

Statement Addendum

Client Name: Peter Murray
Date of Birth: 26/02/1972
Care Setting: Craig Residential School
Dates: 1961
Persons Involved: The staff and children

Full Statement

In 1961, when I was very young, I was taken from my parents. Being removed from my family at such a tender age left me feeling completely lonely, scared, sad, and emotionally overwhelmed. I was sent to Craig Residential School for six weeks, and even being taken away for that short time felt like an unbearable punishment. It was the beginning of one of the most traumatic periods of my life.

From the moment I arrived at Craig, I was subjected to degrading and humiliating treatment. The staff would watch us when we were in the showers, claiming they needed to wash us. This complete invasion of privacy left me feeling exposed, powerless, and ashamed. It was deeply unsettling, and no child should have to experience such a violation of dignity.

Food was scarce, and at times, there was none available at all. I remember moments when toothpaste was the only thing we could eat. Being starved in this way was horrifying. The constant hunger was unbearable, and there was no option or escape. This neglect caused both physical suffering and long-lasting emotional trauma.

The staff regularly used physical punishment in ways that were painful and frightening. They would restrain us violently, sit on us, bend our arms back, push, prod, and hit us as a form of discipline. The pain was often severe, and the fear of further punishment was constant. It was not just the physical pain that hurt—it was the humiliation, fear, and helplessness that came with it. The school operated more like a prison than a place for children, with doors always locked and children secluded in rooms for long periods.

The mental abuse was relentless. I would cry myself to sleep at night, only to be shouted at, hit, or further restrained for showing my emotions. Expressing fear or sadness was treated as a wrongdoing, leaving me feeling trapped, worthless, and terrified. This constant stress and emotional torment affected my sense of safety and stability in ways that have lasted my entire life.

The experience also deeply affected my relationship with my family. It took me years to forgive my mother for sending me to Craig. The trauma created a permanent rupture in our relationship, and I have struggled

with trust ever since. I find it very difficult to form close relationships, and I often feel isolated.

The abuse I suffered also contributed to struggles with addiction. I turned to alcohol and drugs at a very young age as a way to cope with the pain and trauma, though I have since recovered. Returning to school after Craig was another challenge. I was bullied by other children, which further damaged my confidence and disrupted my education. This had long-term consequences for my life and career opportunities, leaving me playing catch-up with my education even now.

The lasting impact on my mental health has been profound. I continue to suffer from anxiety and depression. I often feel like an outsider, like someone who does not fully belong. The sense of fear, isolation, and mistrust I developed at Craig continues to shape how I interact with the world. I struggle with feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and difficulty trusting others. The trauma I experienced has had a cumulative effect, affecting my relationships, my emotional well-being, and my ability to navigate life with confidence and security.

Being at Craig Residential School was not just a bad experience—it was a formative trauma that has affected every aspect of my life. The physical abuse, emotional cruelty, neglect, deprivation, and humiliation have left deep and lasting scars. These experiences continue to impact my mental health, my relationships, and my daily life to this day. The effects are not in the past—they are ongoing, and they have shaped the person I am now.