QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

QP 0125A 05/22 AS

Occurrence #: _____

Statement no.: **1** Date: **29/07/2022**

Statement of

Name of witness: **SEWELL Aimee Maureen**

Date of birth: [redacted] Age: [redacted] Occupation: **Youth Club Manager**

Police officer taking statement

Name: **SEWELL Aimee Maureen**

Rank: **Sergeant** Reg. no.: [redacted]

Region/Command/Division: **Northern Region** Station: **Mount Isa PCYC**

Statement:

Aimee SEWELL states:

Career experience

1. I am currently employed as the Youth Club Manager at the Mt Isa Police Citizens Youth Club ("PCYC"). I have held in this position since June 20th 2022.

2. I was previously employed as the 'Youth Officer' at Mount Isa PCYC to facilitate youth programs since approximately April 2020.

3. As part of my duties as the Youth Club manager, I am responsible for service delivery and co-ordination of crime prevention and intervention programs and activities for disadvantaged and disengaged youth in the Mt Isa District.

4. Some of the services we currently offer for young people are program such as Team Up, RUBY, Booyah Respect, Queensland Blue Light Association Blue Edge, diversion programs such as Chillin in the Park and Thursday Night Live.

5. I hold a Bachelor of Secondary Education in major in Physical Education and minor in Biology. I am also a current registered Teacher with the Queensland College of Teachers with a registration number of 899385.

6. This qualification allows me to provide greater learning outcomes and assist with behavioural management strategies for the variety of programs and activities that I facilitate for PCYC and QPS.

7. Prior to commencing in this role I was employed by Queensland Heart Foundation as a Field Officer delivering programs and education about heart health with a focus on Indigenous Communities within Queensland.

(Witness's signature) (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations' signature) [redacted]

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **SEWELL, Aimee Maureen**

The Under 21s Respondent Program

8. The PCYC, with the assistance of Queensland Police Service, has received funding to facilitate the Love Bites - Under 21s Respondent Program.

9. The program is limited to 1 – 3 participants per program and is constructed on the National Association for Prevention of Child abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) Love Bites Respectful Relations Program.

10. The Love Bites program is a Respectful Relationships Education Program for young people aged 15-17 years. Love Bites is based on best practice standards for education programs as recommended by the Federal Government funded Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House and other leading academics in the area of violence against women.

11. The Under 21s Respondent Program covers all content in the Love Bites Training manuals. **Attachment A** is a copy of the Love Bites Training manuals.

12. Whilst based on the Love Bites program, the Under 21 Respondents program has added content specific to the types of participants who are undertaking it. We have done this to address any specific attitudes and behaviours of the participants and to enable us to wrap a more holistic response around the young person and their family.

13. For example, Love Bites is based around 'standby' behaviours. That entails the use of scenarios by way of 'what would we do if we saw?' Our program still encapsulates this element however we also ask questions from a victim and offender centred approach or allow the conversation to flow from the young persons perspective which is generally from offender or involved perspective.

14. During our program participants must watch a video as authorised by the Love Bites program "Angela Barker- Loves Me, Loves Me Not Loves Me Loves Me Not The Angela Barker Story - YouTube

15. The Love Bites 'Standby Perspective' asks, "What were some of the red flags or warning signs building up to this incident". The Under 21s Respondent Program also asks, "What are some of **your** red flags or warnings before an incident you were involved in? and "What other influences were in place example intoxicating substances?" Offender Perspective) as well as "How do you think the victim felt?" (Victim Perspective).

16. Part of the program and the manual includes 'attitudes and beliefs.' We found that our young people naturally self-identified with examples, for instance, 'in relationships, some people provoke others into hitting them so it's their fault.' Our young people will take this question and relate to their

[redacted]

relationships rather than from a 'standby perspective,' because these are examples that occur in their relationships. They may provide justification for the behaviours; however, we use the content provided to challenge their current attitudes. By way of example, instead of asking 'What other options does someone have other than hitting or assaulting someone else,' we change it to 'What other options did *you* have instead of the behaviour you displayed'.

17. We also modify the program in such a way that we do not heavily rely on the use of PowerPoints in detail as many of our young people have literacy difficulties. We find that activity-based content delivers better results and improves understanding.

18. We have also created a small resource book based on the NAPCAN content that does not require a lot of writing – for the reasons set out above. By way of an example, in the 'ideal partner' content, we may ask the young people to draw their example or provide one-word answers. We also offer one on one support if the young person requests that we do so.

19. As part of the program we also have daily check in and out monitors from 'Reboot.' Reboot is a program used by PCYC that teaches practical neuroscience-based and trauma-transformative tools to empower young people to make the most of their opportunities and to identify their emotional wellbeing at the time of engagement.

20. This provides us with information on the young person's feelings and emotions at any given point in time during the program. If we can better understand how a young person is feeling, we can support them with an alternative teaching method. For instance, if a young person is 'grog sick' (suffering under the effects of alcohol, i.e. hungover) we will not perform physically demanding tasks because this will lead to disengagement and possible behavioural issues.

21. At the end of the program, in a private sitting with consent from the young person (respondent) and family, we review, detail and explain their Domestic and Family Violence Protection Orders ("DFVPO"). Often our young people have numerous conditions and there is limited understanding by the young person about what the conditions mean.

22. By referring the young person back to our program, we can contextualise the information the conditions on their DFVPO and we are able to better explain the conditions and relate them back to conversations we have had previously as part of the program and elements of DFV.

23. We are able to do this because with each young person we have worked previously with and have developed a level of rapport with our young people and their families. I believe that due to this previous engagement participates feel more comfortable in asking questions and clarifying their understanding of the orders through reflective questioning.

[redacted]

24. As part of the program, we also complete an entry and exit survey, which is more detailed than NAPCAN, although the young people are still able to complete the NAPCAN survey as well. By having the young people undertake the survey, we are attempting to canvas if there has been a change or influence in their knowledge or attitudes at the end of the training period.

Additional aspects to our program

25. In addition to the fundamental aspects of the program, we provide additional support to our young people, including the provision of breakfast and lunch for the participants, and a flexible structure to the program during which we take regular breaks to accommodate the learning needs of our young people.

26. When we have high engagement on the program, we will focus on these conversations and allow the young people to talk and self-regulate amongst each other. We also encourage and uterlise the NAPCAM group agreements on confidentiality and participation.

27. We provide transport from young persons residence to PCYC and home again for each program. We have identified that accessibility is a major barrier to participation in any program. Transport also provided an invaluable time to build rapport and open lines of communication with the young people.

28. We also provide a catering service to the families for dinner on nights of the program and use that time to engage with the parents or carers of participants and suggest methods on how they can support their young person in a positive way.

29. We have been challenged on the name "Under 21's Respondent Program" but this is purely for agencies and organisational purposes. This is important because in our community we have not been able to facilitate a program of this nature for this age group. To my knowledge the only groups that address the DFV behaviours of offenders are Men's groups that may or may not be suitable for our demographic.

30. To clearly clarify we do not refer to young people as respondents or to their families, this is purely identified on the agency referrals forms only. In a community setting we describe them as "young people".

Review and additional information

31. A monthly review is conducted in relation to the young people who participate in the program. This is completed by reviewing QPRIME occurrences relating to Domestic and Family Violence related street checks or offences.

32. Our last review on 1st August was completed for the four participants.

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **SEWELL, Aimee Maureen**

33. Young Person A, male 13 years participated in May Program. Prior to participation in 2022 he has 8 DFV occurrences including 6 breaches with serious violence. Since participation has had 1 occurrence as aggrieved and unfounded as respondent. Report indicated on one occasion after the program, Young Person A attended Mount Isa Police Station requesting protection. This was a strategy discussed in our program as he identified that his physical violence was in response to being assaulted first in some capacity.

34. Young Person B, male 17 years has had 3 DFV occurrences since January 2022. Was identified at risk of DFV due to his partner 15 years being pregnant. Young Person B has not committed or been involved in DFV since participation in May program. PCYC is also assisting with employment and housing opportunities, as well as assistance with driver's licence through Braking the Cycle.

35. Young Person C, male 17 years since 2012 has had 7 DFV occurrence including suffocation offence in 2022. Since June program has not breached bail or committed DFV offences. During the program Young Person C, could describe the impacts of this level of violence and potential health outcomes to his victim.

36. Young Person D, male 18 years has a young son to his aggrieved. Young Person D has displayed significant controlling behaviours and serious physical violence towards his juvenile female partner. Since his participation in June Program Young Person D has had two breaches of DFV to his contact conditions with no physical violence reported.

37. Furthermore, we will make contact with the young person and family members on progress and offer additional support if needed or requested from the families.

38. We liaise with Youth Justice, Corrections, Child Safety and Domestic and Family Violence High Risk Team if a young person is connected with one or more of these stakeholders.

39. If we identify any specific issues for a young person we will refer them to support services such as Headspace or uterlise the QPS referral system.

40. We also use our brokerage with the young person to assist with goal setting. Such as obtaining a driver's licence, drafting and creating resumes and assisting them in obtaining employment opportunities.

41. We believe if a young person has responsibilities and structure it will increase their self-esteem, assist in reducing boredom and anger (including impulse control) and improve emotional regulation. These beliefs underpin our approach to young people and the program.

[redacted]

(Witness's signature) (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations' signature) preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **SEWELL, Aimee Maureen**

42. To date, we have run two programs of this kind and are constantly reviewing our own performance to ensure that our young people are getting the most out of the program. We debrief internally to review elements that were effective and those that could improve, request feedback from participants and families through verbal.

43. As far as I am aware, this program is the first of its kind in Queensland and is only currently being delivered in Mount Isa; however, we have just received funding to deliver the program in Doomadgee and Mornington Island. I anticipate that we will commence delivery of these programs in Term 1 of 2023.

44. We have intentions to partner with other community groups and agencies to assist with facilitation in the near future. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lead organisations such as MONA corp have demonstrated interested in partnership. We continue to build these relationships for the benefit of the program.

45. In providing the program we want to provide our young people with the greatest opportunities with the overall objective to reduce crime, reduce custody times and occurrences and improve long term outcomes.

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(6C)(c) of the *Justices Act 1886* that:

(1) This written statement by me dated **29/07/2022** and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and

(2) I make this statement knowing that I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false

AIMEE MAUREEN SEWELL [redacted] Signature

Signed at MOUNT ISA (place) this 5TH (day) day of AUGUST (month), 2022 (year)

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(Witness's signature) (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations' signature) (Signature of police officer preparing statement)