

# Child Safety Commission of Inquiry



## Jerry's story

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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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Dear Commissioner,

I write to provide information for consideration as part of the ongoing examination of Queensland's child protection system.

This submission concerns a systemic issue relating to kinship reassessment, review rights, and prolonged residential placement.

I was an approved kinship carer for approximately [REDACTED] years. I provided consistent family-based care and respite during that period. I have no criminal history and there have been no findings that I caused harm to the children.

Following the children's removal from their mother's care, my approval was renewed for only one year rather than the standard three-year period. No reviewable decision letter was issued in relation to that restricted renewal and no formal revocation decision has ever been provided. As a result, I was unable to access independent review.

The children were not reunified with their father as indicated at the time of removal and have instead remained in residential care for an extended period.

I formally requested reassessment as a kinship carer so that family-based care could again be considered. That request has been declined at service-centre level. No formal reassessment has been undertaken and no reviewable decision has been issued in relation to the refusal.

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Without a reviewable decision, there is no pathway to independent oversight through QCAT or other external mechanisms.

The complaint I lodged with the Department has been referred back to the same regional reporting line responsible for the original decisions. Escalation through the Director-General's office has not resulted in independent reassessment.

The children are now ■ years old and remain in long-term residential care. They have additional needs and have experienced significant disruption to education, therapeutic supports and contact with persons of significance since removal.

My concern is broader than my individual circumstances. The systemic issue appears to be:

- refusal to reassess kinship placements while children remain in residential care
- failure to issue reviewable decisions preventing tribunal access
- internal complaint processes cycling back to the original decision-makers
- prolonged residential placement without transparent application of the placement hierarchy

Queensland's legislative framework prioritises placement with family or kin where safe and appropriate. Where reassessment is refused without reviewable decision-making, there appears to be no effective external safeguard.

I respectfully request that this matter be considered within the Commission's examination of:

- barriers to kinship reassessment
- access to review rights
- reliance on long-term residential care
- accountability mechanisms within regional decision-making

I am willing to provide documentation if required.

Thank you for your consideration.