



CHILD PROTECTION CARER CASE STUDY

Case Study 2 – Carer B

Carer B cares for her grandchild. She began caring on a daily basis when the child was a toddler. As an adolescent the child was formally placed with Carer B by the State based Child Protection Organisation (CPO) for a short period, after which the child was placed with the biological father. When the child became a teenager, Carer B was contacted urgently by the CPO and asked if she would become the guardian of the child. Carer B advised that she would. The child arrived with three outfits and a uniform.

Carer B explained that her grandchild has a history of trauma, autism and depression. She receives allied health support services including occupational therapy, psychological counselling, speech therapy and respite through NDIS funding. All allied health therapies are helping the child significantly and are highly valued. Furthermore, the child is performing well at school and teachers have been recognised as very skilful and overwhelmingly supportive of the child's disabilities and educational needs. The grandparents are very proud of their grandchild's school achievements.

Carer B lives on a retirement pension. She no longer considers herself retired as she is now a full-time parent. To enable her to provide for her grandchild's needs she has withdrawn money from her superannuation fund (\$10,000) to purchase necessary provisions and to pay for school tuition fees. Carer B receives no financial or ongoing support from the CPO. She has applied for and receives the Carers Allowance which enables her to pay for fuel for the three-hour round trip to the child's school, which is deemed a priority due to the support the child receives there.

At the time of second formal placement Carer B has received two visits from CPO staff during which she was assisted with the development of the NDIS application. Whilst Carer B is grateful for this support, she feels disappointed about the lack of ongoing support and explained that CPO staff "put her grandchild on her doorstep, visited her once soon after the delivery date and then ceased contact." Phone calls to the CPO to seek information, advice and support are not addressed and phone messages with requests for someone to contact her are ignored. She is unsure if she is considered a Kinship Carer by the CPO as she has not been provided with any information or documentation by a case worker. She is unaware if she is entitled to Kinship Care payments or

other funding as per relevant legislation and policies as no information has been provided to her by CPO staff. Carer B is reluctant to complain as she fears the CPO may perceive her concerns harshly and remove the child from her care.

Carer B explained that both her husband and herself have medical conditions and whilst manageable they do create some hardship. They have structured their lives to attend medical and other appointments whilst the grandchild is at school. Outside of school, much of their time is dedicated to their grandchild. Carer B stated that she and her husband love their grandchild dearly and are thankful that she is in their care. The child “brightens their day and is cheerful, helpful and delightful.”

For further information about the Child Protection Carer Project please contact Dawn Hawthorn-Jackson at: emuconsulting111@gmail.com.