



To whom it may concern:

Reference for Elias Youssef (Oussama Benyoussef/Elias Campbell/Elias Benyoussef/
Elias Campbell Youssef)

The following is an extract of a 27-page resignation letter my husband and I sent to the Head of the Children's Service for Panel in January 2018, resigning a role we loved as foster carers but impossible to work in such a dysfunctional service, where we witnessed failure at every level and in catastrophic ways by not meeting basic human rights needs for our young people, we could fight no more. It may give you a glimpse into what Elias has had to suffer all these years. They could not even sort his name out.

An example of this occurred when I called the prison, they stated they did not have a prisoner under the name I asked about, it took sometime before they eventually found him, causing me stress as I knew he was there.

Elias is the funniest, sweetest young man you could ever wish to meet, we cannot imagine our lives without him and we are thankful for the time we had with him, Elias described it as 'the happiest time of his life'. I wish he was never taken from Morocco, I will always wonder how he would have faired, but he was. I wish he was never in the Children's Service, but he was, I wish he never experienced all the things he has had to experience, but he has.

Without parental guidance all his life he learnt how to survive and sadly he has mixed with the wrong people many on the wrong side of the tracks, or just simply struggling like him, he never really stood a chance, but he should have had the best chance, after all he was under a States Department of a very wealthy Island, who did nothing to return him to his country of birth, but decided to keep him here to lead such a poor life.

If as I am led to believe he stays in prison for some time, can I please ask that he gets all the support and positive training/exams to help him get on the right path when he comes out. Mentoring is the key.

It is very difficult to arrange visits to the prison and it has been traumatic for me and his fosters sisters/family, to see him there, maybe this should be made simpler so he can get the support he needs.

He deserves the best help and support to once and for all put him on the right path. It would save us all a lot of heartache and he would have a life worth living.

Extract: Elias came to us in 2011-2013

.....The next young person that came to us was extremely complex: if you knew of his case you simply would not believe it and would share our continued sadness. I still cry myself to sleep over this young boy. Smuggled into Jersey, illegally from Morocco, around the age of 5 yrs. old, did not speak a word of English, to live a sad life for a time until he was actually 'dumped into care' by the remaining 'adult', who left the Island without telling him. The other was in prison for rapes (a major case here in Jersey). His care was taken over by the Service who was already involved, but completely failed him, and quite honestly we truly believe he would have fared better if he had been returned and even dumped on the streets of Morocco.

I question where were the roles of the Immigration and Police Service, why was no-one ever charged with illegally bringing him first to the UK/London and on to the Island, and those who allowed him to lose his identity, culture, language and family ties, his status and suffering a sad childhood under our Corporate Parent.

Instead of him being unemployed and homeless on the streets of St. Helier, drifting into a drug culture I pointed out but was ignored, or in La Moye Prison/Magistrates Court, because the Corporate Parent replaced these neglectful adults and continued the neglect by never having a team around this young person.

We watched this failure with every child.

This is so heart breaking I don't think we will ever get over it.

To date the Corporate Parent has had since 2003 to find his family and despite our efforts to push them into this (we found some ourselves with the kids on the internet not the best way I would suggest) this still has not been done and he cannot get on with his life without some answers... we are now continuing this search...

I don't know where to start but being brief he had a wonderful 2 years here, where he experienced family life, positive relationships and happiness, great role modelling, but by then he had significant issues and we had significant concerns (all documented) and it was decided that from 17yrs of age he would do well with full support under the 'leaving care team', as we did not know any different at the time and thought this is the path to go and he would get the right help to move into independence, how wrong could we be.

This boy longed to meet his mum and family, we went to extraordinary lengths for this to be a reality, despite getting so close, it of course failed with the worst type of planning and management possible. We hoped it would be done now he was in the "leaving care team" as promised, but what followed was

unforgiveable, the worst type of poor management I have ever seen (until the next time), in short it never happened, and as predicted by us, without the right 'team around the child' (which we thought he was going to get) and as all the research shows, he quickly became a NEET, unemployed, unable to manage living alone in a soulless bedsit/guest houses! I kid you not. Without proper support and supervision, began sofa surfing, became homeless, uses drugs and ended up in Prison and is a regular in the Magistrates Court and drifts in and out of jobs. A path to nowhere, all under the watchful eye of the residential staff and so called 'leaving care team'.

This amazing young man who made us laugh so much, who raised the roof at the Opera House when he won the Eisteddfod drumming competition, who rapped in the most beautiful voice at Rock School with the youth service, who had amazing friends who all went on to do great things, who we all loved, and had so much promise was failed at every turn. What we achieved with him was lost and quickly dismantled by the residential unit he went to for 'the leaving care support', but there was none, they refused to speak to me, never returned my calls etc.

I will live with the regret of letting him go as we now understand this system is broken and not fit for purpose as the staff were poorly managed and the absence of any positive planning with realistic outcomes.

A further small example of this was when he was admitted to us as a planned admission, he arrived with his belongings packed in Marks & Spenser crates, dirty clothes and all on view in these crates, the black sacks dumped outside where my rubbish bins go and it was only [REDACTED] checking the sacks that they did not end up in our Euro bin.

I thankfully checked with him that he had got all his stuff and he said a box of photos was missing, in short I rang Heathfield Residential home, spoke to a member of staff who said there was nothing left, my young man explained where it was and could the staff go and look.

They said they would and informed us nothing was left in his old room, my young man was insistent they were there, so I said we would drive up there, on arrival we did not exactly have a warm welcome but we insisted he could go to his old room and check, we did and we looked in the exact place he explained very clearly to the staff and sure enough the box of his photos were there. It contained family photos and one of his mother, in fact the only photo of his mother, therefore important.

As the home was being decommissioned these could have been lost forever.

No one blinked.

Another episode will stay with me concerning this lack of care was the fact he was the only child in his year not to go on a big and final school trip to Spain, the paper work had gone to the staff/SW at Heathfield and it was never organized he was never able to benefit from this and all the wonderful memories it brings, he was quite simply left out, unforgiveable. As soon as I found out I tried everything even offering to pay our selves to get him there but it was not to be. He was shattered and the look on his sad face will stay with me forever. If only the staff attend the meetings, the parents evenings

etc... they would engage, but as we found time and time again this rarely happens.

It showed the poor attitude to care and compassion, in fact there was none. His schooling was poor with little to show for it except what we managed to achieve with him, he was left adrift with no-one taking responsibility.

He visits every now and then, usually when he is in employment, but at times I have had to find him, and to my sadness found him in prison and in the homeless shelter, there seems to be no solution led thinking in helping this beautiful young man achieve his definite potential. We feel completely at a loss.

The bits of work done in trying to trace his family were piece meal and never came to fruition, also there is no 'life story work' done so he cannot piece his life together for any sort of closure, it was a mess and still is a mess, but we are going to try and do what we can to help him piece it together in order to draw some line in the sand, it will be us taking him to Morocco, and doing this work, not the service who have had 14 years to find his family.

To date (2018) we still do not know who this boy really is, and more importantly he does not know who he is, he has several names and he does not know which is his real name... despite our efforts to get this cleared up once and for all, you simply could not make this up.

What happened to this young boy will stay with us for the rest of our lives. There are many young people like him, kept on the bottom rung of the ladder scrapping a life, future benefit dependents, prison users, drug users, mental health users, wasted lives. Trying to survive not thrive. What a huge cost to us all....

Yet no one in the Service blinked.

End of extract

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Elias has no one and is rotting from inside I simply cannot imagine not having a soul to call your own. He has a mother, somewhere, not too far; she just needs to be found....

We have been working with Mark Rogers Director General of the CS to help find his family and to put some of the wrongs right. To date we are still waiting....

Please look on Elias kindly and with the right help and conditions I truly believe he can do well and live a life that you and I would want for your son or daughter.

If you need anything from us please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours truly,

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