



Kristin's story

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In Feb 2021 my nephew, aged 8 (Victorian Foster Care System since 14 months old and had been in approx 21 foster homes) came into kinship care with my daughter and they lived with me in Qld. The transfer to the Qld Foster/kinship care took over two years to complete due to court processes and the difference between the court orders in each state. This meant that all support services were closed to us. We had to travel 2 1/2 hrs to access psychology and occupational therapy services and pay for it ourselves, often not covered fully by the Victorian payments so I paid the extra costs.

Due to behaviours in the home and school refusal/suspension my daughter could not work. He already came with the diagnosis of ADHD, developmental trauma and ODD. In 2024 after a private play therapist pushed for it, he was tested for Autism and diagnosed with level 2 as well as PTSD (we were continually told that due to the developmental trauma that it was pointless to test for Autism).

Due to being part of the Victorian system for the first two years we were not allowed to be a member of the Queensland Foster and Kinship Care, nor could we access training - only Victorian training (not that Kinship carers are encouraged to do training). We found books on trauma informed parenting and overseas podcasts.

He could not get funding for support at school. He had missed a lot of school through the years due to appointments and so was behind in his schoolwork, could not write well and struggled with social/emotional cues. He became disengaged from his school in 2022 (yr 4) with multiple suspensions. It took many weeks for Child Safety to arrange another school for him to Eventually he started in a different school a few weeks before the end of the school year. 2023 was a bit rocky at school (suspension) and by the end of May 2024 (yr 6) he was 'excluded' from this school. He did not attend school for the rest of the year (other than a few times where he was excluded from being with the rest of the school following a successful appeal by Child Safety. He was allowed to attend for a couple of hours, in a room with teachers/aids). His high school allowed him to do an early extended transition program and this has translated well in 2025 with no behaviour problems and improving school grades.

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As you can imagine behaviours through these difficult school problems and not being diagnosed with Autism until aged 11 meant his ingrained aggressive behaviours he had before he came to live with us continued. During the time he has been in the Qld Foster/Kinship Care system there has been multiple changes of CSO's. In 2025 there was a further major change to CSO and Team Leader. In May 2025 Child Safety made the decision to move him into residential care due to his unsafe behaviours in the home. We were told at the time that we could just forget about him and my daughter is now getting pressure from the intensive kinship team to relinquish her kinship carer status.

This has caused great angst for us as we consider him to be part of our family and are continuing to have daily contact with him and celebrate his successes. He has formed a strong attachment to us. We are the only people in this world who have known him for nearly 5 years. His history before coming to us is very sparse as it is in boxes in Brisbane somewhere (we were told Child Safety didn't know what had happened to the boxes). Residential care has been a concern for us as he has moved into a house where the other 2 children are vaping, chroming and possibly marijuana. This is not an environment he has been exposed to in the past. He has been given a mobile phone and Child Safety do not believe there should be any parental controls on it or safety mechanisms. He has made himself a Facebook account and Snapchat account. We do not know what training the residential staff have in autism, ADHD or developmental trauma.