

St. Joseph's Orphanage Restorative Inquiry
Second Gathering of Former Children from the Orphanage, January 10, 2020
Hopes and aspirations for children currently in the care of the State:

"There's gotta be love." (Maura LaBelle)

- Kids in state care should be checked in on a regular basis.
 - Safety is a must.
 - Children's emotional and physical wellbeing must be continuously evaluated.
- Children should be listened to and believed.
 - Don't discount what the child says.
 - Be accessible to the child.
 - Get to know the child as a person, not just a file.
 - Every child in foster care should have guardian ad litem.
- The State must select and support foster families with great care.
 - State staff selecting foster families need extensive training
 - Foster families (and adoptive families) should have thorough background checks.
 - Training is essential for foster families, including in child development.
 - People who are caring for children need to know the difference between discipline and abuse.
 - Foster family compensation should be raised.
 - Institutions (religious and otherwise) require very careful oversight if they are providing care for children.
- Instead of taking kids from families, invest in supporting the family to care for their children.
 - Whenever possible, children should be placed with their extended family.
- There should be transparency and accountability from all parties.
 - Authority/responsibility should be shared and not concentrated in one agency or institution.
 - Case worker caseloads should be reasonable.
- Access to records is very important. The state should seek ways to allow children access to their records when they reach adulthood.
 - People deserve information and support in accessing records.