

Survivor Supplementary Statement

Date Completed: 16/07/2026

Survivor Full Name: Stephen Ray Crawford

Known in care as: Stephen Rogers

DOB: 14/02/1968

Redress Priority: Low

Serious Criminal Convictions: None

Mother's Name: Margaret Ponsenby/Rodgers/Crawford

Father's Name: Steve Lilly

Name of Care Home(s): Neil Street Children's Home, Smyllum Children's Home, Nazareth House Cardonald, Kibble

Age in care: On and off from birth to 16

Reason for going to care: Mother was alcoholic so social services would take children

1.Introduction

My name is Stephen Crawford. I am making this statement to share my experiences of being in care as a child and the impact these experiences have had on my life. Some of the details are difficult for me to talk about, and some memories are clearer than others, but I will describe what I remember to the best of my ability. I understand that my records from the time are limited or incomplete, and I want to explain my experiences in my own words.

2.My Time in Care – Overview

Me and my siblings were in an out of care from birth due to the fact that my mother was an alcoholic so social services would come and take us into care for a while, then my mother would stop drinking and we would get put back with her for a couple of months and then my mother would start drinking again so social services would take us back. This pattern occurred throughout my childhood. For the most part me and my two younger siblings were kept together while my 3 older siblings were in separate places.

Neil Street Children's Home

My earliest memories in care were in Neil Street. I was in Neil Street twice. The first time I was in there I believe I was around 4 and then I went back in there when I was a teenager. I think the second time I lived there from around twelve to fifteen. If you did not go to school, staff would take away your pocket money and other privileges. There was a designated smoking room, and I was smoking from the age of thirteen. Staff knew we were smoking and allowed it, even though we were far too young. There was no physical abuse here, probably because we were older so there wasn't really anything they could do to us physically this time around because we were teenagers. Therefore, if you did anything wrong, they would just withhold privileges such as not giving you any dinner etc. Even though there were no physical punishments we were essentially

completely neglected and left to run the home ourselves. It was wild place because of this. The staff just turned up got paid and went home and left us to it.

There was some bullying within the home but not regularly. The kids that were there for a long-time sort of stuck together and then when other kids from different areas would come and go sometimes there were minor issues but not an everyday issue. We slept in dormitories of four of us.

Smylum Children's Home

I also spent time in Smyllum, Aberdeen. I believe I was possibly around 8,9 or 10 years old. There was physical punishment here as well. Staff would make us pull down our pants and would smack us on the bare bottom, so it hurt more. It was essentially corporal punishment. They said it was because we had done something wrong, but it should never have happened. We were hit as and when they decided, not every day and not without a reason, but that does not make it acceptable. It was only ever for minor things, I certainly don't remember doing any major crime that justified them hitting us.

Smylum was more military style where the staff members would boss you around. It was the total opposite to Neil Street where you were completely left to your own devices where in Smylum there staff were monitoring everything you did. I don't actually remember going to school in Smylum I am not even sure if they had schooling there.

Nazareth House, Cardonald

I was in Nazareth House, Cardonald for what I believe were two Christmases. I must have been around eleven or twelve years old. I remember being smacked there every few months. This was carried out by the nuns who were just mental. They were not like the nuns you see in church who were happy people, they were very strict and not kind and it seemed like they were certainly in the wrong job. I remember there was a wall separating Nazareth House from a school and one time we were climbing the wall and got caught by the nuns and we got smacked for this. We did go to school while at Nazareth House, the school was outside the school, but I don't remember going to school much at all.

The layout of Nazareth House was like a prison, not in the sense that the doors were locked but that the cafeteria was a big, long hall and the rooms were all long dormitory style, it was a very intimidating place. Punishments included being sent to bed with no supper, which meant going to sleep hungry. I remember at Christmas time all of us kids had to sort all of the presents that Santa was going to bring us because they didn't do it and I remember thinking at the time this kind of defeats the purpose. The nuns were the strictest staff I ever dealt with by far, with them it was simply anything you did wrong you got hit for it, whether it was a sack on the hands with a ruler or a spanking on your bottom. There was zero tolerance. For instance, if you wet the bed or

didn't eat all of your dinner you would get hit or spanked. The nuns were very cold; you could never build up a relationship with them and become friends or family or anything like that.

Foster care – Erskine

I would have been around 12 or 13 when me and my two younger sisters were living in foster care. It was pretty bad here. The family had 4 or 5 kids of their own and we were not treated the same. For instance, come dinner time the family would all have their dinner together and then me and my sisters would have to have our dinners after. It was very clear that we were not part of the family. There was no physical abuse, but we were completely neglected. We ended up running away because my two younger sisters hated it there and couldn't deal with it anymore. I rang our social worker after we had run away, and they came and got us and then we were taken back to Neil Street the second time.

Kibble

I remember attending Kibble for a period while I was at Neil Street for the second time. I think I wasn't going to school or had got suspended from school when I was at Neil Street for not going to school. The staff simply didn't care if you went to school and of course me being a kid was happy to not go so because of this; I started getting sent to Kibble for the days to do my schooling. I was a day boy is I would go up and spend the day there and then go back, but it wasn't really a school at all. Kibble was a pretty rough place to be honest with you. Kibble was more like a borstal or an approved school, so this was where bad kids went. The kids who lived there were people who had done crimes and been sent there as a sentence. I didn't have a sentence, but I was sent there and was mixing with these kids daily. This was rough and there was a lot of fighting. Luckily for me there was another 4 or 5 boys who used to get the train with me from Greenock up to Kibble but it was still rough.

I think I did this for around a year because I left school at 16 and I believe I had started going to Kibble in the day when I was around 15.

After care

We were in Neil Street for the second time until I was 16, at which point I left school and we were essentially dumped out of Neil Street, and you have to leave. They didn't do anything to help and support me at this point, so I just left and went and lived with my mother for a short time and then moved up to Fort William to get a job with supported accommodation and never looked back since.

3.Emotional and Long-Term Impact

I have been married twice been divorced twice and like to be on my own and I left the country to move to England and then to America. I think I was just trying to get away from it all.

I haven't been back to Greenock since I left at 16. Physically I don't really go outside the door unless it's necessary and I am on anti-anxiety medication. I also have COPD from the smoking which I started in the care homes, so I have medication for that as well. All the other kids were smoking in Neil Street, and it was like the cool thing to do I started as well. I am always paranoid and I don't know if that is anything to do with my upbringing in care.

Signed: Stephen Crawford

Date: 16/07/2026

Method: Taken over phone