



## Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory

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### Transcript of interview with EA & EB, a grandfather and a mother of a child in care

- EA They, you had a, an interview with 'em and she had an interview with 'em in hospital. And by all accounts she could have gone to Rehab in Darwin.
- Now I don't know, this now but by all accounts, they could, she could take [name] with her. Sort of thing, everything seemed to be dicky dory as far as I know, you know and then they changed the guide post.
- EB All they did was rolled up at the door and took her away.
- EA Cause I went off, I went cranky about it. .. led away like she's a little criminal you know? And she was in a perfectly safe place you know like.
- EB They even said that in one of their statements, that um, my parents would be a good thing for [name], like living next door to my parents, was a good thing for [name].
- You know but all of a sudden they were not good enough and they just took her off them and me.
- EA They got her, took it, went to court and got a two year, whatever they call it, you know - - - and um, um, um, in the statement that um welfare wrote there was a lot of bullshit in it, it was absolutely it wasn't true you know, they had to make their little case look better you know.
- And we were going to fight it but they reckon oh if you fight it, the both lawyers you know, gonna fight it - - - so if this goes on for 12 months, there's court cases aye, the two years starts then, you know.
- So from you – it might be 12 months down the track so you're looking at three years y'know? And we decide just well as the Magistrate said, she had to be returned to her mother, Mum as soon as possible - - -
- Interviewer Sorry, so just to go back. You 're saying that if - to fight this two year order that was imposed by ..
- EA No matter how long it took it - start the two years.
- Interviewer It would then be - prolong the beginning of that two year process?
- EA That's right and that's what we thought well - - -



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Interviewer And would it be fair to say that you were reluctant to fight for fear of prolonging that two year process?

EA That's right. We're looking at bloody three years, all depends how it went for y'know.

EB No we backed out because they were pulling out our history, which had nothing to do with the kid. And it has a lot to do with the kid but history that - like history of violence with your partner and shit like that.

EA And she's not with that bloke anymore now .. so that, that, that - - -

Interviewer Sorry, just to clarify, you're saying that when you entertained going through court, when you did go to court, you pulled out because of the history that was being brought up?

EB Yeah.

EA But you try and ask welfare anything, you don't get nowhere. You don't get a thing, you don't know what's gain' on.

And as far as I'm concerned - - - she - they shouldn't have had [Name] in the first place. She was with family, y'know?

I don't drink, or smoke, or do drugs y'know, so what was the wrong with that y'know? No they lead her off like a little criminal, they had two coppas there with us y'know.

EA You're hitting the damn, you're hitting the damn wall that's right in front of you all the time.

EB Oh well, um, after DCF took [name] off me, when I was - the first time. Yeah, I was on drugs the first time and Ice to be specific, and yeah DCF took her off me and um, I pretty much went clean from then.

And the second time they took her off me - oh they gave her back to me after two months, of fighting for her back. And then I made a mistake and lost her again and pretty much have been fighting for her since.

I ended up having a miscarriage, going to rehab and getting a job and doing the right thing and still without her.

Interviewer Okay, so you were asked to go to rehab after - by DCF after she was taken and you did that?



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EB I did that. No, I wasn't asked to go to rehab I just did that on my own terms. Whereas when I was ready to get out, they asked me to go back in.

They asked me to do three more. I ended up having a little tiny bit of alcohol for a mate's birthday and it was just - right on the limit. A half an hour later and it would have been out of my system, sort of thing and I got kicked out. And I wasn't even in there for alcohol. I was there for Ice. I mean they were well and truly clear when I went in.

EB I ended up getting a job in May, and I been working since. And now I work on the weekends, on Saturday and Sundays.

I see [name] on Monday and Wednesdays. I see a counsellor on Tuesday, and I pretty much go to work on Thursday and Fridays for the dole.

Interviewer So you've had a job, you've had employment since rehab, and you've got your own house and since then you've been seeing [name] through DCF?

EB For one hour twice a week.

Interviewer One hour, twice a week. And where does that happen?

EB That happens at the DCF building. It's been that way for 14 months. It's depressing. It's hard.

Interviewer And how do you think .....Let me see if I have a tissue ..

EB If not, I've actually told DCF yes, I was in the wrong, and yes you have done the right thing that, at that time. And it's just, they're not, you know, they haven't done anything good that comes out of this for me now. They said reunification plan and it feels like they're just pulling her away.

Yeah, we've got nothing to do, nothing special to do together, we just sit there and don't even talk.

Interviewer And so you're saying that DCF are talking about a reunification plan?

EB That's - they've been talking about that since last year. It's just a fact that I've been advised from my lawyer, I've been advised from DCF to go back to rehab, just for six months, and I thought well, why not better myself now?

They can't see the fact that I've got a job, I've been clean, I'm seeing a counsellor, I'm doing all the right things, so why the hell do I have to go back to rehab? I mean I'm offering drug testing, I'm asking them



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to do it, it's like what the hell why do I have to go back to rehab? I mean I'm offering drug testing, I'm asking them to do it. It's like, what the hell ?

EB

And we wanted to go for a three month program, but I got like –I had to think about what I've got here which is a flat, my bills. I've got my power bills, my rent, and pretty much the car, that gets to stay here when I'm gone.

Just feels like she's just got close to another family and part of me thinks that she's better off there, you know. You know, cause it looks like it's the best thing for her, best future for her.

And I shouldn't be looking at it that way, but the longer she's with those people, it's - closer she gets to them.