I need to get back home – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. I felt anguish that this time was delayed and there was a period of a few hours where I was aware of the allegations and my children were left in his

care and I was not able to leave the police station under guidance from DCP and SAPOL. (I understand now it was within my rights to leave). I provide a witness statement regarding allowing the perpetrator into the home (that I did not) after my awareness of the allegations.

In court documents:

“The mother states that she was not aware of any sexual abuse of [REDACTED] whilst in her care. (As part of the Care and Protection proceedings) “the mother subsequently found out that the Department of Child Protection was made aware of allegations of sexual abuse and failed to notify the mother of this”

In Court Documents (Trial Book One, Volume [REDACTED])

It is stated “The mother is very concerned about events which have transpired since mid-last year. The main points the mother wishes to be placed on record;

1. The mother was not aware of any sexual abuse taking place but is concerned that [REDACTED] doctor [REDACTED], SAPOL and the Department of Child Protection were notified in [REDACTED] and failed to take any action to protect [REDACTED] or inform [REDACTED] of the notifications made to them. The Department’s application states that they received information on [REDACTED] but [REDACTED] and SAPPL records indicate the Department must have been notified earlier than this and failed to take any action to protect [REDACTED] from the alleged harm.
2. The mother lodged a number of complaints last year and this year to the relevant authorities including the Ministers office this year.
3. The mother states she was shocked to be arrested on [REDACTED] by SAPOL. The mother maintains her innocence in relation to these charges. The mother states she was taken out of the interview and spoken to off camera and told that “[REDACTED]”
4. In relation to the history of the notifications [REDACTED] states in her own words the following:
 - [REDACTED], I contacted the Department of Child Protection, Noarlunga – [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]session today. To have been placed in a taxi without my knowledge on the way to her father’s who is extremely violent and domestically abusive and only allowed supervised contact on a very LIMITED basis for safety concerns, is incredibly concerning or even the fact she was being put into a taxi on her own without my permission. I was not contacted or consulted and her step-father was asked to leave the premises. And why I was also challenged in the car park on this. I have never been so stressed in my life – I was not consulted and [REDACTED] word was taken for without checking police documentation or court documents?!

■■■■ has told us she was venting and angry about being changed schools and was saying stuff re not liking her step-father and to get a reaction – her words – there is no reason without any sort of investigation or evidence to make alternative plans for my daughter’s transport and accommodation that evening or to even ■■■■ who is on a restraining order! He has since continued to send abusive messages ■■■■

Can you please explain what is going on and why this occurred please? I have left a message with reception. ■■■■

- Phonecall made on the day ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■
■■■■
- Phonecall made to ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■
■■■■ DCP would not disclose. This was 8 months prior to DCP becoming involved. There is a clear record of attempting to gain information and advice to take protective action. I also called legal services on this day for advice. (Telstra records).

On ■■■■ ■■■■

I received a response from ■■■■

■■■■

As a medical practitioner, I need to base my decisions on logic, reasons and be able to justify such if required.

It is indeed not my role to investigate. However, I have certain obligations, as defined by the Law.

Given the circumstances, it is not appropriate for me to enter into an extended dialogue about the matter.

With regards,

■■■■

■■■■

- Only ■■■■ I desperately asked for advice and consideration:

“Can you please explain what is going on and why I haven’t been informed? Why was my ■■■■ contacted and accommodation arranged when I have full custody for safety reasons. I literally have no information about what is going on please? There has been no dialogue or explanation?”

I also asked if he was unable to speak with me who I could speak with. I was also extremely distressed my ■■■■ had been placed in a taxi to her ■■■■ who did not have custody, who was supposed to be on supervised visits, facing severe violent

teaching her (I do think it was too strict and I do believe I didn't feel I could stand up to that at the time) and in hindsight I would never have allowed this or for her to feel invalidated. I am incredibly sorry for saying that she just had to put up with [REDACTED] strictness and with what I know now and the skills I have now – I would never repeat this.

I do note the Department does not clarify the information about what these incidences are. With my comment to [REDACTED] 'to get over it' I was not referring to sexual abuse or conduct in any way shape or form – I did not have knowledge of this so in context my comments are not in relation to allowing her to be abused. I am incredibly sorry if this is what my [REDACTED] believed of me and what I was stating. In regard to the conversation about how she was sitting – I did try and teach my [REDACTED] to sit in a 'lady like' fashion – I was not at all placing responsibility on her for male inappropriate behaviour or abuse and I thought I was teaching her how to keep herself safe at the times I did say this. I do not realise that [REDACTED] utilised this in his perpetration. I would do things very differently with what knowledge and skill set that I have now, and I have deep remorse that my daughter did not feel supported and potentially shamed by me.

On multiple occasions my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] would make claims (wide-ranging) and then retract them and I did share this with her [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. She would say she made things up because she was angry she had had her phone confiscated. There was a direct correlation or timing to her saying things like "your boyfriends a creep" with no further details and her phone being removed or a disciplinary measure and then she would tell me I am sorry I said that I was angry and trying to get payback. I did not hide this information in fact I discussed it with professionals and what I should do about it. Knowing what I do now I would not have taken any risks or relied on the guidance and feedback I was receiving at the time because they too did not have the complete picture. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] – they all had knowledge that she had made claims and then retracted them. Her teachers were commenting about her disruptive behaviour. The [REDACTED] was teaching me that I needed to remain firm with [REDACTED] because the behaviour and confabulation was part of her 'disease' – [REDACTED]. I mention all of this not to discredit my [REDACTED] but to share that I was very confused about what was going on and what was

behavioural, I was on the [REDACTED] and stressed without good emotional regulation skills at the time and I was under the manipulation of the perpetrator and his co-ervise opinion and gaslighting that [REDACTED] was simply 'naughty' and that I wasn't disciplinarian enough. I trusted the guidance from professionals that I was seeking. And I now understand the behaviour was from her underlying trauma and would absolutely understand this now, address it entirely differently and have the information and clarity to take protective measures.

With regard to [REDACTED] Psychiatrist via CAHMS [REDACTED] – I am unable to get this information now as I am not a legal guardian however [REDACTED] opined to me that [REDACTED] disruptive behaviour, pranking at school, her lying and attention seeking were due to her [REDACTED]. I trusted this opinion and at no point was sexual abuse queried. [REDACTED] stated that I was placing good boundaries down for [REDACTED] and that I was not to engage in her lies which was her disease of [REDACTED]. I genuinely believed that this was the professional opinion and that [REDACTED] was seeing the staff of the [REDACTED] on a weekly basis including full physical examinations and weigh ins and that if anything was considered wrong I would have been informed. I now very much understand that the trauma that was underlying her behaviour was the sexual abuse but I did not have the professional capacity to know this at the time and I trusted the professional opinions I was garnering. The Department commented that I should know that eating disorders are related to sexual abuse however not once did the [REDACTED] staff discuss this with me or raise my awareness on this. I now understand differently and have new knowledge.

In [REDACTED] SAPOL did attend my home and I allowed [REDACTED] to be interviewed privately in a separate room to myself. I did not know what this was about, and I asked to know. I certainly did not know that it was about alleged sexual abuse. I was told at the end of the interview that there was nothing disclosed, and I specifically asked if there was anything I needed to know or do to support my [REDACTED] and I was told no. SAPOL took no further action, [REDACTED] I remember the male police officer who attended (accompanied by a female) saying "I have a teenage daughter as well and they are difficult" – I understand this is hearsay

and I will not likely be able to evidence this, but it really minimised to me there being an issue that I needed to act upon.

I truly believe that I didn't want to be looking for abuse so when authorities and professionals seemed to not act I accepted this concept that everything was okay as it was preferable to the horrific reality. Combine this with my dependence on my partner and [REDACTED] I can see now that I was reluctant to believe or be looking for the worse. Notably my mindset is completely changed on this and I understand the need to be vigilant for abuse.

The [REDACTED] documents contain record of [REDACTED] being interviewed by [REDACTED] in the family home in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with no action taken by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] also raises that I was taking the children's bedding and clothing and restricting their access to food. I deny this and I believe this information has been taken out of context. My eldest [REDACTED] reports that words were twisted and is prepared to make a statement but again I do not feel that is child-focussed. In terms of food my children were well fed and the only time I restricted food was to state that we don't eat/snack just before dinner is served nor could I afford for them to eat the packaged school recess foods at home – they were offered alternative snacks in between meals. There are considerable [REDACTED] of family meals, receipts for food shopping, meals out, lunches provided at school via lunchboxes and canteen orders, and many witnesses regarding the food that my children were nourished with.

I was struggling with my [REDACTED] behaviour and lack of respect for her belongings (without the insight that she was being abused by the step-father) and I did attempt to declutter her teenage bedroom. I categorically did not remove all her bedding or clothing but I did minimise it and pack winter clothes away in storage due to space issues and to help her feel more organised. I understand that the actual issue that needed addressing at the time was my daughters abuse and I wasn't attune to this at the time however I did not neglect or take bedding, clothing or food from my children in a disciplinarian manner.

I deeply regret if my children feel this was the case and in the future I would always communicate so that they know their needs will be met and are not fearful otherwise.

It is commented that I did not report the abuse to the authorities this is because I did not have information that I could report, that any issues that I thought had been raised had been assessed by the authorities ([REDACTED] [REDACTED])

The school ([REDACTED]) had information about the alleged sexual abuse and were reportedly “On the fence” regarding the information – this is documented and was also told directly to myself after the actual allegations were raised via SAPOL. I had spoken to the school chaplain and counsellor about [REDACTED] previous claims and retractions in anger regarding discipline with her phone use (what I thought was teenage versus parental issues) well before the actual date of disclosure and the school had not notified authorities or taken action.

On the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] after a supervised visit with my children at [REDACTED] I noticed that my phone was receiving notifications from an online game called [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] had been playing during the visit on my phone. I could see the live chat that my [REDACTED] was having with a fellow gamer. I shockingly saw the comment from my [REDACTED] that her sister had been raped by her [REDACTED] and that she is being abused to. I knew that she was in the care of the Department and that the step-father could not access her but I was immediately concerned for [REDACTED] [REDACTED] contact the Crisis Line that night to report what I had witnessed online and I immediately contacted my support [REDACTED] to ask her advice on this and to inform her as well. I in no way was attempting to cover up what I had seen or heard and wanted help for my [REDACTED] immediately learning this information on the back of the allegations already in place. It is I that made the notification that brought the potential abuse of my [REDACTED] to the authorities attention that night.

Financial Impact

[REDACTED] has published my personal information to my perpetrator. They did not allow for domestic violence and hardship and my financial future is irrevocably affected. They did not care.

Further, [REDACTED] placed a caveat on the home that he is still pursuing in the courts and the courts are entertaining his adjournments – he has no legal rights to the proceeds of sale and in fact owes me money but the system is still allowing this to continue over ten years down the track when he is completely outside of the jurisdiction. His narcissistic charm keeps affording him adjournments which is

amounting to an extension of co-ercive control and harassment. A matter which should not still be continuing ensues in the [REDACTED] and I haven't been able to file my affidavit which would quash the case because he keeps being allowed to adjourn the time to file. It is exhausting and I live with the potential for further harm over my head.

In this time he continues to harass and intimidate me by way of third parties and the police state that because its through third parties that they can not do anything.

Not to mention that my earning potential despite being university qualified was severely affected by Domestic Violence. I did not receive proper financial support for my children and I have been homeless and [REDACTED]. The costs financially and to my health (this also costs) are too much to try and equate.

Whilst I was incarcerated I lost my home [REDACTED] did not pass on documentation from the bank in time. As such I lost \$30,000 in legal fees (the banks) attempting to keep my home and in the end my home [REDACTED]

Children in Care Exposed To Sexual Harm

My daughter [REDACTED] experienced that other young people were being frequented in their units by middle aged men for sex. She attempted to alert [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and to my knowledge they turned a blind eye.

My [REDACTED] was also offered cigarettes by workers there whilst pregnant.

Further, my daughter attempted to report drug use on the premises.

Attitudes of Workers

Whilst awareness and understanding of Domestic Violence is improving amongst workers and responders I still have found considerable:

- Victim blaming
- Misunderstanding of reactive abuse responses
- Prejudice/stigma
- Minimising
- Judgement
- Corroboration with offenders
- Shaming
- Pathologising

My experience with Domestic Violence began in childhood, and ensued through my teenage years and in the relationships I formed prior to giving birth to my first child. However, I want to speak to what happened with the Department of Child Protection in

its response and intervention to the Domestic Violence I was experiencing once my [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I want to speak to the fact that it was not supportive or effective and further exacerbated the trauma for both myself and my children. In fact I will speak to the fact the Department uses the very concepts of Domestic Violence power and control variables to enact its authority.

Victim Blaming & Family Separation

The Department's sentiment towards me and the way that it conducted itself with me was an attitude of victim blaming. There was and is, despite great research into the fact that it is very difficult for a victim to leave a Domestic Violence relationship, an onus on separating myself from my children for lack of protective capacity without the intention or preparedness to fully upskill and support me to effectively leave and not to re-engage in these types of relationships. A short term solution that yes puts the safety of the children as the priority but does not create long term generational change or solutions.

After my children were permanently removed on [REDACTED] – just one year later now that I am out of the Domestic Violence, fully supported, have sourced and engaged my own therapy, educated myself on boundaries and healthy relationships, built my self-esteem and have a village of healthy and supportive people and community around me, I am in a full position to be protective. These are not interventions that the Department organised and further my children will now not be able to benefit from this change and also have that restorative and healing aspect that could prevent the cycle continuing.

Children's exposure to Domestic Violence is a non-negotiable and I absolutely understand and agree with this. However the solution by just simply removing the children and creating barriers for reunification is not a long-term solution and it is simply on that exacerbates the trauma for the children and the victim parent ongoing.

We only talk about psychological trauma within the medical parameters of 'mental illness' and 'disorder', instead of financial trauma, poverty, debt, and oppression being recognised, people are told they have mental health issues or need to seek mental health support.

This means we don't look at the structures and environments that people are in when they are struggling, and instead pathologise the individual mind.

The shaming and criticising amounts to victims hiding abuse and not seeking support.

Attempts to Have the Department of Child Protection review my Case in the Best Long Term Interests of my Children

I include my response to the [REDACTED] of DCP:

Thank you for your response regarding my request for an internal review of the long-term decisions made regarding my children's care, including the information that informed those decisions and their current placement.

Whilst I appreciate that you consulted your legal colleagues, I am deeply concerned that the reasons given for excluding this case from an internal review specifically the time elapsed and that "Orders were granted by the Adelaide Youth Court with the presentation of evidence that was accepted by the presiding magistrate to have met the required threshold of the balance of probabilities and the rules of evidence." – are based on inaccurate information.

Notably, a trial never commenced. Indeed, no evidence was tendered let alone tested for the rules of evidence. The Court was not required and did not make any finding of any fact on the balance of probabilities.

Importantly, due to being incarcerated, I was unable to contest the order application from the Department and I was not able to fairly take this matter to trial. Notably, the charges that the Department considered requiring long-term planning for my children were formally withdrawn and I did not serve a long sentence.

From this, given my position at the time, there was no admission/s, and I consented to the order. This means that the order was made without the Court having to consider the things the Court must otherwise consider. Attached is a copy of the order from the Court confirming this.

Additionally, I am troubled that the recent legal input has been sought regarding the [REDACTED] guardianship of my children, without considering new information and evidence that could lead to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding. [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I have significant information that has not been considered, including:

- Inaccurate evidence
- Additional evidence that provides a more wholistic perspective
- Manipulation of the system by perpetrators as an extension of Co-ercive Control
- Procedural errors and unfair practices
- Staff bias and alleged falsification of records
- Considerable influence of my children's voices
- Considerable admission of information from the Case Workers involved in the [REDACTED] case that the Coroner has pointed out were unprofessional and inaccurate in their record keeping and displayed impaired judgement.

- A flawed Parenting Capacity report – again built on inaccurate information, containing another DCP client’s name and not conducted via the lens of Autism. Specific behaviours pertaining to my [REDACTED] were considered as non-attachment markers or trauma-based when they are the very behaviours of the now diagnosed Autism level 2. Further that the report failed to account for relevant paediatric reports and largely included and were based on the opinions of my perpetrators.
- Updated information (including adjusted medical diagnosis) and other changes of circumstances.

All of which can and will demonstrate that the investigation and assessment processes validity should be questioned and at the very least reviewed such that the Case Direction moving forward reflects the best long-term interests of my children.

I understand that the legal consultation does not encompass the full context of my case, particularly as I have only been able to outline broader themes without specific examples (for example the voice recordings of access visits contradicting documentation, meetings and other documents that I hold). It is to be noted that the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] does not contain all the evidence and information that I hold that I believe the Department needs to consider to ensure ongoing decisions reflect my children’s best long-term interests.

The fact that the evidence was not formally judged and tendered is why I approached the Executive team because I am imploring you to consider a review which I believe you can initiate at your discretion despite perceived legal limitations.

Whilst I appreciate the advice to pursue revocation of orders as a means of review, I urge you to recognise that the Department has created barriers to such a process. Parental alienation has severely impacted my relationship with my children, influenced by the main perpetrator and the current caregivers, who allegedly oppose reunification. This situation has involved coercive tactics (that can be evidenced) that should be thoroughly considered in the interest of my children.

The inaccurate information currently guiding the Department’s position will continue to undermine any productive future arguments in court and I point to the significant power imbalance. Although time has passed, it is crucial to revisit this information while there remains hope for healing and restoration. The current case direction does not support reunification, and I believe it is based on flawed information.

The Department’s child-centred principles are vital and it is essential that the accurate and uninfluenced children’s voices are upheld. While ensuring safety is paramount, this

must be balanced with a strength- based approach and openness to new information and continuous learning for a long-term best interests approach for my children.

I must note that I do look forward to collaborating with the new Case Management team that has been assigned to my children [REDACTED] Further, irrespective of an Internal Review outcome, I also look forward to taking up the offer of working with a resolution manager from the Complaints Management Unit and specifically I seek to address:

- Contact arrangements with my children and the steps needed to move towards this goal and ultimately a plan for reunification given a significant change in circumstances and given the successful reconnection with my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and the strong relationship with supporting her with my [REDACTED]
- The safety of their current placement and actions taken to address identified concerns.
- Any biases and discrimination affecting how I am treated by case management and issues related to communication and information sharing.
- The accuracy of the investigation, the context surrounding it, and the influence of the caregivers and my main perpetrator on the long-term care outcomes and contact determinations for my children.

While I respect your decision about the review, given the lack of formally tendered evidence cited otherwise and the issues outlined, I implore you once again to consider a review at your discretion.

Thank you again for your attention to this important matter.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

My Children Are Currently At Risk of Harm

My Children are in a home that has a history of Domestic Violence and serious mental health, where my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has allegedly been physically and emotionally harmed and where there is alleged ongoing abuse yet the Department states “there is no current concerns”.

How in this State can children be permanently removed from a mother who has increased her protective capacity and healed from Domestic Violence only to be permanently placed in a home experiencing ongoing Domestic Violence? Are [REDACTED] in our State not held to the same accountability as [REDACTED]

I include my attempts to alert my Children’s worker whom did not give me a formal response. ([REDACTED])

[REDACTED]

Thank you in advance for considering this information about the concerns of the placement of my children. CARL Notifications have been made. If I have not received an adequate remedy and response in 10 working days I will have no hesitation in taking this matter to the office of the Executive.

I understand that you might dismiss these concerns as a mother attempting to muddy the waters. I am and always will be my children's best advocate. And I take this position very seriously.

I am concerned about the placement of my children. These concerns stand alone regardless of the fact that ideally I would like my case to be reassessed by the department. Legislation does provide provision for a child's case to be reviewed each year especially given a change in circumstances. There has been a change of circumstances to my insight as their mum and ability to provide trauma informed and child focused care.

However, if my children can not be home with me then at the very least I would hope for them that they can grow up safe and supported. My children deserve a loving and stable environment.

I understand that the choice of the current carers for my [REDACTED] and my [REDACTED] came about in an emergency. And whilst I do appreciate them taking this on, I am concerned that they were a family who was already struggling with its own history of domestic violence, mental health and physical health issues. I am worried that a placement made in urgent circumstances has progressed to long term when they may not have the capability to provide the safe and stable environment that my children need. I have attempted to provide this information to DCP even through the assessment phase of the order.

- **History of Domestic Violence and Mental and Physical Health**

Before my children went into care, I was supporting [REDACTED] as a victim of Domestic Violence perpetrated by her on and off again partner [REDACTED]. Despite the Department's claim that my children had a well established relationship with this family. My [REDACTED] had met them once in the shopping centre by running into them and my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had seen them once since she was three years old. Due to their ongoing crisis I had distanced myself and my children from this family except largely via messaging and phone calls between myself and [REDACTED] where I would try and support her. This extended to the mental health issues that their [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was suffering and clearly communicating to my own [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as well as her school and service providers as a result of the abuse at home.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Notably at the time my children went into this family's care the adults were living separately. [REDACTED] had been provided with a separate H [REDACTED] [REDACTED], that were going on between himself and [REDACTED] I am unaware if he still maintains this separate house and his single-status pension but I believe this is the case.

[REDACTED] receives the [REDACTED], has been detained in the [REDACTED], has expressed suicidal ideation requiring police attendance and does not adhere to his medication regime (evidenced in messages and medical records). Notably, he allegedly sold his [REDACTED] medication to my [REDACTED]. Also, notably at one stage when [REDACTED] was detained in the mental health ward, [REDACTED] messaged me distressed as [REDACTED] was insisting and in fact, threatening that she bring him in [REDACTED] material to him and she felt threatened and uncomfortable, just one example of the ongoing distress [REDACTED] would express to me.

On numerous occasions [REDACTED] would ask me to connect her with supports so that she could leave the relationship with [REDACTED] in which she was experiencing physical, verbal, emotional and financial abuse. I would provide her with resources but I also on her request made a direct appointment for her with [REDACTED] which unfortunately [REDACTED] did not attend. [REDACTED] has filed bankruptcy due to the financial pressures placed on her by [REDACTED]

Another resource I connected [REDACTED] with was [REDACTED] for her [REDACTED]. Unfortunately, in a session with [REDACTED] where they recommended that [REDACTED] be in a program, [REDACTED] became very angry and was yelling and the session was ended due to this behaviour. [REDACTED] was distraught and this was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was threatened and afraid of his anger. I would be surprised that a mandatory notification was not made by the [REDACTED] team.

Unfortunately, [REDACTED] herself suffers from poor mental health. She is diagnosed with [REDACTED] however she also does not adhere to her medication routine and has openly shared this with me. She has a history of childhood sexual abuse herself and considerable familial conflict that would affect her well-being as well as be disruptive at the family home.

[REDACTED] would comment that she felt sorry for [REDACTED] due to his mental health and anger issues that “he couldn’t help” but she was also very threatened and fearful of his outbursts. She would comment about the cycle of abuse and his apologies and the exhaustion of it all as he would just do it again. A big threat that [REDACTED] would hold over [REDACTED] head was like that of [REDACTED] mother – both threatened to remove [REDACTED] from her care due to her poor mental and physical health. [REDACTED] would hide his [REDACTED] passport from [REDACTED] and say that he was going to remove [REDACTED] from the country and take her with him home to his parents in [REDACTED]. This was understandably [REDACTED] greatest fear.

Both [REDACTED] spoke of physical abuse. [REDACTED] stated that she had a considerable record of photos of bruises [REDACTED] She spoke of being picked up and thrown across the room. She shared that her Dad would get angry with her for not keeping her room clean and a consequence of this is that he would pull large, heavy wooden drawers out the chest and throw them at her across the room. [REDACTED] corroborated this. [REDACTED] would allegedly call [REDACTED] names as well as call [REDACTED] fat and lazy. When [REDACTED] was over at my place in the company of his friend, my daughter’s father [REDACTED], he would repeat this rhetoric as well as complain that [REDACTED] and “why would he want it from her anyway when she’s fat and covered with tumours”. He would speak like this in front of his [REDACTED] who would be over playing as well as my children and I would ask that he stopped talking in this way.

[REDACTED] mentioned that [REDACTED] would buy her big presents to say sorry for his behaviour and try and gain favour back and she was sick of it. This included a [REDACTED] and an expensive [REDACTED] that she pointed out to me.

[REDACTED] was attempting to work full time in [REDACTED] but was having trouble with the responsibility of it including making large error judgements leaving [REDACTED] that she was reprimanded for. One of her positions ended very abruptly, I am unsure if she was removed from her position but in weeks prior she felt she was going to lose her job because [REDACTED] and doing the responsibilities due to the stress at home. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] would comment that she was emotionally and physically not coping (as seen in some text messages with me – but this was a repeated statement). I would go around

and try and help clean up the house and take over meals. She wasn't taking her [REDACTED] and was also suffering with [REDACTED] which is quite severe. She ended up having a [REDACTED] and I helped her to recuperate. This is an ongoing serious health matter.

[REDACTED] was very isolated and often had to cancel arrangements we made because [REDACTED] would state so or would have an outburst when it was going to be happening. I remember a family event we were going to put on by the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] she stated they actually needed to leave straight away as [REDACTED] was being abusive and having "one of his outbursts". I witnessed him yelling extremely loudly at the top of his voice whilst [REDACTED] was still in the car. I sent follow-up messages to [REDACTED] after as I was very concerned if they were okay.

[REDACTED] and this was affecting her social experiences at school. Notably my children in my care did not have bed wetting [REDACTED] issues but [REDACTED] reported to the Department that they did. My [REDACTED] [REDACTED] saw this in the court reports and was most distressed by this comment being made about her and vehemently states this is untrue.

I remember that in around [REDACTED] just before my children went into their care [REDACTED] would express mixed feelings – she wanted to leave the relationship but felt she couldn't and had no choice and at the same time she expressed a deep yearning to have another child [REDACTED]

I would as with my other friends, share with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] information about potentially being [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was privy to these letters and medical documents.

I feel like [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Notably in the early investigation phases if my [REDACTED] stated that they wanted to see me or go home to me, the carers would get very angry with them. It is my belief that [REDACTED] now is too afraid to say she wants a relationship with me. [REDACTED] does not like change and has experienced the removal from myself and is potentially keeping status quo unable to speak up about the alleged abuse by the carers and also because they are now her primary caregivers, she potentially feels a loyalty to them as a survival tactic.

- **Father's Influence Via Carers**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
I have been informed by [REDACTED] attend the home to see [REDACTED] to take them out in the car and drive them

done independently. There are many videos of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that I still hold and he was in early intervention for his speech prior to him being removed. This early intervention was halted during the investigation process and for at least a year when he first went into care. [REDACTED] Child Care at the recommendation of his paediatrician to help his language skills when he was removed. The Child Care had notes of how well he was settling in and also that he was very attached to me (separation times). Notably within two weeks of him starting at the child care centre he was removed from his family home and his [REDACTED]

It was then stated that [REDACTED] had improved in his [REDACTED] development which one would hope so as he was growing older and attending child care and kindergarten and having interventions but it is also concerning that the improvement is measured against a base line that is likely misrepresented by the Carers when compared to other formal assessments that had take place prior. [REDACTED]

It was also reported by [REDACTED] that when he went into her care the only words, he had were swear words. I have records and videos of his language at the time as well as doctors notes and a speech pathologists that state otherwise. My [REDACTED] states that in fact [REDACTED] would allow their [REDACTED] to teach him swear words and they would all laugh about it. I am concerned if these are the only words [REDACTED] had that he either had regressed (videos show him speaking other words although I do definitely acknowledge he was much more delayed than my daughters were at the same age) or that he considerably regressed with the trauma of being [REDACTED].

- **Direct Violence to my Children in Care**

I am very concerned that my children are growing up in an unstable home and experiencing Domestic Violence in their home and their carer's ability for judgement and care are potentially compromised by this. Further I am extremely concerned that my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] attests to direct violence perpetuated on her as well as allegations of violence to my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I wholeheartedly believe my [REDACTED] and as has the Department in previous instances of reporting abuse by her [REDACTED] and as has the [REDACTED] who believe her witness testimony in court. I believe this same standard should be given when my [REDACTED] is attempting to report abuse in the carers home. I also believe that same standards of safety and care and protectiveness and investigations that are applied to biological parents should be applied to Carers if not an even higher level of care and responsibility and the children in care are vulnerable. Biological parents are constantly informed that "good enough parenting" is

not the standard when children are placed into care, the care must be superior to good enough parenting.

My [REDACTED] [REDACTED] states that [REDACTED] kept yelling and threatening around the home about making sure to get the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and started suddenly buying big ticket items and new phones and things for himself with the money. They moved to a larger home in a nicer area, and it was heard when [REDACTED] said maybe they can't cope with the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] would become extremely angry stating they need the DCP money for rent.

I also raise further concerns about my [REDACTED] because he is in close contact with [REDACTED] and has a clearly documented and noted vindictive agenda.

My [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has and is prepared to make further statements to the fact that she witnessed the male [REDACTED] allegedly standing over my [REDACTED] screaming at them that they needed to make a statement so that she would help the case and "Save her sister" and [REDACTED] And that she was being pressured with comments like "if you do this it will help your big Sister" and "what's wrong with you?". Allegedly the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] calling her a "lying bitch" when she said she wanted to see me. My eldest daughter states that the Carer is a big and loud and intimidating man and was seen to be standing over my middle child who was crying and not wanting to make a statement whilst he was yelling at her that she had to. A [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The notes of attempts to discuss this with the Department can be found in formal notes taken by the [REDACTED]. It is this circumstance that led me to desperately have contact with my [REDACTED] who was reaching out to me about the violence occurring via the Carers and resulted in my prison sentence. I take full responsibility for this but share this to provide context.

[REDACTED] has inappropriately spoken to my [REDACTED] about me being unsafe and a [REDACTED] and I am concerned that my [REDACTED] feels the need to align with his views to keep safe and attached to her now primary source of care. A witness statement is available for this as well as a police report because the witness called the police to the site. The police commented that [REDACTED] was being belligerent, shouting and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Further to this my [REDACTED] comments that the Carers were providing the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]). This includes past information that my children (and I for that matter) were not privy to except via these documents. Further to this on other occasions my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] witnessed the Carer get angry with my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for saying “she wanted to go home” and “she wanted to see me ([REDACTED] [REDACTED] and this including yelling and throwing physical [REDACTED] hit my daughter so hard it smashed into pieces).

I believe my [REDACTED] is fearful and co-erced. My [REDACTED] has also stated that much of what was in [REDACTED] comments and statements came from the Carers words and ideas. My [REDACTED] has stated “our stories do not line up” and further states that I as the mother was not involved in the sexual abuse. My [REDACTED] is prepared to make a statement and/or be interviewed regarding this however I feel that she has experienced enough trauma, and it may not be trauma-informed nor child focussed to include her in this process.

As commented earlier, the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and he has shown a long running predilection for harassment via all means at his disposal. There is a strong history of convicted Domestic and Family Violence including Co-ercive Control (Carrier Harassment) and Assault. Many records can be produced pointing towards the continued harassment and committed violent offender [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] stated after he lost custody to our daughters that he would do whatever it takes “to make me pay” and have me lose the children because if he couldn’t have them no one can. Malicious and false reports were made to the Department of Child Protection in the investigation periods as part of this ongoing harassment by [REDACTED] and the Department has actually spoken with [REDACTED] regarding this.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] as well as significant drug and alcohol dependency and this provides much context because he:

Has a vigil ante however paranoid approach regarding child sexual abuse because he:

- States that he was a victim and best friends with [REDACTED] who was abused and
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- He states that his mother was a paedophile. ([REDACTED]

- He states that he was sexually abused by his Step Father as a child.

[REDACTED] prior to the charges on myself being raised made online claims that his Drug and Alcohol Counsellors [REDACTED]. It is to be noted that [REDACTED] are also approved [REDACTED] Foster Carers and have reported these malicious allegations and paranoid concepts to the Department. The Department would have record of this, but further [REDACTED] is prepared to make a statement regarding this.

- The carers of my [REDACTED] are very close friends with the [REDACTED] and have taken on his views that I am guilty despite the fact that the charges have been unsubstantiated. It is to be noted that in the past [REDACTED] have allegedly taken drugs together and the father has been encouraging my [REDACTED] and carers in the view that I am a [REDACTED] I do not believe the conversations around my children have been appropriate, unbiased or child focussed and potentially surmount to parental alienation. This can be demonstrated via my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] recounts and in an account of a witness dealing with the Carer who commented in front of my [REDACTED]

In [REDACTED] attempted again to make a malicious report regarding an alleged parole breach via a Victims of Crime line that was then in turn investigated by my [REDACTED] and by the [REDACTED]. The report was deemed malicious, and a breach was not given.

In [REDACTED] harassment continued when he proceeded to write on my friends and family social media accounts that I am a paedophile – for example “ [REDACTED]

- **Social Media Supervision**

On the [REDACTED] after a supervised visit with my children at [REDACTED] I noticed that my phone was receiving notifications from an online game called [REDACTED] that my [REDACTED] had been playing during the visit on my phone. I could see the live chat that my [REDACTED] was having with a fellow gamer. I did not actively seek this out – it was popping up on my phones’ home screen. To my understanding the chat was unsupervised and with strangers and this instantly alarmed me as m [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at the time and vulnerable. I shockingly saw the comment from my [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was being abused too. I knew that she was in the care of the Department and that the [REDACTED] could not access her but I was immediately concerned for my

██████████ for both the unsupervised social media and the disclosure she was making and I contacted the Crisis Line (Child Protection) that night to report what I had witnessed online and I immediately contacted my support ██████████ i to ask her advice on this and to inform her as well. A record of both the crisis call and the messages to ██████████ I hope to demonstrate from this, that I in no way was attempting to cover up what I had seen or heard and wanted help for my ██████████ immediately learning this information on the back of the allegations already in place. It is I that made the notification that brought the potential abuse of my ██████████ to the authorities' attention that night. I wanted the potential abuse to be investigated.

It was reported by the Department that I was trailing my ██████████ on social media but what concerns me as that she wasn't being supervised online when at such a vulnerable point in her life.

Further to this I have screenshots of the ██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████ and saying that it was her brother. This was very alarming for me. Particularly also that my son's images were not protected.

- **Unprotective Behaviour by Carer**

Both my daughter ██████████ and the ██████████ have attempted to get help for the Domestic Violence occurring in the carers home. What is concerning is that ██████████ is minimising it (when at other times desperately stating how bad it is at home) whilst also suggesting that ██████████ because she didn't like the rules at home or blaming ██████████ past trauma. I made the error in the past in thinking that my daughter was just responding to strictness re mobile phone use for example as a teenager. These children deserve to be heard and as the Department rightly states regarding the importance of the children's voice, it is also imbedded in our legislation..

My ██████████ was removed from the Carers home but yet my ██████████ have remained there. Her statements about the abuse at home were quashed by ██████████ as ██████████ misbehaviour – yet ██████████ has previously been believed by the Department and court of law as a credible witness. Further there is conflicting evidence and proof to suggest the Domestic Violence is going on at the carers home however the carers words are just taken for. The same standards applied to biological parents should be applied to carers and when listening to allegations from children. I feel ██████████ was removed as a 'problem' whilst the younger two stayed in an unsafe environment and ██████████ is well aware of this and not taking action. This is highly alarming given ██████████ has taken on the responsibility of the Care of vulnerable children.

█ has been witnessed by members of the public who are prepared to be interviewed promising that she will leave █ and then when █ tried to repeat this and share this in a meeting with █ stated she was lying.

It has been witnessed that █ had to be physically removed off of █ when he was violently attacking █

█ attending their homes because of how angry and verbally abusive he gets.

When █ was still in my care but █ had been removed, █ opened my car door at school pick up and yelled at me █ that if “my daughter kills herself its my fault.” There was nothing that I did at school drop off to warrant this attack or sudden verbal abuse. It was not at all child focussed for █ who was already worrying about her █

My █ also comments that during her time in the care of █ she witnessed:

The carers yelling and intimidating and angry all the time.

Constant arguments and door slamming.

Constant financial issues.

Talk of sex and pornography.

Physical objects thrown across the room and at people.

Both █ becoming very frustrated with █ due to his behaviour █

Constant name calling including █ calling █” and █ doing nothing to stop or prevent this.

Considerable dog and cat urine over the house and not cleaned up. Unhygienic environment.

Access to █ and other prescription medication with █ name on it at the height of █. Screenshots and evidence of this is available.

That █ did not receive adequate dental care and medical attention when she asked of it from the Carers.

Direct hits from █ and not stopped by █

•

████ is very distressed that the Carers have been able to invalidate her trauma and experience as “just not liking the rules” and is very concerned and protective of her █████ siblings still being in this care environment. As their mother I am extremely distressed to not be able to protect my children and that they are in the care of the Department of whom they have been entrusted with providing a safe, stable environment for them.

Given the Department's stance on Long Term Placements in meeting children's safety, belonging and well-being needs and given the current spotlight and demand from the community to stamp out Domestic Violence I would hope that the circumstances of my Children's care are reviewed as a matter of urgency. I request that appropriate action regarding the safety of my children is taken and if I do not receive a written response about their ongoing care arrangement decision within 10 days I will unfortunately need to escalate this further.

Yours sincerely,

████████████████████