



TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH CV, THE MOTHER OF CHILDREN IN CARE

CV My eldest children, ah my eldest children, daughter aged 13 and son is aged 11.

I was a victim of domestic violence in the past. One time he broke my wrist and he is known to the police and I left him [Redacted]. Took my children away and he has followed us in the past.

He is no longer present.

Over time my eldest children began to develop serious behavioural issues. They often got very angry and punched through the walls of our house. They also smashed plates, TVs and louvres in our house. They broke things that I bought for them to play with.

One time they broke a new trampoline that I bought. They destroyed the Christmas trees that I put up each year so we couldn't have Christmas trees in the house.

I tried to get help for them. I went to the clinic, local clinic and told them there is something seriously wrong with my kids can someone help me please?

In [Redacted] I arranged to see a paediatrician and child psychologist through the clinic. My daughter and son were diagnosed with Oppositional Defiance Disorder. They were put on Ritalin medication, They kept getting angry and doing things like smearing food over the walls.

I didn't know where to turn to for help.

[Redacted] I rang the Kids Helpline after I saw an ad on the TV and asked for help. I told them I couldn't cope any more.

After this Territory Families became involved. Someone from the office came out to see me and I told the person from Territory Families that I needed respite from my children, They gave me a form and told me that I could get respite if I signed it. I have to appear in court. I was represented [Redacted] at the time. Territory Families ended up getting a two year order.

They took the kids away when they were at school [Redacted]. [Redacted] I went to court again for my son and daughter. [Redacted] I remember that the lawyer told me to shut up and don't say a thing. I didn't get them back and the court made another order putting them into care.

I didn't even know I could appeal. I feel like the lawyer misrepresented me and treated me like I was stupid. The lawyer didn't return my calls [Redacted]

I heard that Territory Families had sent my daughter to Darwin. She was only 11. She was placed with a single mother (redacted) who had 3 other children. I also heard that she had been set up with three mobile phones, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

She started putting on make up and started taking photos of herself. She started hanging around with girls in Casuarina and got into trouble for stealing and

started meeting boys.

I think she only went to one or two weeks of school while she was in Darwin.

She came back home and was put into a safe house. I heard she couldn't handle Darwin and I have seen her lots of times in town drunk or looking for drugs. [Redacted] are supposed to look after her. The rules are not to lock the children inside the house at night as I have been told by the Department of Children with Families and this is how she gets into town at night.

I have three other children [Redacted]. I have looked after them and raised them while my older son and daughter have been away and in the last few months on a number of occasions my daughter has absconded [Redacted] and turned up to my house asking for food. She did the same things she used to do smash things, punched holes in the wall and smear food everywhere but her behaviour has even got worse then before she left.

She is now swearing at my little ones. I felt like she has lost all respect for me [Redacted].

One case worker has told me that she is still my responsibility, This really upsets me because I asked for help from them years ago. They took her from me, they raised her and they were supposed to help us. Instead they took her into their care and made her worse and now I feel like they hold me accountable for it.

I tried to go to the police for help. One of the police officers supported me and said to me we will try and protect you and the little ones. They tried to help me get a Domestic Violence Order against my daughter to stop her coming to the house.

After all this happened I didn't end up getting the DVO because Territory Families got another order from the court and took my youngest kids away from me. I feel like they have done this because of what happened to my daughter and what has happened since she has come back [Redacted].

They don't care that I tried to get help from the police to protect my little ones. Instead they have asked me to go to parenting and counselling courses now.

Territory Families treat me like I am worthless. I feel like they have blamed it all on me and have taken no responsibility for what happened. They do not understand me or my family or what I went through.

A good example of this is when the case worker from Territory Families told me that my daughter and son's father needs to have an input into what is happening to their children.

I said to them I don't even live with him anymore. He broke my wrist. It breaks my heart that I have lost my little ones over all of this ...

Um, I think it's, to me it's another stolen generation over again.

Um my father is at the home [Redacted] um when he was a little boy and he has

overcome a lot and still to this day it is very hurtful and emotional what he went through and it has saddened him that all my children have been taken into um DCF and he is really trying to help me and help me fight for my children to be returned home.

And I think he is just the rock and the support I have got at the moment, yeah.

Yeah, what I would like to see is some help done for my daughter. Yeah, yeah. So I have tried and tried and the Department just keeps blocking me for her education and safe wellbeing.

Yeah it's like banging my head against a brick wall to get that help for her.

In the last two weeks she's just finally gotten into school because she went herself and asked the school if she can be enrolled and that was without the help of the Department.

And I said to her I am willing to help her but she has to get counselling to now for her anger management.

They went behind my back and link up with the children's father. He has had nothing to do with them since the day they were born.

What he has put me through with domestic violence and scars I have got now from him. I haven't lived with domestic violence ever since.

Yeah I have come a long way, yeah to be a strong mother and a strong woman.