

Child Safety Commission of Inquiry



Ali's story

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I wish I had never become a foster carer. My heart is now broken.

I was a daycare worker when I decided that I could look after these boys that were going from home to home, I could become a carer to help children, but, I have come to the conclusion that you just can't help them. Child safety makes it too hard.

I learnt 2 things as a foster carer, it was drilled into my head at all the courses I did before I started, it's all about families and BREAKING THE CYCLE....well it's NOT.

Child A is now an adult, on drugs, living in NSW with her mother, and has 1yr old baby. Definitely not breaking the cycle. She self placed with her mother at 15 and child safety did nothing.

Child B is running around the country and back on trains and child safety more than likely don't even know what or where she is most weeks. She has an alcohol problem and is a very lost girl who is getting told so many lies she doesn't know what or who to believe and once again child safety just doesn't care. Once again child safety has let her self-place.

Child C, is with carer and her younger sibling to a different mother. Doing ok.

Child D, and Child E are with their 70yr old grandmother who is very unwell with heart problems yet child safety keep putting respite children with her because there aren't enough carers because we all quit because of the way we get treated.

Child F, who I raised from birth and I was told would be in my care till 18 was sent 1 month after my child safety officer left and I got a new one to his 76 yr old grandmother at the age of 2. I fought it but was told family is best it didn't matter about her age.

The kids mother who I have a good relationship with gave me the magistrates report and he didn't believe he should go but child safety had already sent him so he said he would let him stay there. The manager said his

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grandparents had spent a lot of money in court to get him so they deserved him. No BREAKING THE CYCLE here either. Was told from my agency that they did a welfare check and was told by child safety and another agency worker we don't do them and they were very surprised when I could show them emails proving the worker had sent me the emails saying she had done it.

Child G, who I have a statutory declaration to care for till she is 18 and that I am still an approved kinship carer for, I raised her till she was 2 and child safety reunified her to her dad?? 1 month before she was reunified to her dad he failed a drug test and he also has a domestic violence order on him but as I have stated that doesn't matter to child safety. Have a case plan that states he was supposed to do 3 courses but I don't believe he has done them. Had case workers pick up that were friends with him and when I told child safety they were moved on. She went for a 9hr visit with her dad and when she returned she still had the same nappy on never saw that worker again because he agree with me.

The last case plan I got was dated 19th and stated I couldn't get her to sleep and didn't have her in a routine yet he could get her to sleep and had her in a stable routine???? She hadn't even started sleepovers yet?? The whole case plan was all Lies in highlighted all the lies and sent it child safety never got a reply.

I had her going to a paediatrician and while still in my care but going through the reunification process they wouldn't let me go to her appointment I had lots of questions as she was dairy free and vomiting a lot with certain foods and not sleeping so I emailed the questions for child safety and her dad to ask the doctor and child safety didn't take them and she never returned to that doctor again. She is now 4 and I have received phone calls from the hospital in regards to her having dental surgery??? Child safety even took my mother who owns and has lived in the house for 14yrs off the household family list and tried to say she was never on it but I could prove she was as I had been independently assessed and she was on that assessment. The lies they tried to come out with on this particular case is phenomenal but after the lies they tried on me with Child C I kept EVERYTHING. After visits from them I would email saying as per our visit... just so they couldn't lie anymore and they still do.

Child H, she was born in jail she is with a 70yr old carer 3hours away from any of her family and has met them once. How is that keeping family together. And sorry what quality of life can a 70yr old give a 2yr old for 18yrs this was my argument with Child F's case

I don't see any of the kids I had but I see the rest of the family as I have a great bond with them. I believe child safety made my bond with the families very hard. I think if carers and families could have a great bond like what I have with the mother of this family then it make the families all much closer but child safety need to let that happen if the families are willing some aren't.

When I had the kids family contact was a big thing I would make sure the kids all had contact at least 2 times a month. Now they don't see each other at all so the family that once was close when I had them is now so broken. This is where I believe it needs to be more about the kids and not the parents.

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Parents need to be made alot more accountable before reunification can happen they need to be drug free for at least 12mths all drugs marijuana is a drug and they can't have domestic violence orders on them. Putting kids in these homes is not BREAKING THE CYCLE. They need to be made aware that these kids have other siblings and these siblings have a bond and that bond needs to be kept.

The reporting line?? Does anything actually ever happen when you ring this line because I am aware that at least 10 phone calls have been made in regard to Child G (and only 1 of them was me.)

And just to throw it in there we are just volunteers like the local ladies down at the footy club cooking chips or like the rotary club by the manger of child safety that just really tops off why I don't do this as a volunteer position anymore.