

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EWX

Support person present: No

1. My name is EWX. My date of birth is 1965. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Bellshill Maternity Hospital in South Lanarkshire. My mum was from Newarthill and my dad was from Townhead in Glasgow. They are and My mum and dad got married and lived in Newarthill. My dad was a lorry driver and my mum did cleaning jobs.
3. I lived with my three sisters, one is older and two are younger and my two younger brothers. The order of my siblings is; me, EJN, and My youngest sister was actually a twin but my other sister passed away a couple of weeks after she was born. There was only about a year between us all apart from between and me. I felt as though as I was the oldest because I always looked out for my brothers and sisters.
4. My dad was a heavy drinker. He used to bring his brothers back from Glasgow to drink. My mum didn't drink but she had a lot of health problems. I can remember lots of happy times but there were sad times too due to poverty. We lived near my granny and grandpa so I think they helped a lot but my granny passed away aged 48. My grandpa met someone and decided he was going to move to Perth. So any support my mum had was gone.

5. I was in foster care in Bellshill with my sister, [REDACTED] when my mum was in hospital having the twins. I think she had been quite unwell and there was no one to look after us. I don't know where my brothers and other sisters went to stay. I was five and [REDACTED] was about nine. When we were there, [REDACTED] wet the bed and had to do the dishes for a week. The foster parents were screaming and shouting at me for trying to help her do the dishes. I don't know how long I was there for but I think I was with them for a few months. I can remember being taken to school and bought new clothes and taken to the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow. They had a son but I can't remember his name. Apart from the incident with [REDACTED] wetting the bed, it was alright there. I think the worst part about it was being away from my mum and dad.
6. When I was about ten, my family moved to Bellshill which is about six or seven miles away from Newarthill. I had to move school and started going to Longmuir Primary school. Things started to go downhill from there. My dad lost his job and my mum gave up her job as well. My mum used to go to her bed a lot so I was left to look after my brothers and sisters. I can remember being hungry a lot of the time. I have a memory of walking with my wee sisters to find my dad to get money to give to my mum because we were hungry. Most of the time, he had spent it all on drink. He was mad for it.
7. There was a lot of bullying going on in the area too and we had to avoid certain streets because various people wanting to hit us because we weren't from there. I was picked on at school for not having the right clothes or uniform too. I have a lot of bad memories of Bellshill.
8. The social work was involved but I don't think they could have been much help, either that or my mum didn't accept it. One day my mum told us to pack a bag and that we were going on a trip to Perth to visit my grandpa. She didn't tell my dad.
9. After we went to Perth, I used to come back to stay with my mum's sister. I only stayed with her because I missed my dad and I didn't want to leave him on his own. My aunt was bad to me and used to hit me so I came back to Perth. My mum was squatting in

the flat above my grandad's so I lived there for a while but it didn't work out and we were all staying in different places. The family was all split up. My two youngest sisters and brothers were put into two different homes.

10. I didn't have a place of residence and was staying in different places. I was still going back and forward to see my dad in Newarthill. My schooling was badly affected. I was supposed to be going to a primary school in Perth but I didn't go. I only went to Perth Grammar School for a few weeks.
11. Everything was messed up. I missed my dad and I was always worried about my brothers and sisters. It was a horrible time in my life. My mum was in the Murray Royal hospital in Perth. She didn't have a house. I was staying with my grandad in his one-bedroom flat because of the situation. The social workers decided that I was to go into care so that I would start attending school regularly. The social worker was called Kenny Miller. He was based in Balhousie Street in Perth. I can remember them telling me that I was to get a uniform from a shop in Perth.
12. After that, I ran away. It was easy to jump on trains and run away because it wasn't as busy. The police caught me in Buchanan Street in Glasgow.

Larchgrove Remand Home, Glasgow

13. I was taken to Larchgrove in Glasgow. I spent two nights there. I can remember being made to strip off and stand naked by a Glaswegian couple there. They told me to get into a bath. They said they were the night watchmen. I remember it feeling degrading. I knew that I had to do it because they would have beaten me up. I had to wait until the next day for a social worker to come from Perth to pick me up.
14. After that I went back to my grandad's in Perth. I can remember the social worker threatening to put me in Colonsay House. It was always used as a threat. My grandad told the social worker that we would sort things out. I was eventually told that I couldn't stay with my grandad and that I'd have to go into care. I can't remember much about

what happened after that but I ended up being taken to Colonsay House anyway. I was about twelve.

Colonsay House, Perth

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

Burnside Assessment Centre, Dundee

31. The decision was made at the panel to send me to Burnside Assessment Centre. I had to go back to Colonsay to stay for a couple of nights because I had to wait on Jessie Young to come and take me to Dundee.
32. Jessie Young drove me to Dundee. She took my shoes off me and locked the car doors so that I couldn't run away. I can remember her stopping at a garage in Dundee. I felt scared going to Burnside Assessment Centre. It was boys and girls. It was kids who had got into trouble for things like stealing and assaulting people. It was like going into prison. I was terrified.
33. It was quite a big building compared to Colonsay House, maybe two or three times as big. It had a big, white wall around it with barbed wire. The barbed wire went all the way around the wall and on top of the gates. It was almost impossible to get out of the place.

34. When I arrived, I was taken to a room and told that I would have to wear their clothes. They were old jeans, a navy sweatshirt and black Adidas trainers. Everyone wore the same outfit so it was like a uniform. I was taken upstairs and shown the dorm. I was lucky enough to get a single room. There were kids doubled up as well. They took my cigarettes off me and put them in a box.
35. At the time, I was under the impression that Burnside was run by the local authority. I think it was a place where you went while they looked for somewhere else for me. There were about thirty children who were aged twelve to sixteen. There was a woman called LEM who I thought was the boss. There were two units, and they were mixed but the sleeping arrangements were separate. I think there were five or six members of staff in each unit. There was a member of staff called EIF

Routine

36. The daily routine was getting up and getting ready. We had to get up at a set time and go to the room which was known as the 'smoke room'. I used to get dressed as quickly possible so that no one could see me because there was no privacy. After that, we went to the classrooms. The school consisted of sitting in classrooms and doing what you wanted. There wasn't any formal education because it was an assessment centre, you were only in there to be assessed. It was as if your education wasn't important. I think the staff observed us in the classrooms.
37. I can remember being made to go into the gym. I hated gymnastics. The gym teacher was horrible. She used to make me take part. I think her name was HYC She had long grey hair like a perm. I couldn't run and jump on the horse but she would make me do it. I used to be in tears. She threatened me with not getting cigarettes or with being put in 'the box'.
38. There was a TV room which was locked. I remember looking out the window one day and feeling so fed up. I can't remember any of the staff talking to me asking me what I wanted to do or telling me how I should be behaving.

39. I think I only had a few visits from Jessie Young when I was there. I went to a children's panel every 21 days. I seemed to be kept there on 21 day orders at each panel. I can't remember having any visits from my family.
40. My mum used to send me pound notes. There was a metal box in which they put cigarettes in. They allowed you to buy them even though you were under age. We got pocket money which was enough to buy ten cigarettes. They were used as a punishment too.
41. We ate in a dining area. I can't remember any problems with the standard of food in Burnside. Once you had finished your meal, each table had to take a turn of scrubbing the floors. This happened after every meal. There were daily chores of scrubbing the toilets, bath, shower area, the rooms and the dining room. I can remember having to scrub the baths throughout the day so it could be twelve noon when you were still having to do it.
42. One time I was made to scrub all the toilets and baths with a scrubbing brush and powder by the woman **LEM**. She was a bully.
43. I have memories of having baths at night. There wasn't a lot of privacy. The doors weren't high so you could see over the top and at the bottom. The woman, **LEM** was usually supervising so it wasn't nice. I still hate not having privacy when I'm getting changed.
44. It's ruined my life being put in all of these places. I sometimes wonder if it was my mum's fault but I think if the social work had helped her more with trying to get a house for us, things might have been different. I think if she had been supported more, things would have been better.

Running Away

45. We used to have to wear black donkey jackets. Everybody knew where you were from because it was like a uniform. One day a group of us were taken out by the gym

teacher. I held back until I saw my chance and ran away. I just ran and hid in a close for hours. I eventually got to Dundee train station and jumped through the turnstiles. I managed to get on the train to Perth. I ran away several times.

46. Another time my daughter's dad came to see me, I had been going out with him for a while. The doors in the unit were opened for some reason and I was able to speak to him from the door. I managed to run out, I didn't even have any shoes on and jumped in the car and he drove off. The police always caught me eventually and I was kept in the police station until the social worker came to get me to take me back to Dundee.
47. There was a room like a cell, called 'the box'. It was used as a punishment. It was just like a police cell, there was a bit for putting your mattress down to sleep, a toilet bit and a bath. It was a square room with no window. You would be put in there if you had misbehaved. You would normally be put in there for a few hours.
48. One time some boys had managed to get out the unit and they were at the fence trying to get over the wire. The police were there with dogs and I was watching from my window. The night watchman found me at the window and started battering me over the head with his torch and I was screaming. The was just the norm.

Sexual abuse

49. One time I was put in the box for four nights. It was because, one of the staff used to get away with sitting with the girls and putting his arm around them and feeling their chests and I had made a comment to him about it. I can't remember his name.
50. He used to take us out in the van during the week and do the same. He was short, fat, starting to go bald and stunk of cigarette smoke. He was between fifty and sixty. I can remember one time, we were out with him in the minibus and one of the girls said he was aroused. You could see that he was aroused because he had been touching a girl called [REDACTED]'s chest. The girls were just laughing it off.

51. One day he tried to do the same with me, he told me that he would give me cigarettes and was trying to feel my breasts. I managed to get away from him on the couch. I said to him you're just trying to feel the girl's chests. He got up and dragged me out the room by my hair and along the corridor to the box room. I was screaming. He put me into the room and told me I was being kept in there for a couple of days. Some of the other kids would come to the pipes and put some roll up cigarettes through them for me.
52. Another time, this man came into my room and said that I could have some fags if I did something for him. There was a lot of sexual abuse in Burnside but I don't want to even think about it.
53. I was told that I was to wait to be taken to an emergency panel. I was taken out with no shoes on and put into the car and taken to York Place in Perth to an emergency hearing.
54. Around this time, I was having to go to court for numerous offences I had committed while I was there. It seemed to be anything that the police could charge me with. I can remember having a pile of panel papers. It was shoplifting charges.
55. When I went to court, I was sentenced to eighteen months. I was sent back to Burnside while they found a place for me to serve my sentence. I think Jessie Young was looking for a placement for me. I think it was difficult for her to find places because my mum didn't want us to be put in a Catholic home.
56. I think I was only in Burnside for a few months, it could have been up to nine months. I can remember hoping that I was going to get home but it wasn't going to happen. I was sentenced to eighteen months residential training because I was under the age of sixteen. I think I kept running away from Burnside so I was put under an 'unruly certificate'.

Leaving Burnside Assessment Centre

57. They sent me to Corntonvale prison while they found me a place in Tyne Park. I wasn't allowed to speak to any of the other prisoners because I was under sixteen. I was completely kept away from everyone else. It was terrible because none of the others knew why I was being treated that way. I was the only young person there on remand. They had to keep me separated from everyone else so I was kept in my cell.
58. I was locked up all the time. I would be taken out of my cell when all the other prisoners were in their cells and I would have to scrub the floors. There wasn't any electricity in the cell so, in the winter, when it got dark early there were no lights. I was in a cell beside the office. I wasn't allowed recreation. I used to be taken out into the yard by myself with a guard to walk around for an hour. The school teacher used to come into my cell.
59. There were a couple of women who had serious mental health problems in the cells next to me. I couldn't sleep because I could hear them screaming and crying every night. It was difficult to hear and see things like that. I can remember one of them was carried out by four prison officers and I heard her screaming for her mum.
60. I was there for four or five months from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] in 1981. Eventually the social worker came to tell me they had found a place for me at Tyne Park.

Tyne Park School, Haddington

61. It was like a big, old fashioned house with big grounds. There were about ten to twelve rooms for us all to sleep in. There was a couple of big rooms and a TV room. We had meals in the basement. There were three buildings in the grounds next to the school, they were used as classrooms and one of them was a laundrette.
62. When I first went in, it was quite scary. There were some girls who had been there for a while. They bullied me for the first few weeks. The headmaster became aware of it

and they were eventually moved to a different school. I think the headmaster was called George.

63. You were allowed to wear your own clothes. We were given a clothing grant for the year. There was a woman who you could go to for clean underwear. She had them in her office. We were taken to Edinburgh or Haddington to buy bigger items of clothing. It was good in that sense. There was a wee cupboard where you could buy sweets and cigarettes. My mum used to send me a couple of pounds in the post. You were allowed home every second weekend.
64. At the weekends, if you weren't allowed home, the school took you out somewhere on the Saturday. They took us to Portobello or North Berwick for the day. They sometimes took you out through the week at night time in the van.
65. By that time, I was older and more used to the system. I used to spend a lot of my time in the laundrette. I would wash and dry my clothes because I liked getting them ready for the weekend. It was a bit of an escape for me. The staff were alright about it. One of the teachers used to take me to the gym in Haddington to play squash. I was good at playing it so I quite enjoyed that.
66. Tyne Park was the best out of all the places I was in. Although abuse took place there too. I had to go to the dentist in Haddington and was given gas and air. When I woke up in the room, I started crying. The member of staff who had taken me was shoving me and telling to calm down. I was terrified of the dentist for the rest of my life.

Sexual Abuse

67. I was fifteen. There was a member of staff called **LEN**. He was between twenty-five and thirty. He had black hair, a black a moustache and he wore flared trousers and kickers boots.
68. He had a thing for all the girls. It was well known in the school that he was like that. I was sexually abused by him. He would give us money and pretend it had come in an

envelope from our mums and dads. He would open the tuck shop and make out as if you were buying things in return for sexual favours. He really liked Bruce Springsteen and he would bring his music in at night and let the girls put the records on in the TV room. Looking back now, he was just a beast.

69. I remember the work we were given was behind my school age. It was things like being told to read a book and write about it. The kids were from twelve to sixteen. I wasn't educated properly. We weren't taught any life skills. By then I was glue sniffing.

St Mary's Kenmure, Bishopbriggs

70. I was put into St Mary's on [REDACTED] 1982 because I had absconded from Tyne Park in Haddington. I had run away with my daughter's dad to London. Jessie Young came to get me. I was flown home and taken straight to St Mary's. I was put there because I kept running away.
71. Some of the other girls in St Mary's were the unruliest in Scotland. There wasn't anywhere else for me to go. The other girls had done some really bad things. There were three different units. Each unit had two girls in it. There were six girls in total. There were twelve to fifteen boys in each unit.
72. I used to get taken upstairs to my room about eight at night. I wasn't allowed out of my room to go for breakfast or other meals. I was locked in the room; it was like a cell.
73. I can remember sitting around a table with social workers while they decided where to put me. There was talk of me going back to Tyne Park. My mum and dad were there along with social workers and the headmaster. There was a member of staff who was known as [REDACTED] LEP. He was another pervert. During the meeting, he came into the room and announced that the doctor had confirmed that I was pregnant. My dad was crying. I kicked the table in anger. I'll never forget it. I was only sixteen and wasn't given the chance to speak to the doctor.

74. The staff told me that if I didn't want the boys to know that I was pregnant I would have to take part in the activities. I was taken from St Mary's to the hospital in Perth for appointments and scans. There were two staff members there and they stayed in the room while I had scans. I was treated like a prisoner. They felt like they had to keep hold of my hands.
75. The boys didn't know that I was pregnant and one of them kept trying to touch me. It was terrible. I reported it to the staff but nothing was done about it. The staff didn't care. You had to just stay quiet and accept it.
76. I was scared of some of the other kids there. One time one of the girls hit me while we were both waiting to see the doctor. I had a black eye. The conditions were shocking. I was allowed to speak to my mum at night but the staff warned me not to say anything. The staff listened on the other end of the phone. I tried to tell my mum about what was happening in St Mary's but the headmaster pulled me into his office and warned me not to say anymore.
77. In the mornings, you had to go into a classroom because there were a couple of teachers there. It was rubbish. We weren't taught anything. I used to go into the kitchen to help the cook.
78. We used to be taken over to the play barn at night. The staff used to make me go in the goals at football when I was pregnant. I told them I wasn't running about because I was pregnant. I hated it.
79. There was a male member of staff who was Asian. I can't remember his name. He used to say he would teach me how to make curries. He was another pervert. There was a woman called Mary who worked in the kitchen. She was alright.
80. One night, two boys broke out of their rooms and were trying to run away. The night watchman battered them. The next morning, the headmaster got us all into the hall and was screaming and shouting, threatening us. The prison officers came from Glenochil and took the two boys away.

81. The food was terrible there. They used to give us beef burgers, which were put in the middle of the table, you could see all the ice on some of the burgers so they were still frozen.
82. One of the workers used to bring me in cigarettes. She was really nice. Her name was Jeanie. She was quiet young and stayed on the Isle of Skye. I met up with her after I got out of care. She was lovely.
83. One time, when I was in police custody in Perth Police Station, I used to be put in the detention cell. They would take most of my clothes off me. It was terrible. I would have to wait for the social worker to come for me. The police officer who hit me had hit my brother on a different occasion. I ran away a lot and slept in cellars and people's cars. The social workers didn't care about me.

Sexual abuse

84. The Asian member of staff who used to want to teach me how to make curries would try to feel me up and give me cigarettes. He used to try and come into my room to give me a biscuit for my morning sickness. He saw me in the shower. So, I think he would have done more to me if he could have. Looking back, it was sexual abuse. He was maybe called **LEQ** he was in his forties and was married with two kids. He used to take me out in his car to the Campsie hills. I don't know how he managed to get me out because he wasn't allowed to do that. He stayed in . It was secure there so I didn't know how he managed to get me out. Someone must have known he was doing it. The lady, Jeanie, who worked there as a carer in my unit took me aside one day and asked me if he was doing anything to me. I didn't tell her.
85. I was in a room one Saturday before my mum and dad came to visit me. **LEP** sexually abused me. I was pregnant at the time but I didn't know. He used to sneak cigarettes in and give me packets of ten cigarettes. He did the same to another girl from Maryhill. I couldn't even tell my mum and dad when they came to visit because **LEP** was sitting there too. I used to sit and cry and my mum would break her heart

crying too. It was a shame. LEP was in his thirties, he had had dark, long hair and wore jeans and trainers. He should have been sacked.

86. I have blanked it all out. It makes me wonder if it all happened and I ask myself why it happened. I don't understand why it all happened to me. I don't feel able to speak about the sexual abuse in St Mary's anymore. These people were supposed to be looking after kids in care. It makes me wonder if this happened to me, what else happened to other people.
87. I know that I was unruly because I ran away and sniffed glue but I don't think I deserved any of that. I ended up doing fifteen months out of the whole sentence before I got allowed out.

Reporting of abuse at St Mary's

88. I tried to tell staff and the social worker about the abuse but no one listened. I was always the bad one for running away. The staff in these places knew that I was sniffing glue. No one tried to help me. I stopped glue sniffing when I became pregnant.

Life after being in care

89. I met my daughter's dad when I was in care. He was in care too. After I got out of St Mary's, I had my daughter and I eventually got a house. My daughter's dad was still doing drugs. It was hard because of his lifestyle and I ended up taking heroin. I was only seventeen. I tried my best for my daughter, [REDACTED]. She didn't see me under the influence. When [REDACTED] was still young, he was sentenced to a period in prison and I managed to end the relationship then.
90. I worked in the bingo hall and did cleanings jobs but I went onto drugs. I have been unemployed for years.

91. I was put on methadone because I was addicted to strong painkillers in 1989 and 33 years later, I'm still on it. I haven't come across anyone else who has been taking it for as long as me. I think there is a lack of support. I used to get support when I lived in Glasgow through the recovery café. I found it helped me to speak to other people who had similar addiction problems. I have had to do a lot of it myself. I just can't seem to get off of methadone on my own. I want to try to reduce it even more. The doctor told me that I have to be careful as she feels I am too emotionally unstable to reduce it more. I explained that I have always been unstable. I'm on medication for depression.
92. I was sentenced to four months in prison when my mum was ill. I was told she had passed away two days before I got out. I had been in possession of drugs so was taken back to court. The same judge sentenced me to twelve months in prison reduced to ten. While I was serving the sentence, my dad passed away too. I have never been in trouble since then. I will never appear in court again. I think the panels and courts were always hard on me. My offences have all been drug related.
93. I was in a rehabilitation centre in Liverpool in 2020. I was there for five or six weeks and some of the other patients were bullying me. It was terrible. It was like being in a home again. The staff didn't do anything about it so I left.
94. I work in the local charity shop for six hours twice a week. I love it. I like being on the shop floor and on the till. I enjoy it. I find living in Perth very boring. My daughter moved in her with her partner and my grandson because she wanted to be closer to family. When my grandson is older, maybe a couple more years, I am going to move back to Glasgow because I have a lot of friends there.
95. I was diagnosed with breast cancer two years ago. I had to have surgery and radiotherapy treatment. I'm terrified that the cancer returns because my mum had the same and died when she was 59. I try to be positive about it and keep motivated but it's hard

Impact

96. It was out of my mum and dad's hands. There were six of us. My sister, [REDACTED], was in Dr Guthrie's. She was assaulted there. My brothers EJN and [REDACTED] were in a place in Dumfries. They went to Oakbank School too. They were sexually abused. My brother, [REDACTED], tried to deal with it all himself but he took his own life. My other brother, EJN, is badly affected by mental health problems. He says things about his time in care and I know what he is meaning. I always felt like I had to try and look after the others.
97. I didn't sit any exams while I was in care so I think my education was affected too. I had to learn things myself because we weren't given a proper education. It has affected me and embarrassed me throughout my life when I have tried to apply for jobs and do my CV.
98. I haven't had a relationship for over ten years. I was in a relationship with a man after [REDACTED] dad, he was a great man. He lost his younger brother so he became badly depressed and unwell. He took his own life. I miss him so much. It was nine years ago. I haven't been in a relationship since. I don't want one. I don't trust anybody.
99. I think about my time in care a lot. When I'm in company and somebody mentions when they were pregnant it makes me remember what happened when I was pregnant in St Mary's. It comes up all the time. It never leaves you.

Treatment/support

100. I have reduced my methadone down because I just want off it. I don't think I've had enough support. I haven't seen a drugs worker for two years. I think they are working remotely but there is no one there to ask how I am getting on. The doctors don't deal with it because it's supposed to be the drug workers.

101. I haven't had any counselling. I have just tried to keep going myself. I don't know what kind of help it would be. I have found speaking about it has helped and made me feel a bit better. My life has been ruined by my time in care.

Reporting of Abuse

102. I haven't spoken to the police about what happened to me in care because I don't trust them.

Records

103. I would like my records to find out exactly where I had been and for how long.

Lessons to be Learned

104. Abuse still goes on today. The children in care today should be watched more carefully and there should be better communication between them and the social workers. I would like to think that things will change and that it will never happen to anyone again. I hope that lessons are learned. I should never have been treated the way I was treated.

Other information

105. 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.. 

Dated..... 9/3/22