

22 February 2013

Hon Tim Carmody SC
Commissioner
Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry
PO Box 12196
George St QLD 4003

Dear Commissioner,

Firstly I would like to acknowledge the excellent work being carried out by the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. CREATE is greatly encouraged by the inclusion of children and young people's views in the discussion paper released on February 18th.

CREATE would like to share with you the enclosed letter, written by a young person in residential care. This letter has been written in response to recent media coverage of young people in residential care.

CREATE finds this young person's experience to be both an alternative viewpoint on the issue and a practical example of how residential care is experienced by the young people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lucas Moore'.

Lucas Moore
State Coordinator
CREATE Foundation
15 Lever St
Albion, QLD 4010

Child Protection the Real Truth

Last week in the Sunday mail some of you would have read the news clip "Child protection is a joke" by Madonna King

Well the truth is that story was a joke. Madonna King might have had 25 years' experience across newspaper, radio and television, but it is obvious that she has had no experience in residential care. I am a fifteen year old girl in residential care and I can tell you that my residential is definitely not like that. That doesn't mean there aren't children out there that are off the rails, in fact there are few children out there that are definitely worse than others, but majority of the children are quite normal. Most children go to school, TAFE and some even have good jobs and some children get good grades and have a healthy social life, they have rules and regulations they have to follow and punishment for those who don't abide. They live like normal teens except without the parents. The thing you have to remember is most of the children in residential care did not do anything wrong to end up in care - it is their parents fault. The reason for residential is because there is not enough foster cares, the wish for most children in residential care is to go a family that will love them for who they are. Every residential is different, I can tell you that all the residential I have been to and all the residential I have heard about do not have flat screen televisions mounted on the walls of the kids bedrooms.

Miss King also wrote in her article and I quote; 'some youth workers get hurt one female was wrapped in a sheet.' From my experience if a kid ever tried to attack a youth worker, the youth worker has a legal right to restrain the child, and all youth workers go through training so they can't say I didn't know what to do. To the people of Queensland : Your taxes are not being wasted on these kids, your taxes are giving these children a chance to live as normal life as possible, it gives them a chance to flourish, a ticket out of poverty, homelessness and violence and abuse. Some of these kids are so traumatised when they come into care they don't know anything different, "and of course they are going to act out" no one has ever been there to help them and if you were placed in a home you had never seen before with people you have never met and all of a sudden people were being nice to you, wouldn't you find that a bit odd? You wouldn't really know how to act; imagine all the questions they would have in their heads. Most people that come from troubled backgrounds haven't had anyone there for them, but on some occasion the Parents/ Guardians appear to be nice because they want something from the children in return, so when all these people are being nice the kids are probably wondering 'what the hell do I do and what do these people want?' In the article it also states the boy was fourteen when he came into care imagine all the things the boy would have seen and heard and all the abuse and neglect he would have received in past years, at 14 years old you are still classed as a child. So I say : s don't just go on what one person has stated; help these Young People out and become either a carer or a youth Worker You can't judge the whole care system from one traumatised boy but by the many children that have gone right though the system have become a success. Your taxes are very helpful and much appreciated by all Young People in Care, Thank You Kindly.

Name Withheld