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EoB Inquiry (Exh 146 & 147)

MRS D. WEYMIENS

16 Woodrow St,
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Dear Mr Lees,

I have written pages already but discarded them because I don't know how to arrange it. Subjects overlap so much, there are ~~too many~~ different categories. I do not know where to start, or where to finish! Firstly, thank you for asking people for their views & opinions on what's gone wrong with the young male population of Australia & how the Education Dept can help get through to them to produce fine upstanding citizens, instead of the drugged out drop-outs that are much more common these days, whose fault is it - ?? You can blame some slack to abusive home environments, but the majority come from ordinary/average homes. It's what the teenager learns outside of home that causes him to change or reject his parents values & beliefs & follow this peer pressure, to conform to the teenage culture of rebellion. These young people believe they are indestructible they are immortal, they can do what pleases them & never suffer any consequences, they believe they have learnt all there is to know in order to survive - "power & violence is all you need," they believe they can drive like idiots & never have an accident, they can live on chips & McDonalds artificial beef patties & they will be as strong as ever! Why do they think like this? Basically its fed to them night & day on a plate - ^{songs} these attitudes - TV movies, action he-man themes, magazines etc. I am enclosing various bits & pieces I've cut from magazines & newspapers due to my 'secret concern' for the children of today. I can use these to explain how I feel. You probably have the statistics but to ^{newspaper cuttings} understand better its more enlightening to read case histories as they vary so much. Abused children don't always become abusive parents. Drug addicts don't always come from neglected homes. Boys who commit suicide can come from loving & supportive homes. Wife bashers & alcoholics can be taught to overcome & control themselves. etc etc Where shall I start -

Sincerely
Mrs D Weymiens

I am unable to separate this into sections, I can just continue on. Firstly, I must speak about the children who are not "normal" but below average achievers. Society has an epidemic of children needing special treatment, because once deformed ^{or premature} babies would die early, now medical science can perform miracles & give life. This does not mean a good life but one filled with suffering from surgery, endless hospital stays & treatments & being shunned & rejected & persecuted in school, because of some disability. My 18 year old daughter suffered rejection, hence loneliness for her 4 years in mainstream classes & 4 separated into a Special Education Unit. She was ^{LAST AT SPECIAL SCHOOL} hearing-impaired & learnt to lip-read her speech was severely effected & she was 8 years old before she could speak almost normally. I speak of girls, although this study is on boys, because boys experience the same problems & after you do this study, you will need to do one on girls! Boys feel things inside & bottle it up. Girls talk more. Dawn suffered despair at being avoided, shunned, teased, etc because she was intellectually impaired & couldn't follow the teacher's directions. She never had a friend, no one ever spoke to her, she wandered the corridors looking for her next class ^{cause she} but couldn't follow a timetable! She is a particularly pretty girl so she wasn't tormented as much as others who had "queer" features or ^{learning difficulties} special needs glasses. (I'm only speaking of children with special needs) In her first year of High School she would follow the girls - hoping to be included in their lunch group or to find her next class & would be turned upon & told to get lost & stop following me, "you - - -". She still suffers "down" moods when she remembers the hurt & disappointment. I would be up the school often but I was treated like an idiot, - who was I demanding they teach the other children some respect for this disabled? Their attitude was - "she'll have to get used to it, if she doesn't fit in!" ^{they couldn't} care less! (Lucky, things are changing now.) **BOYS suffer the same.**

I can remember when I finally 'forced' them to arrange a friend for her (which lasted 2-3 days). My daughter came home glowing all over "Mum, I've got a friend, she said hello to me & she sat with me for lunch." Tears ran down my cheeks!! But they never monitored it & as my daughter was unable to initiate conversation, the friend lost interest. Teachers didn't even know who she ^(Dawn) was; no one ever even spoke to her! All year, no one even acknowledged her existence! On the 3 occasions someone did - she was so overjoyed & excited - "Mum, the teacher smiled at me today" "Mum, the teacher said hello!" How thrilled she was! Finally, when the ^(last) year was nearly over, they had a special teacher come for the 2/4 hours one/or two days a week, big deal! There were at least 20 other children at that school needing help but the school couldn't afford the extra resource teachers for these children who always tried their hardest to learn, to be accepted & valued as 'normal' teenagers. The "normal majority" should be taught what to expect of children who are 'strange', 'peculiar' or 'different', they can understand, if only special education programs were presented to them explaining ^{ie} how to react when an intellectual disabled child suddenly burst into laughter at the wrong time or babbles on about an unknown subject, when he was asked what his name was! They act inappropriately & so get labeled 'queer'. In the year previously, ^{my daughter} Dawn, could not follow anything the teacher said so would close her book & fold her arms & go to sleep! There were 5 students like this in her class. The others could have learnt to read & write with a special teacher but schools will not supply them because the government won't allow the money. It's not that the government can't afford it - they give away billions to companies to help them out of financial strife & spend billions on warfare weapons,

but they have neglected services for the people for too many years & "you reap what you sow" if they do not turn the younger generation around to what is honourable, decent, & respectable - we will have massive domestic violence, turning to guerilla warfare, terrorists & a revolution with race against race, as in other countries. Men were boys, who could not control themselves, who had anger towards ^{to} their parents for being abandoned, abused, bashed, or unloved or neglected. Many are ADD/HD / Autistic Spectrum Syndrome produces uncontrollable behaviour, violence & criminal acts ending up in jails where they become more frustrated & confused. If they ^{ADD ASS. ADHD (ASD)} have caring parents, & proper successful medication & proper successful teachers at school, & control themselves. they can overcome this anger! Unfortunately, those born into ^{drug & alcoholic} deprived or neglected homes don't have a chance, as the teachers are against them from the start as they are labeled "not worth saving", hence bad behaviour through frustration & lack of emotional needs being filled, leads to punishment (& suspension) which is then viewed as unfair then the "pay-back" cycle begins. Boys will get even with a teacher by burning down the school! or shooting the class!

All they need are caring teachers who reach out to help. I volunteer in schools. I took a boy under my wing who came from an abusive & violent home (the father) The attitude of the father was that his kids were "all idiots", they were abused & put down & belittled as being worthless & hopeless! Why should a boy try when he's been told he's a failure from the moment he was born!

I have seen this in numerous households & know there are more & more parents or single mums who can't & don't know how & don't want to learn how to teach their child, ^{as toddlers} We start teaching them how the heater is hot & will hurt, by gestures & actions, before the child puts his hand on it. These parents don't teach these essential things because they are too busy drinking, going to play the pokies, watching, brawling with neighbours & taking drugs.

When the child burns himself, he is abused, called "a stupid idiot" & told he hasn't got a brain & will never amount to anything, because he is hopeless! ^(with obscenities in between) He is stripped of self-esteem so why ^{should he} bother trying? Children only live up to expectations, you expect them to do well & appreciate their efforts & support them, they will try to please you & live up to what you hope.

If the parents obviously don't give a dam, the child becomes very downhearted & starts believing he is stupid, it is his fault! So why bother trying & they give up, & never learn. ^(at 6/7 years)

I took this little boy ^{under my wing} & found with my encourage- & praise & support he began to take a real interest in learning his words & was soon building excellent sentences in his word/sentence builder & became a good reader. When I came to speak about his progress, I was hit with verbal abuse from his father about he ^{the boy} was a rotten good-for-nothing (worthless-type talk) & would never amount to anything! I took great pleasure in telling them how wrong they were! & with help & encouragement he ^{the boy} had picked up & was doing really well!!

How surprised they were!

I forgot to mention I have had a child at school for 30 years, my youngest - 18 years old just completed 4 years at the Special School & has just left. She does not have the brain power to get a job but that's another area the government's making promises about, but no way can they provide what all our teenagers need! They really don't care & don't want to know! I've ^{until this enquiry} always helped in many charity groups & schools. I am actually doing the Teacher's Aide Cert & Course & I've been amazed at the Policies & Acts, such as anti-discrimination acts & workplace Health & Safety Acts, Disability Act, Inclusive Curriculum policies, that the schools in general totally ignore! I have not worked in a job for 30 years, except I've worked full-time as a volunteer in canteens, day care centres, St. Vincent De Paul Crisis Centres, schools, councils, etc. I helped lobby governments with letters & petitions for many causes to improve lives. My education was limited & so only now can I go to TAFE to learn for a late "career" in my mid 50's. I am amazed that policies have been in place for years, yet schools did not supply the quality resource & special teachers needed for students who had unrecognised & recognised learning problems! The policy by Education Queensland, has been ignored, that states every student ensures a quality education for every student. I assure you if this leaks out to Mothers who have been screaming for help for years, the Dept of Education could be sued for thousands of cases of neglect! For failing to provide students with quality teachers.

I have had contact with numerous children, mothers would come to me for help, knowing my daughter was in the Special School, & receiving special learning programs. They need them also. I always tried to support & help them.

These thousands of children in this category were most often

denied teaching's case history - I have met so many dishearted & angry mothers of children mainly boys, who cannot learn in the usual classroom. I've met teachers suffering stress who cannot cope with these bad behaviour cases (either could I!) It is because of demands placed on teachers to control too many children with diverse needs, requiring different styles of teaching at such varied levels of development. How can teachers teach when they have to give heaps more time to those who don't understand & need to have the questions repeated 6 times? How can they decide what the bad behaviour stems from? Is it because the child has had no tea or breakfast & was out $\frac{1}{2}$ the night in a pub? Is it because he was tormented, abused & bashed last night? Is it because of frustration because he wants to learn & be as clever as the others, but he just can't understand? Is it because he is too slow & becomes exasperated when the teacher rubs the blackboard clean too soon, before he has copied his work down, the teacher saying "Well you'll have to be quicker won't you!" I have 5 nephews & 1 grandson I have plenty of experiences about teachers. My friend's son & one of my nephews just gave up - "I just shut my book & never write anything anymore!" & so the teacher has effectively cut off this child's desire to learn, he can't keep up so why bother, this boy could have been successful in life, but having eye trouble, being cross-eyed & needing thick glasses was enough to destroy any self-confidence he could have had. Although tested at above average in intelligence his emotive problems from being a "nerd" & subjected to the bullying taunts & harassments from his peers, & his teacher's total lack of help, forced this boy to "throw in the towel" in about 4th class! Other contributing factors were, his father abandoned him & his brothers so only a single Mum was his parent. Teachers being so insensitive

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This boy was expelled as a hopeless case.

some years ago in these days. Not much has changed! Many a teacher has said "I'm here to teach, not act as nursemaid!" & so luckily the government has begun to wake up to this attitude & is now training teacher's aides to deal with these problems. Mr Beattie has granted "behaviour management workshops to 2,200 teachers in 72 workshops across the State" this sounds a little deficient when there are about 1,765 schools plus 428 non-state schools. It's too late dealing with behaviour problems in Primary & High School, it needs to start in their first school year. There are some excellent early intervention special Education units for 3-6 year olds where I know of many children with learning difficulties attending & where they are receiving excellent program/management but suddenly they leave to start school & all the supports are taken from under them & they are left floundering on their own with a teacher, who is totally unaware of the child's problem. This is also because teachers are not expected to know the background of every child or each child's particular problems. But it certainly would help if teachers bothered to find out, or to listen to the mother when she tries to explain how her child needs certain time or it has trouble holding the pen & you have to repeatedly position the pen before he can write. One boy needed occupational therapy for years but no service was available: so this mother faithfully did the exercises for years ^{herself}. Mother explained all this to the principal & in writing, but it was never passed onto the teacher (who believed he did not need to know at that stage) & so when going into a new class, the teacher berated this little boy for doing messy work & told him (& the mother) that he was not going to accept such nonsense! after the boy was doing the best he could - but couldn't get to hold the pen properly. (2nd class in school)

What sort of start will that give to a child? "You catch more flies with honey." Teachers should know if you scold a child unfairly, you do not win their cooperation!! & some teachers talk to the children in very unkind ways. I believe there should be an inspector who visits school unannounced & walks around corridors, listening to the way teachers talk to pupils. I had one teenager refuse to go to one school & I found out why - the teachers talked as though they were talking to "dogs!" void of any sense of respect or fairness.

I once stood outside a 2nd class room & listened to the teacher. I was so horrified - I took out my notebook & wrote it down, but I was never game to protest about it, as I knew on previous occasions 1) principals never admit that a teacher has done the wrong thing 2) Teachers always deny or downplay 3) Principals have to support their teachers. This is in opposition to the (false) belief - that teachers work with parents for the ^{best} interests of the child! They don't! & sarcastic

This teacher was very unkind & spoke in a very humiliating manner - she said this & this is almost word for word!

"Son, what line are we on? silence are you listening Jon!"
 "Where are we up to Jon?" "No, you don't know, do you? you haven't got a clue -" "See here, Read now! Jon read this?"
silence "Don't you know that word?" "Are you stupid!"
 "How long have I been teaching you? & you still can't read!" "Are you stupid?" "how long does it take for you to learn a word!" "Now look at this & read it!" silence

This went on for 4 pages in my little notebook.

Many many children ¹¹ have trouble at births, & learn more slow.
Both these mothers had the same story to tell, as I saw
the boys grow up. My daughter Dawn was also deprived
of oxygen at birth & had similar symptoms. No! & no 2
boys were so slow at forming sentences that they
would start saying something & half-way through the
sentence would lose track of it & say "it doesn't matter,"
& walk away - the mothers kept prodding to help them
remember what they were saying & he extremely patient,
waiting for the answer, this was primary school age
into high school. Both mothers were up the school often,
different schools, because the boys could not put notes
into a book nor answer questions nor read out loud
& did not complete test papers. They continually asked
for special exemptions for doing exams on paper or they
were granted more time but they always told me the
teachers' attitude ^{as they said!} was "I have 30/40 other kids in my
class, I can't go that slow, if he can't keep up then
it's bad luck!" & they weren't even apologetic about it!
I know one boy left as soon as he was old enough
& went to Jafe to learn to read & write because the
schools couldn't teach him! Ridiculous isn't it!!!
I'll say the other boy may not have been so lucky."

This lot of pages so far covers unrecognized
learning problems mainly whereby boys miss out on getting
extra help which was asked & begged for but schools ignore
the problems. Also how some teachers kill a boy's desire to learn.
This is not as big & disastrous as the "peer pressure"
problem, to be "cool". I have not had very recent
experience with teenagers, so I may be a little behind
with them, but I start at younger ages & know it progresses

as I said, many many, thousands have difficulties at birth
 which leave damage or some defect in their functioning.
 I found figures for Aids, congenital defects to be over 150,000
 babies & that was 1997 figures. These require specialist
 teachers, their disabilities are obvious. What about the
 thousands born or conceived under the influence of drugs
 or drinking parents? Definite alcoholics give birth to
 babies with particular features & characteristics & impaired mental function.
 What about parents who just drink alot, it's common sense
 that the babies will be affected in some unseen way,
 & the parents who smoke, the dangers are now established
 the babies are weaker & smaller & other defects unseen.
 All these thousands of children struggling in oxygen-deprived
 homes, how can their brains be alert & able to concentrate,
 & why should they, when they know their parents are laying
 around smoking & drinking all day! Why should they
 have any desire to learn, it hasn't been encouraged, they
 don't hardly have a book in the house! These situations
 impair the mental functioning of many children, children
 who would be bright otherwise are forced to believe
 at an early age, they are failures & stupid & if a teacher
 does not take a particular interest in helping this child
 overcome his problems/build up self-esteem etc this
 boy will join the scrap-heap - depression, unable
 to cope, drugs, drink, rebellian, revenge, crime etc.
 (not in that order - anger could come first, who knows)
 vandalism trouble with police.

Lucky 13! I can ramble on. I'm sorry I was unable to write it briefer. I've enclosed newspaper cuttings I collect to make my point to tell you what I think as they have written it for me. Please read all the newspaper cuttings as I agree with them & it helps you to see what goes on. (You know this already) One other thing - Children who tramp back & forth, being shared by the father & the mother, usually suffer some emotional trauma. Most breakups are due to the father, having no self-control, losing his temper, abusing the wife & children to bashing, drink & drugs. When boys are forced to side with the father, he illtreats the mother. When younger children are terrified of their father & are forced to go for access visits, it disrupts their emotional balance. The teachers can tell from the child's behaviour, who went home to Dad's for the weekend. Boys will misbehave, more than girls. How many thousands of boys are forced to stay with a father who is a drunk & drug addict, abusive & unpredictable! yet the law says a father has the right to have access to his kids. It should be that a father has to prove he is a decent responsible role model & deserves his children first before they are forced to go. Think of the hundreds of thousands little hearts that could be saved if they investigated it further. If mothers have suffered domestic violence & abuse & their children have to listen & see it, surely they should be protected from further terror. The Families Youth & Community can only do so much but they should have powers to stop access visits to a man who has caused violence to the mother.

This is all.

Sincerely
Adeymin

PS over page

P.S.

I read that in America every child is guaranteed proper help for a learning disability & it must provide appropriate services, if it doesn't it must pay for private tuition.

Tennessee recently mandated that parents, who are not adequately involved in their children's education are subject to a \$50 fine for P.D.D. - which stands for Parenting Deficit Disorder.

also I do not mention drugs except by way of saying how boys are effected by peer pressure & suffer from bullying & loss of self esteem - this applies to the boys I know & ones who were sexually abused also - took up drugs to find relief to ease the "hauntings of their mind" & help them control the anger they had deep down (which now surfaces - when the marijuana has worn off) & so they need more. Some started using it for a dose, for kicks, because it was illegal. " " " " thinking it would make them braver & bring them out of their shell. " " " " it to spite their parents, who really cared. " " " " " " " " who didn't care. " " " " to help their concentration & to learn more. too complex, the reasons

Anyway, the only ones who can teach the downside are the ones who have taken it & successfully overcome their addiction & these ones should be employed to speak & teach others how to overcome it. Without needing educational "degrees" & qualifications.