



Charity's story

Disclaimer: This is the story of a person who shared their personal experience with the Commission of Inquiry through a submission or interview. The names in this story are pseudonyms and identifying details have been removed. The person who shared this experience may not have been a witness and their account is not evidence. They did not take an oath or affirmation before providing the story.

Nothing in this story constitutes a finding of fact by the Commission of Inquiry. Instead, these stories have been published to show how people are experiencing the current child safety system in Queensland. Any views expressed are those of the person who shared their experience, not of the Commission of Inquiry.

Content warning: Some material may be distressing. These statements may include references to violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, suicide, or self-harming behaviours, and may contain strong or confronting language. Some narratives may be about First Nations people who have passed away. Readers are encouraged to engage with this material in a way that supports their wellbeing.

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I am writing to formally escalate my concerns regarding the long-term placement of Aboriginal brothers who have been in my care for the past eight years, and the Department of Child Safety's ongoing failure to provide adequate and timely supports despite repeated professional evidence of increased need. I was told I had a standard of care review happening in regard to school attendance.

This has resulted in my family making the extremely hard decision to end the placement after ■■■ years.

Care Team Meetings held document consistent and escalating concerns raised by Child Safety, education providers, disability services, and support agencies regarding the children's high and complex needs. These concerns include severe trauma responses, extreme emotional dysregulation, school refusal, and the identified need for separate, simultaneous supports for the siblings to prevent further harm.

Across both meetings, the following issues are clearly recorded and acknowledged by multiple professionals:

- Escalating trauma following a failed kinship placement
- Children currently unable to safely attend or sustain schooling
- Professional agreement that supporting the boys together, without separation, is not viable
- Ongoing explosive aggression, distress during transport, and daily crisis-level behaviour
- Repeated acknowledgement that current support hours and ratios are insufficient
- Support arrangements constrained by funding structures rather than the children's assessed needs
- Delays in NDIS planning being relied upon in place of providing interim Child Safety-funded supports
- Explicit statements that the level of care required is unsustainable without additional assistance

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Compounding these concerns, recent NDIS planning decisions have reduced, rather than increased, essential supports.

Over the past 12 months the following decisions have been made:

- Reduction of CSNA level from three to one for 1 child.
- Removal of IFC hours on the basis that I have IPS, despite these supports serving different functions
- Reduction of dual respite days to basic level.
- Addition of Autism Queensland fees to our list of csna costs, increasing financial pressure on the placement
- Refusal of any additional individual support to help the boys build capacity

These reductions have occurred in the context of escalating behaviours and documented professional concern, and have further increased risk to the children's wellbeing, education, and placement stability.

Despite these matters being clearly identified, documented, and reiterated over time, requests for increased and appropriate supports have either been refused or deferred.

In addition, responses from the allocated Team Leader have at times focused on questioning my parenting capacity and minimising the children's assessed needs, rather than addressing the consistent professional evidence presented. I have been advised that the children's needs are not believed to be as high as documented, and that I should "be tougher" and compel school attendance, despite clear advice that their current trauma responses make this unsafe and unrealistic.

This approach is inconsistent with trauma-informed practice, disregards multidisciplinary professional input, and places both the children and placement at risk.

As a result, responsibility for managing extreme and complex needs continues to rest almost entirely with the placement, contributing to further trauma, educational disengagement, and an increasing risk of placement breakdown.

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As a long-term carer, I have been committed to the children's wellbeing, cultural safety, and stability. However, it is neither reasonable nor safe for a long-term Aboriginal sibling placement with this level of complexity to continue without the supports that have already been identified as necessary by multiple professionals involved in the children's care.

I am deeply concerned that the Department's continued inaction, combined with reliance on an NDIS system that has withdrawn critical supports, represents a failure to meet its statutory and moral obligations to Aboriginal children in long-term care and exposes these children to foreseeable and ongoing harm.

I have involved [REDACTED] in the last 12 months but have not been able to get any action. My fear is that if I keep pushing through trying to maintain this placement with inadequate support I'm doing the boys a disservice. I truly hope they can get their needs met when I end the placement and none of it can be brushed off as my parenting problem.