

8<sup>th</sup> February, 2004.

REDACTED

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Ms. P. Scully,  
Adult Guardian,  
P.O. Box 13554 George Street,  
BRISBANE. Q. 4003.

Dear Ms. Scully,

Thank you for your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2004 regarding the findings of your review of my complaint.

I do not accept the result of the investigation for the following reasons:

1. I have never been given the opportunity to discuss with your Investigating Officer Ms. L. Lethlean, with a face- to-face interview regarding details of the information I provided to your Office and to clarify any details which she may see as contradictory.
- 2.. The three Staff of GCFSG who provided the Statutory Declarations have not been given a face-to-face interviews with Ms. L. Lethlean.
3. With relation to the Statutory Declaration provided by Ms. T. Maricich, she has clearly stated in the information provided that she raised the issue of the abuse of my child with Manager, D. Williams in Feb/March 1997 when she also raised with the Host Family Coordinator Judy Graham and then Mrs. D. Williams, the issue of suspected abuse of a blind child. Mrs. T. Marich is very clear that she knew the approximate time of this complaint although she could not give the exact date i.e day. Mrs. T. Maricich knew it was at this time because she had to wait until the return of programs after the Christmas/New Year holidays.
4. The response Mrs. T. Maricich also received from the Manager D. Williams regarding her complaint re suspected abuse of another child, should indicate to your Office grave concerns re the Policy & Procedures and Complaints mechanism which were not in place or being followed by the GCFSG.
5. During your interview with myself and my husband and Mr. R. Joachim on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2003 you indicated to us that there had been an admission by the Coordinator Ms. Melissa Edwards. This is not mentioned in your Report. ?
6. There had also been an admission made by Mrs. D. Williams regarding my complaint of sexual abuse to the Coordinator and reported to her as Manager, during the Mediation Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1999. I had requested that the Justice Dept. be contacted in this regard as there are certain circumstances when such information is available in some criminal matters. (Mediators Ms. Ann Smith & Mr. Jason Connor) You have not commented in this regard.
7. In regard to the Statutory Declaration provided by Mr. E.. Munro, it should also raise concern with your Office that the Manager responded by "telling me not to say anything to anyone" about this previous accusation of the same worker and this important information was never passed on to the Qld. Police despite the ongoing police investigation re my child. It is apparent also that neither the Assistant Coordinator Mr. Munroe nor staff member Mr. Paul Major were asked to provide this information to the Police or record their concerns.
8. In regard to the Statutory Declaration provided by Mrs. K. Naismith, Admin. Assistant to Manager. No face-to-face interview of Mrs. K. Naismith took place with Ms. Lethlean. Ms. K. Naismith advised me she remembers exactly where she was standing when Mrs. D. Williams told her about my complaint of a sexual nature. She also advised that the staff stood around discussing my complaint and that she, K. Naismith stood up for me when D. Williams made a derogatory remark regarding my complaint which I can only presume related to my complaint to D. Williams regarding suspected physical and emotional abuse of a child in foster care who was being provided

with respite within my Host Family program. Although K. Naismith could not give an exact date she has informed me that it was when she was Admin Assistant to D. Williams and prior to her daughter's (Coordiantor) wedding as after this time she was transferred to the accounts office instead of reception area. Her daughter's wedding was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1995. It was apparent to me when I walked into the GCFSG office on 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1995. that my complaint had been discussed by the staff as M. Edwards raised an issue of my complaint in front of Ms. F. Pharoan.

9. Ms. F. Pharoan was never interviewed. Both L. Hastings and M. Edwards advised she had written a lone Report. Nor has Vice President O. Bowly or other members of the Committee or A. Rattray.

9. Your Office has not investigated my complaint regarding the child in foster care i.e. REDACTED. Although I advised that I recorded such information in the GCFSG Host Family File REDACTED REDACTED Mrs. D. Williams refused repeatedly to report this abuse to the Dept. of Families who had arranged the foster care. I reported this complaint to the Dept. of Families. No mention of this complaint to GCFSG or your subsequent investigation, has been mentioned in your Report and no reasons given.

9. No mention of my complaint to your Office regarding the Drugs and Alcohol on GCFSG camp is referred to in your Report and no investigation carried out by your Office despite providing to you a copy of the Statement by my son REDACTED which was provided to the Qld. Police. My son has not been contacted by your office. The cover up of this criminal matter by GCFSG should also raise concern with your office regarding the Policy & Procedures of GCFSG and their refusal to act upon such neglect in duty of care by many workers on the GCFSG camp which was held at a Qld Police Youth Club venue and not reported to the Qld. Police. I'm sure if GCFSG had reported this to the Police by GCFSG it would have been viewed very seriously by the Police as it was a Police venue.

This is another serious criminal matter where workers were informed by GCFSG to keep quiet.

10. Re Policy & Procedures of GCFSG. Ms. R. Allbury advised me that the record keeping of GCFSG was appalling and that there were no Policy & Procedures in place. I have provided to your office a copy of the Policy & Procedures which were tabled by D. Williams and L. Hastings at the Mediation Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1999 as the Policy & Procedures which were in place at the time of my complaint. on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1995.

11. In the information given to me by you on 13th June 2003 in relation to the *Guardianship & Administration Act 2000 Part 2 – Investigative Powers s.180 Investigate Complaints* i.e.

"The Adult Guardian may investigate any complaint or allegation that an adult with impaired capacity for a matter- a) is being or has been neglected, exploited or abused,

OR b) has inappropriate or inadequate decision-making arrangements.

I find it very difficult to understand the Adult Guardian's "conclusion of the investigation, it was unnecessary to proceed with the following issues that were raised by you, namely:

1. If there was evidence that the complaint of sexual assault had been made in 1995, whether GCFSG responded appropriately
2. The adequacy of GCFSG Policy & Procedures in relation to reporting of abuse in 1995
3. Whether these policies and procedures were practised by GCFSG in 1995 and
4. Whether any advice was made to GCFSG by the Office of Adult Guardian regarding the reporting, recording and documentation of allegations concerning abuse.

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The above conclusion in relation to GCFSG Policies and Procedures is contradictory to the advice given to me by Deputy Adult Guardian Ms. R. Albury that "the record keeping of GCFSG was appalling, that there were no Policies & Procedures in place and that the Office of the Adult Guardian would be checking upon the Gold Coast Family Support Group Inc. for quite some time to review their Policy & Procedures.: PLEASE REFER TO MS. R. ALBURY LETTER OF 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2003 quote "I note your concerns about the policies of GCFSG and confirm that the Adult Guardian did review the current reporting arrangements of the service.

This advice to me and this letter from Ms. R. Albury indicates that the Policy & Procedures of the GCFSG at the time of my complaint were inadequate. The Policy & Procedures which were in place at the time of my complaint 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1995 were provided to your Office by us and tabled at the Mediation Meeting by D. Williams and L. Hastings. Mrs. D. Williams advised that these tabled

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Policy & Procedures were updated in May 98 but L. Hastings was not present at the time and he was unaware of the updating of these GCFSG policies in May 98. **Surely a President needs to be aware of his Incorporated Association's Policy & Procedures and Complaints mechanism.**

11. In relation to the denials by the GCFSG, I wish to state to you that I have told the truth to you at all times and I have no reason to falsify any of the information I have provided to you. I believe I have provided substantial evidence to you and there is enough evidence to provide a Brief to Counsel immediately. Surely the information I have provided would cause some doubt re the validity of GCFSG denials, and in particular::
- a) The response to another complaint of abuse regarding the child in foster care wherein Mrs. D. Williams refused to report this to Dept. of Families and stated to me "if your want it reported, you report it." Mrs. D. Williams had arranged the placement with the Department of Families without once again checking any references or making Police checks.
  - b) The response by D. Williams to Mrs. T. Maricich regarding her complaint of suspected abuse of another child being provided with respite by GCFSG under the Host Family program. There has been no investigation by the Adult Guardian with the Assistant Manager Ms. Judy Graham to confirm that Mrs. Maricich had reported suspected abuse of this child to GCFSG and she had referred the complaint to the Manager D. Williams.
  - c) The failure of GCFSG to report to Police the criminal matter of use of drugs and alcohol on camp which were being passed around by 12-15 workers whilst caring for our disabled children.
  - d) The threats, intimidation and false accusations against me should indicate that GCFSG are endeavouring to cover up the truth regarding complaints of abuse and neglect. I presented this information to the Police and they are very supportive of me GCFSG have endeavoured to discredit me with false accusations and lies so the Office of the Adult Guardian and Government Departments doubt the validity of my complaints.
  - e) The denial by Ms. M. Edwards that she telephoned me and made admissions to me on 1<sup>st</sup> July 03 once again is intended to discredit me. I made notes on the telephone directory as she spoke to me as I had no paper available at the time. I enclose these for your correlation with the typed notes I provided regarding her telephone call. No doubt I won't be believed again.

The actions of the Gold Coast Family Support Group Inc are against the Disability Service Act, Child Protection Act, Disability Discrimination Act, Family Services Act and Associations Incorporation Act., Child Care Act and United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

Ms. Scully, the Office of the Adult Guardian may view this investigation as closed, but we do not accept closure of these complaints. I will continue to protect the rights of my child and those vulnerable members of our community. Everyone, including all Government Departments have a Duty of Care to children and I am disgusted that a little disabled girl who has been seriously sexually assaulted and emotionally abused has been treated so poorly by so many of those in authority.

The Queensland Police Service is the only Government Department who has shown us true empathy and belief in our child and us as her advocates. Service Providers are always protected but not the rights of little disabled children. I am so disheartened because I thought you with your experience would have some understanding of coverup of sexual abuse of little children. One day I may be believed. My little girl was crying again today about the sexual abuse and doesn't want to go to her program tomorrow as she is always fearful he will pick her up again. I provided to Ms. Lethlean copies of my child's disclosures and **these disclosures should have satisfied Adult Guardian there was as reasonable suspicion that she had been abused.** I requested you to read these Disclosures.

Yours faithfully,  
Maree Welch..

NO REPLY RECEIVED

4 Typed notes re phone call dated to me with letter on 7th August 03. Enclosed are notes taken during phone call with M. Edwards on 1st July 03.