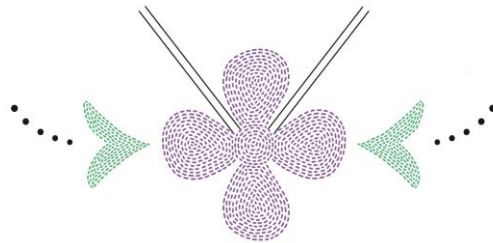


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Elmbridge Room
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



PUBLIC

Friday April 6, 2018

Public Volume 98

**Mona Shaw, Anthony Shaw & Danielle Shaw,
In relation to Michelle Caroline Shaw**

**Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette
Commission Counsel: Wendy van Tongeren**

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APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Lucy Bell (Legal counsel)
Government of British Columbia	Leah Greathead (Legal counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	No Appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	No Appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co-operative Centre	No Appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	No Appearance
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	No Appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation	No Appearance

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Commission Counsel: Wendy van Tongeren

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Williams

Clerk: Bryana Bouchir

Registrar: Bryan Zandberg

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1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 9:11

3 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Oh there we go.

4 Okay.

5 Good morning, Madam Commissioner, and all
6 your supports, and good morning, everybody. My name is
7 Wendy van Tongeren. I'm one of the Commission lawyers and
8 I'll be assisting the family with the story that they will
9 be telling today.

10 This is the Shaw family from Port Hardy.
11 And I'd like to start by just having them introduce
12 themselves. And then, Mr. Registrar, each member here, and
13 there's Mona and Anthony and Danielle Shaw, they will be
14 asking to affirm with the eagle feather.

15 Okay. So just introduce yourselves so that
16 the camera sees which name goes with which person.

17 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** Hello. Okay. Hi, I'm
18 Danielle Shaw and of the Wuikinuxv Nation.

19 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Hi, I'm Mona Shaw. I'm the
20 mother of Danielle, Tony and Michelle and the
21 Wuikinuxv Nation.

22 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Hi, I'm Anthony Shaw, the
23 Wuikinuxv Nation. Thank you for having us.

24 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Yeah, so it'll be
25 Mona who will be speaking first. So, Mr. Registrar?

1 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Good morning,
2 everybody.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Good morning.

4 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** I'll start with
5 Danielle this morning.

6 And, Danielle, do you solemnly affirm that
7 the evidence you will share today will be the truth, the
8 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

9 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** Yes.

10 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** You do? Thank you.

11 Morning, Mona. Same question for you. Do
12 you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will share --
13 that you will share today will be the truth, the whole
14 truth and nothing but the truth?

15 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I swear.

16 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Thank you.

17 And good morning -- and I've already
18 forgotten your name. Anthony. Waking up. Good morning,
19 Anthony. Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will
20 share today will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
21 but the truth?

22 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Yes.

23 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** You do? Thank you.

24 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you.

25 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Do I start now?

1 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Yes.

2 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh.

3 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** So, Mona, I'll just
4 say a few things. First of all, it's just -- it's about 12
5 minute after 9:00, so we've got lots of time here. So I
6 want you to feel relaxed and it's my job to assist you. So
7 if you don't want to hear from me again until you're done,
8 that's fine. Otherwise, if you want me to ask you some
9 questions I can do that as well.

10 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I welcome that.

11 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay.

12 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah.

13 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you. So take
14 care. I know you'll do very well. Okay.

15 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Thank you.

16 My name is Mona Shaw. I was born in Bella
17 Bella and I come from the Wuikinuxv Nation, that's Rivers
18 Inlet. I'm a product of the residential school, St. Mikes.
19 I lived in Wuikinuxv Village all my young life. Or my --
20 both my parents died when I was four years old. And but
21 then a few days after my mom's passing I was sent to St.
22 Mike's Residential school where I stayed for nine years.

23 So I wasn't -- there wasn't a lot of
24 guidance there. It was just basically you were a number.
25 You did what you were told. So I didn't -- there wasn't a

1 lot of preparation for me becoming an adult.

2 I was there until I was 13 and they closed
3 the place down. And after that it was a number of foster
4 homes. Never really settling, and if I did stay with a
5 family, there was a lot of alcoholism. Like, again,
6 nothing very stable.

7 So I spent my young years just basically
8 floating around. And I met my husband when I was 17. And
9 he -- in my mind he offered me stability. So I went with -
10 - I stayed with him and had three beautiful children with
11 him. But how do I put -- it wasn't a stable relationship.
12 He was very violent and there was -- there's times when it
13 was -- relationship was calm. Like, having the children I
14 tried my best to offer them a calmness and to -- I tried my
15 best to provide them with a stable home. But when you have
16 a husband who is very abusive, it's very easy to lose
17 yourself.

18 Anyways, so Michelle, as she was growing up
19 and Danielle and Anthony, they both seen, as children, a
20 lot of the violence with their father. And we would -- I
21 would leave him off and on, trying to get out of the
22 relationship.

23 Anyways, I started becoming in -- started
24 getting into drugs when I was in my 20s. And, again, I
25 didn't know anything about drugs. I was very naive. And

1 so I didn't have a clue what I was getting into until I was
2 already in it. And it kind of -- it took over all the
3 goodness inside of me I felt. As much as I wanted to be --
4 and I tried to be a good parent. At times I wasn't. I
5 wasn't there for my children.

6 When they were -- as they were growing up in
7 I think the year 2000, the drugs just got too much of me
8 and I chose drugs over my children at that time, thinking
9 that -- in my mind, thinking that they didn't deserve to
10 have a drug-addicted mother looking after them.

11 Anyways, Michelle kind of got lost in the
12 works but I walked away. Danielle and Tony were looked
13 after but Michelle wasn't because she was older. She was
14 almost -- she was 18, over 18. So she kind of got lost,
15 very lost. And she -- eventually she found me on the
16 streets and she didn't want to be alone and she didn't want
17 me to be alone. And it's not the ideal situation of a
18 family unit but that was ours.

19 And so her and I were both on the streets
20 using drugs. And during the time, Michelle and I were
21 trying to plan to come home because she was pregnant at the
22 time. And we thought we wanted to try and make a
23 difference, so we were trying to find a way to get home but
24 our brains weren't working too good because we were both
25 not in the right mind. And the last time I talked with

1 her, we were talking on the phone -- I gave her a hug and
2 then we both went our separate ways living on the streets.
3 And we said we'd meet up in about an hour. And we both
4 said we loved you and then she hung up. And that was the
5 last time I ever talked with my daughter.

6 That's kind of the gist of -- the quick gist
7 of where Michelle went missing. I didn't -- we didn't know
8 where she was. I kept looking for her on the streets. And
9 it wasn't until, like, a few days later that a friend
10 talked me into going in to the police and reporting her
11 missing but that's one thing I didn't want to do because I
12 didn't want to face the fact that my daughter was missing.

13 That just -- she was supposed to turn up.
14 You know, she was supposed to be there and I was supposed
15 to hug her and say, you know, "Don't do that to me. Don't
16 scare me like that, you know." But she never did. You
17 know, she was missing for, like, two-and-a-half years. And
18 I spent a lot of that time looking for her on the streets,
19 trying to find her, but she wasn't there.

20 And before she was found, my children
21 started making contact with me on the streets and they
22 started reminding me that I wasn't alone, that I was --
23 that I had family, because I felt I didn't have anything,
24 that I wasn't worth anything, you know. But as much as I
25 put these two through, they came and they found me on the

1 streets and they started to let me know I wasn't alone.
2 And they built a little foundation so that when my
3 daughter's remains were found I was in a safe place. I was
4 with them. And I didn't find out when I was on the
5 streets, you know, and I wasn't told by a random person.

6 Anyways, after they found my daughter's
7 remains, part of you can't believe that that's actually
8 happened. You're still supposed to be waiting, you know,
9 but that finalises it so much.

10 I'm probably jumping over a bunch of pieces
11 but I'm just trying to keep track in my mind.

12 But I remember trying to go to -- okay.
13 Anyways, I've been over eight years clean now off of
14 heroine and the drugs. I have my own home in Port Hardy,
15 bought with my residential school money. I have a
16 beautiful granddaughter that's in my life now that I'm
17 fortunate to be a part of her life. And my children here,
18 we're here to -- I guess my daughter, Michelle, she was 24
19 when she went missing and she was a beautiful child. Like,
20 from when she was a baby, she was just always smiling. And
21 then when she got used to being a big sister she just --
22 she loved Dani to pieces and same with Tony. She was like
23 the second mom when I wasn't there, you know.

24 And I just don't -- you know, like, she
25 deserved better, you know. And you can't question fate. I

1 know that. I guess I'm just -- I'm here also just to --
2 remind my daughter wasn't just a working girl. She wasn't
3 just a prostitute, you know. She wasn't just a junkie.
4 She was loved, you know. She has a lot of people that
5 still cry for her, you know.

6 And there's too many young girls out there.
7 I knew two other ones while I was on the street, two other
8 Native Aboriginal women that were murdered. And it's just
9 -- it's a sad state that we have to be here just to remind
10 people that our children, our sisters, our daughters, you
11 know, they were all loved, you know.

12 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you very
13 much, Mona. I'd like to ask you some questions if that's
14 okay.

15 You did a wonderful job but there might be
16 some details that would help people understand the story.

17 So you were born in Bella Bella. And you
18 also lived in Alert Bay; did you not?

19 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes.

20 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And so how long did
21 you live in Alert Bay?

22 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I was in St. Mike's
23 Residential School from 1964 to 1973 when they were finally
24 closing it down. That's the only way that I was -- got out
25 of there was when they were closing it down finally.

1 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And what year were
2 you actually born in?

3 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Pardon me?

4 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** What year were you
5 born in? What's your birthday?

6 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh, I'm sorry. I was born
7 January 8, 1960. Yeah, so I was, like four-and-a-half when
8 I finally got put in the residential school. I was too
9 young to go to school and I had no understanding of where I
10 was or where my mom was, you know.

11 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And you said that
12 your -- both your parents died before you were five. And
13 both -- in both cases it was accidents; is that right?

14 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. Yeah, my dad owned a
15 little putt putt boat and the boat sank, so he -- and he
16 drowned. And then six months later my mom was going to a
17 funeral or going I think to Alert Bay and the plane crashed
18 and everybody on it perished. So, like I said, within days
19 of my mom's passing I found myself in St. Mike's with no
20 understanding of what really had happened to me or where I
21 was.

22 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And both Bella
23 Bella and Alert Bay, they're fairly isolated communities;
24 are they?

25 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. Yeah, Wuikinuxv

1 Village you can only get in there through boat or plane.
2 There's no roads that get -- to go there. And it's a very
3 small community. Maybe in the village there's maybe like
4 80 people that live there.

5 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Did you actually
6 live at the residential school or did you live with foster
7 parents or family members?

8 **MS. MONA SHAW:** No, I lived in the
9 residential school. They had dormitories. You start --
10 when you first get there you're, like, on the junior
11 dormitory with all the younger girls and then the
12 intermediate and senior. There's, like, maybe -- I'm not
13 sure if it's, like, 60 on each side of the dormitory, but
14 there's a lot of us children and our beds were, like,
15 within 3 feet of each other and we all lived there 10
16 months out of the year. And they -- all the other kids
17 were a family, you know.

18 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And what about the
19 adults who looked after you? What can you say about the
20 caring that you received?

21 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Sometimes during holidays
22 we're allowed to go stay with family. At times -- so
23 because I was very blond, I felt I wasn't really accepted.
24 I was, like, a (speaking in Oowekyala language). You know,
25 that's what everybody used to call me. (Speaking in

1 Oowekyala), you know. So I was -- I used to pray that I'd
2 get darker skin so I'd be like my brothers and sisters but.

3 Depending on the relative that I was staying
4 with, sometimes it was alcoholism, but there's a lot of
5 children, my cousins, that we played with in Rivers Inlet.
6 A lot of times the children, we were very independent, you
7 know. You just ran around and did whatever we did. And if
8 there's drinking we tried to stay away from there. You
9 know, we learned self-preservation as children, you know.

10 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Tell us about your
11 siblings. Who were they?

12 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Okay. I have two other
13 sisters and I had five brothers. One of my brothers,
14 Robert, passed away when I was eight years old, and that
15 was one year that I got forgotten about in the residential
16 school. Over the summer I was eight years old and nobody
17 remembered to take me, so I was stuck in Alert Bay and that
18 was the summer that he drowned.

19 But my family, like, my brothers and
20 sisters, as much as we didn't see each other, like we all -
21 - we were all we had, as we were young -- when we were
22 younger, like, I love my brothers. My sisters too, you
23 know.

24 And, like I say, as children, sometimes I
25 didn't see my brothers for, like, four years because they

1 were in different residential schools or they were in
2 foster homes or I didn't know where they were. And then
3 when I was nine my older sister, Valerie, was asked to take
4 me because nobody else wanted me. That's what she was
5 told. She goes, "You have to take Mona because nobody else
6 wants her." So and she was only 17, you know. She was a
7 new mom and she had -- just like myself, she didn't know
8 how to be a mom. She didn't know how to be involved with
9 family, you know.

10 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** M'hm.

11 **MS. MONA SHAW:** And so she tried to -- did
12 her best to look after me but she had her own demons that
13 she was fighting.

14 And then I kind of stayed off and on between
15 her and foster homes. And then finally -- I think I was --
16 I was fairly young when I got lost in the system. I didn't
17 know where to turn. I didn't know what help was out there.
18 I was thrown out by my sister. I got -- we were too much
19 for her. And so I was kind of like one of the -- I would
20 just go to where all the Natives were in Vancouver. I
21 didn't know any -- there's no support. I just kind of hung
22 out with family and slept on couches, couch surfed for a
23 few years until I met my husband and then I thought, "Oh,
24 this is what I'm supposed to do. This is what family's
25 about." You know, and that, you know.

1 And I didn't realize when I first met him,
2 like, that he was very prejudiced. He thought that I was a
3 white girl. And then he found out that I was Native and he
4 was very vocal as far as sometimes his displeasure, you
5 know. Yeah.

6 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And your children,
7 Michelle was the eldest and she was born on August 11,
8 1981?

9 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes, she was. I was 21 when
10 I had her. And I remember -- like, again, I thought I was
11 going to have to -- I couldn't go into labour. They had to
12 have a C-section and I remember being more upset about the
13 little scar that I had because I was 21 and -- but I just -
14 - I took one look at her and she's, like, just this
15 perfectly little round head and she was totally dependent
16 on me and you couldn't pry her out of my arms. It was,
17 like, that was -- I finally knew love, you know. I finally
18 knew what it was to absolutely love another human being,
19 you know. It was my daughter, Michelle, you know. And
20 then I did my best.

21 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Yes. And five
22 years later Danielle was born.

23 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes.

24 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** The young woman to
25 your left.

1 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. Yeah, May 5th, 1986 I
2 had Danielle and Michelle was quite excited but not quite,
3 you know -- like, she wanted to be a big sister and it was
4 like my family was growing, you know. Like, again, it's
5 like I was making my own little pack. My -- I have my
6 daughter -- my two daughters and then four years later I
7 had my son Tony.

8 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And he was born
9 January 12th, 1990?

10 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes. Yeah. And, yeah, that
11 was ---

12 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And where were you
13 living when the children -- where were you living when the
14 children were born?

15 **MS. MONA SHAW:** In Burnaby.

16 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** In Burnaby.

17 **MS. MONA SHAW:** It was off and on with my
18 husband. Throughout those years it was, like, back and
19 forth. We'd be together and then due to violence, you
20 know, I would leave, you know. There's a lot of blank
21 spots in my mind but we lived in Burnaby for a good part of
22 the younger years, you know.

23 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And you told me of
24 one event with your husband which was kind of the final
25 straw. And what happened there?

1 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh yeah. He used to come in
2 with a bottle when he got paid, 24-pack of beer and a 26er
3 of scotch or whatever he drank. And as soon as we seen
4 that, like, Tony was only I think two months old. Danielle
5 was four and Michelle was only 8 or 9. But as soon as we
6 would see him walking in like that, Dani would run and grab
7 the bottles and they would skit around, grab toys. So we
8 would go into the bedroom and we would barricade ourselves
9 in there and push a dresser against the door so that when
10 he got drunk he couldn't come and hurt us, you know.

11 And I remember him screaming in the door.
12 He goes how he was going to -- how nobody would have me or
13 my children, how he was going to take us and he was going
14 to kill all my kids and let me live for two weeks just so I
15 could think about how they had all died. And then he said
16 he would -- then he would kill me. And having somebody say
17 that to you about your children and then we would -- kind
18 of had to go into hiding. And it was a little bit chaotic
19 there for a while, trying to stay a step ahead of him,
20 because sometimes I would think I was going to be safe and
21 then I'd get a phone call from him.

22 And at the time I had somebody that worked
23 with BC Hydro and I'd say, like, "Where is he living?" And
24 I'd find out he was only two blocks from me, you know.

25 He used to walk by our house in the middle

1 of the night. And I remember Danielle telling me once, she
2 goes, "I was waving at daddy last night" when she got up to
3 go to the washroom and he apparently was standing right
4 outside our house just staring at where we were living.
5 And that was terrifying to me because he could be very
6 charming but he could also be very violent, you know. And
7 the possibility of him making good on what he promised when
8 he was in a drunken rage kind of spurred me on but it was
9 really hard to live in those conditions, you know. I don't
10 think I ever really told my kids how violent he -- it was
11 because that was mine to bear, you know.

12 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And do you know
13 where he is today?

14 **MS. MONA SHAW:** No. He -- we haven't had
15 any contact with him since about '92. Is that about -- you
16 were about -- you were just all children, but it was about
17 '92. And he's -- hasn't been around, has never paid a dime
18 in child support. Family maintenance could not collect
19 money off him because he was so violent and he made the
20 worker feel very threatened. So they told me, they said,
21 "Sorry, we can't garnishee his wages. We can't get any
22 money from him to pay child support because there is fear
23 of the worker, of retaliation."

24 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. So that's
25 one agency that you might get help from and you didn't ---

1 **MS. MONA SHAW:** No.

2 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** --- because they
3 were afraid of your husband. And what about other
4 agencies? Did you go for help about the fact that you were
5 with a violent man?

6 **MS. MONA SHAW:** No, I didn't. I didn't know
7 any agencies and I had nobody there to tell me, to say, you
8 know, "Did you know that there is -- there were these
9 agencies available for me?" So, no, I didn't have any
10 support at all, none, because I did not know who to turn
11 to. I just -- basically just tried my best to be a strong
12 mother and tried to do my best for my children.

13 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And I might need to
14 say a few words so you understand this question, but around
15 that time when your husband was being violent, how did you
16 use the police? What was your perspective of the police?

17 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I remember once when I did
18 try to charge him and then when the police got there they
19 were laughing and smiling with him like they were all
20 buddies; right? And right there, like, you're supposed to
21 be here to help me, you know. But he's explaining to them,
22 "Oh, I got a wife, you know. She's a little bit, you
23 know." I don't know what he said, but by the end of it I
24 think he was to stay away from me for 24 hours at that
25 time.

1 But he -- there was a few other incidences
2 where I had to charge him and I did end up getting
3 restraining order against him. But a lot of the times I
4 felt -- like I said, he could be very charming, could be
5 very charming. And I -- he used to be friends with the
6 lawyers in the courtroom, you know. And I've always felt I
7 sat there by myself separate from everything that was
8 happening around me and just let everybody do whatever they
9 were doing. And I had no say. You know, I had no
10 strength, had no inner strength either.

11 And by this time I had already started
12 dabbling in drug use, you know, but I just -- I felt I was
13 just being pushed whichever way the wind blew, you know.
14 There was -- I had no control.

15 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And so was this all
16 still around, like, the early and mid '90s that you're
17 talking about?

18 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Early about '90s to '92. I
19 think I finally left him when Tony was not even six months
20 old because it was during that time that he threatened, you
21 know, to kill all of them, you know.

22 Like one time when I was pregnant with Tony,
23 he had me by my throat about two feet off the ground and he
24 had his knees to my stomach and he kept saying he was going
25 to make me abort. He goes, "I'm going to make you abort,

1 bitch."

2 You know, and Danielle jumped from her top
3 bunk and she ran up and she's looking at her dad holding
4 her mom by the throat and saying, "Daddy, what does abort
5 mean?" You know, and he dropped me there. But to have a
6 four-year-old run up and say, you know, "Daddy, what are
7 you doing?" You know, "What are you trying to do?"

8 You know, and I'm thankful that maybe they
9 were too young to remember some of the things that we went
10 through, but Michelle didn't. She was older. She seen and
11 she remembered a lot of the times where she had to be the
12 little mother and entertain her baby brother and baby
13 sister, make sure Tony had his bottle, you know, while we
14 were together in that room or just sometimes she seen the
15 stress. She would just kind of, like, usher them away and
16 play with them because she knew to keep everybody quiet
17 because didn't want to get her dad upset.

18 You know, so she lived with that stress for
19 -- as a child too. And she bear -- she bore that burden
20 right along with me, you know, and she was just a child.
21 She shouldn't have had to, you know.

22 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And what about
23 finances when you left him? How did you look after
24 yourselves?

25 **MS. MONA SHAW:** For a while there I worked

1 with BC Tel and BC Hydro, but I slipped on some ice at one
2 point when Danielle was a baby and then I -- there was
3 chronic problem, pain. So a lot of it was just welfare.
4 We had no extra support. It was just welfare and child
5 bonus, you know. I didn't get support from family, you
6 know. They were -- had their own families to deal with,
7 you know.

8 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And did you still
9 live in the lower mainland at that time?

10 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. Again, we were moving
11 a lot around in south Burnaby. I kind of called that place
12 my home. And as my children are growing up, they remember
13 a lot more of the moves than I do. I seem to -- I have
14 blank spots in my memory, like, even as a child. But there
15 was a lot of chaos. And, like I said, my children, they'll
16 remember a lot of the moves. I know we moved a lot but I
17 probably don't remember all of them. But it was basically
18 Vancouver, south Burnaby mainly, you know.

19 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** The police agency
20 that you're dealing with, the one you reported your
21 husband's abuse, was that the Burnaby RCMP?

22 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes, yeah.

23 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And the -- I think
24 there were probably Burnaby courts at that time. They have
25 since closed.

1 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. And, like I said,
2 again, there was no support. There was nobody there to sit
3 with me even or, like, when you have a young mother that's
4 dealing with a very violent husband, sometimes -- nowadays,
5 I mean, there would be somebody sitting with that person.
6 But at that time in the '80s they didn't have that. They
7 didn't offer -- or at least it was offered to me, you know.

8 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Yeah, I know. I
9 was a Crown around that time in the Burnaby courts and I
10 know that Victim Services didn't come until about the '80s.
11 Let's see, in '86 there was the start but it grew slowly
12 and then eventually now, fortunately, we find them in many
13 places in the lower mainland with -- offering the type of
14 assistance that sounds like you're recommending.

15 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yes.

16 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. So when did
17 you get to the point then that your drugs started to kind
18 of control you?

19 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Pardon me?

20 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** When did -- when in
21 your life did you get to the point that the drugs started
22 to control you and your activity and what happened?

23 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh my goodness. There's a
24 few times where it got the best of me and my children were
25 taken away. And then I would try to get my life back

1 together and get them back but it was -- there was a
2 pattern that I started to follow, you know. I would get
3 clean for a period of time and then I would just kind of
4 lose myself in drug use. Or sometimes it was,
5 unfortunately for me, a family member that you (inaudible)
6 that used to come over and bring it and put it right in
7 front of my face, you know, family or friends, you know.
8 Because I never really went out and started seeking it
9 until I was, like, maybe in the '90s. But before that I
10 was -- a lot of times it was just around. And I -- like I
11 said, my kids got taken away from me a few times because of
12 drug use, you know.

13 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And in those early
14 years particularly, what was it about drugs that sort of
15 was telling you that it was a good idea to take them?

16 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh, okay. I just -- I
17 remember reading in the newspaper going crack is an
18 epidemic. And I thought -- and I got scared. I go, "I'll
19 never do that." Right? But they never said crack was
20 cocaine.

21 And I remember asking the dealer one time,
22 I'm going, "I won't touch crack." And he goes, "Oh, this
23 isn't crack. Don't worry." You know, and I was very
24 naive. And he goes, "It's just cocaine. That's not too
25 bad, you know."

1 And I used to just snort it until my nose
2 got plugged up so I couldn't even ingest any of the drugs.
3 And I had a family member who said, "Here, try it this
4 way." And as soon as I took that first hoot of crack, that
5 was it. It was, like, it -- the addiction is instantaneous
6 almost. And I went from a level of occasionally using to
7 constantly using whenever I could, you know.

8 And then I got into a relationship for a
9 while in the '90s where I kind of tapered off. And I was
10 trying to, like, be the family person. I had a boyfriend.
11 We were together a few years. And, again, I didn't know
12 how to maintain a relationship. I didn't know how to have
13 the other half. I didn't know how to talk with a partner,
14 you know. I just went through the motions of trying to be
15 a mother and but everything in my mind was like a picture
16 but I didn't have the tools to be a good partner to
17 anybody, you know.

18 I was young. I was naive. And when I tried
19 to do my best, I -- you know, I was there like for my kids,
20 with my kids, but as soon as like a crisis hit, like when
21 we split up, I think that was -- when me and my boyfriend
22 in the '90s, when we split up, then it was a very quick
23 decline for myself, like, in the drug world and having
24 drugs overtake me to the point where I didn't think I was -
25 - my kids deserved a mother like I was. And I thought the

1 best thing I could do was walk away because what child
2 deserves to watch a parent use drugs, you know? That's not
3 the ideal situation, you know.

4 So and it was the drugs also. They were
5 just taking too heavy a toll on me. And I walked away. To
6 this day I can't believe I actually did that. But I
7 damaged my kids when I did that, you know. Everything they
8 had was gone because their mom chose drugs and didn't think
9 she was worth anything, you know.

10 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And how old were
11 the kids at that time?

12 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Tony was -- Michelle was
13 about just 19, 20. Dani, how old was everybody? I think
14 you were 11?

15 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** At the point that we --
16 you moved away for good?

17 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah.

18 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** Oh, I was 15.

19 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Eleven (11), 15 and Michelle
20 was 19 going on 20. And, like I say, Tony got put in
21 foster home, Dani foster home in the beginning also, but
22 Michelle was -- had no -- nothing. She kind of had to try
23 to make a go of it by herself. And that spirit of hers I'm
24 sure started dwindling, you know, because she -- I was
25 gone, you know. And ---

1 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** When did you start
2 seeing Michelle on the street with you?

3 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh my goodness. At least a
4 year-and-a-half before she went missing. I remember I
5 opened the door and I was in a hotel room and there's a
6 knock on the door and somebody came and they go, "It's your
7 daughter Michelle." And -- anyways, that was about 2002 I
8 believe. She said she came to find me. She didn't want me
9 to be by myself and she didn't want to be by herself
10 either. And so the only way she knew to be with me was the
11 drugs. And she'd already started dabbling in drugs
12 herself.

13 And so on the street, again, it's not an
14 ideal situation, but we tried to look out for each other as
15 best we could. And we tried to make sure we were always
16 taken care of, you know. And, again, it's not ideal. But
17 she didn't want to be alone. She didn't want me to be
18 alone. And she wanted to be with me any way she could.

19 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And what can you
20 say about either you or Michelle at that point seeking help
21 from any agency that could actually help you with your
22 addiction, your finances, getting back with your children?
23 What was going on in that area?

24 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Again, I didn't know who to
25 call. Phones weren't readily available. But a few weeks

1 before she went missing she came and told me that she was
2 pregnant. So, like, okay, let's -- and she said, "Let's go
3 home to Wuikinuxv. And so I remember phoning -- I'd lost a
4 whole bunch of phone numbers by then. But somehow I
5 remembered the band office. And I remember phoning there
6 going, "Can you please help me and my daughter get home?"
7 And being told, "No, we can't help you." You know, and
8 then I would try to tell them, "I'm going talk to my
9 family, you know. Michelle and I want to come home, you
10 know." And the answer was always no. And I couldn't
11 remember other people's phone number to ask for help.

12 And I remember her telling me, she goes,
13 "Mom, don't leave me here. Don't leave me here." Because
14 I was seriously wanting to go and Michelle was so terrified
15 that I would leave her on the street and just -- and go
16 home without her.

17 But, again, I didn't know any resources. I
18 didn't know who to reach out to. I didn't even -- I'd
19 forgotten my children's phone numbers. I didn't know how
20 to get a hold of them. I was just -- I felt like I was
21 shooting in the dark trying to get help for my daughter and
22 myself.

23 And oh, excuse me. And it was just within a
24 few weeks after that we were still talking about going
25 home. And then she said, "I'll see you in an hour, mom."

1 And then phoned me just to make sure I was still there
2 waiting for her. And we always said we loved you -- loved
3 each other. And that was the last I talked to her. She
4 goes, "I'll see you in an hour, Mom." And she was really
5 quite happy, you know, and because we were moving forward.

6 There was excitement, you know. We were
7 going to go home. We were going to get off drugs. She was
8 going to have her baby, you know. It was all these plans
9 that we had. And they're not there anymore, you know,
10 because somebody took her life and dumped her on the side
11 of the road like garbage, you know, and she was lucky
12 enough to be found.

13 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And thank you very
14 much. You brought pictures today actually with you of
15 Michelle. And I noticed one that was up and expect that
16 they'll come up again in a moment. So how old was Michelle
17 when she went missing?

18 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Pardon me?

19 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** How old was
20 Michelle when she went missing?

21 **MS. MONA SHAW:** She was 24. She was 24 and

22 ---

23 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** There she is.

24 **MS. MONA SHAW:** --- she was beautiful,
25 always smiling. She liked her nice clothes. She loved her

1 makeup, you know. And she had such a tender heart, you
2 know, such a tender heart. And I miss her every day.
3 Like, even when she went missing I had a hard time -- I
4 wouldn't -- it's like I wouldn't leave the streets. I
5 didn't want to leave without her.

6 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** M'hm.

7 **MS. MONA SHAW:** For the longest time I would
8 go looking for her, you know, and not knowing that she was
9 already taken from me, you know. I would go looking for
10 her, you know.

11 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And to whom did you
12 report the fact that she was missing?

13 **MS. MONA SHAW:** The Surrey RCMP.

14 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And what was their
15 response?

16 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Basically, she's just
17 another junkie, another working girl. She'll turn up.
18 She'll turn up, you know. There's a small attempt of the
19 cops questioning people, but it wasn't anything serious.
20 And then sometimes I would try to tell them information.
21 I'm, like, the -- you know, like, anything that I knew that
22 I was hearing on the street. And their response was,
23 "You're just a junkie. What do you know?" So they were
24 already looking down at me and looking down at the fact
25 that my daughter was just a junkie. She was just another

1 working girl, but she wasn't, you know. She wasn't.

2 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Now eventually when
3 her remains were found -- and how much later was that?

4 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I believe two-and-a-half
5 years. She was found just in December 7th I believe in
6 2007.

7 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And did you at that
8 stage have any dealings with the homicide investigators?

9 **MS. MONA SHAW:** After her remains were
10 found, again, their response was they didn't -- they had
11 nothing to say to me because, again, I was just a junkie.
12 I didn't know anything. So I believe they were expecting
13 somebody else to come that was more in their line of who
14 they visualised. I wasn't the ideal person in their mind
15 of somebody that could give them information, you know.

16 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** M'hm.

17 **MS. MONA SHAW:** So I felt very unheard and
18 very shamed that this is my daughter we're talking about
19 and the cops are saying to her mom, you know -- and that
20 was a fact. I was a junkie, you know. I was homeless, you
21 know. But I still felt. I still -- you know, she was my
22 daughter. I loved her, you know. And she was -- yeah, the
23 homicide -- they were very snobby.

24 Even the beat cops, sometimes they would
25 have information and they told me they're trying to tell

1 homicide what they had heard on the street but -- to them.
2 I guess they have hierarchies even in the police
3 departments, you know. And they were like, "Oh, you know,
4 like, you're just beat cops. What do you know", you know?
5 So they weren't even listening in them -- to themselves,
6 you know, to the cops that were on the street, the ones
7 that I did know, the ones that did know Michelle, you know.

8 There was a few cops that knew her and they
9 came to me and expressed their sorrow. They go, "She
10 didn't deserve that, Mona." You know, and they would tell
11 me little stories about their encounters with my daughter,
12 you know. Again, it's not ideal that you'd have your
13 daughter -- have the cops know your daughter quite well,
14 but they did and they really liked her and they were very
15 sorry. But there was -- there's not a lot of help as far
16 as with the homicide directly.

17 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** So your experience
18 with the police was varied, depending on the person that
19 you were speaking with and the ---

20 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah.

21 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** --- position they
22 held? Yeah.

23 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah.

24 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And so did -- was
25 there ever a suspect identified?

1 **MS. MONA SHAW:** I had a suspect for -- or I
2 had a person of interest I wanted the police to talk with.
3 And there was even a phone number where my daughter phoned
4 -- the last phone number she phoned from. I got the person
5 to okay that the police trace the call. But I never heard
6 any more regarding that and they said that they did talk
7 with somebody but I don't know who they talked with. I
8 tried to ask them questions about the person that I believe
9 that she was with but there is no information coming. They
10 just said, "It's ongoing investigation and we can't tell
11 you anything."

12 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. And it
13 wasn't much later that you reconnected with Anthony and
14 Danielle; is that right?

15 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah. When Michelle came
16 back into my life she -- I remember she would phone Dani
17 sometimes or phone Tony and I would talk to them. And then
18 when Michelle was missing, all of a sudden he was in foster
19 home. And he was only 16, 17 years old and he would come
20 and find me, you know. And he would make a point of we
21 would get together. He would bring me to Dani's work or we
22 would arrange to go for something to eat, you know. And
23 just -- it was that little contact here and there in such a
24 dark world that I started realizing I am loved, you know.
25 I have two more children that need me, you know.

1 And they started -- it was just, like,
2 little contact and I had a few little, like, trial runs at
3 getting clean, you know, but the last few times I would
4 kind of run back to the streets. But in November 11th, 2008
5 I walked away from Surrey and I told everybody, I says,
6 "I'm not coming back." Because I was going up to see Dani
7 and Tony, I was going to go get clean. I was going to --
8 had all these plans. And they didn't tell me at that time
9 that my daughter's remains had been found. They --
10 smartly, they got me up to Wuikinuxv Village -- pardon me?

11 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** Her remains were found a
12 year prior.

13 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh. No, but 2007 but this
14 is January -- or okay.

15 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** (Inaudible).

16 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah, sorry. Yeah.

17 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** (Inaudible).

18 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah, sorry. In the January
19 right after my daughter's remains were found was when I
20 first went home and that's when Dani and Tony told me my
21 daughter's remains were found. And at the same time, I'd
22 also lost one of my brothers, so that was, like, a double
23 whammy. But that was one of my first attempts at getting
24 clean.

25 And then I spent, like, from that January

1 until the November trying really hard but not quite
2 succeeding in leaving the street life. I guess now in
3 November that's when I finally went back home to Wuikinuxv
4 and I haven't been back to Surrey since. And I've brought
5 Michelle home with me. Like, she's with me.

6 Dani took care of everything as far as my
7 daughter's remains, everything. I wasn't in any shape to
8 be there. And my children are very strong, very strong.
9 And I'm here today because of it.

10 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you, Mona.

11 Your home, be -- would you spell that for
12 the record, just so that people know?

13 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh, okay. Wuikinuxv is W-U-
14 I-K-I-N-U-X-V. Wuikinuxv Village.

15 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. And is that
16 the same -- where the same band office is that couldn't
17 help you at a time when you called?

18 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah, yes.

19 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And so has your
20 relationship with the band office changed?

21 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah, the person that I was
22 talking to is no longer there. And so I didn't ever get
23 the chance to confront her because they said -- I asked for
24 her and they said that she wasn't there anymore. And so I
25 haven't -- and they say they would have been there if I

1 would have asked the right people. But when you're in that
2 kind of shape and you're trying to ask for help you'd think
3 that somebody would -- it's such a small community, that
4 somebody would tell somebody and give them direction
5 because I called quite a few times, you know, just trying
6 to ask for help, you know.

7 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** So congratulations
8 on being eight years sober and clean. What do you think --
9 what is the key to that? What would you say to somebody in
10 a similar position about the key that opened the door to
11 being clean and sober?

12 **MS. MONA SHAW:** It's -- I couldn't go down
13 any farther. I was -- I had hit, like, rock bottom. The
14 next step would have been -- like, when I was on the
15 street, I seen lifers down there and I didn't want to be
16 that. I'd seen people that were there for 25, 30 years and
17 they were in their 70s. And I'm going -- I didn't want
18 that for myself. I was lucky I had support between Dani
19 and Tony. Like, Tony was very persistent with me and Dani
20 too; right? And they were, like, an anchor I was able to
21 hold onto. And, again, I was fortunate. And they were
22 very strong in their asking of me. "Please, Mom", you
23 know.

24 And then I also had my daughter's memory
25 too. I was able to bring her home and that helped my

1 spirit. I still -- I made a promise to her and I have two
2 children that I just hang onto for dear life in -- if
3 there's any temptation in front of me, all I have to do is
4 think about Dani and Tony and my granddaughter, Ariel (ph).
5 And the answer's very easy for me, is no. And I've said
6 that quite a few times in the last few years to people.

7 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Now when we talked
8 on the phone I told you a little bit about what the
9 Commissioner's -- what the task is in front of them. And
10 I'm wondering if you have any recommendations for
11 Commissioner Audette that you could communicate at this
12 point.

13 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Oh my goodness. I guess
14 better communication, like, as far as the RCMP offices so
15 they listen to each other. Like, they're all supposed to
16 be one unit. They're not supposed to be hierarchies and
17 different -- like, just have a communication. Listen to
18 parts of the department that actually know what they're
19 talking about. In homicide they just see something on a
20 piece of paper. They don't know the people. But there
21 were police officers that did know what was happening.

22 And stop the prejudism [sic] regarding what
23 status or what -- you know, where the person stands in
24 their lifeline, or whether they're homeless or whether
25 they're an addict or whether they're a single parent or,

1 you know, they're all these things. Just treat them like
2 human beings and just be caring with them in their loss,
3 you know.

4 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you. And I
5 just see a note here that I don't think I should miss
6 because you also spoke quite glowingly of the Port Hardy
7 Police in terms of helping you with your addiction and
8 getting back on the road.

9 **MS. MONA SHAW:** Yeah, the Port Hardy Mental
10 Health. When I was in the hospital detoxing, I think for
11 the second time, one of the workers, Shane Thomas (ph), he
12 came to me and he was just very genuine. I thought he was
13 just -- you know, I kind of, like, dismissed anybody that
14 was trying to help me. They're just all bureaucratic, you
15 know. And I said, "Well, if you're listening," I says, "I
16 really like fruit." And the next day he walks in with a
17 big bag of fruit. And that was, like, okay. And then --
18 but it was a slow process. But he pointed me in different
19 directions within Port Hardy to help me in those times,
20 made sure I got to my appointments, made sure I had enough
21 food in my fridge, checked up on how I was, you know.

22 And things -- I had a good support system in
23 the very, very beginning that was very valuable, you know.
24 And I started to find myself and be able to accept the
25 help. And that was a big thing was accepting the help.

1 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you, Mona.
2 I'm going to ask that you hand the microphone to Anthony,
3 your son, unless you have anything else you want to say.
4 Okay. Thank you very much.

5 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Hello?

6 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Go ahead. You go
7 ahead. You go ahead.

8 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Yeah, I've prepared a
9 speech.

10 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you for doing
11 that.

12 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** So, again, thank you for
13 having my family here and allowing us to speak about my
14 sister and our lives.

15 So first off, I want everyone here to know
16 that I'm not here to ask for sympathy, seek charity or lay
17 blame. I want only for others to understand some of my
18 family's life, my sister Michelle's life and the
19 unfortunate events that led to her death. I'll also
20 discuss the aftermath, supports I was offered, as well as
21 supports I could have used so.

22 For the longest time it was just me, my two
23 sisters, Dani and Michelle, and my mom. We moved around a
24 lot from apartment to apartment, living in poverty with
25 support from welfare and the local food bank. My mother,

1 being a single parent of three children, did the best she
2 could. She's a fantastic mother. She's loving and caring
3 and would do anything for her children.

4 My sister, Danielle, was one of my best
5 friends. She's tenacious and tough. My oldest sister,
6 Michelle, it's hard to put into words what she was and what
7 she meant to my family and I. She was intelligent, caring,
8 persistent, resilient, beautiful, kind and extremely soft-
9 hearted. She was also so much more than that. She was my
10 second mother. She was the one who gave me haircuts, the
11 one who made me dinner when I was hungry, the one who I
12 looked up to, the one who made my birthday special, the one
13 who loved and looked after me when no one else was around
14 to. She loved butterflies and The Little Mermaid. She
15 wanted to be a stylist. She wanted to be somebody.

16 Around my 10th birthday my mother succumbed
17 to the pull of addiction once more. She was not around
18 much during this time and it was up to Michelle to take
19 care of me. She did the best she could. She did a
20 fantastic job.

21 Soon after this I was placed in the foster
22 care. I did not see much of her after this. I would
23 periodically visit her apartment in Surrey. Soon the
24 visits stopped happening. I was too caught up in my life
25 to see what was going on. She got caught up in drugs and

1 prostitution. She got lost in the world or swallowed up by
2 it.

3 On my 12th birthday she came to my foster
4 home to join the celebrations. I was so happy to see her.
5 Although she didn't look well, I didn't care because she
6 was there. This was one of the last times I'll ever see
7 her.

8 I came home from school years later to be
9 told she had gone missing. My mother would tell me she
10 just left one night after saying she'd be back soon. Two
11 years after that her remains were discovered by a jogger.
12 At this point there's no loss of that last little bit of
13 hope for my sister. I had already known. She never would
14 have gone this long without reaching out.

15 My sister Danielle handled much of the
16 funeral arrangements and I carried her ashes back home to
17 Rivers Inlet, the Wuikinuxv Village. To the best of my
18 knowledge, the police were never able to find out exactly
19 what happened and I do not blame them.

20 I was offered some supports to help me deal
21 with and process these events. The foster system found me
22 a counsellor. I believe this helped a lot. I cannot think
23 of many other supports that could have been offered.
24 Perhaps a support group or being able to speak with someone
25 who went through something similar would have helped. It

1 might have allowed me to feel less alone with what I went
2 through.

3 As for my sister, more supports definitely
4 could have been offered to her. She was a young lady that
5 wanted to make something of herself. Perhaps funding for
6 her education could have been approved. Perhaps she could
7 have been treated with the same concern given to my sister
8 and I when we were forced to leave my mother's care.
9 Perhaps she could have been offered more guidance and
10 support in navigating this harsh and scary world.

11 Michelle Shaw (inaudible) was my sister. I
12 miss her every day.

13 I want to thank the Inquiry for having my
14 mother, my sister and I here, giving us a forum to tell the
15 world about Michelle (inaudible) and for treating the
16 absence of beautiful young women across the nation with the
17 seriousness and concern they deserve.

18 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you, Anthony.

19 Now I'm just going to ask you a couple
20 questions from -- if you don't mind.

21 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** M'hm.

22 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. So this is -
23 - this was an important time where you and Danielle end up
24 going into foster care and Michelle didn't have that
25 because she was 19 years old. Do you remember that time?

1 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Yes.

2 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And describe it to
3 us.

4 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Well, yeah, at the time,
5 my mom got caught up in drugs once more and she wasn't
6 around for weeks at a time. I remember social workers
7 visiting the house and seeing that nobody was there to take
8 care of me when my sister was at work. And I remember one
9 of the social workers actually making me ravioli because I
10 didn't have dinner that night.

11 And, yes, at the time I was -- I had a big
12 brother through the Big Brother program. And he decided to
13 take me into his house and become a foster home. And
14 around that time the environment was judged unfit and at
15 first -- I was the first one forced to leave. And then my
16 sister went to stay with my uncle. And, yeah, I don't
17 remember much else.

18 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** So -- and so where
19 did Michelle live?

20 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** During the time Michelle
21 lived with us. I don't remember where she went afterwards.
22 We all lived in a townhouse in Surrey together. And, yeah,
23 I -- we left that behind, all our furniture, everything. A
24 lot of stuff was lost.

25 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** You said that

1 Michelle was at work one time when the social worker came.
2 Where -- do you know where she was working?

3 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: I believe some
4 restaurant. I don't remember where.

5 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. So she was
6 probably working as a waitress or something.

7 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: Yeah.

8 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Now you said
9 something about she had an idea about what she wanted to
10 do. She knew what kind of training that she wanted.

11 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: Yeah.

12 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: What did you know
13 about that?

14 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: She, I believe, tried to
15 apply to beauty school three years in a row, requested
16 funding from our band, the Wuikinuxv Nation, and was
17 refused those three years. And, yeah, nothing ever came of
18 it.

19 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. So she
20 applied to the same band office ---

21 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: Yeah.

22 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: --- and she was
23 refused. Okay. And so she never went to beauty school.

24 MR. ANTHONY SHAW: No.

25 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Thank you.

1 Is there anything else you'd like to say? Do you have any
2 recommendations to make? Because I should add, because you
3 have actually pursued an education in psychology; is that
4 right?

5 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Yes.

6 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** And can you tell us
7 a little bit about that?

8 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Yeah, I attended Kwantlen
9 Polytechnic University and obtained a bachelor's of applied
10 psychology. And I used funding that was made available
11 because I was part of the foster system and the Wuikinuxv
12 Nation funded my education as well. And I'm currently
13 using that education to work in Port Hardy on the mental
14 health team as a rehab worker. Yeah.

15 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Right.
16 Congratulations. That's ---

17 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Thank you.

18 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** --- wonderful that
19 you've pursued that and been successful.

20 Anything else you'd like to say? Any
21 recommendations?

22 **MR. ANTHONY SHAW:** Just perhaps when the
23 system looks at families and kind of tears them apart,
24 perhaps look at the whole thing, see what supports
25 everybody could use, whether or not they're under the age

1 of 18. Yeah, because my sister and I were offered a lot of
2 support and they were concerned more about us and she was
3 just kind of -- she fell through the cracks and, yeah.

4 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Thank you, Anthony.
5 So let's bring that mic down here. Hi,
6 Danielle.

7 **MS. DANIELLE SHAW:** Hello. So as I
8 introduced myself before, Danielle Shaw.

9 Excuse me. I didn't think I'd be so
10 emotional.

11 I guess to start, to kind of go back to when
12 we were kids, I remember a little more than my mom thinks I
13 did but I was a little bit older. But my mom -- my sister
14 definitely remembered more than we did. She was older.

15 From the moment that we were -- that, you
16 know -- from -- for as long as I can remember, she was like
17 another mom. She was -- like my mom said, she'd usher us
18 away and take us into her room and play and there was times
19 -- like, I remember times when we were, like, four -- when
20 I was, like, four and -- like, four or five, six years old
21 and we'd take Tony, like, six months old, and we'd somehow
22 carry him onto our top bunk and, like, sit in a corner of
23 our top bunk and play with him while there was fighting
24 going on and violence and everything, and just anything to
25 preoccupy us and get us out of the way and keep us quiet

1 and keep us happy.

2 And then at a certain point we left my dad.
3 And anything that we could do to get by it was done. And
4 funny enough, I kind of look back and I think, like, we
5 were together and it wasn't that bad. And we had each
6 other. And, to me, I felt like we were happy and we were
7 away from that environment. And I don't look back on that
8 time and think it was traumatic. I look back on that time
9 and kind of think it was adventurous and fun but I was
10 four, so, of course, I would.

11 And Michelle always seemed older than she
12 was. Even when she was a teenager she seemed like she was
13 an adult. And then she finally got a little bit of relief
14 from that when my mom had her boyfriend, who is our
15 stepdad.

16 Finally we kind of had a family unit. We
17 had some stability. Michelle could, you know, go to school
18 and focus on being with friends and get into some trouble
19 and do what teenagers are supposed to do. And, you know,
20 and she did all those things and things were okay.

21 But, you know, as my mom mentioned, when
22 they split up things kind of unravelled. And that's when -
23 - I think I was in Grade 5 and that's when things really
24 started to go. And my stepdad, his name was Key (ph). He
25 was gone and my mom had spiralled into drug addiction and

1 we were -- Michelle had to work. She was -- so if I was in
2 Grade 5 I was -- she was only 16 or 17 and she worked in a
3 restaurant. She was a waitress in a restaurant and she had
4 to work her butt off to feed us, to feed Tony and I. And
5 she didn't have her own life. She didn't have anything
6 outside of that. There was no option for her to do
7 anything that a 17-year-old should be doing. She didn't
8 have that option.

9 And there wasn't a lot of support. Although
10 we were on the Ministry's radar and we were kind of -- you
11 know, there was always, like, in and out of foster homes
12 and stuff, as far as I know, there was no support for her
13 during that time. There was no help for her during that
14 time because she was older. But she was still a child.
15 Like, she still wasn't an adult and she didn't get a chance
16 to learn the skills it takes to become an adult. And she
17 still was our -- you know, our caretaker, because we were -
18 - although we were in foster, we were also out of foster
19 home. Like, she didn't have a chance.

20 She worked her butt off in adult basic
21 education trying to get -- trying to graduate high school
22 and work and feed us. And during the times when my mom
23 wasn't around, also try to hide from the social worker that
24 my mom wasn't around, try to make it kind of normal for us.

25 I remember there was some nights where she

1 would just pop kernels of popcorn over the stove for us for
2 dinner because there was no other food but bag of kernels
3 for us to eat. And it was just whatever was there was what
4 we had. And she made sure that, you know, we went to
5 school and she knew where we were.

6 And when I was a teenager, I was like 14,
7 and when I was going out with friends and stuff she always
8 knew where I was and she took care of us. And she
9 shouldn't have had to do that. But there wasn't a lot of
10 other support.

11 So it got to a point where she couldn't hide
12 it any longer and she couldn't do this any longer. And
13 there was times when her and I would go out and try to find
14 my mom. And there were times we did find my mom and drag
15 her home and she'd be gone the next day. And I don't --
16 I'm just trying to be honest. I don't want to hurt my mom
17 but she didn't -- when my mom was there, she was the best
18 mom in the world. But, unfortunately, substance abuse
19 alters your whole reality. And so Michelle had to
20 supplement. She had to be the parent.

21 And during that time, like, I remember
22 during that time we're living in Surrey and, you know, it
23 was -- I was in high school and my teenage sister is
24 looking after us and there was no support, even when there
25 was social workers coming in and out there was no support.

1 There was -- our biggest support was the food bank. The
2 only way that we ate was the food bank. That was the
3 biggest -- that was like a lifesaver to us, but there was
4 nothing else offered. Even when people knew what was going
5 on there was nothing else offered.

6 So when it came time that we had to be put
7 into homes that were more stable to us, the only reason --
8 and I look back or I tell my story to people who haven't
9 lived this life -- and, to me, it's a reality and it is
10 what it is. But to other people they think, like, oh my
11 gosh. Or I just kind of go, well, I don't really think of
12 it that way because I got lucky. I got very, very lucky
13 and I've lived a very good life.

14 I got lucky because at 15 years old when a
15 social worker said that we had to leave, the social worker
16 agreed, because I was 15, to allow me to go move in with my
17 uncle. She had never met him. She had no clue who he was.
18 He wasn't even a blood uncle of ours. He was my stepdad's
19 brother. And he was willing to take me in. He wasn't in a
20 place where he could legally adopt us or become a foster
21 home because of a criminal record. But the social worker,
22 without any screening, said -- she said -- she basically
23 said to me one day, she said, "Tony's going to be taken
24 away. He's going to be put in a foster home. He's going
25 to go live with Ken. And you're going to be put in a

1 foster home too but there are zero chances of you guys
2 being put in a foster home together." Because he was 10 or
3 11 and I was 15. We weren't -- there was zero chance.
4 Like, that never happens. Siblings don't get put in homes
5 together. You will not be together.

6 And she said, "I'm going to leave and I'm
7 going to come back in a week. And if I come back and
8 you're not here, I'm not going to come looking for you."
9 So I packed all my stuff into a garbage bag and my uncle
10 picked me up and I went to live with him. And I'm
11 extremely fortunate that this was a home that provided care
12 and support and love and, you know, I was financially
13 stable and had a life that I could only imagine. But
14 that's not guaranteed.

15 I mean, this social worker had no clue where
16 I was going and she had every knowledge -- and I -- on one
17 hand, I thank everything under the sun that she did not
18 come looking, that nobody came looking. But there are
19 people out there, there are kids out there that nobody's
20 looking for that aren't so lucky, that aren't in a stable
21 home and that aren't looked after and nobody's looking for
22 them because they're almost out of the system. And that
23 was the rationale. Had I been younger, I would never, ever
24 have been able to just go live with my uncle. But because
25 I was 15 and she said in a couple of years you're just

1 going to be thrown out anyways.

2 And to her credit, she was -- she knew -- I
3 think Michelle vouched for my uncle because she knew that I
4 was better off where I was going. But I can't help but
5 think of all the kids that aren't going to a safe place and
6 that nobody's looking for. And so I was extremely lucky
7 and not many people are.

8 Tony wasn't so lucky because he was younger
9 and because he couldn't just run away. I mean, essentially
10 I ran away. I couldn't get my license until I was 19. I
11 couldn't travel until I was 19. I didn't have a legal
12 guardian and I didn't have a parent, but I had everything
13 else that I needed.

14 Tony was in a foster home and he bounced
15 around from foster home to foster home and didn't have the
16 same support system that I did growing up. And I guess it
17 was a different support system because he had a support
18 system through the foster care system.

19 I -- once I was deemed ran away and nobody
20 knew where I was -- for all they knew, I was on the street.
21 For all they knew, I was succumbed to drug use as well and
22 nobody was going to come looking. And the social worker
23 knew that. She said, "Nobody will look for you because
24 you're 15." My support system came from this family. And
25 then Michelle was left behind.

1 I went to go live with my uncle. Tony went
2 into the foster system and my sister was left in this house
3 alone with all of our stuff, trying to make rent and trying
4 to live. And at this point, you know, she had -- like we
5 said, she had applied -- she had been accepted into, like,
6 this prestigious school for aesthetics and she wanted to be
7 an aesthetician. She was going to go to Blanche Macdonald
8 and she was accepted in but she couldn't get the funding
9 for it and there was no support. And the rationale for it
10 was that that career wasn't worth funding and that career
11 choice wasn't -- you're not going to be a doctor or a
12 lawyer. Why would we fund that?

13 But that funding -- the program was, like,
14 was a tenth of what a university degree would be. And that
15 would have -- I know it would have made all the difference
16 in the world. It was her dream. It was what she worked so
17 hard in adult basic education. Like, she didn't have to
18 get her Grade 12 but she worked her butt off whenever she
19 could to finish up Grade 12 and to work her butt off and to
20 be there for us so that she could become an aesthetician.
21 And three years in a row those dreams were crushed. And
22 she kept applying and kept applying and kept applying. So
23 she had drive. Like, she wanted to have a life and she had
24 dreams and she was working for those dreams and she was
25 doing everything she could for those dreams under

1 impossible, impossible conditions. And nobody would hold
2 her hand and say, "I'll help you along this way. I'll
3 support you."

4 I mean, I think back and our band -- my band
5 supported me when I went to -- I went to Capilano
6 University in their School of Business for a degree in
7 business administration and they supported Tony in his
8 psychology degree because those were worthy careers to
9 have, but an aesthetician's not and there was no support
10 for that kind of a career path. And I fully believe it
11 would have made all the difference in the world. I fully
12 believe that somebody that could have been there for my
13 sister would have made all the difference in the world.

14 And she tried. She held on. Like, I
15 remember I would -- because I was older and so I could
16 still, like, take the bus out to Surrey and I would still
17 come out and see her for a little while and come visit her
18 and stuff. And she tried and she tried to keep up
19 normalcy. And she tried to kind of build this life so that
20 at some point there was something for us to go back to.
21 Like, she wanted to be able to have a home so that wherever
22 we were there was always somewhere for us to come back to,
23 so that we can come visit her, so that she could still
24 pursue her dreams, so that she could have a life. But, I
25 mean, with everything mounted on her plate, she couldn't do

1 it.

2 And there was nobody there to pick her up
3 when she needed to be picked up. And there was nobody
4 there to support her when she needed support. And if there
5 was, it wasn't forthcoming. Like, nobody went to her and
6 said, "You can go here. You can go here. Like, these are
7 -- this is what's in place for you." It was just not --
8 there was just nothing there. It was just us. There was
9 nothing there.

10 And then, you know, she fell into that life.
11 I remember going to Surrey once and going to the house and
12 there was nobody there and the door was open and the place
13 was trashed and all our stuff was all over the place. And
14 I didn't know where my sister was and my mom was gone. And
15 I didn't know where anybody was. And our house and
16 everything that we owned was done. And it was just kind of
17 like this huge -- I don't know, just this huge loss of,
18 like, she held on for as long as she could.

19 And then, you know, the last I heard she was
20 -- she had met with my mom and she was on the street and
21 she was living that lifestyle. And I'll admit, I have
22 always -- I've taken the -- my brother was always the
23 extremely unconditional loving supportive person who just
24 wanted everybody to be okay. And it didn't matter what
25 anybody did. It didn't matter where they were. It didn't

1 matter anything. He would be right there. And I wasn't as
2 loving and supportive. I was that tough love that just
3 kind of said, if you're high, I don't want to talk to you.
4 If you're asking me for money, don't even get in touch with
5 me. I can't -- I protected myself and just said I can't do
6 this while you're doing this.

7 There were times when my uncle told me that
8 he would -- he didn't tell me until I was an adult but he
9 tried to protect me a lot. So he would reach out to my
10 sister. And one time he paid for a bus trip to Port Hardy
11 because she wanted to go to Port Hardy, and picked her up
12 and drove her there. And she got on the bus and then he,
13 like, walked her to the bus. Got her on the bus and I
14 guess at some point she got off the bus. She -- you never
15 know what's going through somebody's head when they're in
16 the throws of substance abuse. And I guess she just wasn't
17 ready.

18 There was a time when she did go to Port
19 Hardy and she worked up there for a little while and she
20 lived up there for a little while. And I'm not sure if
21 this was before or after she had found my mom on the
22 street. I think it was before. I assume that this was
23 when she had given up the house and when I didn't know
24 where she was, before she had found my mom on the street.
25 And she tried her hardest to work up there too and I don't

1 know what exactly happened because I have never got a
2 chance to talk to her about it. But she found herself back
3 in Vancouver and went and found my mom and got into some
4 heavier drugs.

5 And I saw her a couple times and every time
6 I saw her she'd ask for money and want something from me.
7 And that drove me crazy. That drove me absolutely crazy.
8 But there was nothing there for her, including me.

9 And I saw her about -- I saw her in February
10 2005 right before she went missing. She went missing in
11 September of 2005. And she was excited and she wanted, you
12 know, to move forward and she wanted to get out of the life
13 and she just kept saying, "But I have to get mom." Like,
14 she didn't want to leave my mom behind. And it was just,
15 "I have to get mom. I have to -- you know, mom and I,
16 we're going to get out of here and we're going to be okay
17 and everything."

18 And we kind of had a good visit. There was
19 lots of laughs and stuff but it was -- we didn't talk about
20 the serious stuff. And I never, ever would have imagined
21 in a million years that she'd go missing. And then when
22 she went missing, I -- you know, you still hold on hope.
23 And, to me, I kind of thought, like, she's missing but
24 she's been missing before. Like, not missing, missing but
25 I didn't know where she was before and she's always turned

1 up. She's always taken care of herself. She's got to turn
2 up.

3 And when her remains were found it was --
4 but just to back up, like, when she went missing, the thing
5 that drove me crazy was the fact that in the headlines --
6 you see in the media and if you talk to the cops, the
7 media, like, the headlines, all the headlines said
8 "Prostitute Goes Missing." She was -- that was what she
9 was called. It was never anything else. They didn't even
10 say her name. It was just, you know, some prostitute's
11 missing. Who -- you frame it like that, you know. You
12 wrap it up like that and put a bow on it. Nobody's going
13 to open that up. Nobody's looking at that.

14 And the media plays a huge role in how
15 things are perceived and the biases that we live with. And
16 I just was, like, but nobody thought to ask -- nobody said,
17 you know, this young woman is missing. This young woman
18 has dropped off the face of the earth. Where is she? It
19 was some prostitute, some junkie prostitute. The headline
20 literally said, "Prostitute Goes Missing." Like, and it
21 was just, like, holy crap, because, to me, she wasn't a
22 prostitute. You can't -- you're not going to look at
23 somebody and just label them that way. Like, and how many
24 other women are just labelled for what's going to, you
25 know, be sensationalized and what's going to fit the

1 storyline that the media wants to tell. And how many
2 people read these newspapers and watch the news and see
3 these faces and read the headline and then disregard these
4 lives because of what the media chooses to tell.

5 And it's -- that's a huge, huge portion of
6 where we are today and how there's all these families and
7 all these women because people don't want to listen to the
8 families because these women are just prostitutes or drug
9 addicts or anything like that. And, I mean, like I see on
10 the news all the time you see things about women going
11 missing or people being murdered.

12 I mean, there was just recently a young girl
13 who was murdered. And the headline was all about whether
14 she had drugs and alcohol in her system. And it's, like,
15 so because she drank alcohol she deserved to die? That's
16 what we're going to talk about? Are you kidding me? And
17 then you think about it, like, if she looked different
18 would that headline say the same? And it's the world that
19 we live in and it's ridiculous.

20 And the police are the same way. They just
21 weren't really -- they didn't want to hear anything from
22 anybody. I mean, I also couldn't help much because I
23 didn't -- hadn't talked to her in a while. I didn't have
24 any leads. I didn't know anybody within that, you know. I
25 had family members who did try to find out what happened

1 and find out where she was and there was a huge -- there's
2 something being done to cover it up because there was
3 stories floating around that she was all -- like, there was
4 all these stories floating around that people were telling
5 about her. Oh, she's fine. You know, she moved away. She
6 had her baby and all this stuff. And I don't know who was
7 going to great lengths to cover this up but it was --
8 everywhere we went it was a dead end.

9 Everywhere we looked it was a dead end. And
10 the police weren't wanting to look. And eventually the one
11 person of interest that they had been looking at went to
12 jail for another charge and so they -- the story we got
13 was, "Well, he's in jail." Like, whether he did it or not
14 he's in jail. And it's, like, but that doesn't address the
15 issue. Whether he's in jail for something else or not,
16 that doesn't mean you stop trying to find out what
17 happened.

18 And it was kind of like, isn't it good
19 enough? Like, isn't that good enough that this person's in
20 jail already? And it just -- well, no, it's not. It's not
21 good enough.

22 And when her remains were found -- and I
23 just remember, like, through it all there wasn't a lot of
24 support. There wasn't a lot of anything. It was just kind
25 of how it was. This is how your life was.

1 And, yeah, and so now we, along with a lot
2 of other families, live every day knowing that these
3 vibrant, beautiful women who had all their lives ahead of
4 them are cut short and until now they've never been given
5 the dignity and the respect that they deserve for people to
6 actually hear so what actually happened and how can we
7 avoid this moving forward. And I guess that's kind of one
8 of the main thing. Like, you know, we can tell our story
9 all we want but the main thing is to make sure that it
10 doesn't happen to anybody else.

11 And, I mean, I have a four-year-old
12 daughter. I don't want her to grow up in a world that she
13 has to worry about this same thing. I don't want her to
14 grow up in a world where, you know, she's worried for
15 herself or her friends. And I don't -- you know, we need
16 to do better.

17 I think about my brother and I and I think
18 about the fact that we had support but we also had very
19 little support. And it struck a chord. I was recently in
20 a -- I run a department for the Wuikinuxv Nation actually.
21 I run our natural resource stewardship department there.
22 And so I was in a workshop on policy development and it was
23 about safety policies. And they said, you know, you have
24 accidents which cause harm, and you have incidents which
25 don't necessarily cause harm but could be avoidable, and

1 then you have what's called a near miss. And near misses
2 always get overlooked. And it made me think, like, so harm
3 was done to my sister and here we are talking about it.
4 And my brother and I are the near miss. We had very little
5 support and we had -- we have more support than she did
6 though. And we're doing well today and we've grown up and
7 we're still here to tell this tale.

8 But how many other families are dealing with
9 the same thing and can't cope in that way? And how many
10 other people don't have the same support? And how many
11 other people are falling through the cracks? Because in a
12 lot of ways we both have instances where we fell through
13 the cracks. And we easily, both of us easily could be
14 anywhere but where we are and nobody could blame us for
15 that, you know, for what we went through.

16 And I don't say that easily because who I
17 am, I don't like to say -- I don't need anybody to think
18 oh, poor you or anything like that. I don't -- to me, I
19 actually look back and I go, you know, it wasn't too bad.
20 Life wasn't too bad. And people have it worse. Like, we,
21 you know -- even though we're eating popcorn for dinner,
22 we're still eating food, you know. We still had a roof
23 over our head. And I never had to sleep outside on the
24 ground or anything. And, you know, and I have people
25 around me who love me and who I love. And my mom's here

1 with us and stuff.

2 So I look at this and I go, in the grand
3 scheme of things, life is pretty good and we're doing
4 pretty good. But what could have been for us is a reality
5 for a lot of other people who aren't necessarily the --
6 even the women that we're talking about with the families.
7 And I just think that we need to do better. I just think
8 we need to move forward and we need to do better. We need
9 to make sure that, you know, we're not allowing the media
10 and government agencies to hold a bias over us and to look
11 at us for our names and, you know, our -- where we come
12 from and our background and I'm -- throw us into a box that
13 other people aren't being put into.

14 And then -- and we need to look out for each
15 other too. And so we need to do better but, you know,
16 government agencies need to do better and we need to have
17 better support for one another. And we need to make sure
18 that we put an end to this epidemic. There's no other
19 options.

20 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** Okay. Thank you
21 very much.

22 All of you, thank you very much. It's clear
23 to me that, you know, each day we make decisions and we
24 don't always know what we're preventing. But after
25 listening to you, it very much clarifies which light we

1 should be following. So thank you very much.

2 And Madam Commissioner, do you have any
3 questions for this family?

4 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Merci
5 beaucoup, Maître Wendy.

6 Well, first of all, thank you for -- all of
7 you. And the gift that you're giving us today -- or to me,
8 I'll say, and the teaching is the forgiveness. I'm a mom
9 too. Five beautiful children and we want to do better
10 every day. And I see that forgiveness to your mom is a
11 beautiful teaching. And I'm very impressed by that. Very,
12 very touched.

13 Very touched also by the unity that you're
14 forming or creating. And we see that over and over across
15 Canada by listening to families and their truth and stories
16 that when the family is strong and together the healing
17 process is there.

18 But I hear something new today. Education
19 also. How important -- we know but Canada needs to hear
20 that too. You mentioned that in your testimony that the
21 world need to know who was Michelle and who she is for you
22 today. And I always say we are a tool and very honoured
23 that we were able to provide this to you.

24 But very concerned also that, like you say,
25 Danielle, what about the rest of people who don't have that

1 support, don't have that love, don't have that roof or
2 security? And the list is long. So collectively we are
3 concerned too. And we want to make sure that with this
4 inquiry and your love, your message, your words that you
5 shared to us with the amazing work with Wendy, that we can
6 create a report that will reflect your concern and your
7 recommendation.

8 But also, something that we don't hear
9 enough: media, how they present my loved one, how they
10 misrepresent my loved one or my sister or my daughter. So
11 I'm -- I think it's powerful and it's important that you
12 remind that media also play a key role and they have also
13 an exercise to do to change that.

14 I always say to media, you have that magic.
15 Use it well. But it's more strong when it comes from a
16 family member. Merci. Merci, Danielle.

17 And as human being, parents, but also very
18 dedicated to this work, my colleagues, Qayaq, Marion and
19 Bryan, the children are a part of our priorities in this
20 journey and how the system failed them and how it should
21 be. So I know my colleagues will read your testimony and
22 will learn and use to make sure that we work hard for those
23 recommendation.

24 So we do also ask every family members and
25 survivors that come here if you would like to accept a gift

1 from us because your courage, your resilience, we have to
2 honour that. I want to honour that. And everywhere we go
3 we ask the grandmother from the territory, from the land,
4 to sit with us, to guide us, to help us here. And I always
5 ask my grandmother, my spiritual grandmother to explain the
6 gift.

7 But before I pass the mic, or the talking
8 stick, I want to say that Canada was listening and if not
9 we'll make sure they do. Merci beaucoup.

10 **GRANDMOTHER BERNIE WILLIAMS:** I just want to
11 say (speaking in Haida) and to your family here. And I'm
12 very, very just honoured that you are here to share your
13 story and your truths. And you're too amazing, as daughter
14 and son here too, to carry this message all across Canada
15 because, like, you are so right.

16 I work the front lines in the downtown east
17 side along with a group of women and there are so many of
18 the youth that are still lost down there. And I think I
19 heard one of the families say yesterday is that nobody
20 cares. And I think that's part of our responsibility to go
21 out and to do this work and to make sure that they don't
22 fall through the cracks. But I just want to say haawa to
23 you for your work and that and your words, and welcome
24 home.

25 I want to share this story very briefly.

1 I'm sure you've heard it all -- from us all across Canada
2 but these eagle feathers have made somewhat of a journey.
3 We started the eagle feather drive from Haida Gwaii, my
4 home territory. The matriarchs in our village and old
5 (inaudible) started the drive to collect the eagle feathers
6 along the shorelines and the beaches there. They donated
7 over 400 of the eagle feathers. And so every place we go
8 they -- we do a call out for eagle feathers. So these we
9 are very blessed that it comes from Thompson, Manitoba.
10 And so the families across Canada, the spiritual Elders,
11 the firekeepers, everywhere have been so kind to donate
12 these eagle feathers to give to the families from the
13 families too. So I'd like to give them to the Elders.

14 If there's any of you who would like to give
15 a hug to the family or give them a little word of, you
16 know, comfort, you're very welcome to come up to share this
17 moment with them. It's very tough to come up and come out
18 here to share. So if you feel like it, just come up.

19 **MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN:** This session is
20 closed, so we're going to have a break before the next
21 session. So if you want to take a break, could you please
22 be back in 10 minutes? Thank you.

23

24

25

1 --- Exhibits (code: P01P15P0304)

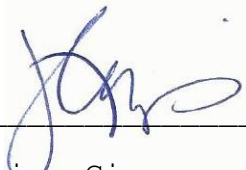
2 **Exhibit 1:** Folder containing three digital images
3 displayed on monitors during the public
4 testimony of the witnesses.

5

6 --- Upon adjourning at 10:58

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Janice Gingras, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Janice', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Janice Gingras

April 17, 2018