

Received 29/4/98
 Handed to B Welch
 by Managers
 & Williams

April 29, 1998

REPORT: THE WELCH FAMILY

In response to a phone call received on Thursday the 26 of March from Maree Welch, requesting to meet with members of the Executive committee and Staff. The following persons visited the family home and spoke with Maree and Bob Welch, Lloyd Hastings, Olive Bowly, Dorothy Williams, Melissa Edwards and Fabienne Pharoan.

All present read a report prepared by Maree dated April 1995. Report alleged that a support worker had sexually molested Bobby during an In-Home visit (the visit was for 2.5 hrs in duration). The extent of the report was both alarming and of surprise to all group members. It was held that had the Family expressed their concern (re. Molestation) during the time of the incident – the case would have been handled differently eg. Police would have been called to investigate the case in question. At no point during that time did the family request that the Committee be advised of the circumstance and/or situation.

The family stated to all present that the report was going to be handed over to the police. The family requested that John O'Connor not be informed of the allegation until the police contacted him direct as they felt that it would give him the opportunity to get an alibi. Prior to leaving the committee and staff agreed to leave the matter in the hand of the Police.

At a later date we were informed by the family, that the police have accepted Maree's report and had indicated that the support worker will be interviewed.

Dorothy Williams sought legal advice from Mark Frances Solicitor and member of the finance Committee GCFSG, regarding the family's request to terminating John Casual employment of 3 hrs per week. Mark suggested two options that the organisation could consider:

1. Suspended with full pay pending outcome of the police report, or
2. To wait for the police report then act if charges were laid.

Mark preferred outcome is to wait for the police report then act if John was charged.

Several Weeks had gone by, on Tuesday 21st April Lloyd Hastings contacted Neil Parker officer in-charge of Child Protection Surfers Paradise. Lloyd was told that the interview with the support worker would take place sometime during that week.

The family informed us on Thursday the 23rd of April that John was interviewed, and that no charges will be laid do to lack of evidence".

On the 28th of April Lloyd Hastings contacted Neil Parker for the second time. Neil informed Lloyd that he was quite satisfied that there is no case to answer too, prior to ringing the officer. Maree and Bob rang Lloyd, requesting a meeting with the executive either Thursday 30th April or Friday the 1st of May 1998.

Maree requested respite on 29/4/98 for Bobbie, to allow them to attend a solicitor meeting at approximately 3 – 5 PM. It was agreed after speaking with Dorothy that Maree contact REDACTED to organise it. Fabienne rang to confirm that this has been arranged with the REDACTED she was informed by REDACTED that yes Maree contacted them. When REDACTED mentioned to Maree that REDACTED will be busy with four other children in a Diners Club program, and would probably be out of the house for part of the respite picking up a client, and that he could look after Bobbie while REDACTED was out. Maree proceeds to say to REDACTED that she will get her Sister Janice to mind Bobbie instead.

REDACTED when speaking to Fabienne said that quote; "I could take offence to that".

Maree rang the office again on 29/4/98 at 2:20 PM and spoke to Fabienne, she was worried about the meeting that was scheduled with the Executive Committee on 30/4/98 at 3:30PM. This time didn't suit her because there is no way that she is able to pick up Bobbie from the school and be able to attend the meeting at 3:30 PM. She didn't want to ask her sister yet again to mind Bobbie after she minded her on 29/4/98. Fabienne asked her if she was able to contact REDACTED for the respite today 29/4/98, she proceeded to say that REDACTED was busy and that although REDACTED offered to mind Bobbie, she didn't want that. Fabienne asked was she frightened that REDACTED might molest Bobbie, she said no but didn't want to take the chance any more.

The family called a further executive meeting which was held on 30/4/98 at 3:30 PM (Family Support Group Office).

Those in attendance were Lloyd Hastings (President), Olive Bowly (Vice President), Eda Beck (Secretary), Therese McIntyre (Committee member), Dorothy Williams (Manager) and the Family (Bob and Maree Welch). Lloyd Hastings conducted the meeting.

- Eda Beck asked for an explanation as to the purpose of the meeting, as she did not attend the meeting dated 26 March 1998 held at REDACTED
- Bob and Maree - wanted the Committee to consider their point of view – their feeling was that the person concerned should no longer be employed by the Family Support Group.
- Lloyd reminded them that at the previous meeting everyone agreed that the police should deal with the matter. No action would be taken until we had a police report.
- The Committee was informed that there would be no charges made by the police, therefore the Organisation has no legal ground to dismiss the worker.
- This in no way reflects the Committees personal feeling on matter