

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EPB

Support person present: No.

1. My name is EPB. My date of birth is 1974. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My mum and dad moved to Cumbernauld, as far as I'm aware, when I was one year old. My dad's name was [REDACTED] and my mum was [REDACTED]. I have a brother [REDACTED], who is two years and eight months older than me.
3. I think my mum realised that my dad was touching me inappropriately. I remember when I was three or four, it's fragmented but I remember sitting on a little wicker chair and my mum and dad arguing. My dad slapped my mum across the face and she ran downstairs. I shouted at him, "Don't you hit my mum", and he slapped me. That was the first thing I remember of them arguing.
4. I remember going into a different house with my mum and [REDACTED] and looking around and my mum saying, "This is our new house". I didn't know that my dad wasn't aware that she was leaving him. I remember going past the house with [REDACTED] and my dad and I said, "Oh, there's our new house", and my dad didn't know.
5. My mum, [REDACTED] and I moved up to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I were seeing my dad at weekends. I was about four years old. It was just before I started school. That's when I started realising my dad was doing something he shouldn't have been doing.

When I was seven years old my dad was making me sleep with him in his room. He was abusing me. I told my mum because I knew it was wrong. I didn't know why it was wrong, I just knew it was. My mum called her sister, my auntie [REDACTED] and we went up to the police station. I was examined by a police doctor. There was no proof of the abuse and they put it down to sour grapes from my mum because they had split up. Nothing was ever done about it. We were still having to go to my dad's house, nobody believed her, nobody listened, so it continued.

6. My mum had boyfriends, as you do when you split up. She became ill. I remember she went in for an operation when I was eight and a half years old. We were never told anything because we were so young, just that she wasn't well. Unbeknown to us she had endometrial cancer and she had to have her womb removed. The guy she was with said he couldn't be with her anymore as she was no longer a woman to him. This was the straw that broke the camel's back and my mum committed suicide. I had fallen out with her because, quite understandably, she lost the plot with me one day. I hadn't tidied my room and she whacked my head off the wall. I ran away to my dad's house.
7. Two weeks later I was still at my dad's. I was out playing and my dad said, "Stay at [REDACTED], I'm just popping up to your mum's". He came back down with [REDACTED] and my mum had killed herself. My brother had found her. We weren't aware then that she had taken her own life.
8. So we were staying with my dad. He kind of left me alone. He hadn't been doing what he had been doing before. I was sleeping in my own bed and everything. It was New Year's Eve and my friend [REDACTED] had come down. I was still in my pyjamas as she had come down early. I got washed and dressed then we were going up to her house. On the way there she told me that my dad had exposed himself to her when I was in the bathroom. I didn't know how to react to that. I was nine years old.
9. We went in the back door of her house, it was like a town house, and she went upstairs and told her dad. Her dad said to me, "Can you show me where you live? I

need to speak to your dad". I didn't know. We went back down to the flat and my dad was downstairs getting ready. [REDACTED] dad told me to go into the living room. A couple of minutes later [REDACTED] and I heard the door slam. We ran downstairs and my dad was covered in blood. [REDACTED] dad had obviously beaten the living hell out of him. You can understand. My dad came upstairs and said, "It's fine, it's fine". He sent me to the shops for sweets, just to get me out of the house. I came back, I can't remember how long it was, but the next thing the door went and it was the police. [REDACTED] and I were sent downstairs. The door went again. I was scared to open it until my auntie [REDACTED] shouted through the letter box. I went to the door and burst into tears. Her and my Uncle [REDACTED] went into the living room with the police and my dad. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] my cousins, went downstairs.

10. We were all taken up to the police station. The police asked me if my dad had done anything to me. I was terrified. I didn't want to tell them. My Auntie [REDACTED] said, "Remember ^{EPB} [REDACTED] it's ok, you're not doing anything wrong", and I had to tell them what he had done to me. We went to stay with my Auntie [REDACTED] and Uncle [REDACTED] in Giffnock but [REDACTED] didn't get on with [REDACTED], they were always fighting.
11. We then went to another auntie and uncle, [REDACTED] They've both passed away now. [REDACTED] was my mum's maiden name. We stayed there for a couple of years. I think I was about eleven by this time. We were treated like dirt and [REDACTED] abused me. Any money she got for keeping us she spent on her own son, my cousin [REDACTED]. She said we weren't worth anything. It got to the last point where she kicked me full force in the back. There was a big swelling and bruising. The next day our social worker, Sandy, came out to see us. He could sense something wasn't right because we were very quiet. We went upstairs to speak to him and [REDACTED] told me to show him. I showed him my back and he said, "You can't stay here, that's not acceptable". He called Uncle [REDACTED] home from his work and discussed things with him and [REDACTED] in a room without us. He basically told [REDACTED] he couldn't leave [REDACTED] alone with us and he would have a placement for us the following day.

12. We got moved to Carsewood Children's Home outside Johnstone, in Howwood. Before we got moved [REDACTED] said things like, "There's sixteen baddies going to batter you when you get there". She was just being really vile. I was petrified. [REDACTED] was probably scared too but he was trying to do the big brother thing.

Carsewood Children's Home, Howwood, Johnstone

13. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

I had two visits with the foster carers, then I went there to stay. I was told by the social worker and the staff at the home that I was going to visit them. I asked if [REDACTED] was going and they said no. I wasn't given any reason why, I was just told that I was going into foster care.

EPD-SPO foster care, East Kilbride & Strathaven

21. The foster carers were EPD-SPO They were alright, just strangers, just people. By this time I was kind of getting used to the fact that I'd have strangers in my life. I saw them once then I went for an overnight stay. The staff at the home asked me if I liked it. I was a kid, I was always trying to make people happy, so I was saying, "It was good, I like it, and they've got a dog". I didn't realise I was getting moved straight after that.
22. When I visited them they had a house in East Kilbride, but shortly after I moved in they moved to Strathaven. I had been put to St Andrews High School when I was in East Kilbride then I went to Strathaven Academy.

Routine at EPD-SPO foster care, East Kilbride & Strathaven

23. It was a nice house, a nice room. They did nice things with me. They made a fuss of me. They got movies and stuff like that. I loved the fact that they had a dog. I am very animal orientated. They didn't have any kids of their own but they had another foster daughter. She was a lot older than me, sixteen or seventeen. I think she was ready to leave. She was there for a little while and she was there when we moved but I didn't have much to do with her. She was really quiet and didn't speak to me much. I can't remember her name. It was or something like that. I was twelve or thirteen. I think I was still in first year.
24. Things were ok for the first wee while until one day I had a shower and I used the shower to wash the soap away. Because I hadn't done that before she thought I hadn't used soap and I hadn't washed. She came into my room and said, "You haven't washed with soap, get back in that shower". I told her I had and she said she had lifted the mat and there wasn't any soap under it. I tried to tell her that I'd rinsed it away and she called me a liar. She said she would make sure I showered properly from then on. She then started coming into the bathroom when I was having a

shower to supervise. It was mortifying. She hadn't hit me at that point. As soon as she started doing things like that I got my guard up and backed away a little bit.

25. We started looking at other houses. We looked at one in [REDACTED] Strathaven. I was looking about and she asked me what I thought. I said it was lovely. I was asked to pick a room. There were three bedrooms, there was their room, a small one with a cabin bed and a double room. I picked the small one and the other girl said, "That's right because I want the other one". We moved there quite quickly and got settled and everything else. The other girl was at the new house for a few months, then she was gone.
26. Things were ok but she was still coming into the bathroom when I was having a shower. At a certain point I just got used to it and got washed. I didn't like it but didn't feel I could say anything about it for fear of repercussions because she had a temper on her.
27. We were at the house in East Kilbride and I came back from a visit with my dad. [REDACTED] EPD asked if everything was ok and I said yes. She said she didn't think so and I burst into tears and told her. She got the social work down and for that I am grateful, for her putting a stop to that. My dad had made me tell him where she stayed. I didn't know he wasn't to know this. So he drove me back to her house. She was quite annoyed about that. We then obviously moved so that wasn't an issue. I can't remember who the social worker was. The visits stopped. I don't remember seeing the police, I think it was just dealt with by the social work.
28. I had chores like any other kid, like sweeping the kitchen floor, keeping my room clean and tidy, vacuuming, doing the dishes. Normal chores that every teenager would be expected to do.

Mornings/bedtimes

29. EPD woke me up for school. Sometimes at the weekend she would tell me to get up if I'd slept in. I had a bedtime. I think it was about 10:00 pm, which I don't think is unreasonable if I had school in the morning. At weekends, if there weren't any problems, I could watch TV in bed for an hour or so.

Food

30. She never withheld food. Food was normal. I never went to bed with no dinner. She kept sweets, like mini bars in the cupboard for after dinner.

Leisure time

31. I think I tried the Girl Guides, but I didn't really take to it, but I didn't go to dance clubs or anything like that. I had pocket money. She opened a bank account for me and I'd put some of my pocket money into the bank. That's something that my mum done for me. With EPD, I had to put so much in the bank and kept some. I can't remember how much. So she was teaching me how to save and how to budget.

Religious instruction

32. EPD was religious. She went to church. She took me a few times but it wasn't my thing. I wasn't really brought up like that. She did send me to a Catholic school while I was there, St Andrews High School. I'm sure she was a Catholic, I wasn't. She just asked if I wanted to go to church and I said I wasn't bothered, so she didn't make me. It wasn't the first Catholic school I went to. I also went to Our Lady of the Missions school when I stayed with my Auntie . That was run by nuns.

Healthcare

33. I would go to the doctors. I went for a medical review. If I wasn't well she'd take me to the doctor. I'm not really a sickly person. I didn't tend to get very ill. One time my

bowel just packed up on me and I was severely constipated. I was in so much pain. She took me straight to Hairmyres hospital. She thought I might have appendicitis. We were in the East Kilbride shopping centre at the time. We just drove straight from the centre to Hairmyres. She showed great care, but the other side to her was horrendous.

Visits/inspections

34. I think I only had one visit with my brother during my time with the foster carers. All contact between us broke down. I just assumed that's the way it was. I had no contact with any other family member after I told EPD about my dad.

Trips/holidays

They didn't take me away on holiday. [REDACTED] was always working. EPD went to Canada to visit relatives one year for two weeks. I was sent to Lanark riding school for a week and then stayed at EPD's brothers for a week. [REDACTED] was working night shift and sleeping during the day. I was happy to see her back strangely enough. I missed her. But I hadn't missed the fact that I wasn't being hit.

Birthdays/Christmas

35. EPD did try to make Christmases nice. I can't remember what she got me for birthdays but I remember one Christmas we had been shopping and I was mucking about with keyboards and she asked if I liked them. I said I did and she got me a big, massive keyboard for Christmas. She got me clothes, maybe not what I'd wear, but not out of cheap shops. She would go to Marks & Spencer or Debenhams, quite expensive stores. She wouldn't skimp. This was throughout the year. She wasn't horrible that way, she always made sure I had nice things, haircuts, etc. We did girly things together. It was just centred round the violence, when it came to school work, getting washed, things like that. Just daft things that you didn't think someone would get that angry over.

Discipline

36. EPD would tell me I was grounded but that would always come after a beating. I was always afraid to ask to go out a lot of the time. I remember friends coming to the house and asking me to go out. She would eventually hear them and say, EPB just go out", as if I hadn't been grounded. My friends and I never left Strathaven. We didn't go to Hamilton or East Kilbride or anything like that. I sometimes went to friend's houses at weekends. During the week I didn't tend to go out at all.

Abuse at EPD-SPO foster care, , East Kilbride & Strathaven

37. When we moved out to Strathaven, there wasn't one thing that sparked things off that I can remember. I can't remember the first time EPD hit me. I remember several times, but not the first time. She would hit me where people wouldn't see. So if I was at P.E. at school I would cover up to hide the bruising on my back or on my legs. Sometimes she would hit me with her hand, I don't remember her lifting her feet to me, and sometimes she would use her slipper.
38. EPD used to get me to do my homework then get me to recite it word for word back to her. I had to commit the whole thing to memory. If I got a word wrong she would lose the plot, she would say I was at it. There was one day, it was over homework, and she made me stand with my hands out in the kitchen with my back against the wall. She used a wooden spoon and slapped my hands over and over and over again, to the point where my thumbs were swollen and my hands were black and blue. How never noticed this and asked questions I don't know. My hands were swollen and my fingers were bruised. This was during a school holiday.
39. She always done it when no-one was in the house. There was one instance when she told me to strip completely naked. She dragged me downstairs. The other girl was still there at the time and EPD said, "What do you think, when she's behaving like this? Do you think I should just toss her out?" The girl came out of the living room and was startled because I was naked and said, "At least put some clothes on

her". She went back in the living room. I don't think she knew what to do. EPD told me to get back up the stairs. That's the only time I remember anyone being in the house when she abused me. I don't know if the other girl was being abused. I remember them arguing but she was taller than EPD I don't know if EPD would have been that brave to lift her hands to someone that would have probably slapped her back.

40. The social work would come out now and again but it was months and months in between. I didn't say anything. She said if I told anybody she would kill me. I believed her.
41. The house was an end cottage and there was a road outside that led to an industrial estate. There was one time she stripped me of my bottom half of the clothes and threw me outside into the garden and made me stand there, completely naked from the waist down, in full view of the road. I was about fourteen then. I remember trying to pull my top down to cover myself. EPD was a delivery driver for EPD He drove the lorries and worked overnight. When he was in she never acted like that.
42. One time EPD mother stayed with us. She was elderly. I was in the big room sharing with the other girl and her mother was in my room. Her pension book went missing and they kept asking me where it was. I said I didn't know, that I hadn't touched it. Her mother left and I was put back into my room. I found the pension book under one of my hats in my closet. Not even thinking anything of it, I told EPD where I had found it and she battered the living hell out of me, telling me I was a thief. I don't know how it got there, whether her or her mother had put it there and forgot, but I hadn't touched it. She punched me in the back.
43. There were occasions when there were finger marks at the top of my arms. She didn't tend to hit me in places where people would see it. There was one time when we were in the car and I must have answered her back. I can't remember what we were arguing about, or even where we were. It was a place I was unfamiliar with. I think she was going to visit one of her friends. She hit me and burst my lip and she

threw me out of the car. I was walking along the road, not knowing where to go. I was going to go to somebody's door but she must have realised what she had done and came back for me. I think if I'd managed to get to someone's door at that point that would have been an end to it.

44. Most of the injuries were bruising or welts that would disappear eventually. She never went as far as to break a bone or cause serious head trauma. She continued to watch me in the shower. That never stopped. I could shower when I wanted but she was obsessive about me being clean.
45. When [REDACTED] was in the house when I did my homework [REDACTED] EPD would say, "Ok go up to your room and sit on your chair in the middle of the room and do nothing. I had a little portable TV in my room. [REDACTED] didn't know anything about this and passed and said, "What are you doing, put the telly on or something". So I would sit there wondering what to do. I put it on, but she came up and saw this and walloped me across the face and said, "What are you doing with that telly on?" I told her [REDACTED] told me to put it on but she said she had told me not to. [REDACTED] asked why I wasn't allowed the telly on and she told him because I was grounded for doing this or doing that. He didn't see her hitting me. I think he heard her shouting at me. She did that quite a lot, no TV, no nothing, sit and do nothing.
46. The last time she hit me before I ran away was to do with school homework. She would say I wasn't doing well enough, I could do better than that. I told her I couldn't, that I was trying my hardest and she wouldn't believe me. I was doing ok at school. The fact that I had moved from school to school to school didn't help. I wouldn't say I was the cleverest academic person but I tried my hardest. Because she used to make me memorise everything that was in my jotters I started ripping pages out or giving someone my jotters to keep for me. I started trying to hide things.
47. I always had an element of guilt about my mum's death. I didn't know at that point how it happened. Whether I could have stopped it or done something to help her. I know [REDACTED] was there, if I had been there, maybe I could have stopped her from dying. [REDACTED] EPD revealed to me that my mum had committed suicide and there was

nothing I could have done. It didn't make me feel any better that she had killed herself, but I thought there wasn't anything I could have done. I hadn't been aware that she had committed suicide, neither had [REDACTED].

48. A few months later [REDACTED]^{EPD} turned round and said to me, "No wonder your mum killed herself, it was your fault". That stuck in my head and twisted. Deep down I didn't think I could have caused her to commit suicide, but it twisted. Obviously the questions came, why did she kill herself? why did she leave us with my dad, knowing what he was doing? That caused me a great deal of pain, to the point that I wanted to die. Obviously I know now as an adult. I am back in touch with my mother's side of the family and they said that my dad said she didn't leave a letter but they know she was desperately unhappy. I was told only a year ago she had endometrial cancer. The knowledge that we have now about hormones, when you have a full hysterectomy, all that estrogen suddenly disappears, it can knock you a bit mentally and with that, and that guy saying she wasn't a woman to him, that's probably why she did it.
49. It wasn't all horrendous. She wasn't hitting me every day, but it was at a level that I was terrified. One day we were walking through the main street of Strathaven to go to the shops. Strathaven is quite a small place. We were having a giggle about something and [REDACTED]^{EPD} went to put her arm round me and I flinched thinking she was going to hit me. She said "I'm so sorry, you thought I was going to hit you". I think after the first time she really bruised me, the next day she burst into tears and said, "I'm so sorry, I shouldn't be doing this to you", and I felt sorry for her because she was in tears. I said, "It's ok, you didn't mean it". That's probably the worst thing you could say to someone who is abusing you. But I felt bad for her. That was the only time she showed any remorse.
50. Not everything was bad with her. It was just the abuse. It was the hitting and the stripping and chucking me outside and watching me showering and bathing. I remember watching 'Flowers in the attic' with her and thinking, "Oh my goodness, that's horrendous". There's a scene where the grandmother cuts the granddaughters hair. After we watched it, [REDACTED]^{EPD} took me into the bathroom one of the times she was

battering me and she grabbed scissors and cut chunks out of my hair. So she's watched that film and carried that out on me. That kind of stuck in my mind because we'd just watched the film then she did that.

51. I don't think [EPD] was evil. I think she was sick. I think there has to be something mentally wrong with her. She didn't have any kids of her own but there had to be something mentally wrong with you to be able to do that to someone. I'm not sure if she's still alive today. She'd be in her seventies now. She was in her forties when she had me. So I don't know if she's still alive or has all her faculties.
52. There were several times [EPD] hit me but they've all just merged. There were times I was going to run away but I was too afraid to. At one point I was going to throw myself down the stairs just to stop it, but I didn't have the courage to do it. It was the fear that stopped me doing anything about it. The social work did come out but I didn't say anything.
53. I would be hit at least once a week. I would try to avoid it happening by memorising everything in my jotter word for word, tidying my room, showering properly, making sure my hair was done properly. A lot of the time it felt like no matter what I done it wouldn't be right. The last year I was with [EPD] was just a tirade of being hit and not knowing where the next punch was coming from, or the next slap.

Leaving foster care

54. This last argument with [EPD] was over homework. [REDACTED] was out at work. She stripped me naked and used her slipper, which had a hard plastic sole. She wore them to hang out the washing, so the sole became ragged. She hit me with it on the backside and back of my legs and the shape of the slipper was cut into my skin. This time she hit me on the face with her hand. I was bruised from the side of my eye down my cheekbone and a little bit of bruising on the other side.
55. At that time I had a medicated cream stuff to help acne, but it also acted like a foundation, so it hid things. I could feel the pain on my face but I couldn't see what

she had done. She told me to get to bed and I would be cleaning the kitchen in the morning then sitting in the chair in my room. This was the Friday night into Saturday. I remember it was snowing. It was either January or February. I was still fourteen at that point. I went to my bed. I had washed my face so that I could see the redness. I saw the marks on my backside from looking in a mirror. I didn't know what to do. I didn't think anyone would believe me, I had no witnesses. I went to bed, got up in the morning, went downstairs and into the bathroom. I got washed and brushed my teeth. I put the stuff on my face and put extra on the bits to try to hide the bruising. I was quite sore when I was moving about.

56. I started to sweep the floor in the kitchen and something just snapped or clicked in my brain. I thought, "What am I doing, I can't do this anymore". This was at 7:30 am. [REDACTED] and EPD [REDACTED] were in their bed. I went into the cupboard and took a mini aero. I felt like a thief. This was to keep me going. I snuck into the cupboard under the stairs and got my boots, a big thick coat and gloves. I started walking the back road from Strathaven to Stonehouse. I knew my friend stayed in Stonehouse. It was nine miles away and it was snowing. I had walked about a mile and a van passed me that I had seen earlier. The driver stopped and asked where I was going. He couldn't believe I was walking to Stonehouse and offered me a lift. I asked him to drop me off at the petrol station.
57. I got out the van at the petrol station and I was just walking about. I saw a couple of kids, by this time it was a good bit later. I asked if they knew where [REDACTED] stayed. I was told it was number [REDACTED] and they showed me the street. I got to her house at 9:30 am. I chapped the door of number [REDACTED] but it was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] mum answered the door and said [REDACTED] was still in bed. She asked who I was and told me to go up to [REDACTED] room. Her pal had stayed the night and I told her I had ran away. I'd confided little bits to my friends in the past and I told her she had battered me again last night. I showed her the bruises. She told her mum, who came up and asked me what happened, so I told her. She told me we weren't going to tell the social work right away, but let them stew a bit as they had put me there with that woman. She said they need to know I was serious. I felt relief, I didn't feel guilty that

people were worried about me because at that point I just felt safe. I had something to eat, I even had a snowball fight outside.

58. We went in and called the emergency social work as it was the weekend. They asked where I was and I said I was in Hamilton because I wasn't getting [REDACTED] mum in trouble for harbouring a runaway. They asked me to go to the police station. [REDACTED] came with me. We just got on a bus and I went to Hamilton Police Station and the social work came. I told them on the phone that they weren't to bring [REDACTED] EPD with them or I would run and they would never see me again. We waited for ages on the social work. [REDACTED] got interviewed separately from me. We both spoke with CID or child protection, it was plain clothes anyway, and I was examined by a police doctor. I took the stuff off my face for them to see the bruising. He saw the marks on my legs and thought they were scratches because of the shape of them. It was actually the shape of the slipper.
59. Nothing was proven. She said I had scratched myself and the bruising had been done at P.E. or I was clumsy. The social work said they had a placement for me and I wasn't going back to that house. The only placement was Glenavon Children's Home, which was [REDACTED] EPD house. I said I can't go there, she would get me. They told me she wouldn't as it was secure. I was taken to the unit. I had nothing, I had what was on my back. Someone gave me a loan of a nightdress for that night. I was there for a few months at least before I moved to Mitchell Street Children's Home in Airdrie.

Glenavon Children's Home, Strathaven

60. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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64. I can't recall how long it was after I'd been put into Glenavon when there was a big meeting. There was a hall downstairs in the home. I went with staff, the social work were there, [REDACTED] and EPD [REDACTED] and their social worker. I was asked questions and felt under pressure to be in the same room as someone who had actually abused me. It felt like a court, minus the jury. I was asked why I'd ran away, did I cause the abuse.

I can't remember who, I think it was the social work that asked the questions. The memory of it has gone because I tried to block a lot of this out. I just remember all of these people sitting and asking me these questions. What did I do to cause this to happen? So I thought this was my fault then at one point I lost it and said, "I fucking hate her, she did this to me and you are asking me all of these questions".

65. The meeting was ended and I went into the dining room and was looking out the window. My social worker came up, I can't remember who it was, and asked if EPD could see me. I felt bad because I said I hated her. I didn't, I hated what she did to me. I said ok, as long as the social worker stayed with me. EPD said, "You didn't mean what you said about me?" I said, "No", meaning that I didn't hate her, but it was construed that I meant she didn't hit me. There were no criminal proceedings.
66. EPD became a taxi driver and was picking up kids from the home. As I got older I sat and thought, she hasn't had anything done to her, she's not been prosecuted because if she had she wouldn't be able to pick up the kids at the home.
67. She didn't give me everything I had at her house. The social work gave me a suitcase the next day with my clothes and the few items I had taken to EPD when I first went there, but I didn't get the keyboard back or little bits of jewellery that she had given me. I think my savings came with me because the bank account was in my name.
68. Nobody ever told me what happened as a result of the meeting but she never bothered me and I was happy enough to go to school without a member of staff. I felt safe. Everything was fine, I was walking up the road with my friends one day and EPD stopped in her car and jumped out. She said, "Get in the car, you've been telling lies about me". I said I hadn't, but she told me to get in the car again. I was terrified and went in. She took me to the home. The staff said she shouldn't have picked me up and they took me upstairs and locked the door so that EPD couldn't follow me. I don't know what was said but she never approached me again and I never saw her again.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Mitchell Street Children's Home, Airdrie

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81. I got counselling in Coatbridge. I got a train to it. I don't think it helped too much then. This was weekly. Once it started it just all came out. This is where I spoke about EPD saying my mum's death was my fault. The counsellor said I was eight and a half, it wasn't my fault. That bit did help. Nothing anybody said could help me with what my dad had done to me. I know that wasn't my fault. I think as a teenager you start to understand more about what happened and it starts affecting you more.
82. My mother-in-law became a foster carer. She started doing it when my kids were young, and I've spotted things with the kids over the years and told her she needs to

do something about certain things. Because I've been there myself, I know what they are going through. I'm not saying I was an angel, I was horrendous at that age at times.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

83.

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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90. I found out my brother was back in Cumbernauld. I also re-established contact with my dad. I had re-established contact with primary school friends from my first school. I found out my brother was in the [REDACTED], which was homeless accommodation for young people, and I got back in touch with him. I also broached the subject with my keyworker and the social work as I had wondered what had happened to my dad. I thought he'd had help. I thought he might have had counselling or some kind of mental help as I thought he was mentally ill to have done what he did. He had also been to the social work to see if he could regain contact with me. He had been in contact with my brother. My brother didn't understand or know what my dad had done. He had never witnessed it. So he had been back in touch with my dad, but he didn't live with him, although he was staying near him.
91. So my dad had asked the social work if I got in touch with them about him, could he have contact and that's what happened. I was seventeen at this point. At that time I smoked. I wrote him a letter saying I would like back in touch with him, telling him that I'm not the same person as I was. I was quite short and abrupt in the letter. I just basically went through the rules, one of them being, don't touch me. I didn't want to hug him, I didn't want to shake his hand. I just told him not to touch me. The first meeting was in an office in the social work department in Cumbernauld. We just met and tried to rebuild a relationship. I wanted to move on from my past and I felt if I couldn't forgive him I wouldn't be able to do that. We had another meeting and things went ok. He didn't make any advances on me or try anything. Things seemed fine.

Life after being in care

92. At the same time as being back in contact with my dad, I was getting ready to leave care. I'd had a couple of jobs. I lost my first job because of my leg, then I was working in Monklands [REDACTED]. Again I lost it because of my leg, it seized up and I couldn't walk, couldn't stand and I was on my feet in that job. I went to [REDACTED] [REDACTED], operating a big sewing machine. We were making huge rag dolls.
93. The social work in combination with Scottish Homes got me a cottage type flat in Coatbridge. The young teenage boys living locally saw a seventeen year old girl on

her own and thought 'party time'. Within months of me being there they were coming to my door at all hours. I was working and they were coming to my door at four in the morning. Eventually my house got broken into. They stole my iron and my Hoover. I was broken into again and they peed in my shampoo and poked holes in my ceiling to look like a face with a mop pole. They ripped every door off their hinges and smashed them to smithereens. They broke in again, when I was there, luckily my friend was there too. We threw things at them as they were entering.

94. I eventually moved into my friend's mum's house. That didn't last long. I then went from couch to couch for a while after that. Eventually I'd had enough, my dad asked me to stay with him in Cumbernauld. At that point I thought, he'd never touched me since we'd been back in touch, it will be fine. I think I tried to convince myself of that and I didn't feel that I had any option anyway. I was eighteen. He wasn't doing anything, he hadn't touched me, but I couldn't settle. I didn't feel safe and I didn't feel comfortable. I spoke to my brother and his girlfriend about it and they told me to speak to the staff at the [REDACTED] because they were supported. I spoke to a member of staff, Kath McPherson, and she gave me a room right away. I don't know if [REDACTED] had a word with them first. My dad wasn't happy, he was upset. I told him I wouldn't lose contact with him. I was literally across the way, but I needed my own space and that's the way I left it.
95. Years later things broke down between me and my brother because of my dad. It was when I was with my now husband [REDACTED]. We weren't married at this point. We had moved down to Cumbernauld village. I'd had my daughter [REDACTED] and I was pregnant with my son [REDACTED]. My dad was still in touch with us at that point. One time a neighbour's little girl was in my house and my dad was coming up for my birthday. The girl asked what I was getting for my birthday. I said I don't know and my dad said, "Come on, I'll tell you", and took her out into the hall. Apparently he touched her chest. I didn't know anything had happened. She said she needed to jump over the fence for something. I thought that was strange. She was older than [REDACTED] but they were friends. She would take her out in her [REDACTED]. I never thought anything about it and my dad left. The girl's mum [REDACTED] came over the next day and told me what he had done. I asked if [REDACTED] was ok. She said she will be. She said she was

dreading coming over to my house as she thought I'd tell her to get out. I said, "Your child isn't going to come out with something like that".

96. My dad came down the following day and normally he would just come in. I put the chain on the front door and the chub lock on the back door so that he couldn't get in. [REDACTED] was in the house. I answered the door, keeping the chain on and told him I couldn't let him in and told him to go. He asked why and I told him. He denied it but I said, "Don't even try to deny it, just go". I called the police and asked for advice on what to do and they said just don't let him in the house and if he tries then to call them. I didn't mention the incident with the little girl. I didn't hear anything else about it.
97. I told my brother and sister-in-law and then all these people came out the woodwork. [REDACTED] then wife, now ex-wife, and her mother said they had felt uncomfortable with my dad, that he had always tried to be right next to them, too close. Her mother said that he had tried things on with her. My neighbour through the wall said she felt uncomfortable around him. All these people got these senses from him, but no-one said anything to me. I always just put it down to my paranoia because of what I had been through. So we all broke contact with him. The police never came back to me but I don't know if [REDACTED] reported it.
98. The neighbours all found out and they were all horrendous to me, as if I'd done something. So it was strange staying there. We were waiting to move house anyway because [REDACTED] couldn't share a room with anyone because of her condition. She was in a lot of pain at night. I was on the phone to the council every single day to try to get moved. Eventually the council came to us with the house we are in now. It wasn't an area we had put down, but we drove down to have a look.
99. You got five days to move from one council house to the next. We did this and done it all up, moved in and everything seemed to settle. My dad didn't know where we were, so I didn't have any contact with him. My brother had nothing to do with him either until he found out my dad had had a stroke. [REDACTED], feeling guilty, got in touch with him. He was in hospital with pneumonia and [REDACTED] told me about it. This was

before I got married. I was married when my son [REDACTED] was four years old. It was maybe three years after the incident with the girl [REDACTED].

100. I said I'd go to support [REDACTED] but I didn't want anything to do with my dad. He wasn't getting back into my kid's lives. I went through with [REDACTED] to see him and my dad acted like nothing had happened. They had found a mass on his bowel and he had to go through surgery and [REDACTED] couldn't go, so I had to go myself, which was horrible. That's when he started saying things like, "I've been a really silly man and done things I shouldn't have". I told him he needed to tell other people what he had done and to stop calling me a liar. I also said that my aunts and uncles thought I had lied about him and I'd done nothing wrong. I didn't go into it too much because he was in such a bad way.
101. I was told the mass was cancer and I started feeling guilty because he was an elderly man and he was ill. He then started saying things like, "Nice t-shirt", and the pattern was across my chest. That was enough for me. I told [REDACTED] I couldn't go down there myself again. Then my dad turned it round and said I was lying again to [REDACTED] and his wife. He convinced them I was lying, even though his wife had come out with these things about him. But she was money orientated and saw pound signs because he was on the way out. He didn't have much but he had his own flat. So [REDACTED] battled on trying to help my dad and fell out with me because I wouldn't. He stopped having anything to do with me because he thought I was being selfish and horrible and believed I was lying. We broke contact for some time.
102. The only time I saw my dad after that was when [REDACTED], [REDACTED] ex-wife called me to say he had twenty-four hours to live and he was desperate to see me. I went to see him and he lived another two weeks. His family were giving me a hard time for not going back to see him. I told them I don't want to see him suffer but he is still a pervert, he is still the person who did all that to me. I told them to go and 'F' themselves and leave me alone. He died after I'd got married. I was asked to consider having him at my wedding. I said no.

103. Before my dad died, my son [REDACTED] must have been five or six because I'd had [REDACTED] by then. He was a baby. I went in to see my dad and I said I was sorry to see him in such a state but [REDACTED] must have thought, how could his sister have told these horrendous lies. I think there was an element that he didn't want to believe it because he had been around when these things were happening. Maybe he felt a bit guilty about it. Things didn't change until [REDACTED] found out his wife had been having an affair for one and a half years, throughout this time that my dad was ill, and she stayed just to get her hands on the money, which she spent before he was even dead. [REDACTED] got in touch with a childhood friend, who was my best friend in primary school, and he found out from her that she'd had my dad jailed because he had sexually assaulted her. So he had spent time in jail for at least one of the offences. She told him that my dad had done that to me, her and others.
104. So because of his wife leaving and finding out that I hadn't been lying, [REDACTED] started drinking heavily. One night he just walked over a dual carriageway hoping a car would hit him. Someone contacted me and told me he was in a bad way. That's when I found out what [REDACTED] had done to him. That's when we started getting back in touch. He has a new partner and she has told me bits and bobs about what he said and he feels bad about not believing me but it had a huge effect on him too. So I don't think it's just me that the abuse hurt. That abuse hurt my brother, it put us in care and I'm sure it contributed to my mum killing herself.
105. So we kind of rebuilt our relationship from there. Through Facebook we found my mum's side of the family and have found out things about my mum. My brother only found out that my mum had committed suicide from me. I thought he knew. Then my dad went mental because I had told [REDACTED]. He should have told him.
106. As a teenager I was weird with guys. I didn't like them coming near me or holding my hand. I would get called frigid, but would say I just didn't like them in that way. It wasn't until I broke complete contact with my dad that I have felt normal. Not having that fear. Not having that insecurity. My husband [REDACTED] knows I was sexually abused and he's always been so understanding. He has said if he ever made me feel uncomfortable just to tell him. He works hard. He puts everybody before himself. He

makes sure everything is alright with me and my kids. I trust him implicitly. I never thought I would say that about any man.

107. I fell off a bus when I worked with [REDACTED] and injured both my knees, so I couldn't work for a while. I hurt my knees. I was put on incapacity benefit and income support. I had just moved back to Cumbernauld then I fell pregnant with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] not [REDACTED] biological father. Unfortunately [REDACTED] father was more interested in where he was getting his next bit of hash than being a father. I finished the relationship pretty quickly. I moved from the [REDACTED] to a cluster flat in [REDACTED], which is just a mile or two down the road. I had [REDACTED] there. I stayed there until she was about seven and a half months then moved to a flat in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which are no longer there.
108. I always thought there was something wrong with my daughter. She got checked and had a scan. I asked if she was going to die. She got an ultrasound brain scan, which was inconclusive. She then got a CT scan when she was eleven months old and we found out she had [REDACTED]. I became [REDACTED] carer. [REDACTED] is twenty-five, [REDACTED] is nineteen and [REDACTED] is thirteen.
109. I went to college when [REDACTED] was three and did an HND and HNC in beauty therapy but [REDACTED] needs overtook and I had to concentrate on her. I didn't work until I stopped being [REDACTED] carer about three years ago. Although I wasn't her carer I was still running back and forward making sure she was ok. I then got a part time job in a local shop. That shut down, then I got a job as a cleaner but I hated it. It was so boring, I was on my own. It wasn't the work, it was just so boring. I then started working in another little shop.

Reporting of abuse at ^{EPD-SPO} [REDACTED] **foster care, [REDACTED] East Kilbride & [REDACTED] Strathaven**

110. I reported the abuse from my dad on a number of occasions as a child, to relatives, the police and ^{EPD} [REDACTED], who in turn contacted my social worker. I can't recall who that was at the time. There was never any proceedings taken against him.

111. I reported the abuse from ^{EPD} [REDACTED] to the social work department and the police at Hamilton Police Station, when I ran away from her when I was fourteen. I was told by the police then that there was insufficient proof.

Impact

112. I have a lack of trust. I don't trust people very easily. I am very wary of people round about me. I defend myself now, but when someone lifts their arm there's always that little bit inside me that wants to flinch away. I never really let guys close to me. I still get a vibe about boys and men and I won't go near them or have too much to do with them. I get a feeling from people.
113. I can relate to foster children. Because of the feelings I had as a teenager I realise what they are going through, whether it's the same as I went through, whether it's something completely different, it doesn't matter, it's still a realisation. They have opened up to me in the past.
114. I have not had any other counselling or support. Rehashing it all again and again doesn't help me. I put it in this little box and put it away. It's in the past. I put it in the box as soon as my dad was gone. It opened again when I got back in touch with [REDACTED] and we talked about it. A few years after we got back in touch he said he was sorry and I told him to forget it, he had apologised enough.
115. I had bumped into my Uncle [REDACTED] and Auntie [REDACTED] daughter, my cousin [REDACTED]. She lives in Cumbernauld as well. I hadn't seen her for years. I was down at Recap. It's a second hand furniture shop. You can donate furniture to them and they will sell it at a cheaper rate to people. I was there with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] came over and said, "You don't recognise me". I told her I did but I couldn't place her. She told me who she was and we got talking. I saw her a couple of times and I told her that it bothered me that her mum passed away thinking I was a liar and she asked what I meant. I said, "About my dad, he sexually abused me". She said, "He did it to me too". She had never told her mum and dad because she was terrified she would never be

believed. So he was systematically doing this, it wasn't just me. It was any female he could get anywhere near.

Records

116. I have never recovered my records from my time in care. It's not something I am interested in. Everything I needed to know about my mum I think I know now.

Lesson to be learned

117. They need to look for signs in kids. See how kids act and read them a bit better. I probably showed signs but no-one looked for them. I picked up things with my mother-in-law's foster kids because I saw myself in them. Social workers should be trained to see signs, read body language. To a certain degree they are better now. I believe foster carers have to jump through hoops to foster children now. My in-laws are with the FCA, Foster Care Association.
118. There are lots of reasons why kids are in care. I think they need to be able to read kids and it's good that they have started doing this. You have to have a lot of understanding and a lot of patience for kids coming from neglected or abusive backgrounds.
119. Children's homes are difficult places to work in. I know that these kids are hard work. The way they speak to people is horrendous. You make choices. You may have been treated badly, it doesn't mean you have to be a horrible person. I tell my own kids that. Was I an angel? No I wasn't. I was a teenager, I was upset, I was confused. I don't think I was mentally stable at one point but I came through it all and made something of my life.

Other information

120. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........
DocuSigned by
EPB
51BFFC90E105422...

Dated..... 11 May 2021