

Text by Teionerata Jay written as a youth in placement, after placement-after placement.

What can help right now is hearing our voices, recognizing us as human beings. And treating us as such.
To teach youth their rights, **YOU NEED TO RESPECT THEM FIRST!**
Please listen if you are a government, organization, social worker. etc..

I AM NOT a failure! Novembre 2nd 2022 (in care.)

Time and time again I have to rely on the system, time and time again, I struggle to reach out. Time and time AND time again, I feel like a failure, not because I am. I am smart, I am funny, I am cool, I am caring, I am patient. So patient with this youth failing system. I am resilient. I speak my truth my social workers denied, my own family denied. I've lived a lonely life, given to one worker or to another, one institution to another, one home to another and so on and so forth. This is the only safe-ish, « safe » home I've have ever known. Some kids including me have only ever had this as our home. I'm so angry, I should be outraged but that is not an option for me. With 17 lonely years under my belt of THIS SYSTEM, that is not a right I have. For a while it was mainly if I could show my emotions at all. At home I couldn't, I would be beat, screamed at, tormented, shamed. I got a warning, a warning that if I lived my truth, I'd be not just trapped like at home but CAGED. Only just yesterday did I learn there is no difference than a rehabilitation center in Quebec and a Juvie in Ontario. Honestly, if we're so much better as Quebecois put it then the rest of Canada with our « rehabilitation centers » having unlocked units if we behave, we could do so much better as to actually be capable of rehabilitating children. I could tell you all the incidents I've heard of and seen, been through, we'd be here all day and I doubt you'd listen because you ALREADY KNOW. I'll never understand my elders experience with residential schools when they were young. But I can say so little has changed, the same system who did it 30 years ago. Largest changes are you can't do it in private and you can't take us all. A « unholy » number of native folks sit in the system, a despicable amount of children. You caused the abuse that occurs with generational trauma in families, now it just so happens we CAN'T stay at home. Abuse brushed off as normal in our communities, where do you think the steel/wooden spoon came from? Not us. None of this is for our benefit. Not the minors who remain in the system. Not me. I was logged off to a new unresearched program in Timmins Ontario called Wakenagun Youth « healing » lodge. Untrained staff, no therapy, no schooling. No program to be seen anywhere. Similar to the countless cement buildings I've been repeatedly logged off to. Practiced culture which I ALREADY HAD AT HOME. The system has taught me nothing except I need to look out for myself and grab close my culture before it strips me off it. I've luckily tapped back in on my own accord to my roots in which has since been made out of reach from me from sleeping on gym mat beds, no fresh air and windows in the doors of my bedrooms... (cells) for pervy men to stare into. I understand where my troubles lie but I hope you see how dearly I care about myself. I stand up to these child killer hands to help me how I beg to be assisted. To not stick me into these white men systems.

#AbolishTheSystem

The system we have today does more harm than good. More heartache and disfigured families. More children are being traumatized by being forcibly removed from their homes. Once a kid is aged-out, everything they experienced in Youth Protections hands - does not just go away. When our file leaves your office, we are still kids.

Take care of our youth.