

██████████ 2015

My daughter has been involved in an abusive relationship – both verbal and physical abuse – and mental health issues.

She lived with her partner for ██████ years and they have an ██████ old daughter together.

He has ██████ daughters from a previous relationship.

My daughter has another daughter from a previous marriage.

I will not go into details of why my daughter stayed in the relationship for so long – I am sure these are well known and documented. However she finally moved out of the shared home in ██████ after his drug use escalated and could no longer be ignored or denied. My daughter and ██████ granddaughters first moved in with me and the family then pooled resources for her and children to rent a unit on their own. At this time an AVO was put in place in terms of my daughter and granddaughter.

My daughter continued her involvement with her partner (living apart) until ██████ - her reason being that she was terrified of letting him take their daughter – fearing that he may lose his temper and because of the continued escalating drug use – and in her mind at least this way he only saw their daughter when they were together.

Things came to a head at ██████ – at this stage he was not only abusive and threatening to my daughter, but also to both of my granddaughters, my daughter's ex husband and myself.

My daughter came to terms with the fact that she could not deal with this herself any longer and finally reported him for breaching the AVO on ██████

He has a history of mental health issues and has been admitted to various psych wards on numerous occasions.

They have been through the official mediation process – but as my daughter is insisting that he pass a drug test and be following a registered mental health plan before he has unsupervised time with my granddaughter no resolution was found.

My daughter has seen a lawyer who has all the documentation in place should she need to go to court once the current AVO is lifted.

My daughter has agreed to meet with her ex partner on several occasions with my granddaughter as she has been advised that “it will look better for her if it goes to court if she has not withheld contact completely”. The meetings have taken place at venues recommended by the police with CCTV footage. On each occasion he has been quietly verbally abusive and threatening and has openly mocked her about not being able to do anything about it or prove it. He works as a ██████ Counsellor and openly boasts to her that he knows how to work the system and that she can't touch him.

I am asking the Royal Commission to consider the following :

- It is extremely difficult to get an AVO put in place until the perpetrator actually crosses the line and can be proved to have crossed the line. My daughter actually borrowed a recording device and was able to record part of a threatening telephone conversation – that is how she was able to get the AVO.
Can there be a way to invoke protection whilst they are still threatening, stalking, verbalising etc. Too often the final proof is violence or injury. Repeat offenders know not to commit anything to voicemail or text messages or in front of witnesses.
- An AVO is not listed on a police check.
This should be a mandatory inclusion in any police check information. From the date and numbers of AVO offences, it will either evoke a pattern of repeated behaviour or be seen as an individual offence not repeated.
- As I am sure you are aware, it took a great deal of courage for my daughter to finally report a breach of the AVO. However – it is now [REDACTED] later and this breach has still not been served. Our understanding is that the policeman who takes the statement has to serve the breach. We have been given many explanations why it is still outstanding – at that time of year the policeman went on leave, was working nights, was transferred etc. When they visit the house her ex partner is not there or does not answer the door. The police know where he works but apparently they do not like to serve at a work place. The policeman has now been permanently transferred to another station – so now he is even further away and even further out of touch. The police even had my daughter's ex partner in the station in connection with another crime – but the breach was not served.
If a breach of an AVO is issued – it should be served quickly, in any place and by any police officer on duty.
- We believe that my daughter's ex partner is being charged with a theft offence (committed after she left him). She knows about this because after he was charged by the police she spent an evening receiving abusive and threatening telephone calls from him. Because of his previous history, we understand he may in fact go to jail.
My daughter is not allowed access to any of this information unless her ex partner informs her. Surely with a current AVO in place she should be informed if he is sentenced and/or goes to jail as this will have a direct bearing on his access to my granddaughter.
- My daughter's ex partner is currently employed in the [REDACTED] counselling industry.
What checks are in place to ensure that people within this industry are not using drugs themselves?