

24th November 2004

Tracy Ayrton

The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE

My name is Tracy. I am the eldest child of Carol Adams (nee May) previous submission 344. I feel I need to write this submission to you, because so many have suffered at the hands of '*The Department*'. Not just the people who had been state wards, but their partners and their children and probably some grandchildren have suffered as well.

My mother was mentally and physically abused by people put in charge to supposedly care for her. She relives the abuse on a daily basis as she has always had pain and suffering from tremendous headaches and back pain. She now has serious life threatening illnesses that were directly caused due to the abuse she received as a young girl and young woman. Our whole family now has to care for our mother, as she is now unable to do much for herself.

Due to the upbringing of my mother in the institutions, my mother never had and never learned to give or to accept love. I missed out on these emotions from my mother and I fully blame the wardens who were in charge of these children's upbringing. Being a mother myself now, I simply cannot understand such actions from 'grown-ups'.

A lot of the problems we have in our society now days are exactly what '*The Department*' taught their state wards – violence & abuse, no respect, no love. The Department really has a lot to answer for. The vicious circle of abuse, be it mental or physical abuse continues from generation to generation, because these people don't know any other way. These traits were taught to them by their superiors.

Due to the sheer determination and courage of my mother to not let these people win, my mothers' children have broken this terrible and vicious cycle. My mother gave us an education and made us believe that if we worked hard we would be ok. She also made us realise that in this world you must be responsible for your own actions and not to rely on anyone for what you wish to achieve.

Every day I watch the pain and suffering of my mother and cannot believe that someone is not accountable for causing this. Why are these people above the law? They committed abuse on defenceless children and no one seems to care. Does no one care because this is still happening today?

Regards,

Tracy Ayrton