



Amalia & Julius' 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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Last year, my partner and I applied to become foster carers. We completed a full weekend of foster care training (both full days), followed by several in-depth interviews, a three-hour follow-up assessment each, further interviews, and the Blue Card application process. We initially began with ██████, but their foster care division was later shut down and transferred to ██████.

When we were transferred to ██████, we were told that because our preference was for long-term care placements, they could not guarantee that and therefore would not proceed with our application. We made it clear that we were still open to helping and understood the system's needs, but we were told it wasn't worth continuing. Another reason cited was the presence of a dam on our property — located 10 acres away from the house.

We were shocked and disappointed. We have a stable, loving home and a genuine desire to provide care and stability to a child in need. I wanted to share this feedback because I'm deeply concerned about the current foster care system, especially given the well-documented shortage of carers.

While I understand and value the importance of reunification, I believe there needs to be an honest assessment of whether this approach is truly serving children's best interests. If reunification results in children returning to unstable or unsafe environments — or if repeated failed reunifications lead to children entering residential care, where outcomes are often poor — then the system is failing them.

Surely, when capable, caring, and committed families are willing to offer long-term stability, that should be seen as a positive solution. In cases where reunification has failed multiple times, or where it is clearly not safe, children deserve the chance to grow up in a consistent and nurturing environment.

During training, we watched videos of young people who had lived in 10–12 different homes, and many who ended up on the streets at 18 after time in residential care (the percentage of this is shockingly high). It was heartbreaking and difficult to comprehend that this is the outcome of a system designed to protect them.

I truly hope this situation is reviewed and improved. If changes are made to better support long-term placements and value carers willing to commit for the long term, we would still love to become foster carers in the future.