



**REPORT ON INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE QUESTIONABLE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE CHILD PROTECTION & FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY
(CPFSA) AND EMBRACING ORPHANS/CARL ROBANSKE**

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INTRODUCTION

Sometime in March 2021, the Office of the Children's Advocate's attention was drawn to one Carl Robanske, a United States national who was the focus of a media story done by Nationwide News Network. The aspect of the story that specifically interested the Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA), was that which highlighted an on-going relationship between Robanske and the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA), an executive agency within the Ministry of Education and Youth. Preliminary concerns centred around Robanske's past and his reported inappropriate contact with a female minor.

Consequent upon this, the OCA commenced an investigation as if this report were in fact accurate there was a need to ascertain the full context of Robanske's partnership with the CPFSA, given its responsibility as the national agency which provides care and protection for vulnerable children, and those exiting care. The CPFSA's self-expressed tagline is *Protecting Children, Empowering Families, Securing the Future*; without more, this means that the CPFSA ought properly to be held to a higher standard as it deals with some of Jamaica's most vulnerable citizens.

The objective of this investigation, therefore, was to enquire into and assess the comprehensive nature of the relationship between the CPFSA and Robanske and to fully consider the actions being attributed to any interested parties. If applicable as well, the Children's Advocate will mention suitable remedial action(s) that may be deemed necessary and will make recommendations regarding additional steps to be pursued, as may be appropriate. This Report, therefore, is being provided in accordance with the requirements of the *Child Care and Protection Act* given the high public interest concerns surrounding this matter and its seminal importance to the child protection sector.

LEGAL AUTHORITY OF THE OCA TO INVESTIGATE

The OCA is the Commission of Parliament that was established to protect the rights and best interests of all children in Jamaica¹; that is, anyone who is below eighteen (18) years of age. Of more specific relevance to the matter at hand, however, is the OCA's **statutory obligation and authority** to review matters of this nature in line with the need for the preservation of certain minimum standards associated with the provision of services/care for children and safeguarding principles. The material sections of Paragraph 11 of the *First Schedule* to the *Child Care and Protection Act (CCPA)* provide thus:-

(1) The Children's Advocate shall –

- (a) Keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of-*
 - (i) law and practice relating to the rights and best interests of children;*
 - (ii) services provided for children by relevant authorities;*
- (b) give advice and make recommendations to Parliament or any Minister or relevant authority, on matters concerning the rights or best interests of children-*
 - (i) upon request by Parliament or such Minister or relevant authority, as the case may be, as soon as is reasonably practicable after receipt of the request;*
 - (ii) on such other occasions as the Children's Advocate considers appropriate;*

The concerns that the OCA had (and still has) having learnt of Robanske's past and his association with the CPFSA, along with subsequent reports and complaints that were made to the OCA in relation to questionable behaviour (both by Robanske and representative(s) within the CPFSA), provided a

¹ Section 4 of the *Child Care and Protection Act*

justifiable basis for the OCA to exercise its legislative authority to investigate and review the attendant circumstances. Very live issues as to whether any child protection rights had been breached in the first instance, and if any best interest principles or safeguarding considerations were compromised with regard to any other children, called for an external review and assessment.

One may very well ask whether the Children's Advocate should be concerned about residents within a transitional facility such as The Father's House. The short answer is that this particular facility from the outset, did not cater exclusively to persons over 18 years, thus making the jurisdiction of the Children's Advocate applicable. Additionally, and of further relevance to any query which may arise with regard to this consideration, is that the CPFSA's suitability to position itself as creating wholesome environments for some of the most vulnerable within the Jamaican society, comes into sharp focus. As such questions abound, these must be assessed within the context of the CPFSA's continued ability to operate as it is presently constituted and/or in a manner that does not lend itself to the highest standards of institutional capacity to protect those whom are entrusted into its care and those transitioning out of its care. These considerations are critical given the position of trust that the CPFSA occupies and the functions that it is expected to discharge in relation to children and those immediately transitioning out of its care, having previously been a child for whom it cared. Consequent upon this, a very high moral authority is demanded of institutions of this sort.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE(S) EMPLOYED

Throughout the conduct of this investigation, the OCA employed a number of processes which can be summarized as follows –

- Scanning diverse media sources, both local and overseas
- Reviewing and analysing documentary evidence
- Interviewing individuals who had useful information

- Recording statements from diverse individuals
- Reviewing call and data records from mobile telephones and tablets – SMS, WhatsApp, Snapchat among others
- Convening of a Hearing which was presided over by the Children's Advocate for the purpose of giving the CEO an opportunity to comment on the adverse findings that were brought forward by the investigations of the Children's Advocate prior to the completion and tabling of this Report. This Hearing took place on December 21, 2022 and is a matter on record as the services of a stenographer were utilized for the collection of verbatim notes. As is her right, the CEO was formally represented by counsel and also accompanied by the Legal Officer employed to the CPFSA.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

From the initial stages of this investigation,² the OCA experienced problems with securing the cooperation of various relevant parties. Some expressed fear that they could lose their jobs, whether they were assigned directly to a CPFSA Office or to a residential child care facility; some reported that they felt intimidated/pressured not to cooperate; others felt confused because as far as they were concerned, Robanske was a 'good man'; and still others were heavily resistant to the efforts and investigations by the OCA's representatives. Cumulatively, this made it particularly difficult to procure critical information within a timeframe that the OCA would have preferred. So significant was the lack of willingness to cooperate that the Children's Advocate thought it fit to pen a warning letter for the attention of key stakeholders, advising that if persons did not desist from wilfully interfering with the investigations, steps would be taken pursuant to *Paragraph 23 of Part II of the First Schedule to the CCPA*³

² The OCA first became seized of the matter in March 2021 and commenced its investigations during that very month.

³ 23. Every person who—

which makes it a criminal offence to obstruct or refuse to cooperate with investigations being conducted by the Children's Advocate. Ultimately, these factors have contributed to the delay associated with the presentation of this Report.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS/LIMITATIONS

Investigations of this sort are invariably always categorized as sensitive for a number of reasons. These include, but are not limited to -

- (a) The population of would-be victims does not readily open up to external investigators/persons and as a consequence trust nurturing and building were elements that the OCA had to emphasize throughout.
- (b) The 'informer culture' that often inhibits persons from speaking frankly about situations that may be perceived as 'getting someone in trouble' severely impacted the pace of this investigation and the number of persons who were willing to come forward and when they

(a) wilfully --

(i) makes any false statement to, or misleads or attempts to mislead the Children's Advocate or any other person in the exercise of his functions under this Schedule; or

(ii) fails to comply with any lawful requirement of the Children's Advocate or any other person under this Schedule; or

(b) without lawful justification or excuse --

(i) obstructs, hinders or resists the Children's Advocate or any other person in the execution of his functions under this Schedule;

(ii) fails to comply with any lawful requirement of the Children's Advocate or any other person under this Schedule; or

(iii) contravenes the provisions of paragraph 13 (5); or

(c) in a manner inconsistent with his duty under paragraph 19(1), deals with documents, information or things mentioned in that subparagraph,

commits an offence.

- did, to commit to converting their oral account into a written statement.
- (c) The possible presence of the Stockholm syndrome⁴ where persons develop positive and strong feelings of loyalty toward individuals who carry out unethical/exploitative acts towards them.
 - (d) A skewed approach with regard to how (in)appropriate behaviour is perceived and/or processed which may influence unhealthy levels of acceptance by the victim(s).

CHILDREN WHO HAVE LIVED IN CARE/CARE LEAVERS: THE CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK & MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The nature of the allegations that gave rise to this investigation prompted the Children's Advocate to incorporate some general literature about children who have lived in care and those leaving/transitioning out of care. The objective of this being to demonstrate the degree of vulnerability that is often (if not always) characteristic of individuals who fall within this cohort and as a consequence, the need for altruistic and supportive interventions as well as a requirement that special care be taken when treating with them. This is especially desirable when the party who is discharging the care towards this population represents the State as a higher standard is expected and in fact, required. When dealing with vulnerable populations the actions of the State should be beyond reproach, be of the highest standard and should be predicated upon principles of integrity and professionalism.

Studies have shown that there is a high co-relation between the reasons that caused a child to be placed in care in the first place, on the one hand, and their increased vulnerability to abuse and exploitation on the other hand. Of significance, is that this vulnerability attaches not only to them when they are

⁴ This condition often applies to situations including child abuse, coach-athlete abuse, relationship abuse and sex trafficking. Some victims see themselves as being in love with their abuser.

minors (i.e. below 18 years) but also even after and during their transition out of the formal care system. A child or young person is in care, or 'looked after', if they live with foster parents, in a residential children's home, or in a residential setting such as a school or secure unit.

*The Preventing Exploitation Toolkit*⁵ expressed that these children may have been placed in care for many reasons. These can include:

- if there is significant risk of harm in the home
- if their parents are unable to care for them
- if they have complex needs and could benefit from respite care

The extract below which treats with the vulnerability of this special cohort to exploitation, aptly describes some of the critical considerations that are widely applicable -

*“Children in care and care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group. They may have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. This can lead to significant emotional, behavioural and mental health needs, **putting them at increased risk of being groomed or exploited by people offering them the attention, affection or support that they have struggled to find elsewhere. Indeed, care homes are often targeted by people seeking to exploit the vulnerabilities of these children.** [My emphasis]*

Moving between care placements, or in and out of care, can further impact a child's emotional and mental wellbeing, and can prevent them from developing stable and protective relationships with trusted adults. Socialising with peers from similar backgrounds (who may be experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties), can reduce children's ability to establish positive, pro-social peer relationships. Their relationships with

⁵ <https://www.preventingexploitationtoolkit.org.uk/home/what-is-exploitation/what-is-vulnerability/children-and-young-people-in-care>

others may instead become characterised by abuse, violence and exploitation.

Children in care are more likely to go missing. During this time they are at greater risk of experiencing abuse, grooming and exploitation.

The experiences of being in care can continue to impact on children and young people after they have left the care system, especially if the transition into family or adult life is challenging and if the support they receive is unable to meet their needs.

Care leavers are often required to become independent at a younger age than their peers, with many leaving care when they are 16 -18 years old. They may be expected to become responsible for finding housing, employment and study opportunities without the support networks available to many other young adults. This transition can be challenging and stressful, difficulties increased by past childhood trauma. Employment, housing and financial difficulties and feelings of isolation and exclusion can make care leavers particularly vulnerable to exploitation.”⁶

Another resource which supports this position with regard to the high probability of vulnerability to abuse and exploitation of children in care and those transitioning out of care, is the paper entitled *What Makes Care Leavers More Vulnerable Than Other Young People and What are Children's Social Care's Responsibilities to Them?*⁷ In considering the issue, six factors were identified as

⁶ Ibid – See Footnote 6

⁷ Joanna Nicolas, Child Protection Consultant and Trainer – <https://careleaverpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Social-care-responsibilities-to-care-leavers.pdf>

contributing to the vulnerability index of these individuals. These were summarized as being -

- What led them to be in care – overall 60% of children (in the UK) come into care because of maltreatment;
- Their experience in the care system;
- Lack of consistency – in homes, friends, carers and workers;
- Lack of support;
- A human desire to be part of a family, which makes care leavers more vulnerable to exploitation of all forms, including sexual exploitation and through gangs;
- The young person may have very little experience of what healthy relationships look like.

Yet another resource which emanated from the University of Zurich, Switzerland in 2021 articulated views about sexuality in residential care and how lived experiences of those children influenced their experiences while transitioning out of care and long after their care placement(s) had come to an end. In an original research article entitled *Vulnerability and Well-Being Decades After Leaving Care*⁸ the researchers zeroed in on the issue of sexuality by canvassing the views of care leavers and examining those against data gathered in a longitudinal study aimed at understanding the impact of residential care experiences on selected dimensions of care-leavers' well-being. The extract below is instructive –

Tabooed Sexuality in Residential Care

No lessons were planned on perceptions of their own or the opposite sex, on how to deal with intimacy and physicality, how to work on relationships, get the right balance between distance and closeness, or how to view themselves or others – and more than that, these subjects

⁸ Thomas Gabriel, Samuel Keller, Clara Bombach:

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.577450/full>

were actually suppressed: 'They didn't teach us how to deal with the opposite sex. They always kept us apart. We didn't have any contact with one other' (Marie). In these conditions, it was almost impossible for them to learn how to deal with their own needs, their body and their own sexuality. For many former residents, self-care remained a challenge long after they had left residential care. Their first sexual experiences were often described as highly ambivalent: 'I didn't know what to do! And I was defenceless, too. I mean, if someone wanted something, I couldn't say no even if I wanted to say no' (Marie).

Within Jamaica's local landscape as well, there is literature which underscores the vulnerability of children within the care of the State and inferentially, the continuing need for support if the intention is to produce well-grounded individuals who will transition out of care. In a 2021 CAPRI⁹ report entitled **Fix the Village Governance and Accountability for Children in State Care in Jamaica** it was said that,

*“. . . consistent reports of abuse and sub-standard living conditions, . . . have come to typify characterizations of state care in Jamaica. There are an estimated 4,875 children in state care in Jamaica, ranging from ages 0 -18. If these children are being ill-served, as the existing research suggests their rights are being abused, their development is encumbered, and they will be ill-equipped as adults to participate in social, civic, political, and economic life. These reports raise several questions, among them: does the removal of a child in crisis to state care, particularly to a residential facility, further their best interests?"*¹⁰

Page 9 of this report goes on to reference the Office of the Children's Advocate thus,

⁹ Caribbean Policy Research Institute – a not-for-profit public policy think tank based in Jamaica

¹⁰https://capricaribbean.org/sites/default/files/public/documents/report/fix_the_village_governance_and_accountability_for_children_in_state_care.pdf - Page 5

“State care for children in Jamaica, however, is wanting. The Office of the Children’s Advocate (OCA), a state entity mandated to protect children’s rights, has consistently reported high child-to-social worker ratios, placement of children in adult institutions, and the creation of state institutions that are inadequately staffed and resourced to meet the needs of Jamaican children, particularly those with special needs.”

Further, at page 11 of the report it was stated that,

“Children in long-term institutional care suffer from reduced physical, cognitive, and hormonal development, as well as issues around attachment security. They are at increased risk of physical and psychological abuse, and neglect. It is estimated that for every three months spent in care, between the ages of 0 - 3 years, a month of development is lost. Research on state care in developing states such as Haiti and Cambodia noted that children in care are more vulnerable to health risks, and often have poorer growth trajectories, and lower social and emotional cognitive functioning. Long term state care, even in higher income jurisdictions, leads to poor outcomes: outcome data for children care from the Boys Town Initiative, which has over ten locations across the United States, shows that their high school dropout rates are as high as 75 percent, their use of hard drugs is 50 percent higher than the average population, and up to 80 percent are likely to have mental health or behavioural problems.”

Cumulatively, therefore, it should be beyond debate that this special cohort of children requires specialized care even as they transition out of state care and progress to young adulthood. Adverse childhood experiences that typically are attached to them as a distinct group predispose them to harm in their adult lives and play a contributing role in how these vulnerabilities may influence their approach to benefactors who appear to shower them with great attention. The

objective of the State cannot be to rescue these children and after caring for them place them within a transitional facility or in any other circumstances that erode the progress which the State hoped to have made while the ward was a minor. Regrettably, the OCA's investigations highlighted a glaring lack of appreciation by the CEO of the CPFSA for this view as she repeatedly maintained that once a former ward has attained 18 years, there is a lower risk that is attached to them. One of the bases cited by the CEO as a justification for this view of hers, was the "decision-making powers of them (the former wards) as adults."¹¹

THE PRIMARY ISSUES

1. What is the role of the Child Protection and Family Services Agency?
2. What population of residents did the CPFSA-operated transitional facility known as The Father's House cater to?
3. Did Carl Robanske have antecedents that gave rise to the need for precaution in relation to his interactions with children?
4. Did the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA) know of these antecedents?
5. Did the CPFSA have an administrative (as well as a moral) responsibility to avoid/prevent a partnership with Carl Robanske and/or any organization in which he occupied a position of influence?
6. Did the CPFSA have an administrative (as well as a moral) responsibility to avoid and/or prevent Carl Robanske from having access to children in its care and by extension, access to those transitioning out of care?
7. What steps, if any, did the CPFSA take in pursuit of any concurrent administrative and moral responsibilities it may have, to ensure that it was serving the best interests of those wards (and former wards) in its care?

¹¹ This view was expressed by the CEO in response to a question posed by the Children's Advocate at a Hearing convened by the Children's Advocate on December 21, 2022.

ANCILLARY ISSUES

8. Did any of the CPFSA's representatives have a relationship with Carl Robanske that fell outside the realms of a professional nature and if so, did this influence the approach taken in relation to any such representative's handling of matters involving Robanske and the wards/former wards within the CPFSA's care?
9. Did any of the CPFSA's representatives attempt to influence the outcome of any enquiries, investigations, or any other avenues through which matters concerning any ward/former ward and Robanske, should properly have been ventilated?
10. Did the CPFSA in its handling of any concerns that may have arisen in relation to Carl Robanske and any of the relevant facilities that fall within its purview, act with full candour in relation to any of its representations to the Honourable Minister(s) and/or instructions issued by the Minister of Education and Youth¹²?

ASSESSMENT OF THE ISSUES

A. THE ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY

Part I of the *Child Care and Protection Act, 2004* (CCPA), is dedicated to the 'care and protection of children' and as such it focuses on the provision of support and guidance to these children by an adult or an institution that is capable of adequately doing so. The arrangement of the provisions of the CCPA also makes it very clear that this Part does not focus on the child who is in conflict with the law, but rather focuses on children who are non-criminogenic. In the words of the statute throughout *Part I*, there is repeated reference to 'the government agency responsible for children' and the central role that it ought

¹² The CPFSA is an Executive Agency which falls within the Ministry of Education and Youth, thus making that Ministry its 'parent Ministry' and the Minister of Education and Youth the responsible individual(s) to whom the CPFSA ultimately reports.

to play in providing support for children who are in need of care and protection for a number of varying reasons.¹³ Therefore, the duties of this 'government agency responsible for children' make it the *de facto* parent that can step into the shoes of a biological parent for the day to day discharge of care to a child where necessary. Within the local context, this agency is the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA), an executive agency that falls within the ambit of the Ministry of Education and Youth. By its own self-description on its website, the CPFSA has incorporated the following as a part of its core values, "*We will always apply the 'best interests' principle. We treat children, and families with sensitivity, fairness, honesty and equity. We aim to deliver the best and most effective service. . . **When a child leaves us he/she will be in a better position than when she/he came.***" [Emphasis mine].

The inference to be drawn from this self-description is that the CPFSA accepts its role as the agent of the State which literally parents a cohort of children who are typically fractured and extremely vulnerable. It also seems to hold the view that upon exiting care, a child (ward) should have his/her life chances enhanced when compared to what may have existed if that child had not been taken into care. It is impatient of debate that any such government entity must be held to a very high standard of accountability as those children over whom it has charge were essentially removed from their domestic situations because their families were seen to have been compromising their best interests and failing them in some way or because they were orphaned. The State therefore ought not to be purportedly 'rescuing' these children but in practical terms negatively impacting their life's outcomes.

¹³ A child is deemed to be in need of care and protection where there is no adult available, such as is the situation where the child is an orphan, or where the adults in the child's life are not discharging their responsibility of care towards the child and there are critical gaps in the provision of care towards the child.

B. NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CPFSA AND THE FATHER'S HOUSE

The CPFSA was previously known as the CDA, i.e. the Child Development Agency. In 2014, the then CDA opened the transitional facility known as The Father's House that would cater to female wards of the state. This facility was established as a result of a partnership between the CDA and a United States based charity known as 'Embracing Orphans'; the house was said to have been **gifted** to the agency by Embracing Orphans and there were certain administrative costs that the benefactors would continue to make to the CDA (CPFSA). Robanske is reported as saying,

*"We (will) attend to maintenance as well as assisting in some of the financials of it, including a reimbursement for the lead House Mother's Salary to the Child Development Agency."*¹⁴

What became apparent throughout the OCA's investigations is that the attention and support that Robanske personally gave to The Father's House and its residents was extremely involved and seemed to far exceed reasonable expectations. The word **gifted** is emphasized here because an examination of the Lease Agreement confirmed that the CDA/CPFSA paid **\$0** to Embracing Orphans under the agreement from inception in 2013 through to the conduct of this investigation. In fact, some may justifiably posit that the extent of Robanske's kindness and seemingly unlimited support ought to have prompted the CDA/CPFSA to exercise close due diligence over the entire arrangement; regrettably, it never did. This issue will be explored in more depth further on in this Report. For her part, the CEO of the CPFSA is reported as having described this very timely gift (as far as the agency was concerned) as an "invaluable donation". In fact, Robanske's account that he had "been asked for some time by Jamaican officials if Embracing Orphans could help fill the urgent mental

¹⁴ News article entitled *CDA Opens Transition House in Montego Bay* – <https://jis.gov.jm>

health needs of the country's at-risk children",¹⁵ seems to accord with the CEO's expression of gratitude for this 'invaluable contribution' as it was the CPFSA that is purported to have solicited assistance from him.

Embracing Orphans describes the beginnings of its involvement in Jamaica in terms which hint more of romanticism, blind opportunity and chance as ordained by Divinity rather than any definitive strategy save for the explicit condition that attachment to an orphanage would be desirable. In the *Our Story* portion of its website¹⁶ its start is described thus,

"In Dec. of 2007 Founder and Executive Director, Carl Robanske, asked God where he could serve. Robanske had served through missions in several other countries and awaited an answer from God via the cheapest international plane ticket in the Caribbean or Central America. Jamaica was the answer and Robanske disagreed with God, challenging God with the need for a cheap hotel, a place to serve such as an orphanage, and confirmation that there was need at the location. God answered all of these challenges and the following week Robanske was serving in Jamaica. God started the dream in Robanske on that trip and within three months the work toward a proper 501 c 3 non-profit began."

In addition to these initial utterances and perspectives, as the partnership with the CDA/CPFSA deepened over time, the Embracing Orphans' website seemed to thrive on using visuals of Jamaican children as well as open references to its association with the CDA/CPFSA which was its "partner" in Jamaica. These repeated references undoubtedly helped in the authentication of Embracing Orphans as a legitimate and approved organization that treats with children and vulnerable individuals in Jamaica. The upshot of this being that Embracing

¹⁵ As published in the article *Embracing Jamaica* by Sheila Hagar – November 5, 2017 www.union-bulletin.com

¹⁶ www.embracingorphans.org/about

Orphans may very well have been able to lobby willing individuals to raise funds and/or make donations for its use.

Three Sample Extracts/Publications that Speak of the Relationship Between the CDA/CPFSA and Embracing Orphans/Carl Robanske

(I) Embracing Orphans - The Father's House on Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/216598321>

“Embracing Orphans believes in the love of Jesus, and through His love we care for the orphaned, abused, and neglected of Jamaica.

The Father's House is the first transitional home in Jamaica. Girls 15 - 21 yrs. of age further their education and are enrolled in college. The house is located near educational opportunities, health care facilities, has a plentiful garden, and many mango trees. With a culture of the Father's love, the professionally trained staff make the house a home.”

(II) *Every.org – an entity which accepts donations on behalf of non-profits* [www.every.org/embracing-orphans]

Up to **November 2022**, well beyond the date from which the relationship between the CPFSA and Embracing Orphans/Robanske ought to have been terminated as directed by Minister Fayval Williams, this donation collecting agency listed the following description:

“Embracing Orphans believes in the love of Jesus, and through His love, we care for the orphaned, abused, and neglected children of Jamaica.”

(III) Cause IQ – an entity which describes itself as providing web-based information and tools to help non-profits and others grow their client base and find funding. [www.causeiq.com]

Program areas at Embracing Orphans

Embracing Orphans owns and operates a girls home in Jamaica to provide a safe and stable home for teenage orphans. The organization also owns a boys home on the island. They lead Church service trips to Jamaica and provide funding and building assistance to build independent housing for homeless individuals in Jamaica.

Personnel at Embracing Orphans

Name	Title	Compensation	Date of data
Carl Robanske	Chairman / President and Chief Executive Officer	\$46,600	2021-05-21

Financials for Embracing Orphans

- **Revenues**
 - Expenses
 - Assets
 - Liabilities

Revenues	FYE 12/2020	FYE 12/2019	% Change
Total grants, contributions, etc.	\$254,399	\$238,044	6.9%
Program services	\$0	\$0	-
Investment income and dividends	\$0	\$0	-
Tax-exempt bond proceeds	\$0	\$0	-

Revenues	FYE 12/2020	FYE 12/2019	% Change
Royalty revenue	\$0	\$0	-
Net rental income	\$0	\$0	-
Net gain from sale of non-inventory assets	\$0	\$0	-
Net income from fundraising events	\$0	\$0	-
Net income from gaming activities	\$0	\$0	-
Net income from sales of inventory	\$0	\$0	-
Miscellaneous revenues	\$0	\$0	-
Total revenues	\$254,399	\$238,044	6.9%

It is of significance that the Founder and Executive Director of Embracing Orphans is Carl Robanske and also that in January 2014 when The Father's House officially became operational, the current Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the CPFSA was then acting as the CEO of the CDA. From then until now her tenure has been unbroken and as such she has had full stewardship over, and ultimate responsibility for, the agency's collaboration with Embracing Orphans.

C. DID THE FATHER'S HOUSE ACCOMMODATE CHILDREN?

Since the onset of this investigation the CPFSA's leadership, to include the CEO and others as well as general members of staff, have repeatedly sought to distance The Father's House from being a facility that housed any children. Explicit expressions, for example, that "*questioned the jurisdiction of the OCA in conducting any enquiry into the operations of My Father's House as it was not a*

child care facility and it accommodated adult females” were not uncommon from CPFSA personnel. Despite these diverse attempts, however, the legal definition of who a child is; previous utterances as to who The Father’s House would accommodate; the Birth Certificates of residents; and the Admissions Log from The Father’s House have collectively served to nullify any plausible denial that children were in fact being accommodated at the facility. A child in Jamaica is defined as being any person who has not attained the age of eighteen (18) years.¹⁷

Evidence That Establishes the Accommodation of Children at The Father’s House

(i) Historical Comments Attributed to Key Individuals/Events

(a) Opening Ceremony for The Father’s House – On 3rd January, 2014 there was an official event which marked the opening of The Father’s House. In a Jamaica Information Service news report which was published on 5th January, 2014 a portion of the caption read:

*“Female wards of the state, **16 to 18 years old** who are preparing to exit state care, now have a transition facility that they can call home, Montego Bay, St. James.”* [Emphasis mine]

(b) Comment by the Manager of The Father’s House – on 5th March, 2021 investigators from the Office of the Children’s Advocate visited The Father’s House in furtherance of our probe. During this visit, they saw and spoke with the Manager of the facility (Ms. Shiona McDonald) as well as Children’s Officer Mrs. Nicolette Prout-Love of the CPFSA who was present at the time of the visit. Mrs. Prout-Love works at the St. James CISOCA office as the CPFSA’s Children’s Officer. Ms. McDonald

¹⁷ Section 2 – The Child Care and Protection Act, 2004

reported that the home was a transitional home that accommodates females **ages 17 to 23** who were leaving State care but had no family or home to return to. She stated that there was no child at the facility but when asked about the youngest age of the female residents Ms. McDonald informed that a seventeen year old was currently living at the facility.

- (c) Comments by Carl Robanske – Robanske was captured in a video entitled 'Embracing Orphans Short Documentary Imagine Videography'. In that video, he made explicit reference to The Father's House by saying,¹⁸ *"we have the first transitional children's home, or transitional girls' home on the island called The Father's House. **Kids from 16 – 21** get the chance to . . . become independent women. Getting the chance to have a lot of the power back that has been taken from them through abuse and neglect and other trauma."*

(ii) **A 2017 Investigation by the OCA**

In 2017 a matter involving a minor who had been residing at The Father's House was referred to the OCA for the purpose of conducting an investigation. The need for an investigation arose because this minor became pregnant whilst residing at The Father's House. Not only does the OCA have its own record of this investigation, but an examination of The Visitors' Log for The Father's House reveals an entry made on "31/03/17" in relation to "Keisha Rodriques-Mills"¹⁹ for an "investigation".

¹⁸ www.embracingorphans.org – see time stamp 5:34 – 5:45 of the video.

¹⁹ Mrs. Rodriques-Mills was at the time the Manager of the OCA's Investigations Unit, a post which she still occupies.

(iii) Relevant Extracts From The Admissions Log

The Father's House kept an Admissions Log which recorded the names and dates of birth of the girls who were being accommodated at the facility, along with other information, including their date(s) of discharge. An examination of that Log confirms that since its inception in 2013 up until the OCA's investigations in 2021/2022, there have been residents who had not yet attained the age of 18 years, i.e. there were children being accommodated. Those beneath 18, spanned from 15 – 17 years old.

This Report therefore finds that the CPFSA was fully seized of the fact that while the facility did cater to wards transitioning out of State care, some of those whom it (the CPFSA) had selected to transition were **children** who it well knew were being accommodated at The Father's House. In the face of this evidence, the belated attempts of the CPFSA and its agents to obfuscate this fact are both futile and embarrassing. Of further significance to this deliberate attempt to put distance between The Father's House and its accommodating of minors, were responses given by the CEO at a December 2022 Hearing before the Children's Advocate. When the Children's Advocate squarely put her finding that children were in fact being accommodated at The Father's House and gave the CEO an opportunity to respond to this finding, the CEO's comment was that no children were accommodated at the facility. When pressed on this, the CEO went on to proffer that if there were "emergency placements" for "overnight stays" you may have under 18(s) but that The Father's House did not accommodate them beyond those circumstances. In the face of the evidence cited in this section of this Report (in particular the Logs that showed the **years** for which these residents who were minors lived at The Father's House), this explanation from the CEO is incredible and as such has not been found by me

to have any merit, save for revealing the rehearsed posture that it seems the CPFSA's agents agreed to maintain having become aware of the OCA's investigations and the scrutiny that was now being shone upon its conduct.

D. ROBANSKE'S ANTECEDENTS: MATERIAL OR IMMATERIAL?

It has been established as a fact that in December 2016 Carl Robanske's Washington State Education Certificate was suspended for two (2) years after he admitted having had sexually inappropriate exchanges with a minor. The details of the exchanges and the surrounding circumstances are of significance; as such, these will be thoroughly discussed in this section of the Report.

The Final Order of Suspension is dated 6th December, 2016 and extracts beneath the heading *Findings of Fact* state, *inter alia*:

Misconduct with Student

2. *On or about May, 2014, on more than one occasion, Mr. Robanske instant messaged A.L., a female middle school student, after school hours and on weekends. The messages included some conversations with sexual innuendo.*
 - a. *On or about May, 2014, Mr. Robanske instant messaged A. L. a conversation about tattoos, and included a frontal picture of an adult male with his groin area covered in a Pinocchio tattoo.*
 - b. *On or about May 14, 2014, Mr. Robanske engaged A.L. in a game called "this or that". He then mentioned sneakers or thong and then said, "I just read what I typed, I meant thong like sandals not the other one and hoe about u singing or you licking and biting me..... u licking and biting me."*

- c. *On or about May 14, 2014, when A.L. asked Mr. Robanske if he was really getting a tattoo, he responded, "Ya, you want to see the back one or the dirty one."*

3. *On June 2, 2014, Mr. Robanske was advised of the allegations brought to the administration's attention regarding inappropriate communications with a Garrison student through his personal Facebook page. Mr. Robanske was placed on Administrative Leave with Pay.*

4. *On June 16, 2014, Mr. Robanske submitted a letter of resignation.*

5. *On March 24, 2015, **Mr. Robanske** participated in an interview with an OPP²⁰ investigator in which he **admitted he had initiated the instant messaging conversations with A.L. after he saw her on Facebook.***
[Emphasis mine]

6. **Mr. Robanske agreed to be evaluated by a psychologist to determine if he was safe to have unsupervised access to children.** *On August 7, 2015, Mr. Robanske was evaluated by Philip G. Barnard, Ph.D., DABPS. As a result of the testing/evaluation, Dr. Barnard determined:*
 - a. **"He appears to have little awareness of the inappropriateness of his behavior."** [Emphasis mine]
 - b. *"Mr. Robanske lacks insight into any of the unconscious or conscious motivations for his inappropriate behavior. He claims to understand that it was inappropriate, stating that he would not engage in that type of behavior in the future."*

²⁰ Office of Professional Practices

- c. **Dr. Barnard stated, "If a person lacks insight in understanding both their unconscious and conscious motives, then there is an increased probability of that type of behavior reoccurring.** [Emphasis mine]
- d. Dr. Barnard stated, "I cannot state at this time that Mr. Robanske does not present a risk to his students."

Beneath the section of the Final Order of Suspension entitled Conclusions of Law, the following extracts are instructive:

- 2. OSPI²¹ has jurisdiction over Mr. Robanske and the subject matter discussed herein.
- 3. Mr. Robanske committed acts of unprofessional conduct by initiating communication with A.L., a female middle school student after school and on weekends for no educational purpose. The conversations were inappropriate and full of sexual innuendo, including an inappropriate photo of a male with a Pinocchio tattoo over his groin area; WAC181-86-013 (3).
- 4. There is clear and convincing evidence that Mr. Robanske committed unprofessional conduct. WAC 181-86-170 (Burden and Standard of Proof).
- 5. **There is clear and convincing evidence that Mr. Robanske has a behavioral problem that endangers the educational welfare or personal safety of students, teachers, or other colleagues within the educational setting.** WAC 181-86-013(3). [Emphasis mine]

Child safeguarding principles, as well as the vast number of resources/data on sexually inappropriate situations and exploitation which have women and girls disproportionately represented as victims, render Robanske's antecedents as being materially relevant. The heightened care that must be taken when

²¹ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

treating with vulnerable populations such as children and former wards of the State, require that persons with questionable antecedents be presumed to pose a risk of harm to them. Good sense should dictate that such individuals be isolated from these vulnerable cohorts and that access be avoided.

UNICEF in its resource entitled *Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*²², awarded attention to programming aimed at preventing and responding to the sexual exploitation and abuse of children by aid workers. Though it focused primarily on emergency situations, the following extract is useful:

“. . . some aid workers abuse their position of power through the sexual exploitation and abuse of those who depend on them, including children.

*These acts are unacceptable and violate criminal laws. **Sexual exploitation** refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, perpetrated by aid workers against the children and families they serve. **Sexual abuse** is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions, perpetrated by aid workers against the children and families they serve.*

Women and children . . . face the greatest risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. High levels of need resulting from scarce resources, food shortages or economic insecurity can intensify the power imbalance . . . raising the possibility of sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers on whom communities depend . . .”

When this is layered upon the general profile of a girl who has lived in State care, the concern is amplified. Yet another reference to a UNICEF publication is

²² www.unicef.org/resources

helpful; *Children in Alternative Care*²³ was last updated on June 14, 2021 and it noted that,

“The immediate and long-term damage caused by family separation and unsuitable alternative care, particularly in institutions, is well documented. Institutions are often characterized by inherently harmful living arrangements. Children may experience forced cohabitation and fixed routines not tailored to their individual needs. They are frequently deprived of the ability to make choices that suit their best interests.

What’s more, children in alternative care are regularly isolated from their families and local communities. Deprived of parental care, they can endure physical, psychological, emotional and social harm – with consequences that last a lifetime. These children are also more likely to experience violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.”

Even more troubling, is that Robanske is acutely aware of these vulnerabilities. His own words are:

“Girls are especially endangered in Jamaica . . . There, females are seen as commodities by some, an attitude that leads to girls being sexually abused, neglected, exposed to violence in and out of their homes, as well as abandoned. They have been sexually and physically abused, and have run the streets.”²⁴

The material relevance of Robanske’s antecedents is therefore clear, thus underscoring the need for great precaution. In addition to the ‘perfect’

²³ [unicef.org/protection/children-in-alternative-care](https://www.unicef.org/protection/children-in-alternative-care)

²⁴ Taken from the story entitled ***Embracing Jamaica***, published on November 5, 2017 in which Robanske was interviewed and extensively quoted. The story surrounded the situation of female wards (**minors**) residing at The Granville Place of Safety, a residential child care facility operated by the CPFSA. The article can be found at https://www.union-bulletin.com/news/embracing-jamaica/article_46a99310-c171-11e7-9512-535122a8ba26.html

environment for exploitation as alluded to in these resources and outlined in the first part of this Report as well as Robanske's own appreciation of the context of these females, there is Dr. Barnard's psychological assessment of Robanske that:-

- (i) He seems unaware of the inappropriateness of his behaviour toward A.L., a female teenager;
- (ii) He is likely to repeat the behaviour that was full of sexual innuendo;
- (iii) He has a behavioural problem that endangers the safety of persons around him.

E. THE CPFSA'S KNOWLEDGE OF, AND RESPONSE TO, ROBANSKE'S ANTECEDENTS

Available information suggests that the relationship between the CPFSA of the one part and Carl Robanske and Embracing Orphans of the other part, dates back to 2009, just over a year after he first began working in Jamaica having been "Divinely" led to Jamaica. Over the course of this relationship, there is quite a bit of evidence which demonstrates the level of involvement Robanske had with the CPFSA's programmes, the facilities it operated and/or had oversight of, and how he worked alongside various representatives of the CPFSA across the island at different levels. By the time Robanske's 2014 indiscretion with the minor child had occurred, this relationship seemed to have been flourishing over this 5 ½ year period and can be viewed as having been somewhat cemented. As a consequence, in assessing the CPFSA's knowledge of Robanske's misconduct and its subsequent response to it, the chronology of events is vital. The timeline can be summarized as follows:-

- **2007** – Robanske established a presence in Jamaica.
- **Mid-2009** – commencement of partnership with the CDA which saw diverse relationships being pursued with and through the CDA/CPFSA under Robanske's recurring theme of "Jesus. Orphans. Jamaica. That's Us."

- **Late 2013** – The Father's House started accepting wards of the State who had been selected by the CPFSA as being ready to embark upon a path of transitioning out of care.
- **January 3, 2014** – the ceremony which marked the official opening of The Father's House was held.
- **May 2014** – inappropriate contact with sexual innuendos was made by Robanske via his Facebook account with A.L., a female student in the USA, on multiple occasions.
- **June 2, 2014** – Robanske was advised of the allegations against him and was sent on administrative leave with pay by education authorities in the USA.
- **June 16, 2014** – Robanske submitted his letter of resignation from the school (USA).
- **March 24, 2015** – Robanske admitted in an interview with the education authorities (USA) that he did initiate instant messaging conversations with A.L. after he saw her on Facebook.
- **August 7, 2015** – Robanske was evaluated by psychologist, Dr. Barnard.
- **December 2016** – Robanske was found culpable of professional misconduct and to have a high probability of repeating the sexually inappropriate behaviour. As a consequence of this, his education licence was suspended for two (2) years.
- **February 2018** - the CPFSA reports that it found out about the suspension and the reason for it after hearing 'people' talking about something in relation to Robanske. [See evidence from CPFSA's response(s) to my letter and its report to the Minister that are discussed subsequently in this Report.]
- **2016 – March 2021** – the relationship between the CPFSA and Robanske/Embracing Orphans continued apace and uninterrupted.

- **March 2021** – in Jamaica, national attention was brought to the existence of the partnership within the context of Robanske's inappropriate conduct towards a minor.
- **Beyond March 2021** – a relationship still persisted between the parties.

If the CPFSA's disclosure that it was aware of Robanske's inappropriate conduct with a minor from 2018 is accurate, the question then arises as to what steps, if any, it took having learnt of the matter. Of further relevance, is an assessment of whether these steps were sufficient in all the prevailing circumstances.

Was the CPFSA's Response Adequate?

In response to questions raised by the OCA, the CEO of the CPFSA has indicated thus:

“Based on documentation from the State of Washington dated the 6th of December 2016, Mr. Robanske was placed on a two year suspension and not a ban.”

Additionally, in response to questions posed in a radio interview on Nationwide News Network on 3rd March, 2021, the CEO in a voice clip defended the CPFSA's continued relationship with Robanske though they were aware of the matter in the USA, on the basis that it was not a criminal conviction. She also explained that their relationship commenced prior to the allegations in the USA, seemingly implying that because Robanske's transgression occurred after the CPFSA embarked upon this partnership with him, the situation was not as bad. The relevant extract of the news article reads:

“Meanwhile, CPFSA Boss, Rosalee Gage Grey, told Nationwide News that the agency she leads continued its association with Robanske because he did not have a criminal record.”²⁵

²⁵ <https://nationwideradiojm.com>

This position of the CEO demonstrates a grave lack of understanding at best or at worst, an act of wilful blindness to the scope of her administrative and moral responsibilities. It is extremely troubling that someone who is entrusted with the care of arguably one of the most vulnerable cohorts within Jamaican society, could so glibly defend a questionable association based on semantics which so starkly call into question her own integrity and her loyalty to the vested interest that she ought to have in the lives of wards and former wards of the State. The well-rehearsed mantra of stakeholders who work in the area of child protection has always promoted 'erring on the side of caution' in a bid to ensure that suspicious elements/persons are kept away from the vulnerable whom are in care. Indeed, on many occasions the CEO herself has been quick to talk this very talk, yet on this particular occasion when Robanske has **admitted** to his sexually laced overtures to a minor and the CEO should have demonstrated that she would not only 'talk the talk' but 'walk the walk', she instead defended the continued relationship with him on the basis of a mere technicality. This has severely compromised her capacity to lead the government agency that ought to be proactively creating a safe environment for those in the State's care. The State ought not to be merely reciting platitudes as to what its commitment is when it is convenient so to do, but should actively be discharging its responsibilities in the day-to-day administration of its duties.

It is of little comfort that when given the opportunity to respond to the finding of the Children's Advocate that she had failed in her administrative and moral duty of care towards this vulnerable cohort in her appearance at the December 2022 Hearing, the CEO stated that she had not failed because "the youngsters were over 18 years." Though this Report has already found that this was not entirely accurate as there were minors at The Father's House, it is important to insert this particular comment at this juncture because it ably illustrates the lack of understanding as to the required approach to wards in care and those transitioning out of care.

Additionally, the related issue of 'perception' is of some importance. The CPFSA's public association with Robanske even after his established inappropriate contact with a minor has cast a shadow upon the CPFSA's image, a consequence that seems to be lost on the CEO or one that is being deliberately ignored by her. Of even greater significance in this matter, is that the principles of the government entity that provides day-to-day care and support for these females ought to be beyond reproach. The CPFSA's standards should not be questionable; its leadership should not be unmindful of its image (as well as their own) and should be careful about whom they collaborate with. The way in which the CPFSA has compromised itself by engaging with and, perhaps even more importantly, continuing with an official and very public association with Robanske and his organization has severely punctured its credibility of being a good steward of its duty of care to its primary subjects – wards of the State and former wards.

The irony of this situation as well, is that the CPFSA seems to have operated contrary to the provisions of the CCPA, legislation which it so frequently references as being its guide. The CCPA emphasizes that pre-emptive steps be taken to ensure that a safe and enabling environment is created for and around children and where there is even a mere suspicion that this safety net **could be** thwarted, active steps to address the matter ought to be pursued. The CPFSA ignored this precautionary approach by treating Robanske's antecedents as being immaterial or in the words of the CEO²⁶ as being deemed "low risk" for The Father's House. By its actions, the CPFSA and its management perhaps even legitimized Robanske and enabled his association with a vulnerable population it was duty bound to protect.

²⁶ Upon appearing before the Children's Advocate at the December 21, 2022 Hearing, the CEO was at pains to point out that even after finding out about Robanske's antecedents, ties were not severed because the CPFSA thought the risk was deemed to be low for The Father's House. This was her explanation when asked to comment on the Children's Advocate's finding that the continued association caused a shadow to be cast over the CPFSA.

What Happened After 2018?

Post-2018 the CPFSA still pursued its collaboration and partnerships with Carl Robanske/Embracing Orphans in spite of knowledge about his antecedents. There were diverse incidents which made this clear and this section of the Report will focus on these. Additionally, the CPFSA in responses provided since the matter gained public attention, has given some account of steps it took post its 2018 discovery as well as other material pieces of information; these too will be reviewed.

The Formal Response of the CPFSA

In March 2021, the Children's Advocate and the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth & Information (as her title then was) each formally requested a response from the CEO of the CPFSA.²⁷ Though the requests were raised separately and without prior knowledge of either of the requesting parties, both related to the public claims that were being circulated about the CPFSA's partnership(s) with Carl Robanske in light of his admitted sexually inappropriate conduct with a female minor. There was much similarity in the CEO's response(s) with the summary of the key elements of information provided by her being:-

In Response to the OCA

- Since 2017, following the suspension of Robanske's education licence, a Board Member (J.W.) assumed leadership of mission trips to Jamaica.
- On February 13, 2018 the matter concerning Robanske was discussed at the CPFSA's Divisional Directors' weekly meeting. Decisions that were purportedly taken were that –
 - (a) a scheduled visit to an annual fundraiser in Washington State by the manager of The Father's House and a former ward was cancelled;

²⁷ The OCA's request was sent via letter dated March 5, 2021 and the MOEY's request via letter dated March 4, 2022.

(b)a meeting would be held with Embracing Orphans on their visit to Jamaica in March 2018.

- Sometime in February 2018 contact was made with Embracing Orphans concerning the matter. The CPFSA described the approach of the secretary (J.W.) thus:

“The response from the secretary of the Embracing Orphans Board noted that it holds the conduct of its board members, team service trips [sic] participants and staff to high biblical standards. They submitted three documents, namely Workplace Conduct, Culture of Honour-Grace & Reconciliation and Ethical Conduct & Child Protection. . . These outlined the organisation's procedures subsequent to the incident.”

- On February 19, 2018, the weekly meeting of the Divisional Directors was informed that Embracing Orphans apologized for its non-disclosure of Robanske's suspension. Purportedly, the management of Blossom Gardens Children's Home and The Father's House were told that Robanske was to have no access to the wards (residents).
- On March 15, 2018, the meeting that was contemplated was actually held in Jamaica with Embracing Orphans; two of the outcomes were said to be Robanske being removed as the lead on all projects involving children's homes in Jamaica and that his focus would be on 'Rebuild' (i.e. a housing project) and The Father's House.

In Response to the MOEY

- The CPFSA reported that sometime between February 13 – 19, 2018, it received confirmation from Embracing Orphans that the allegation was true and they apologized for not having notified the Agency; they also provided information on the case regarding Mr. Robanske.
- Having learnt about the matter, the CPFSA says it wrote to Embracing Orphans and laid out certain conditions:

- (a) it no longer wanted Robanske to be the face of Embracing Orphans in Jamaica;
- (b) he was to have no interaction with children's homes;
- (c) he was to have no lead role in Mission Trips to Jamaica; and
- (d) he should not contact/liaise with the CPFSA nor any longer be the face of Embracing Orphans in Jamaica.

- The CEO in her response sought to explain that the CPFSA in deciding to continue its relationship and collaboration with Robanske/Embracing Orphans, it took certain factors into consideration, some being:-

- (a) the nature of the incident;
- (b) whether it was a criminal conviction or professional misconduct;
- (c) the length of time that had elapsed since the incident and when it found out in 2018;
- (d) even though the actions of the founder reflected negatively on the organization, the CPFSA sees him as being separate from the organization and views the organization as having "the same objectives" as the CPFSA.

- The CEO also indicated in her response that "since the news story and in response to directives outlined in letter dated March 4, 2021" it was only then (i.e. over 3 years later) that the CPFSA signalled its intention to terminate its partnership with Embracing Orphans "with immediate effect".
- Further, a commitment of vacating the premises within 90 days was given in this response that was issued under cover letter from the CEO and dated March 18, 2021.

Inconsistencies & Discrepancies Based on Responses Provided by the CPFSA/CEO

Having assessed the contents of both responses, there is an uncomfortable deficit in terms of the CEO's overall response. There are certain inconsistencies and discrepancies which contribute to this deficit.

1. It is the CEO's account that since 2017 J.W. assumed leadership of Embracing Orphans' trips to Jamaica, following the suspension of Robanske's education licence, yet it has also been asserted by the CEO that it wasn't until 2018 that the CPFSA became aware of Robanske's suspension. If in fact this change in leadership came about in 2017 and the CPFSA was aware of it, shouldn't this have prompted at least an enquiry from the leadership of the CPFSA as to the reason for this shift, as it had **always** dealt primarily with Robanske? Given the CPFSA's national responsibility to, and the duty of care it owes to this vulnerable cohort of society this would have been a reasonable response. Furthermore, given this unexplained change, why did the CPFSA allow Robanske's continued access to residents within its care in the face of this unknown/unexpected variable in light of its fiduciary responsibility as an Executive Agency of a Ministry of Government?
2. By the CEO's explicit admission, the CPFSA became aware of Robanske's suspension in 2018. This was **confirmed** sometime between February 13 – 19, 2018. The delay in the CPFSA taking any action whatsoever to terminate its association with Robanske/Embracing Orphans is in itself questionable. How reasonable was it for the leadership of the CPFSA to have omitted to sever ties and to purportedly do so **three (3) years later**, only after having received a missive from the MOEY instructing them to terminate the relationship? The CPFSA is an Executive Agency within the Government of Jamaica that through its inordinate delay and indecisive action, *prima facie*, has compromised the undergirding principles of child safeguarding. In brief, these principles enunciate the view that the conduct of all stakeholders who work within the child protection sector should demonstrate through their actions, their commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children. The confidence that should be reposed in the CPFSA's leadership has been impaired by this hesitation to act, especially within the context that it is the government entity

responsible for the care and protection of children and that even up until 2022, it still had not conclusively severed these ties.

3. The CEO informs that along with the response the CPFSA obtained in February 2018 from J.W., the secretary, three documents which were created by Embracing Orphans after the discovery of Robanske's inappropriate actions, were submitted. Having reviewed all three documents as a part of this investigation, the following observations are noteworthy:-

(a) The first document bears the name Culture of Honor – Grace & Reconciliation and is dated February 10, 2017. Based upon the wording contained in this document, it appears that it was issued in direct response to Robanske's sexually inappropriate contact with the minor. A portion of the document states that,

“In June of 2014, Carl Robanske was placed on administrative leave because of an allegation of unprofessional conduct with a student. He made the board aware of the situation immediately & an emergency board meeting was called the next day. As a board, we called in some wise counsel to help us in this process of reconciliation . . .

Carl admitted & repented of the mistake and was ready to take responsibility for his actions. . .

Together, we determined a plan of reconciliation:

- *Carl cut short his time in Jamaica that summer. . .*
- *Carl would meet regularly with men of God . . .*
- *Carl would take steps to filling his life with life-giving people and experiences . . .*

- *Carl would seek professional counselling **if he desired** after the summer . . . “*

The ambivalence with which this document is worded highlights two things. One is that its ability to serve as a successful and preventative measure for any further transgressions, is largely dependent upon Robanske himself; for example, he could seek counselling only if he determined it desirable. The other issue highlighted in this document, is the immediacy with which Robanske's counterparts at Embracing Orphans coalesced to support him in the face of his admitted indiscretion. In addition to these matters, is the fact that this document is dated February 2017, just 4 months shy of three (3) years after the incident in June 2014. Embracing Orphans says that Robanske told them about the allegation the day after he was placed on administrative leave in June 2014 and that “he was very open with the entire situation”. This glaring gap draws attention to the absence of any mechanisms or changes that were put in place during the period from June 2014 – February 2017 to insulate vulnerable populations from Robanske – of course, these included those wards and former wards whom he would interact with in Jamaica. Yet another consideration, is If the ‘culture of honour’ which this document cites as one of its key tenets were truly at work, why did they wait to share the news with the CDA/CPFSA? Of even greater significance, is that even with this lack of forthrightness on the part of Robanske/Embracing Orphans, the CPFSA has aligned itself with this organization on the basis that as the CEO has stated they share “the same objectives”. This is reminiscent of a grave error of judgment on the part of both Embracing Orphans and the CPFSA.

(b) The second document entitled *Ethical Conduct & Child Protection*, dated March 7, 2017, has as its stated policy that Embracing Orphans will “conduct its ministry in a manner which merits continued public

trust and confidence and according to the highest ethics, based upon Biblical standards.” The document also indicates that where any “breaches of ethical conduct arise, Embracing Orphans’ representatives who are aware of such should seek appropriate guidance from leadership as to the course of action to address it.” What remains curious, however, is that the policy does not actually go on to state what the leadership will do in any such reported instances. When the Children’s Advocate sought to assess the extent of the CEO’s knowledge of what leadership would do in any such instances, the CEO advised stated that she could not say as though she provided the documents as a part of her response to the Children’s Advocate, she had not actually assessed the documents, she merely handed them over. Further, and perhaps even more concerning, is the conflict of interest which is apparent on the face of the document; **viz. the final signatory on the policy is Carl Robanske, with the descriptor of “Founder & Executive Director”.**

(c) The third document is entitled Workplace Conduct; it too bears the date March 7, 2017 and **has “Carl Robanske, Founder & Executive Director” as the final signatory.**

Collectively, therefore, these documents illustrate that Robanske is virtually synonymous with Embracing Orphans and that they operate as an indivisible whole. Both the documents at (b) and (c) were submitted by the CPFSA in a bid to show (in the words of the CEO), “the organisation’s procedures subsequent to the incident”. What they have confirmed is that post the incident in 2014, Robanske remained a central authority figure who was still participating in the operational and administrative leadership of Embracing Orphans.

4. In the CEO's response, she reported that at the meeting which took place on February 19, 2018 it was mentioned that *"the management of Blossom Gardens Children's Home and The Father's House were told that Robanske was to have no access to the wards"*.

Visitors' Log Book

As far as The Father's House is concerned, there is a preponderance of evidence which shows that if any such intention was in fact announced, it was either an empty promise or was deliberately not complied with as **Robanske had repeated access to the residents**. An examination of the Visitors' Log Book for the years 2018 and 2019 revealed that Robanske visited The Father's House twenty-two (22) times on diverse dates – ten (10) visits occurred between March 10, 2018 – December 17, 2018 and twelve (12) visits between March 1, 2019 – November 10, 2019. The reasons recorded for these visits were:

- Youth Group and activities
- Appreciation Party (curiously this was in March 2018, weeks after CPFSA's February 2018 'discovery' about Robanske's antecedents)
- Take girls to church
- Youth Group
- Columbia Corner Church
- Interact
- Enjoying interactions
- Look at house
- Crafts & devotion
- Worship, games and devotion
- Games
- To build in Refuge, Trelawny
- Hang & pizza
- Worship

These records clearly establish that there was no avoidance of Robanske post the CPFSA's knowledge of his antecedents, nor was there any removal of his access to the residents at the facility. In fact, his access post their discovery, exceeded the frequency of that which obtained before as the records reveal that for the two year period of January 3, 2015 – February 19, 2017 he visited a total of eleven (11) times²⁸ which is less than the 22 times within the 18 month time span, post 2018.

Daily Log Book

Likewise, a perusal of The Daily Log Book of The Father's House that covered the period 20th July, 2020 – 18th August, 2020 paints a picture that is not too far from what the other logs referenced above portrayed. It documented the following in relation to Robanske's interactions with the girls:

- July 20, 2020 – *“Uncle Carl came by at 6:38pm to watch movie with the girls and bring snacks for the girls. . . Uncle Carl along with **K., T., A., D.F.,** and **G.** watch a movie . . . Most of the girls went to their beds at 9:30pm. The others continued watching movie with Uncle Carl. Most lights were off.”*
- July 29, 2020 – *“Uncle Carl came by to drop off a mask for **T**, he sit and talk with **K.** and **C.** then left the facility at 8:10pm.”*
- August 5, 2020 – *“The other girls and staff left the facility to St. Mary at the Blue Hole River at 8 AM. It was a wonderful time travelling. Uncle Carl and Auntie J travelled with us. The girls enjoyed themselves, bathing, sliding, swinging, walked up and down the river, taking pictures and had a good lunch. It was a fun filled day. We left at 5 PM. We returned at 8:07PM.”*
- August 7, 2020 – *“. . . at 2pm with four girls present, they are **C., T., A.** and **D.M.** They all watched the television. Faithful Few Ministries and Bay Life*

²⁸ The reasons for visiting during this period were listed as: Evening visit with girls; Youth Club; Watch movie & games; To play games & eat KFC with staff and residents; site visit; visit to worship with residents; saying hi; visit; church; tile.

Baptist Church visited. They were accompanied by Uncle Carl. They introduced their Ministries to the young ladies.”

- *August 11, 2020 – “G. came home at 4:40pm. She sit and talk with Mrs. L [a Children’s Officer from CPFSA] and Uncle Carl. She then went and had her shower. . . Shift was handed over . . . at 10pm.”*
- *August 14, 2020 – “Uncle Carl, Auntie J, Mrs. L [a Children’s Officer from the CPFSA], the girls and I L.B. [one of the House Mothers], watched a movie, the girls had snacks and ice cream. It was a night of fun. Movie finished at 10pm.”*

These entries were all made by the staff at The Father’s House. This means that they openly granted Robanske access and they too consorted with him on his visits. It is also significant that a member of the CPFSA’s staff participated in some of these activities and also that given the CEO’s assertion that post 2018 instructions were given that Robanske should have no access to the residents that these Logs seemingly escaped the attention of the CPFSA’s Monitoring Officer. Two reasonable inferences can thus be drawn from these circumstances: (i) either there was in fact no such instruction issued about him not having access to the residents and this is now a recent invention as the spot light has been turned on how the agency handled the situation; or (ii) the CPFSA and its agents failed to exercise due diligence in its monitoring of the facility to ensure that he had no access.

Added significance is attached to this issue because of fresh comments made by the CEO in response to questions posed by the Children’s Advocate in the December 2022 Hearing convened by her (i.e. the Children’s Advocate). The CEO plainly stated –

- “[Robanske’s] engagement was only in relation to what was anticipated as per the Lease Agreement.”
- “After 2018 it was a landlord and tenant relationship.”
- Landlord’s role was said to be focused on major repairs and it was only for those purposes Robanske would visit the facility.

- The risk of harm (to the residents) she says was low as “access is not a problem because he lives overseas.”
- The security and Manager [at The Father’s House] would know if he visits and we would know. The Manager would have responsibilities.

She also stated initially that:

- “Because they were adults living there we were not monitoring that facility.”

When pressed as to how then the OCA was able to retrieve documentation from The Father’s House that demonstrated on-going visits by a CPFSA-appointed Monitoring Officer in her official capacity, the subsequent (changed) response that came from the CEO was:

- “The Monitoring Officer was assigned special responsibility, we therefore wanted to make sure that what was happening was in keeping with the transitional living programmes.”

Having considered all the available evidence, coupled with the CEO’s vacillation on this matter of Robanske having liberal access to the residents, this Report does not accept the CEO’s account and finds that there was little to no effort to thwart Robanske’s access.

Were Any of the Residents Minors (Children) at the Material Time?

An even more compelling concern is presented when the Visitors’ Log and the Daily Log Book(s) are assessed within the context of what is contained in the Admissions’ Log as this establishes that Robanske in fact had access to residents who were minors at the time of occupying The Father’s House. From even before the official opening of The Father’s House in January 2014, the Admissions Log indicated that in 2013 there was a resident who was 16 years old (i.e. L.H.). Similarly, as time progressed there were other wards who were below 18 years who were selected by the CDA/CPFSA to take up residence at The Father’s

House, and not to just be “overnighting” in an “emergency” as the CEO has stated in the Hearing presided over by the Children’s Advocate in December 2022. The sample of the records that the OCA collected throughout its investigation, indicate that at the time of admission these girls were:

- S. W. – 15 years
- W. H. – 16 years
- H. S. – 15 years
- M. C. – 15 years
- S. S. – 17 years
- K. F. – not yet 18
- S. T. – not yet 18
- M. L. – not yet 18
- M. W. – not yet 18
- A. B. – not yet 18

5. The CEO’s response has indicated that in the CPFSA’s 2018 letter to Embracing Orphans, (it having found out about his case), certain conditions were laid out. One of these being, that Robanske should have no contact/or be liaising with the CPFSA and no longer be the face of Embracing Orphans in Jamaica.

- **Call Data Analysis: July – September 2021**

Despite this claim, however, call data analysis done as a part of the OCA’s investigation for the period July 1, 2021 – September 16, 2021 **over three (3) years after the CPFSA’s purported directive of “no contact”** paints a different picture. During that period there were telephone calls made from the mobile telephone number ending in -8546 assigned to the CPFSA-employed manager at The Father’s House and Robanske’s local (Jamaican) mobile telephone number ending in -6284. Additionally, the available call data also provides evidence of telephone calls between the mobile telephone number ending in -9804 of the CPFSA’s Director, Children & Family

Programmes²⁹ (at that time as she has since retired) and the mobile overseas telephone number of Carl Robanske starting with digits 1-509 as well as between her number and Robanske's local (Jamaican) mobile telephone number. It should be noted that this call data analysis reflects activity gleaned from traditional communication data and does not include traffic from SMS or non-traditional platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or other similar platforms used for communication and the transmission of images and videos.

- **Analysis of WhatsApp Messages & SMS Communications up to September 2021**

As a part of the OCA's investigation, output devices to include mobile telephones and tablets belonging to the residents of The Father's House and the Manager of The Father's House were seized in September 2021. Though these devices were returned to the owners within a matter of days, data from these devices were extracted (including reversal data) and as such information such as contacts stored, calls made and received, SMS messages sent and received, WhatsApp messages sent and received as well as images sent over other platforms (such as Snapchat) were available for review and analysis. This analysis confirmed that WhatsApp communication continued freely (beyond 2018) between the Manager of The Father's House via her mobile telephone number ending in -8546 and Robanske's overseas mobile telephone number starting with area code 1-509. It was also evident from messages sent via a WhatsApp Group Chat named *TFH* that comprised of the Manager and residents of The Father's House that *Uncle Carl* (as Robanske was referred to by the girls) was one who, prior to the investigations, had had liberal access to them. In fact, from messages exchanged within this *TFH* group chat between the period March 3 – March

²⁹ This post is a part of the senior executive management cohort that is based at the CPFSA's Kingston Head Office and based upon the organizational structure of the CPFSA, this Director reports directly to the CEO.

7, 2021³⁰ some of the girls expressed empathy for what Uncle Carl was going through and pledged to take steps to help portray him in a positive light. They pledged to do three (3) things – (i) write a letter; (ii) prepare a documentary/video on Uncle Carl; (iii) start an online petition. As expressed by resident **G.B.** on 6th March, 2021 and reflected in message bearing the time stamp 21:54:07 in the TFH's WhatsApp group chat,

“We are going to do these to reach out to the minister to see if anything changes.”

For her part, the Manager expressed to the girls the need to “stay strong for each other” and that “we will get through this”. What is of particular interest as well, was the Manager’s offer to assist the girls with these endeavours even though this was clothed with an intent to deceive. This was communicated by the Manager via her mobile telephone number ending in -8546 in the TFH WhatsApp group chat in the following way:

- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:38 – *“I will help you guys with it.”*;
- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:47 – *“But it can’t be known.”*; and
- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:21 – *“Remember I work with the Government who is trying to “cut” ties with him.”*

There were also other CPFSA representatives who expressed their support for the Manager and offered encouragement throughout their “ordeal”. One such was the CEO after receiving a WhatsApp message from the Manager on 3rd March, 2021 at 10:24:32 about how strategic everything that was going on seemed. In response, on the same day at 11:01:15 the CEO sent a WhatsApp message from her assigned mobile telephone number ending in -9681 to the Manager's mobile telephone number saying,

“God Alone my dear. All in his hands.”

³⁰ This was at the height of the public scrutiny when the media had drawn attention to the partnership between the CPFSA and Robanske. This was also the period of public statements by the MOEY and the OCA.

- **Embracing Orphans' Annual Review for 2020**

The annual review which was published on Embracing Orphans' website for 2020 demonstrated the strength of the continued relationship between the CPFSA and this organization. The review also made it very clear that unlike what has been put forward in the CPFSA's repeated claims that the work of Embracing Orphans/Robanske did not include minors, its reach did incorporate children. Page 2 reflects the words,

"The government's largest entity for child protection is the Child Protection and Family Services Agency. Embracing Orphans partners with the C.P.F.S.A. for most of its programs and outreach. There are over 4,000 children in their care. This includes 52 children's homes and approximately 1,300 in foster-care."

Page 8 of the review which is entitled *Flexibility & Margins* continues,

"We do many projects, unique outreach, and ministry that doesn't fit in a box.

*This past year we supported **adopting families, foster families, children's homes, children who had aged out of the system, families with special-needs children,** parents with mental health needs, advocacy of changes to laws protecting children, education for social workers, and more."*

- **Newspaper Articles Displaying Robanske's Personal Involvement with the CPFSA Post 2018**

Both articles that will be referenced in this section are Jamaican articles which contradict the CEO and the CPFSA's claim that beyond 2018 all formal contact with Robanske as an individual had been suspended. One such article was published in The Gleaner on Tuesday, 4th August, 2020 under the headline **Embracing Orphans Rebuilds Families**. Another, was published in The Gleaner on Monday, 18th January, 2021 and it bore the headline **Child**

Protection Agency and Embracing Orphans Launch Family Food Pantry. In the first article Robanske is pictured in front of a house, the building of which he was reported to have been involved in; Robanske when interviewed, explained that through partnership with the CPFSA's Family Reintegration Programme homes are built for families with children in foster care or state care. With this, there is a high probability that Robanske would have access to these children given the absence of any effective supervision of his interactions. The second Gleaner article features a photograph of the CPFSA's Western Regional Director who has held that post since March 1, 2018 and provides a compelling report that publicly speaks about fresh discussions as recent as 2021 with Robanske with regard to a new partnership. Of interest, is that this fresh method of partnership was initiated by the CPFSA. A portion of the article reads,

"The FFP, which was launched in late November, aims to provide a support structure for children in foster care, family reintegration, and the child and family support unit. [Sic]

"There was a growing need because a lot of persons lost their jobs," explained Eric Vassell, the CPFSA's western regional director. [Sic] "A lot of them just don't have it to sustain the family. We spoke to Carl (Carl Robanske, director of the overseas-based Embracing Orphans) and he embraced the idea and so we decided to retrofit the office, which he did." "

This report flies directly in the face of the CEO's utterance in a radio interview on 3rd March, 2021 on Nationwide News Network in response to a question posed by Kedisha Clarke of the Special Investigations Division. The reporter sought to probe why the CPFSA would continue to partner with someone with Robanske's antecedents and in response the CEO stated,

"We don't deal with him directly."

In this regard, the utterances of the CEO become further discrepant on this issue. In the December 2022 Hearing before the Children's Advocate, the CEO indicated that following upon the Children's Advocate's letter to her in March 2021 in relation to the extent of the relations the CPFSA had with Robanske as well as a letter from the MOEY, she embarked upon an information gathering exercise in a bid to respond to my questions and that of the Minister. According to the CEO, it was only then that she got information "that elements in the Western Region were still having some engagement." The CEO mentioned that this engagement surrounded "some Food Package or Pantry" and two children who were in need of medical attention. This Report finds this description of how the CEO gained knowledge about such significant undertakings of the CPFSA that were reported in a national newspaper incredible; not only was the whole country put on notice, but the issue involving the two sick children had to do with wards of the State, (one of them at the time resided at Noah's Ark Children's Home) who were sent overseas by virtue of discussions between the CPFSA and Robanske. Despite how incredible this utterance rang, the Children's Advocate pressed as to what the CEO did having 'learnt' of this continued engagement which was in defiance of her instructions. In response to this, the CEO claimed that she "wrote to the Regional Director and sent out general communication that they should desist." The Children's Advocate then asked for these bits of correspondence to be shared; they were not to hand at the Hearing but later in the day four (4) Memoranda that were issued by the CEO were provided as proof of what had been sent out. Having reviewed all, none of them demonstrated any instructions by the CEO that "they should desist" from engaging Mr. Robanske. In fact, none of the documents sent under the CEO's signature even mentioned the engagements that were said to have prompted these memoranda being sent out by her. The CEO also failed to disclose this 'new information' in either her response to the Children's Advocate or the Honourable Minister, a fact

which is very curious as she has said that her reason for seeking the information in the first place, was in a bid to respond to the enquiries raised by both the Children's Advocate and the Minister.

For ease of reference, the first page of each of The Gleaner articles mentioned in this section, is inserted in the two pages immediately following:

[THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE HAS INTENTIONALLY BEEN LEFT BLANK.]

The Gleaner

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Embracing Orphans rebuilds families

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Published: Tuesday | August 4, 2020 | 12:07 AM



Contributed

Carl Robanske, executive director of Embracing Orphans, elbow bumps Simone Gordon while they stand in front of her recently built house in Tower Hill, St James.

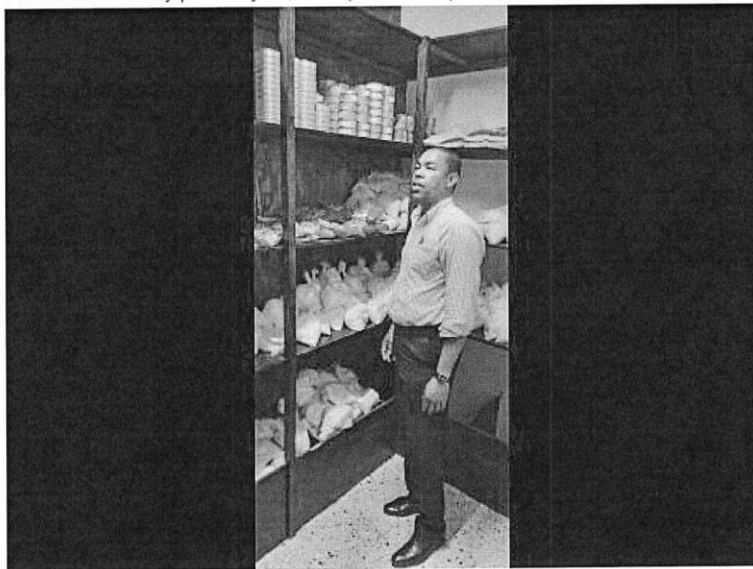
Carl Robanske, executive director of Embracing Orphans, an overseas-based non-profit organisation, is excited about their partnership with Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA) and Jamaica Relief Ministries that has resulted in some 20 homes being built for families in western Jamaica.

The initiative is part of the CPFSA's family reintegration programme, a strategy developed to keep children in families. These children are under the supervision of the State because...

Child protection agency and Embracing Orphans launch Family Food Pantry

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Published: Monday | January 18, 2021 | 12:05 AM | Kavarly Arnold/ Gleaner Writer



Kavarly Arnold

Child Protection and Family Services Agency's western regional director, Eric Vassell, at the recently established Family Food Pantry at the CPFSA's Regional Office in Montego Bay.

WESTERN BUREAU:

The western arm of the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA) has teamed up with the Embracing Orphans entity to establish a Family Food Pantry (FFP) to assist [redacted] children in state care as they try to manoeuvre the challenges brought on by the COVID pandemic.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUALLY INAPPROPRIATE OVERTURES BY ROBANSKE TO FEMALE RESIDENTS OF THE FATHER'S HOUSE

As outlined earlier in this Report, during the conduct of this investigation the OCA encountered many hurdles. One of these was the reluctance exhibited by the former wards to confide in our investigators. As discussed in the portion of this Report that explored the characteristics of investigations of this sort,³¹ this did not come as a surprise and as such, the OCA remained patient and understanding throughout. As time passed, some progress was made and this resulted in three (3) of the former wards providing useful information. Their account(s) will be discussed in this section of the Report but without making any reference to even their initials given the sensitivity of the connected matters; they will therefore be referred to a **Resident A**, **Resident B** and **Resident C**. Also, where available, data extracted from electronic devices and social media platforms will be examined alongside information that was provided in witness statements to the OCA.

RESIDENT A

This resident outlined in her witness statement to the OCA that she had been a ward of the State for some time when she was selected for transfer to The Father's House in 2014. At the time she started living at The Father's House she was 15 years old. From her account she became well acquainted with Robanske whom she met from 2014 and she describes him as a "white man, he is of medium built, [sic] straight blond hair and he is medium height meaning he was not tall and he was not short." As will become particularly significant later in Resident A's report, she identified Robanske as "the founder and owner of The Father's House and he also sponsors some of the girls at the home in going to tertiary institutions of their choice."

³¹ This prior discussion begins under the heading of *Special Considerations/Limitations* which explored material characteristics of persons who grow up in alternative care.

Access to the Girls

Resident A's account accords with written records taken by the OCA from The Father's House as a part of this investigation – these being the relevant extracts from the Daily Log that were discussed previously in this Report and established the liberal access that he had to the residents. Resident A said that Robanske would:-

- Take them to places such as Dunn's River Falls, Cool Runnings and Verney House which is a guest house where they would use the pool and eat cakes and ice-cream;
- Take them to a church called The Meeting Place which is located along Howard Cooke Boulevard in Montego Bay;
- Visit and "interact with us individually and in groups at The Father's House and at other places that we went with him." She also went on to clarify that "Carl was never allowed in the rooms at The Father's House so he would talk to us in the dining area, the hall, on the balcony and outside in the yard."

She also indicated that on some of the excursions the girls would be accompanied by staff from the facility but on other occasions (such as when they went to church) they would not be accompanied by staff. Of course, this remains in stark contrast to public assertions made by the CEO of the CPFSA that Robanske had no access to the residents. Resident A in her statement offered her own perspective on this assertion in these words,

"I was also surprised when I heard the CEO of the CPFSA Mrs. Gage-Grey in the media saying that Carl did not have access to the girls and that he only funded the home. That report by Mrs. Gage-Grey is not true as Carl had access to all the girls in The Father's House and even wards at other children's homes such as Blossom Gardens Children's Home which is located in St. James."

Resident A's Allegations Concerning Sexually Inappropriate Behaviour of Robanske

She recounted to our investigator three (3) distinct situations of concern that are worthy of repeating.

- ✓ Facebook Messenger. The first relates to Robanske sending her a friend request on Facebook³² over one Easter holiday whilst she was spending time away from The Father's House at a relative's home. She says she accepted his friend request and thereafter, Robanske started to contact her via Facebook Messenger; his Facebook Messenger profile name is 'Carl Robanske'. She describes the messages at first as being "casual" and they messaged each other back and forth. As the Easter holiday continued, however, the messages shifted to things like what she was wearing and he started to video call her via Facebook Messenger. She asserts that Robanske showed her his erect naked penis on one of these video calls while in his bathtub. She also says that there were a number of other video calls and messages via Facebook Messenger but she is not able to recall the finer details of them all.
- ✓ Dunn's River Falls. The second situation arose based upon Resident A's allegations, during an excursion to Dunn's River Falls over the summer holidays during the same year of the Easter break referenced above. She reports that the residents along with members of staff of the facility went with Robanske to Dunn's River. On one occasion while she was in the water, he had another resident of The Father's House on his back and he came towards Resident A. She asserts that "he came close to me in the water and pulled me closer to him and told me to feel his penis." She says that she looked down and did in fact see his erect penis but she did not touch it. She says she had no difficulty seeing it because though she does not remember the exact time of day, it was after midday and it was a

³² This is the same modus that he admitted to having used with A.L., the female minor in the US that was subjected to his sexually inappropriate conversations.

sunny day. She says she pushed him away with her foot and he again came close to her at which time he asked her "if his penis was bigger than [her] boyfriend's." She also alleges that he touched her buttocks while they were in the water and that he was "very careful and skilful in the way he touched me so no one would notice what was happening." She also reports that Carl told her to keep what happened a secret. She says that though she felt assaulted by him, she did not object or raise an alarm because "I felt like he had to have his way with me because he was paying my school fees/scholarship and I had gone through so much in life and I did not want to jeopardize my scholarship."

- ✓ Three-Some with Girls. Resident A says that Robanske maintained contact with her via Facebook Messenger when he returned overseas, even after the Dunn's River incident. She alleges that in some of these conversations he spoke about wanting to have a three-some with her (Resident A), the same resident who was on his back in the water when they were at Dunn's River and a third resident of the facility. He also explained in detail what he wanted to do with them.

Resident A says these messages via Messenger continued even after she had transitioned out of The Father's House and was living elsewhere, right up until early 2021, "however his messages stopped since the early part of 2021 when the news media reported about Carl Robanske." She has also indicated that though she did not actually delete any of the messages he sent to her, she noticed that in early 2021 after the news broke, "the messages he sent me also disappeared from my Facebook Messenger as I did not see the messages when I went and checked."

Reason for Resident A's Initial Non-Disclosure

Of significance also, is that Resident A provided an explanation as to why she never disclosed to anyone in authority any of these alleged occurrences

between herself and Robanske. In this regard, she has indicated to the OCA that,

"I did not make a report to the manager or any staff member at the home about what Carl Robanske was doing because Carl was paying for my schooling, he was paying for my tuition and I was living at his house and I wanted his help to continue . . . I was afraid of what would happen if I reported Carl to the manager or anyone else who works at the home because I had no family support, no other place to go and live and no one to help pay my tuition fees . . . I was previously sexually abused before I became a ward of the State and so I felt that I had to agree with the sexual things that Carl was doing to me in order to get ahead in life. I initially looked up to Carl as I thought he was different but I felt victimized by him."

Corroborating Account of Resident A's Assertions

The OCA's investigations benefited from the input of an individual who was Resident A's boyfriend during the time that Robanske was purportedly sending Resident A sexually suggestive messages and video calls via Facebook Messenger. In his witness statement to the OCA he indicates that though he had never met Robanske in person, he knew who he was by virtue of what he learnt about him from the residents at The Father's House, pictures he saw of him and by reading some of the messages he had sent to his girlfriend via Facebook Messenger. This boyfriend explains that while he was in a relationship with Resident A they had each other's Facebook password(s) and could therefore independently access each other's account(s). He alleges that on occasion when he would log into Resident A's Facebook account he saw messages that came from Carl Robanske. In his words,

"He sent her a lot of sexual messages and I read some of the messages which I felt were not appropriate for a man like Carl to send to [Resident A]. I do not remember all of the messages he sent but I remember he sent

her messages asking her about **the size of my penis**, he would also ask her what she was wearing and she told him what she was wearing and he would hold **conversations with her about his penis and his penis size** and other messages that I did not like a man to send my girlfriend especially a man who was helping girls like [Resident A] who have a history of being abused.”

Resident A's boyfriend indicated in his statement that the messages were “getting to him” and making him upset and he reacted to this situation in two ways:

- ✓ Telephoned Robanske. He says he called Robanske over Facebook Messenger and told him, “me no know if you understand patois because me no talk proper English but me want you stop message me woman.” He says in this call, he also threatened that he would report him. According to the boyfriend, shortly after he placed this call to Robanske Resident A called him and asked that he desist from calling Carl again because he was her sponsor, he was paying her school fee and she was living in his house.
- ✓ Screenshot Taken of Messages. Resident A's boyfriend took screenshots of some of the sexually inappropriate messages Robanske sent to Resident A over Facebook Messenger. He saved these messages at the time and says because he had uploaded them to his Google account he still had access to them at the time of the OCA's investigation. The messages that were shared with the OCA serve to corroborate the accounts provided by both Resident A and her former boyfriend as to the sexual nature of Robanske's exchanges. These screenshots are reflected on the four (4) pages immediately following:



3G 3% 11:58 PM



Carl Robans...

Now



I think you are cool but I've never thought this way, you are much younger and it's unprofessional



But now we know a lot about each other

yess alot

i am good at acting cool



Ya. You are cool.

yes

but when you come i will be like all cool but if i am

Aa



GIF





27% 1:26 AM



Carl Robans...
1Min



1:20 AM



U dont like dick

yes i do



Oh

but y u take down a dick off
the internet

To get u horny already
deleted

Aa



GIF



You have a good boyfriend.
He probably has a big
seiner too ha



Wiener



Write a message...



More



Edit





RESIDENT B

In her witness statement to the OCA Resident B indicated that she went to live at The Father's House when she was still in high school and was 16 years old. She reports that she met Uncle Carl and over the years she got to know him well.

Access to Residents

Resident B's account, like Resident A's account, is consistent with the portrayal provided through Daily Log Book records from The Father's House, of the liberal access that Robanske had to the residents at the facility. Resident B has said that "Uncle Carl and Aunty J³³ visit the property numerous times since I have been at the facility," and that they would visit either alone or along with others. Sometimes they would come along with a team (according to her, typically in March and summer of each year) and then on several other occasions either with each other or Uncle Carl/Aunty J would come by themselves. Resident B goes on to relate that they would interact with the residents by:

- Playing board and other games;
- Having movie nights;
- Cooking meals for the residents that sometimes had food that Resident B says she was unfamiliar with and they would tell them about food from their American culture;
- Going on excursions to places like Dunn's River, Cool Runnings, the beach and church which she says is The Meeting Place on Howard Cooke Boulevard.
- Sponsoring Christmas Dinner. Resident A says that when Uncle Carl sponsored the 2019 dinner, it was held at a hotel in Montego Bay and it was attended by all the residents and staff of The Father's House (including the Manager, Ms. McDonald); various CPFSA representatives from the Western Region as well as the CEO of the CPFSA and the then

³³ This "Aunty J" is the same secretary whose initials are J.W.; she is the one whom the CPFSA says would have been the one to interface with residents/the CPFSA following the exposure of Robanske's inappropriate conduct.

Director of Children & Family Programmes. The significance of this is not to be understated, as the CEO has corroborated this account of Resident B. When this assertion was put to the CEO at the December 2022 Hearing convened by the Children's Advocate for her comment, the CEO confirmed that –

- this 2019 party was sponsored by Robanske;
- it was held at either Half Moon or Seascape Hotel in Montego Bay;
- she (the CEO), Robanske and the girls who resided at The Father's House, other CPFSA representatives and staff from the home all attended this 2019 Christmas Party.

What this means is that the CEO had first-hand knowledge of the fact that Robanske did interact with the girls even after her own directive in 2018 (purportedly) that this should not occur and that he should no longer be in contact with the CPFSA. Effectively, the CEO has contradicted her pronouncements made on other occasions on this very issue. This Report finds that this is a material inconsistency on a central issue which renders the CEO unreliable and not credible on a concern that goes to the very root of this matter.

Resident B has also said that the last time she saw Uncle Carl was in March 2021 at The Father's House when he "came and interacted with us residents as he usually does"; she notes, however, that this was before the news broke in the media which she became aware of through a meeting held by the Manager of the facility with the girls in March 2021.

Resident B's Allegations Concerning an 'Uncomfortable Experience' with Robanske

Resident B's report is somewhat nuanced as she has indicated that she was "unsure about whether or not to put much meaning to the occurrence." It was also for this reason she says she delayed disclosing it to the manager of The

Father's House soon after it purportedly occurred, despite having been advised to do so by someone in whom she had confided the very day after the alleged incident happened. Resident B alleges in her statement that at one of their Christmas dinners³⁴ she was taking a picture with Uncle Carl and his hand rested **“on my lower back on the top of my bottom.”** She reports that she said nothing to him and that it did not last long, “just as long as it was in the snap of a picture.” The OCA also collected a witness statement from this confidant of Resident B who has confirmed Resident's B assertion that she had in fact related the incident the day after it allegedly occurred.

Resident B's Disclosure

Resident B's account to the OCA details that at the March 2021 meeting held by the Manager of The Father's House with the residents, the focus was the media report concerning Uncle Carl. Resident B alleges that the Manager asked the girls if anyone had had sexually inappropriate relations with Uncle Carl or if anything uncomfortable happened; in response to this query she says she disclosed her uncomfortable experience in the meeting. Resident B also reports that another resident (who will subsequently be introduced in this Report as Resident C) also made a disclosure in the meeting and that they were the only two to do so.

The Aftermath

It wasn't until over some six (6) months³⁵ after this disclosure to the Manager in the March 2021 meeting, that Resident B eventually gave a witness statement to the OCA. It took much effort on the part of the OCA's investigator to secure this statement as when Resident B was approached she was adamant that “she had already told Ms. McDonald about her experience with Carl.” However,

³⁴ Resident B alleges that this was not at the 2019 Christmas party but at one prior to 2019.

³⁵ Resident B's witness statement to the OCA was collected on September 23, 2021.

after a mobile telephone conversation which lasted for 16 minutes and 54 seconds between the OCA Investigator and Resident B, (the OCA's Investigator having been the one to have called on Resident B's mobile telephone), Resident B eventually agreed to meet face-to-face with the Investigator at a convenient place, as she did not want to give any information over the phone. The meeting, however, did not take place on that date as Resident B called back from a telephone number starting with digits 1-876-605 that our investigations subsequently confirmed was the landline situated in the Manager's office at The Father's House. Our investigator reports finding the conversation strained and unusual based on the fact that Resident B was essentially asking her questions which sought to have her repeat that she was from the OCA and not the OCR or the CPFSA and she wanted to hear again which Unit within the OCA she was from. The investigator also formed the view that the telephone line appeared to be open; at the end of the conversation Resident B reneged on her commitment to meet face-to-face that day and stated that the suddenness of it all was making her uncomfortable. The following day on September 17, 2021, the OCA investigator was on the premises of The Father's House and had occasion to briefly speak with Resident B; she reports that Resident B says she was not interested in giving a statement as she had already informed the CEO of the CPFSA about the incident when she visited the facility in March 2021.

In spite of all this, a week later the OCA was able to get a witness statement and Resident B conveyed to the OCA in that statement that after her disclosure in the March 2021 meeting the other girls became "stand offish" towards her, labelled her an informer who was carrying news to reporters and blamed her for making the matter with Uncle Carl come to light. According to Resident B it caused "me to feel very uncomfortable and like they were more concerned about Uncle Carl than they were of [sic] me." She has reported also that after the meeting the Manager did not seek any further information from her nor did

she follow up with her as to how she may have been feeling about the whole situation. Resident B further asserts that after the OCA's team visited The Father's House within that same time period,³⁶ the snide remarks and 'informer' label got even more intense and led to questions by the other residents as to why or how the OCA knew to have particular interest in her and Resident C.

Additionally, Resident B reports that days after this March meeting with the Manager, the CEO of the CPFSA and a team from Head Office came down for a meeting with the residents. She says that by then she was very distressed and uncomfortable in the house and as a consequence chose not to go to this meeting. Of significance, however, is that she alleges that after the meeting she had the opportunity to speak to the CEO and she told her how she felt because of the treatment being received after having spoken about her experience with Uncle Carl. Resident B claims that the CEO did not probe any further and did not offer her any support; what she did, however, according to Resident B was to raise the possibility of the Agency helping her to find alternative accommodation if there was somewhere else she preferred to live. When this assertion was put to the CEO for her comment in the December 2022 Hearing, she confirmed, *inter alia*, that –

- She did journey (along with others from the Head Office in Kingston) to The Father's House in March 2021 for a meeting with the girls;
- Resident B was the only resident who did not attend the meeting;
- After the meeting, Resident B spoke to her about an uncomfortable incident between Mr. Robanske and herself.

The CEO also indicated that prior to speaking with Resident B she had been informed by the Manager about Resident B's disclosure and that the Manager reported asking Resident B if she wanted to make a report but Resident B "declined to go". When asked by the Children's Advocate if she (the CEO) was

³⁶ It should be noted that the news broke on March 3 and the OCA visited the facility on March 5.

aware of Resident B making any other report about the matter, the CEO says she was not aware of it and because Resident B by now was over 18 years “she would have to make her own report”; she also indicated that in her view the Manager’s action was appropriate. It is significant that the CEO in response to questions raised by the Children’s Advocate, indicated that she did not seek to confirm when the uncomfortable incident with Robanske took place as she did not think it was important to ask. A response such as this confirms the inadequacy of the CEO and the CPFSA’s approach to this entire Robanske affair.

Supporting Evidence for Resident B’s Account: Analysis of WhatsApp Messages Extracted from Mobile Telephone Devices – March 3, 5 & 6, 2021

This section of the Report will focus on aspects of extracted mobile telephone data centred around the developments associated with the Nationwide News story of March 3, 2021 entitled **Nationwide Exclusive: Partnership Between CPFSA & Man Accused of Inappropriate Communications with a Minor Uncovered**. The aim of this approach is to highlight any circumstantial evidence which together with the allegations advanced in Resident B’s statement, on a balance of probabilities, point to reasonable inferences of things done and said within this very eventful first week of March 2021. In this regard, WhatsApp messages sent by and/or from four (4) mobile telephone numbers will be examined. These telephone numbers were assigned at the material time to the following individual(s):-

- ✓ Mobile telephone number of the CEO of the CPFSA ending in -9681
- ✓ Mobile telephone number of the Manager of The Father’s House ending in -8546 (She will be referred to as SYM in the text boxes.)
- ✓ Mobile telephone number of the CPFSA’s Director, Children & Family Programmes ending in -9804 (She will be referred to as AB in the text boxes.)

- ✓ Mobile telephone number of the CPFSA's Public Relations & Communications Manager ending in -4100 (She will be referred to as RDG in the text boxes.)

Sequence of WhatsApp Messages for 03/03/2021

10:24:32 Message from SYM to CEO: Wondered about how strategic everything going on seems.

11:01:15 Message from CEO to SYM: "God alone my dear. All in his hands."

12:02:34 Message from SYM to CEO: "A journalist name Kedesha Clarke from nationwide contacted [Resident B]."

12:02:58 Message from SYM to CEO: "Said she knows her from high school."

12:03:08 Message from SYM to RDG: "A journalist name Kedesha Clarke from nationwide contacted [Resident B]. Said she knows her from high school."

12:03:24 Message from SYM to CEO: "I sent it to [RDG] as well."

12:03:36 Message from SYM to CEO: "I'm having a meeting with the girls now."

12:03:50 Message from CEO to SYM: "Ask them not to speak to reporters."

12:03:55 Message from SYM to CEO: "I did."

13:15:27 Message from SYM to CEO: "There are some things coming out of this meeting. When u get a chance please call me."

13:20:53 Message from RDG to SYM: "Thanks."

13:21:03 Message from RDG to SYM: "CEO spoke to me."

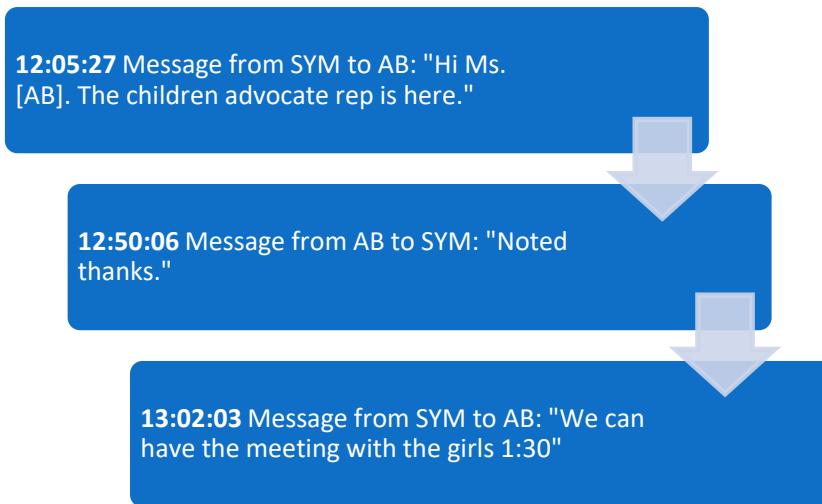
13:22:16 Message from RDG to SYM: "Tell [Resident B] if she calls her or messages her that all request pertaining to this matter must be directed to the CPFSA HQ-PR Unit or the MOEYI."

13:22:36 Message from SYM to RDG: "OK"

These exchanges between 10:24 am to 1:22 pm are quite instructive in that they confirm that there was some preoccupation with the surfacing of the media report pertaining to Robanske. What is evident as well, is that the CEO was being updated by the Manager of The Father's House about matters unfolding there. Significantly, these updates:


- (i) Corroborate Resident B's account that there was a meeting convened by the Manager with the girls at the facility when the media reported on Robanske's antecedents. (See above message highlighted in yellow font sent to the CEO at 12:03:36)
- (ii) Raise consideration as to whether the "things coming out of this meeting" as reported to the CEO by the Manager followed by a request that the CEO calls her, could in fact relate to the two disclosures that were said to have been made by Residents B and C in the meeting. (See above message in yellow font sent to the CEO at 13:15:27.)

Sequence of WhatsApp Messages for 05/03/2021




Here there was an interjected conversation between SYM and another team member from the Western Region. SYM told her of the upcoming meeting with AB. SYM also made mention of Resident B in this exchange with the team member.


13:08:00 Message from team member to SYM: "Make sure yu lock up ina yu car and have yu meeting don't trust that chick there."



13:08:24 Message from SYM to team member: "They are all a part of it."




13:09:45 Message from team member to SYM: "Oooo i see . . ."

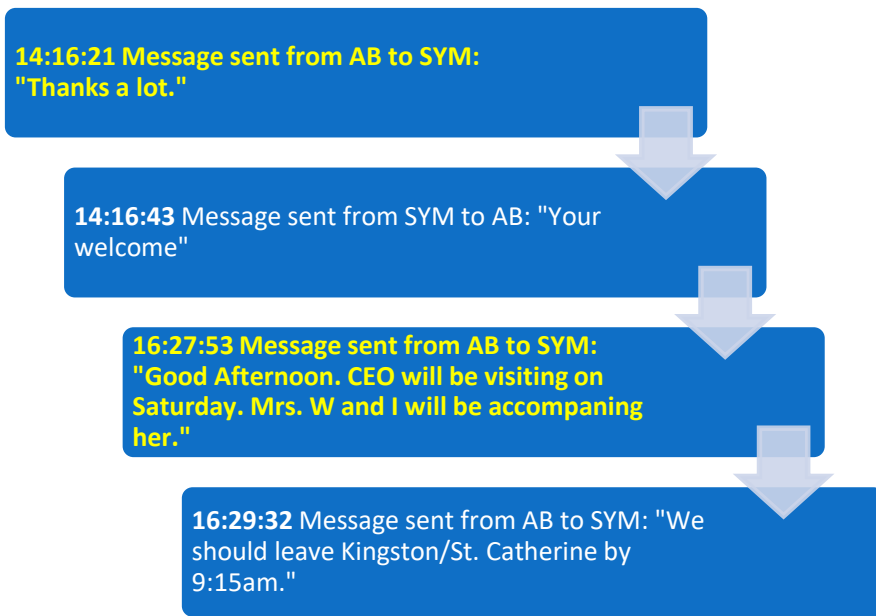


13:50:22 Message from SYM to Resident B: "Come upstairs."

13:50:38 Message from SYM to Resident B: "Ms. [AB] going to call in a minute."



13:58:46 Message from SYM to AB: "Ready now?"



SYM then sends out advisory to the residents via WhatsApp group chats about the impending visit the following day (i.e. March 6, 2021).

The significance of these WhatsApp messages is that-

- (i) They hint of some fear/lack of trust in Resident B; *prima facie*, this is consistent with Resident B's account that she had been labelled an informer. (See above message highlighted in yellow font that was sent to SYM at 13:08:00.)
- (ii) There seemed to have been particular interest in speaking with Resident B. See message above in yellow font sent at 13:50:35 that AB, who was a member of the CPFSA's senior executive management team, would be calling and that Resident B needed to "come upstairs." These messages were followed by a message of "Ready now?" sent from SYM to AB, presumably to indicate that the call could now take place.
- (iii) As shown above via highlighted yellow font in text box bearing the time stamp 16:27:53, there was a WhatsApp announcement from the CPFSA's senior executive management that the CEO, AB and Mrs. W. would be visiting the facility. This is consistent with Resident B's claim

that the CEO and others visited the facility shortly after the meeting that the Manager had convened with the girls.

WhatsApp Message Transmitted on 06/03/2021

12:48:06 Message sent from AB to SYM: "Good Morning. We are on our way, we are on the highway."

This message is also useful as it serves to bolster Resident B's credibility when she says that she saw the CEO at the facility, thus creating an opportunity for her to have spoken with her as she asserts. In any event, the CEO has since confirmed that a conversation did happen with Resident B.

RESIDENT C

Resident C started living at The Father's House when she was a minor. She remained hesitant to speak with, or to provide a witness statement directly to the OCA when the OCA (acting upon information received) approached her to do so sometime in September 2021. When the subject of Robanske was broached with her and she was asked if she wanted to share any experiences she had with him, she informed the OCA's investigator that she already told Ms. McDonald what happened with Uncle Carl in a group meeting in early 2021 and she was determined that before she could provide any more information she must first discuss the OCA's request with the Manager of The Father's House. While Resident C maintained her stance in relation to the OCA, over time her relationship deepened with the Interim Manager at The Father's House who replaced Ms. McDonald on September 23, 2021; they developed a bond that

was nurtured by them spending more individual time together and building a good rapport.

Resident C's Disclosure

The Interim Manager informed the OCA that in April 2022, for the first time she (the Interim Manager) learnt about Robanske's inappropriate exchanges with a minor in the USA and felt rather bothered by it because of his close association with the home. As a result, she says she decided to engage the residents in a conversation about the different forms of abuse and acceptable vs. unacceptable behaviours and that she opted to do this because since her tenure at the facility many of the residents stood strongly in defence of Robanske and were very protective of him. Her goal was to educate them about right from wrong as a matter of principle. The Interim Manager reports that in light of this pro-Robanske sentiment in the house, she raised the issue with Resident C to hear what her views on the matter were. It was during this discussion that Resident C disclosed to her that Uncle Carl had "engaged in inappropriate activities with her on more than one occasion." This disclosure took place on Wednesday, April 13, 2022.

Resident C's Allegations Concerning Sexually Inappropriate Behaviour of Robanske

The account of the Interim Manager is that Resident C relayed to her four (4) instances in which Robanske was inappropriate. These are:-

- ✓ Beach Trip. It is alleged that Resident C indicated that shortly after she had become a resident of The Father's House and was seventeen (17) years old, she went on a trip to the beach with other residents of the home. She reports that while in the water with her and other residents, she noticed that Robanske was "backing his fist in front of them." Apart from sharing this with the Interim Manager, Resident C says she only mentioned

it to one other resident when they had returned from the beach on the day in question.

- ✓ Dunn's River Falls/Peeping Tom. Resident C is said to have reported to the Interim Manager as well, that on another occasion Uncle Carl took them on a trip to Dunn's River Falls. When getting ready to leave Dunn's River, herself and another of the girls were going to shower before leaving and Uncle Carl offered to help by holding their bags and guarding the door while they were showering. Resident C alleges that while in the shower she "looked back and realized that Uncle Carl was peeping through a crack in the door" at her naked body. She further asserts that when he realized that she had seen him, he indicated that "she should turn around to face him." Resident C reports that while she did not report the matter to anyone at that time, since the whole media story about Robanske broke and the Manager of The Father's House convened a meeting with them in March 2021, during that meeting she mentioned this incident to her. In response, Resident C says the Manager "was very upset" and commented that she would "have to make a report because this happened when she was a minor."
- ✓ Floating Lesson. On yet another occasion at the beach, Resident C says that Uncle Carl was teaching her how to float. She alleges that they kept drifting out until it was too far for her to stand; it was then that she says he squeezed her bottom; slipped her swimsuit bottom aside and nearly inserted his penis into her vagina but she strongly shouted "no, no!" She told the Interim Manager that this was the first time she was sharing this with anyone.
- ✓ Instagram Messages. As per the Interim Manager, Resident C has also alleged that Robanske would send explicit text messages to her via Instagram and on one occasion even sent her a video of himself masturbating and shouting out her name as he ejaculated. According to her this happened **after** the OCA's investigation started and she "deleted

the video and called him and reminded him that he must stop all these things." Again, she says she told no one about this incident.

Resident C's Reasons for not Providing a Witness Statement to the OCA

The Interim Manager in her witness statement to the OCA says that she encouraged Resident C to make a statement as a part of the ongoing investigation but Resident C gave four (4) reasons for not wanting to -

- (i) "She just wanted to put everything behind her."
- (ii) She believes that Robanske will not be coming back to Jamaica.
- (iii) Since she told the (former) Manager of The Father's House about the Peeping Tom issue in March of 2021 and she said she would have reported it, there was no need for her (Resident C) to speak with the OCA. Of significance here, is that in the CEO's response dated March 18, 2021 to the Ministry of Education she asserts that the National Children's Registry (NCR) was requested to do a search of its records to ascertain whether there were any reported cases against Mr. Robanske, but there were none.
- (iv) She does not want her boyfriend to find out what Uncle Carl did to her.

For her part, however, the Interim Manager told Resident C that she would be reporting the matter in keeping with the legislation's requirement for mandatory reporting.

Recent Gift from 'Uncle Carl'

The Interim Manager's tenure at The Father's House officially ended on Friday, September 16, 2022. She has reported to the OCA that in conversation with Resident C approximately one (1) week after (i.e. on September 23rd) she was informed that Uncle Carl sent over \$70,000 to one of the resident's bank accounts to treat all the residents to a day at Mystic Mountain in St. Ann. They

arranged for two cars to transport them to the attraction and Resident C says they had a wonderful time. Taken by itself, if this report is accurate, it is not overwhelmingly significant. Within the context of the previously discussed circumstances, however, and the attachment to Robanske that some of the residents seem to have alongside their willingness to defend him, its significance becomes enhanced.

INADVERTENT MINISTERIAL ERROR

When the matter of Robanske came to national attention on or about March 3, 2021, the Honourable Fayval Williams, MP was the Minister of Education and Youth and thus had overall portfolio responsibility for the CPFSA, it being an Executive Agency within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. Minister Williams is currently holding the same Ministerial assignment. The Honourable Robert Morgan, MP, at the material time, was also in that Ministry as the Minister of State and he had direct oversight of 'children's issues' within the Ministry.

Regrettably, though through no identifiable fault of their own, they both fell into error with regard to public pronouncements that they made while commenting in the media on the Robanske situation. In each instance, there was a clear misrepresentation by the CEO of the CPFSA (either written or via oral utterances) upon which the Minister(s) relied for their own pronouncements. These are examined below.

Hon. Robert Morgan, Minister of State – Education, Youth & Information (as he then was). In a live interview with journalist Kedisha Clarke of Nationwide News' Special Investigations Division on March 3, 2021,³⁷ both the CEO of the CPFSA and Minister Morgan were guests. The topic of the discussion was Carl Robanske

³⁷ <https://nationwideradiojm.com/moeyi-orders-probe-into-cpfsas-association-with-man-accused-of-inappropriate-communications-with-a-minor/>

and his partnership with the CPFSA and the story is posted under the headline **MOEYI Orders Probe into CPFSA's Association with Man Accused of Inappropriate Communications With A Minor**. For her part, the CEO made some interesting comments in response to questions which sought to understand why the agency continued its partnership with Robanske. Some of these include:

- “We continued our relationship because he did not have a criminal record.”
- She also asserted that “he does not work directly with the children... We don't deal with him directly.”
- The “partnership pre-dated the report of his activity.”
- “The interaction between him and any child within our child care system is not happening.”

Minister Morgan when asked whether Robanske had been granted access to children in State care responded thus:

“Based on what I have been advised by the CPFSA he has not had interactions with children under the age of 18 . . .”

Discussions in the previous sections of this Report have already illustrated that this is not an accurate statement and that the CPFSA was very much aware of this inaccuracy yet it allowed the Honourable Minister to publicly fall into error.

Honourable Fayval Williams: Minister of Education, Youth & Information. A news story posted on April 14, 2021 on the Nationwide News website entitled **MOEYI Terminates Relationship with Embracing [Orphans] Following Nationwide News Investigation** reported that,

“The Ministry of Youth and Education [sic] has terminated its relationship with the organisation Embracing Orphans, whose founder was cited for professional misconduct in the United States.

Minister of Youth, Fayval Williams, says it will also vacate a child care facility it leased from the same organization within the next 90 days.”³⁸

Similarly, in an article in The Gleaner published on April 15, 2021 under the headline **Gov't cuts ties with US Charity Boss on Professional Misconduct Charges**,³⁹ an excerpt reads,

“Portfolio Minister Fayval Williams said the premises which has being leased from the group by the Government will be vacated within 90 days following the notice.”

The relevant extracts of both news articles which have been replicated here are on all fours with the CPFSA's official written response to the Honourable Minister which was conveyed under cover letter dated 18th March, 2021, bearing the signature of the CEO.

The OCA's investigations have confirmed that on April 14, 2021 the CPFSA had not in fact completely severed ties with Embracing Orphans. It has also been established that the premises at which The Father's House is located had not been vacated by the CPFSA within the 90-day window, i.e. by July 13, 2021 which is 90 days from the 14th of April, referenced by the Honourable Minister in the article. In a bid to account for this, the CEO has asserted that the property has subsequently been transferred to Jamaica Relief Ministries (JRM). An examination of documents which evidence this transfer, however, confirm that the transfer was not effected until September 21, 2021 which was way beyond the July 13th commitment. Further, the OCA's investigations have confirmed that JRM is an entity that is closely associated with Embracing Orphans, the principals know each other and they have traditionally partnered with each other on

³⁸ <https://nationwideradiojm.com/moeyi>

³⁹ <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20210415/govt-cuts-ties-us-charity-boss-professional-misconduct-charges>

projects which target children in Jamaica. The degrees of separation from Embracing Orphans are therefore not too far removed and the CPFSA has continued to occupy the premises to date.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Throughout this Report the approach taken has been to identify each issue, discuss it and express the finding/inference that is to be drawn in each section. As a consequence, no extensive discussion will be reflected in this section of the Report. All that is intended under this part is a summarized version of the main findings so that they may be easily identified in one place.

1. The Child Protection and Family Services (CPFSA) is the government entity responsible for the care and protection of children. Operationally, this means that it is charged with running children's homes and places of safety; granting licences to qualified individuals/entities for the operation of residential child care facilities; administering the Foster Care Programme; providing administrative support for the process of adoption; and monitoring children who are placed on a Fit Person Order by the Courts, whether they be placed within a residential child care facility or they remain in familial placement. Reasonably incidental to these responsibilities is the CPFSA's focus on having wards of the State successfully transition out of care once they attain the age of majority (i.e. 18 years). This means that there is a heavy fiduciary duty that the CPFSA bears towards some of the most vulnerable children and young persons within Jamaican society. Understandably, therefore, it is held to a high standard and should appreciate that its actions towards this cohort should be able to withstand scrutiny and serious errors of judgment which have the potential to (or actually do) put their charges at risk are unacceptable. A breach of the CPFSA's duty of care undermines the insulation of the protective environment that the State has entrusted the

agency to provide. This Report finds that there has been such a breach of duty on the part of the CPFSA under the stewardship of its CEO.

2. The Father's House is a transitional facility that caters exclusively to females. The wards of the State who qualify for placement at The Father's House are identified and selected by the CPFSA. Since the news of Robanske's suspension in the USA publicly surfaced in March 2021 and since the onset of this investigation, very deliberate and repeated attempts have been made by diverse representatives of the CPFSA to say that no females under 18 years, i.e. children, are accommodated at The Father's House. This, however, is a recent invention that is a classic example of 'a little too late' and is perceived as an orchestrated effort to exclude the facility from the OCA's jurisdiction and duty to investigate. There is a preponderance of evidence that confirms that since the opening of the facility right through to the conduct of these investigations, the CPFSA had routinely accommodated girls who were below 18 years at The Father's House; as previously discussed, this was not for "emergency" or over-night accommodation" as the CEO proffered in a belated attempt to qualify her claims regarding anyone under 18 years being at the facility. Some of this evidence is to be found in The Father's House's own Admissions' Log which records the date of admission of each girl along with their date of birth; Birth Certificates examined by the OCA as a part of this investigation; utterances by the CEO and Robanske in the media as to the age cohort being catered to; diverse media stories that spoke to the profile of the home; the Embracing Orphans' website; as well as the OCA's own interaction with some of the girls who resided at The Father's House during the investigation or who formerly resided there.
3. This Report has reviewed literature that treats with the need for a carefully curated approach when dealing with children who live in, or young adults

who grew up in alternative care. Longitudinal studies have firmly established that generally, children who grow up in institutions require a more supportive environment when compared to children who did not if they are to have positive life outcomes on a sustainable basis; this 'supportive environment' includes one that is free from persons who have a high probability of exploiting them in any way. It is of concern therefore, that the psychological evaluation of Robanske that was done as a part of the 2016 Hearing initiated against him by the Office of Professional Practices, concluded, *inter alia*, that -

"He appears to have little awareness of the inappropriateness of his behavior."

AND

"Dr. Barnard stated, "If a person lacks insight in understanding both their unconscious and conscious motives, then there is an increased probability of that type of behavior reoccurring."

Additionally, many of these girls come into the care system fractured and having been exploited in some way. Robanske is acutely aware of these vulnerabilities. His own words in a 2017 news article which extensively quotes him about the work he is doing in Jamaica are:

"Girls are especially endangered in Jamaica . . . There, females are seen as commodities by some, an attitude that leads to girls being sexually abused, neglected, exposed to violence in and out of their homes, as well as abandoned. They have been sexually and physically abused, and have run the streets."⁴⁰

The State therefore ought not to be purportedly 'rescuing' these children but in practical terms negatively impacting their life's outcomes by having

⁴⁰ Ibid – Footnote 24

lax systems of protection and supervision in relation to whom they are exposed.

4. The CEO failed in her administrative and moral duty to these former wards of the State. Her responses indicate that she is either unaware of, or has a reckless approach to the significant vulnerability which attaches not only to them when they are minors (i.e. below 18 years) but also even after and during their transition out of the formal care system. One example of this is provided by the CEO's response that she did not see the need to probe how old Resident B was when the incident that she complained about occurred nor whether she intended to report the matter. To her mind, it was almost as if once they hit their 18th birthday the duty of care owed to them ceases, even though they physically remain in the care of the CPFSA.
5. The CPFSA by its own admission, knew of Robanske's antecedents from early 2018. It also knew (despite recent denials) that it had children accommodated at The Father's House. It's continued partnership with Robanske himself and with Embracing Orphans given the central and lead role that Robanske plays in that organization, was not only questionable but betrayed the CPFSA's mandate and undermined its moral authority to be telling Jamaicans that they should be wary of persons who may be around children for fear that they may abuse them. The CPFSA's knowledge of Robanske's antecedents coupled with the liberal access to its residents from 2018 right through to 2021 (only being interrupted because the heat was turned on due to the public discourse), vividly speaks to the CPFSA's wilful blindness and its inadequate response. Instead of decisively taking steps to protect what is accepted as a very vulnerable population, the CPFSA somewhat legitimized Robanske through its public association and endorsement and effectively justified their continued partnership by utterances such as that made by the CEO

that “we continued our relationship because he did not have a criminal record.”⁴¹ The CPFSA operated contrary to the principle that an agent of the State with a mandate such as it has, ought to be mindful of the need to prevent exploitation and/or abuse to those in its care – whether this be at the hands of staff, volunteers or other partners. This underscores the betrayal of trust that was manifestly evident in the way in which the CEO processed the matter and executed the agency’s handling of it.

6. The residents of The Father’s House were not only accessible to Robanske but were very receptive to him perhaps because of the gifts and the attention that he would give to them. Some of the residents were able to speak about knowing and interacting with him from they were residents at Blossom Gardens Children’s Home; one even produced a photograph of herself at age 6 that she says Robanske he had shared with her from his interactions with her in that facility. He represented to them a person in authority whom they were fond of, indebted to, and liked; he also occupied a position of trust. The experience of **Resident A** whose account is discussed in detail in this Report, alongside the screenshot capture of messages between herself and Robanske on **Facebook Messenger** provide a good example of how this position of trust was violated. Robanske’s *modus operandi* in this situation is also very similar to that which was the subject of his suspension, viz. he contacted the minor in the USA via his **Facebook** account and sent her inappropriate messages about his genitalia.

7. The CPFSA operated within an environment that allowed Robanske access to children and facilitated his engagement with them. Apart from his liberal access and association with residents from the Father’s House,

⁴¹ Said in response to questions posed in a live interview on Nationwide News on March 3, 2021.

the OCA's investigations confirmed three (3) other such facilities. These are –

- Blossom Gardens Children's Home where prior to the Covid-19 pandemic Robanske would visit the facility and take both staff and children on excursions.
- Jamaica Relief Ministries (JRM) which accommodated male and female children 0 – 7 years. For example, the Visitors' Log records that on December 18, 2018 he went for 'barbering'.
- West Haven Children's Home which accommodates male and female children with special needs. According to the Visitors' Log Robanske visited in 2015, 2017 and on August 18, 2020 to donate bread, observe and interact with residents.

8. The OCA through this investigation has ferreted out a number of instances in which the CEO of the CPFSA has made statements (both written and oral) that are inconsistent with what the records reveal or are discrepant in some other material particular that go to the root of the matter. In the section of this Report that focuses on the inconsistencies and discrepancies of the CEO some of the main ones are –

- A claim that there were no girls under 18 at The Father's House – **disproved by access to birth records and various log books.**
- A claim that Robanske had no direct contact with the residents of The Father's House – **disproved by a review of the Visitors' Log and Daily Logs as well as accounts provided by the residents.**
- A claim that the CPFSA does not directly deal with Robanske, especially post-2018 – **disproved by a number of news articles and online features including Embracing Orphans' Year in Review 2020 which detailed its work in Jamaica through its partnership with the CPFSA and the CEO's own admission of her fellowship with**

Robanske and the girls at the 2019 Christmas Party that was sponsored by Robanske.

- A claim that Robanske would have no contact, be liaising with, or being the face of Embracing Orphans in Jamaica post-2018 – **disproved through call data analysis that showed telephone calls between Robanske and CPFSA representatives and diverse news articles, even up to 2021 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic following a request of Robanske that was initiated by the CPFSA.**
- Written undertaking given to the Honourable Minister of Education and Youth that, in accordance with her directive, the premises would be vacated within 90 days – **disproved as way beyond July 2021 the premises still remained occupied.**
- The CEO's account to the Children's Advocate at the December 2022 Hearing that the Manager (Ms. McDonald) was removed from her position by the CPFSA as a part of its decision to change the way in which The Father's House as a transitional facility would be operated – **disproved through personal knowledge that it was through dialogue with the Honourable Minister(s) Fayval Williams and Robert Morgan as well as the then Permanent Secretary that Ms. McDonald was sent on leave and instructed to leave The Father's House in order for the OCA's investigations to proceed unfettered given the presumable influence Ms. McDonald seemed to have on the girls. This was what paved the way for the Interim Manager to assume duties on September 23, 2021.**

9. The analysis of extracted data from mobile telephones and tablets belonging to the Manager of The Father's House and its residents provided useful information. Though discussed in detail in the relevant section of this Report, the main points reveal –

(a) An open intent of the Manager of The Father's House to deceive in her WhatsApp message as communicated via her mobile telephone number ending in -8546 in the TFH WhatsApp group chat in the following way:

- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:38 – “I will help you guys with it.”;
- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:47 – “But it can’t be known.”; and
- ✓ On 07/03/2021 at 18:56:21 – “Remember I work with the Government who is trying to “cut” ties with him.”

This was in relation to the girls' stated attempt via WhatsApp to portray Robanske in a positive light and to reach out to the Minister to “see if it could change anything.”

(b) Confirmation that there was a meeting convened by the Manager of The Father's House on March 3, 2021 as reported by **Residents B and C** in their recount of how and when they made the disclosure about their experience with 'Uncle Carl'.

(c) Confirmation that “some things are coming out of this meeting” as communicated by the Manager to the CEO on March 3, 2021 and further “when you get a chance call me.”

(d) Confirmation that like the OCA, the media had an interest in **Resident B** and efforts were being made to reach her on March 3, 2021. Of much significance, is that the WhatsApp messages among the CEO, the Manager, AB and RDG were quite focused on **Resident B** and ensuring that she did not speak to that journalist.

10. Both the Honourable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education & Youth and the Honourable Robert Morgan, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education & Youth, through no fault of their own, communicated inaccuracies to the public with regard to the Robanske issue and the CPFSA. In the relevant section of this Report it has been illustrated that the

Ministers fell into error consequent upon their reliance on what has now been established as the CPFSA's misrepresentation of the facts. Needless to say, this ought not only to be seen as unacceptable but also a dangerous precedent to allow to persist without being addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The leadership and management of the CPFSA has demonstrated that it either does not have the capacity or the will to effectively manage sensitive matters in spite of the high level of responsibility that has been entrusted to it in relation to some of Jamaica's most vulnerable citizens. Exposure to extensive capacity building and training in the fundamental principles of safeguarding in relation children in care and the special vulnerabilities of those exiting care is therefore strongly recommended.
2. The risk assessment tools and procedures that are utilized by the CPFSA need to be revisited, assessed and aligned with best practices. There has to be an objective standard that is established and adhered to by all levels of staff and management within the CPFSA.
3. The material inconsistencies and discrepancies that have been exposed at the instance of the CEO are of concern and special attention needs to be paid to this disposition in light of the reliance that one should be able to confidently place on an office holder at that level. Within the context of this investigation, for instance, it has been highlighted how the flawed information that was provided to the Honourable Ministers by the CPFSA led them into error and served as the basis for inaccurate information being communicated to the nation on a matter of high public interest and importance to the child protection sector.
4. Due to the CEO's gross breach of the duty of care owed to wards of the State and former wards who are housed in facilities run by the

CPFSA that is a finding of this investigation, this matter is hereby referred to the Honourable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education & Youth as the person competent to take such disciplinary or other proceedings as may be appropriate against the CEO of the CPFSA.



Children's Advocate
December 23, 2022