



TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH DO, A FORMER CHILD IN CARE

Interviewer You're 18. So do you remember when you first got taken away from these mob?
How old you were?

DO Maybe 12, 11.

Interviewer Yeah OK and that's when you guys were living here.

DO Yep.

Interviewer So what do you remember about that when that happened?

DO I was at the school. I went to clinic first. They checked me. Give me a needle and
stuff like that and then they took me to school and the teacher said someone here
for you and I went outside and seen them welfares like carers, welfare and they
told me to jump in and just took me straight to the police station.

Interviewer Did you know what that was all about?

DO I don't know. They just came and picked me up for no, like, uh, no reason.

Interviewer And your grandmother wasn't in the car or anything?

DO Yeah was with me.

Interviewer Yeah.

DO And then the policeman took us half way at the road for the welfare to pick us up
half way like you know where Victoria Road is?

And like they didn't, like, they didn't tell my nanna anything. They dumped my
nanna outside and they only took me inside in the government building. Yeah.

Interviewer I know that's a while ago now and you were young but do you remember how it
made you feel when that happened?

DO Yeah like I was crying from Katherine all the way to Darwin.

Interviewer Yeah. Did they tell you whether or not you are going to see your grandmother or
grandfather or?

DO They didn't tell me that I'm gonna come back and they, them welfare mob they told
me that you are only going there for one night and come back to your nannas and I
was settled down too but I still didn't...I was worried.

Interviewer They told you that in Katherine did they? That you'd just be gone for one night?

DO Like I'm going down for one night but they took me for good.

Interviewer When did you realise that you weren't going to come back here? Did they ever tell you oh, we..?

DO They didn't tell me anything.

Interviewer So a couple of years you were in Darwin?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer And in that time did you ever get to come back here?

DO In a while because I was telling them I don't want to stay, I want to stay in Katherine because if I stay in Darwin you going to hear too many trouble for me and they said "Oh well, we got to change you to go Katherine."

Interviewer Oh you didn't want to stay in Darwin?

DO Because I was like running amok and acting really stupid and...

Interviewer How come you were doing that?

DO Because I was missing my family and that.

Interviewer So that whole time when you were in Darwin did they ever let you come back here for a visit.

DO No.

Interviewer Did you ever ask to go back to your family or visit family?

DO I want to go visit my family but sometime they [?] up. They asked the people, like asked government mob first if you want to go visit your family.

Interviewer So you are saying that you would only see them if you were in town or shop or something like that eh?

DO Yeah only I would see them like run into them. Like when I asked them that 'I can go visit?' They say 'No.'

Interviewer Yeah and how did that make you feel?

DO Really sad and I just go straight into my room and lock my door.

Interviewer So what would happen if you would get angry and break something or anything like that, would what they do?

DO You know how you got like a tin house and ..what is it that house. He don't lock that normal door, he shut the whole thing down.

Female A shed?

Interviewer So you used to be locked in...

DO Yeah. Yeah like a shed but he shut that thing up.

Interviewer Like a roller door or something?

DO Yeah, that door and the front door.

Interviewer Night time or...?

DO Night and day time.

Interviewer So you couldn't go outside you're saying?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer How did you get outside, did you have to ask?

DO Yep.

Interviewer Did she ever say no, you can't?

DO Sometimes he say no, and that's why I go back in my room and just looking at the wall.

Interviewer So if you wanted to walk outside you couldn't go outside?

DO No.

Interviewer How did that make you feel?

DO Really sad and...

Interviewer A lot of kids stayed in that place, or just you?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer Like how many would be there most of the time?

DO Three kids.

Interviewer Yeah. So you'd be all mixed up with different kids in all those different place, eh?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer Were any of those carers nice or kind to you, the ones in Darwin?

DO They were a little bit nice but sometimes they get really angry.

Interviewer What would happen when they get really angry?

DO They hit you or slap you.

Interviewer So they used to hit you and slap you, did they?

DO Yeah. Like that [slapping sound] to me and just take me in the room. Like they don't grab you like normal way, they grab you really hard. You know them husband one they really wild.

But I growled them back. I say "you mob not my mother and father" you know I say that.

Interviewer Yeah, so what was the worst time when you got hit by them? Do you remember the worst time that you can think of?

DO Some time I run away on a bike too.

Interviewer You rode all the way to the city?

DO No to Palmerston.

Interviewer Oh yeah, that's a long way. And what would happen when you'd run away?

DO They'd call the cops and the cops grabbed me and take me.

Interviewer So what's the longest time you ran away for, like one day, two days, or a week, or..?

DO One day or two day.

Interviewer So whereabouts in the bush were you hiding? All day or?

DO Couple of days, like hiding in the bush with my friend.

Interviewer Really? Where did you sleep, did you sleep on a swag or something?

DO I would sleep with my, like, family, you know. They live at Palmerston in the bush camp.

Interviewer OK.

DO Long grass, my family.

Interviewer So you'd just go camp with them. And how old were you when you did that, do you reckon?

DO I was little.

Interviewer And a lot of people was there in that long grass camp?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer Drinking and everything too?

DO Yeah, but I never joined them. I was just sitting there.

Interviewer Did you feel safe or frightened?

DO Yeah they bought my drink, my family.

Female But you been safe with the family, eh?

DO Yeah.

Female 3 Did you feel safe when you were living in all the different places?

DO No. Every house I go I feel scared and you know. They sent me to all the African one, Chinese one, Fiji one, Island one, and I don't like it.

Interviewer And those mob, different mob, did they, did you understand how they spoke? Language, English or different kind of accent?

DO Them Fiji mob they speak a little bit but sometime I get wild and I tell them too "Can you mob speak English to me? Because I don't know you mob language." And they said "Yes". Only I know one word "Bula" . Mean for 'hello'.

Interviewer What would make them move you? Did they tell you why you're moving or was it after something bad happened, or?

DO I don't know, they just keep moving me, because every house I go to I...

Interviewer Don't like it.

DO I don't like it. I don't know.

Interviewer So what, would they move after you'd get angry or upset, would they move you, or?

Female Did you do that of your own will? When you were angry?

DO No, they'd just come and pick me up and tell me to grab my stuff and take it in the car and take me to Palmerston or Casuarina area.

Interviewer So they wouldn't explain why you're moving?

DO Yeah.

Interviewer Yeah.

Female 3 Did you have just one case worker, or did they change or, who did you...?

DO Change every case worker too.

Female 3 Yep.

Interviewer Was there any good case workers?

DO Yeah like, but I liked my old case worker but he told me he was moving. When I came that case worker, that's the one he helped me out, he told them to take me to Katherine.

Interviewer Do you remember his name?

DO He said "I'll tell my boss that I can, like, take you back to Katherine, because I know I look you, you know, really missing your family".

Interviewer Yeah.

Female 3 What did he do differently to the other case workers? Why was he a good one? What did he do that was good.

DO He called me and he maybe ask me what my number. That I can call him or he call me. If him call me he say "You want anything? You want to go for a drive?" I say "Yeah" and he come pick me up.

Interviewer So the ones before her, did them mob, did they talk to you much, ask you questions like that or nothing?

DO They didn't never feed me, they never do anything. That was like rough. When I go there they always go to the Government building at Darwin next to Kmart area. Always go and ask them "Where my carer?" "He's not here, he's not here. He's gone for lunch." And I said "Come on, he can't be gone to lunch every day, every minute. Where he got to be?"

Interviewer So before you turned 18 did your case worker ask you about where you wanted to stay, what you wanted to do or anything like that or?

DO No, they didn't.

Interviewer What do you think could make welfare better?

DO They sucks the welfare people. They're not doing good things. They say they're letting them carer to buy us stuff. They can buy us stuff because we staying at their house, but the carer where we're staying in that house, they're going to DCF mob, tell them mob, give more money for them kids. They don't even do anything about it.