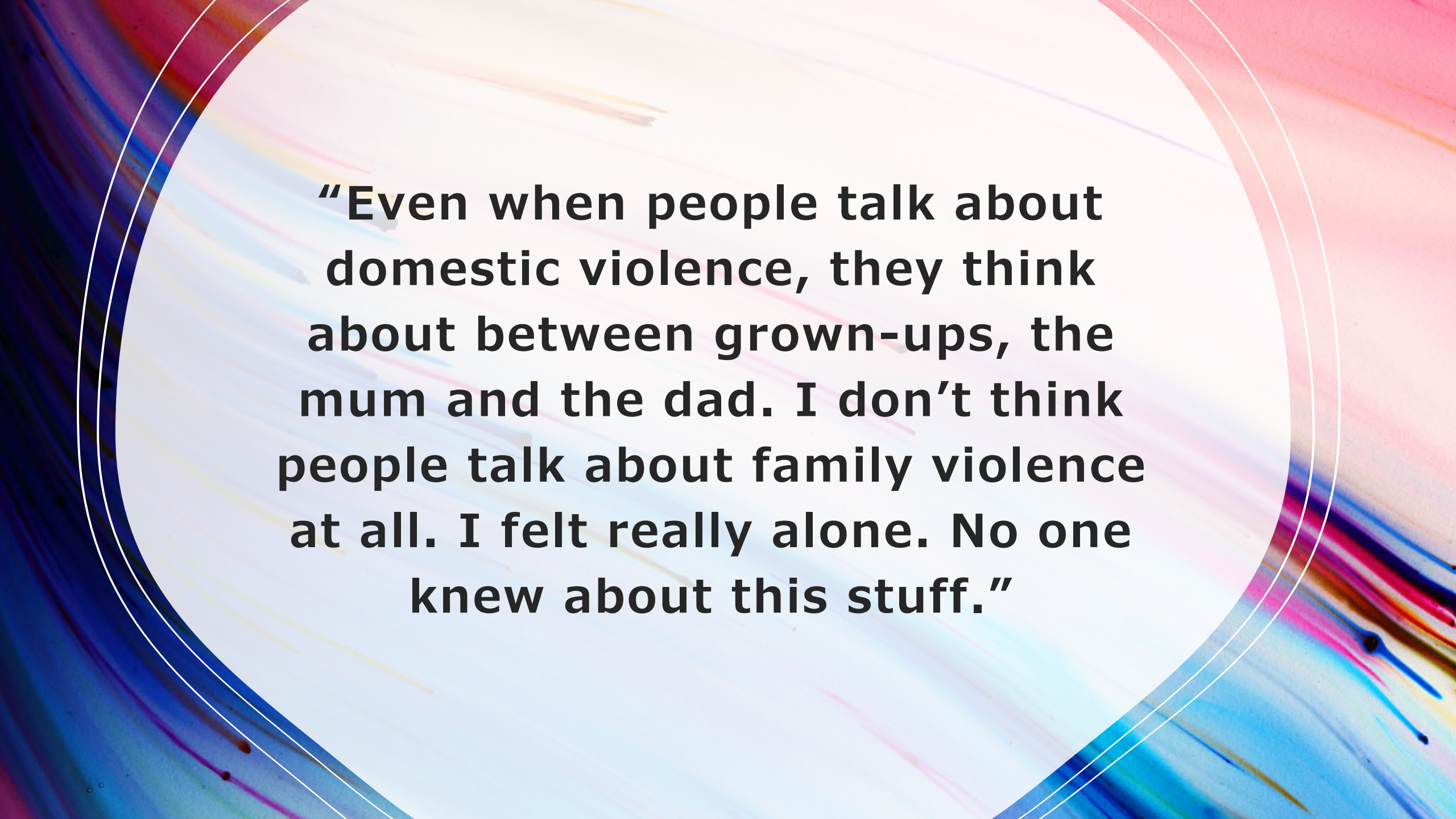


**All quotes in this slideshow come directly from young people in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) who shared their experiences as part of a consultation undertaken by the ACT Children and Young People Commissioner in partnership with the ACT Family Safety Hub.**


**These are published in the [Young people's experience of domestic and family violence](#) booklet (ACT)**





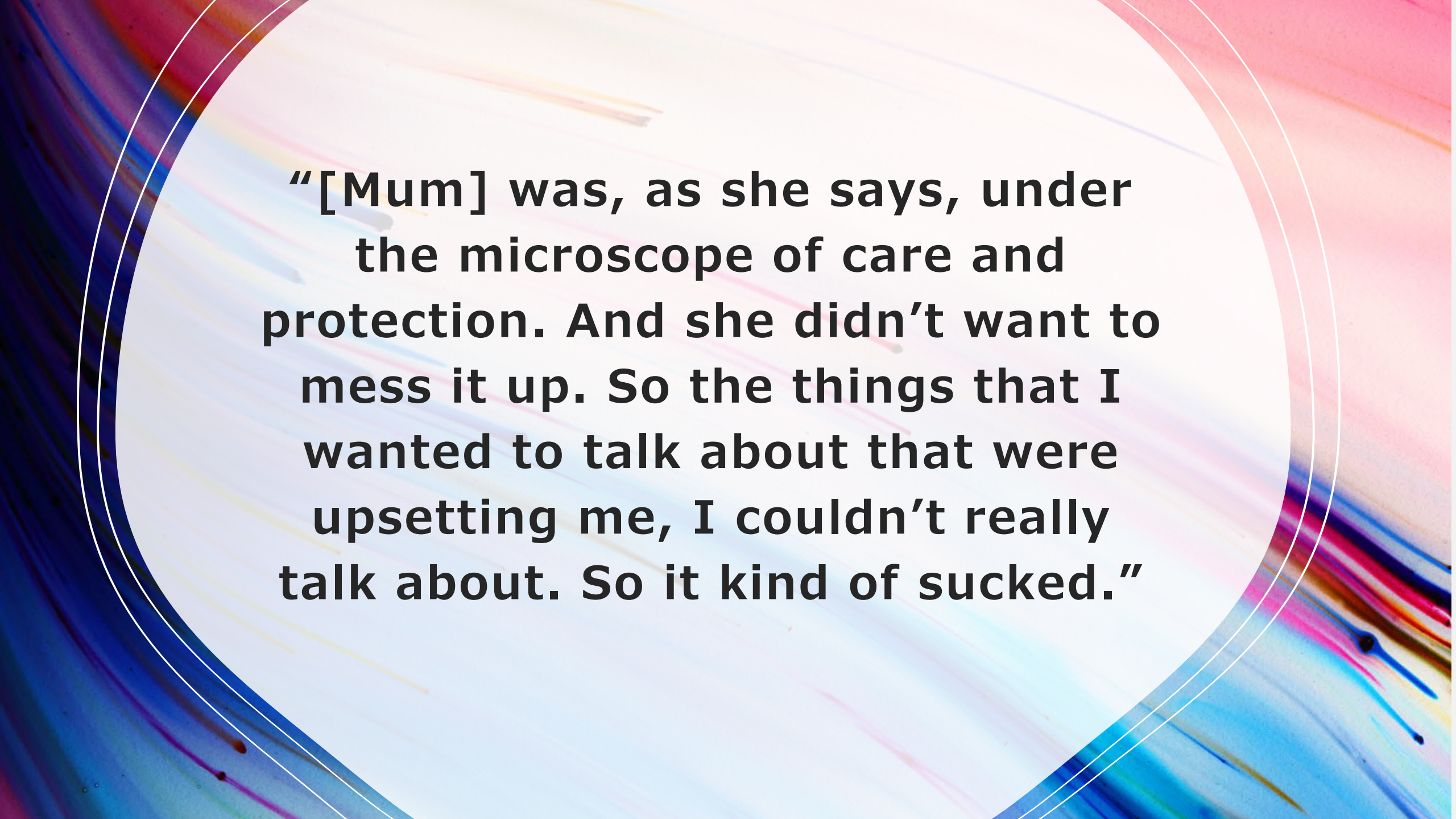
**“Even when people talk about domestic violence, they think about between grown-ups, the mum and the dad. I don’t think people talk about family violence at all. I felt really alone. No one knew about this stuff.”**





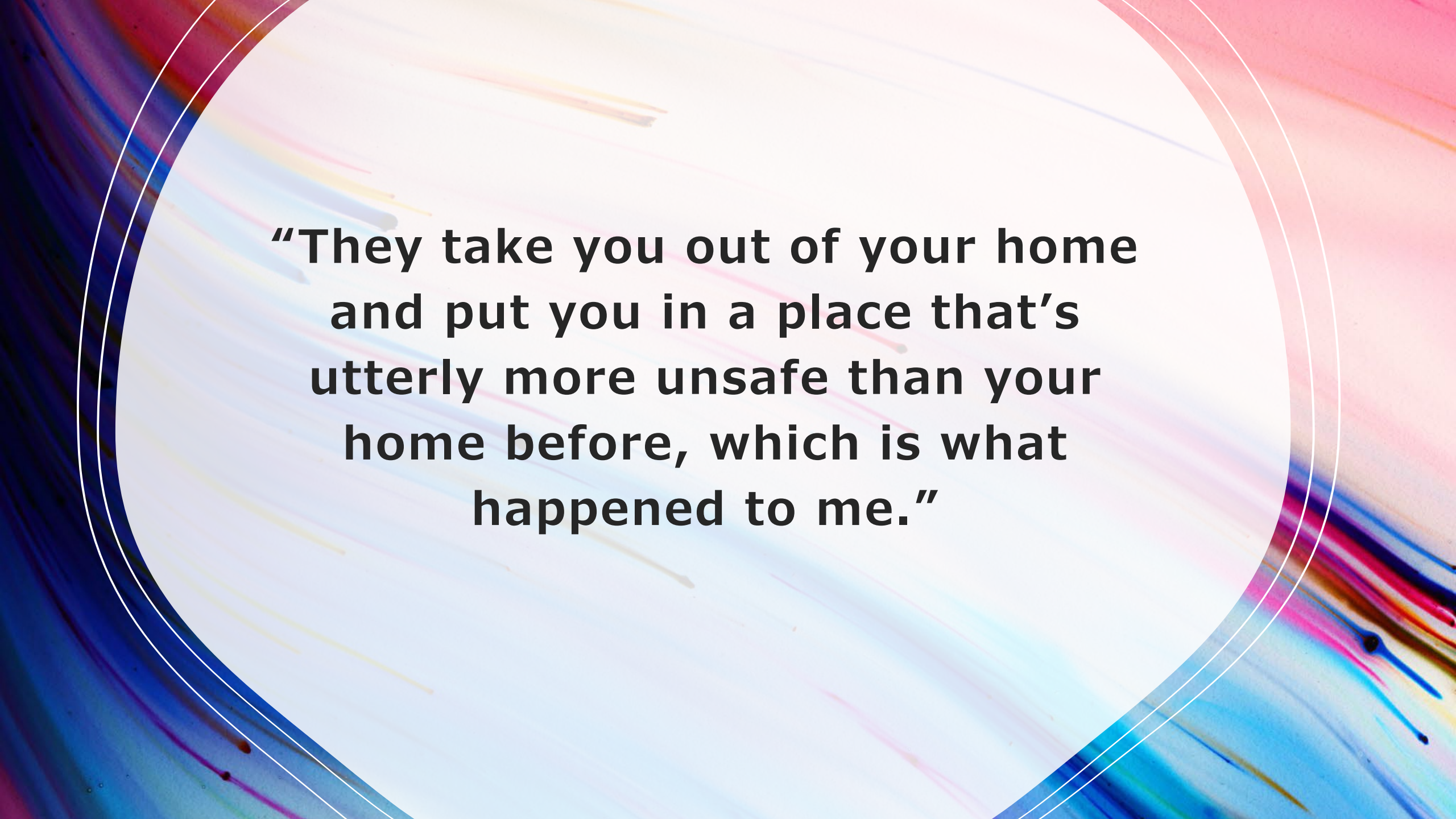
**“I suffered domestic abuse and  
felt like I couldn’t tell anyone  
because it was my brother  
hurting me.”**





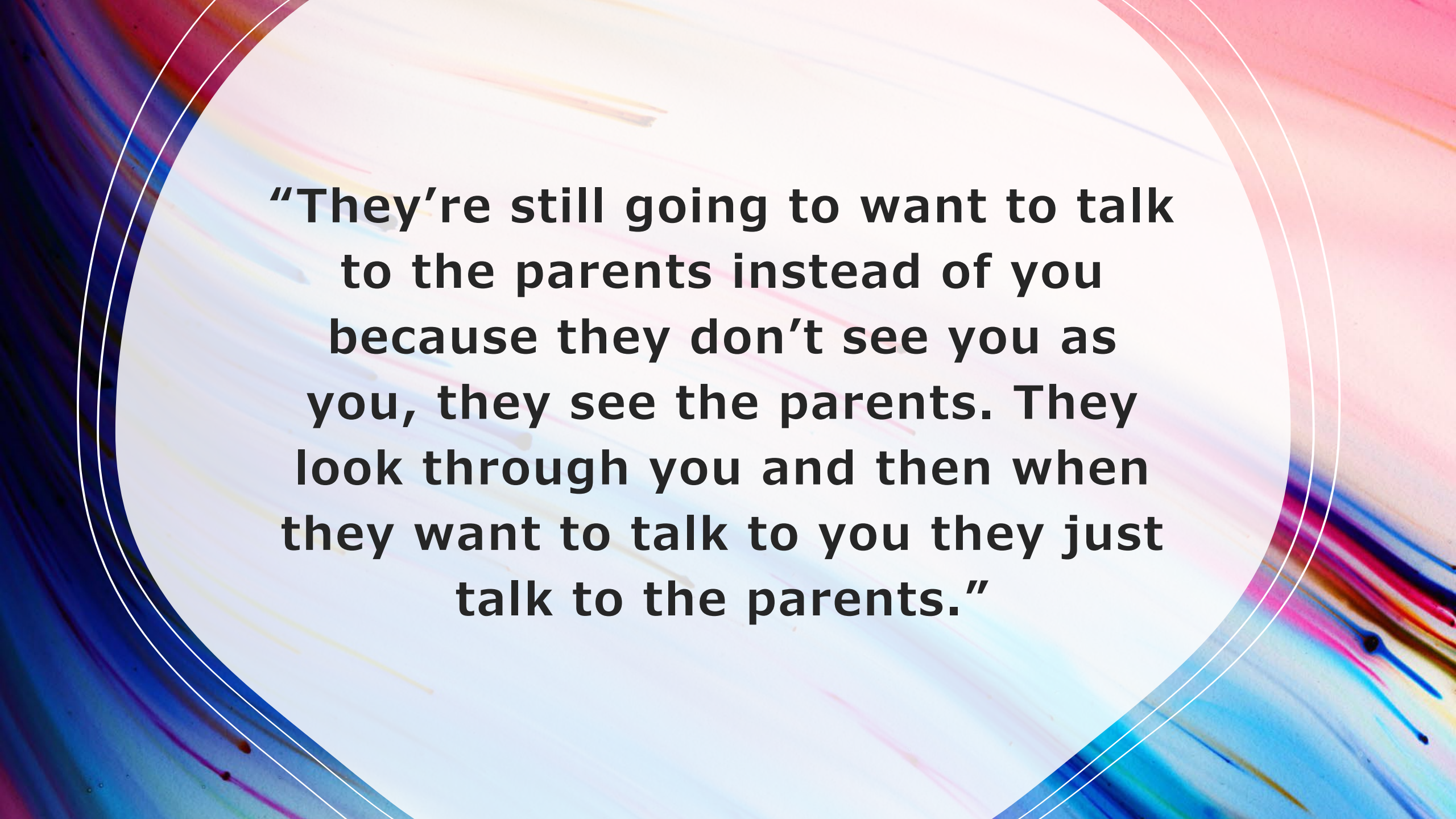
**“[Mum] was, as she says, under the microscope of care and protection. And she didn’t want to mess it up. So the things that I wanted to talk about that were upsetting me, I couldn’t really talk about. So it kind of sucked.”**





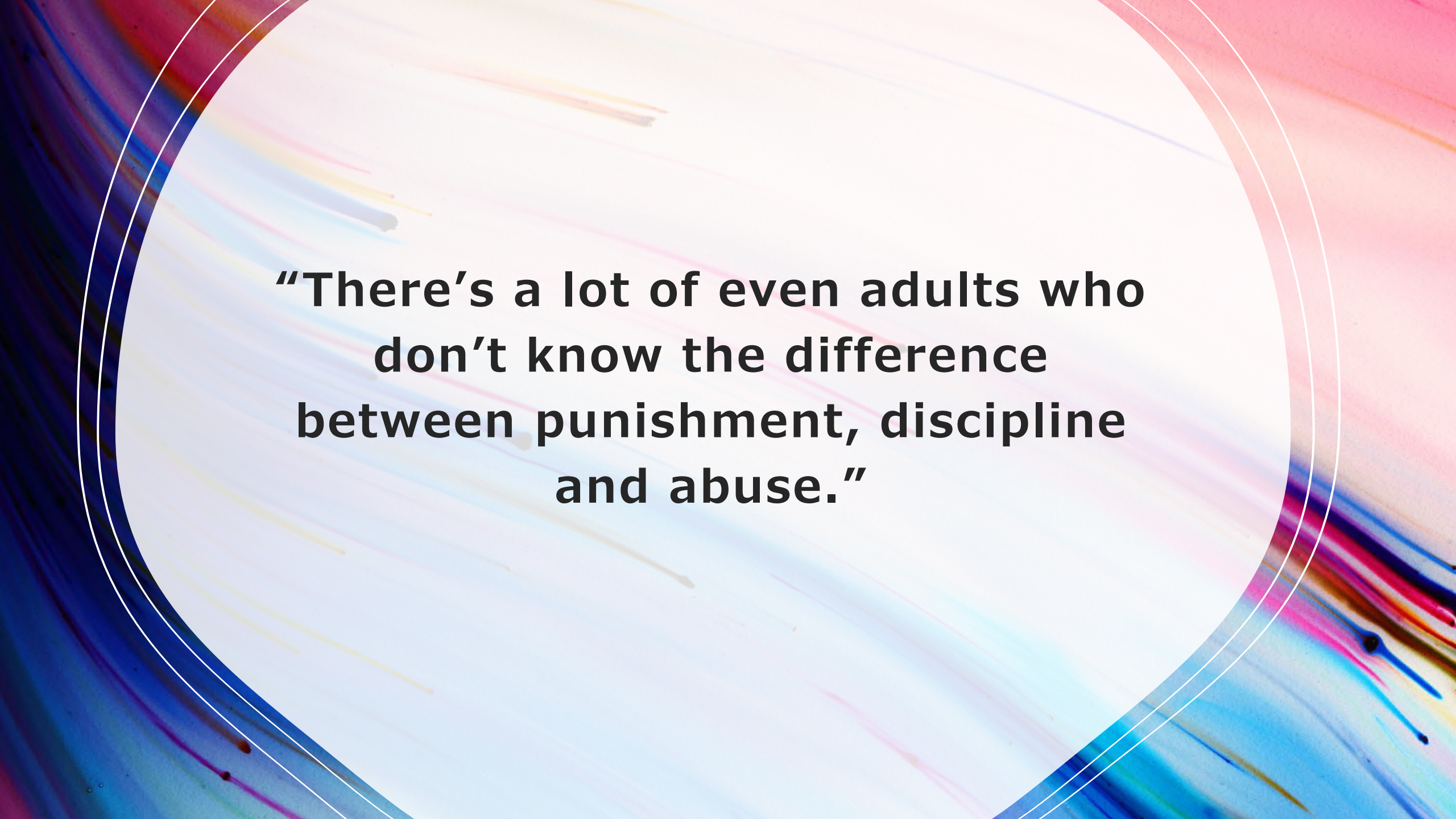
**“They take you out of your home  
and put you in a place that’s  
utterly more unsafe than your  
home before, which is what  
happened to me.”**





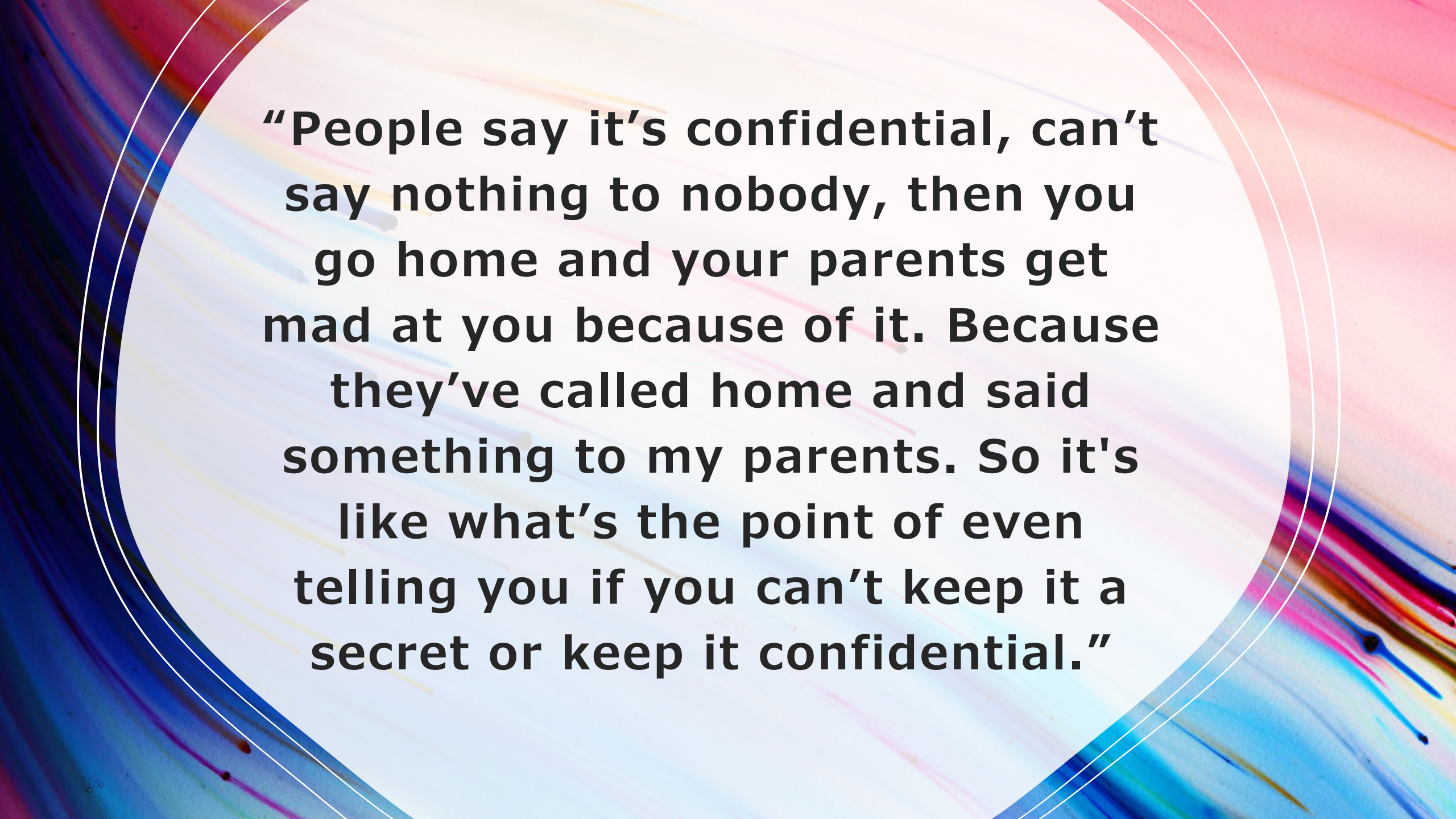
**“They’re still going to want to talk to the parents instead of you because they don’t see you as you, they see the parents. They look through you and then when they want to talk to you they just talk to the parents.”**





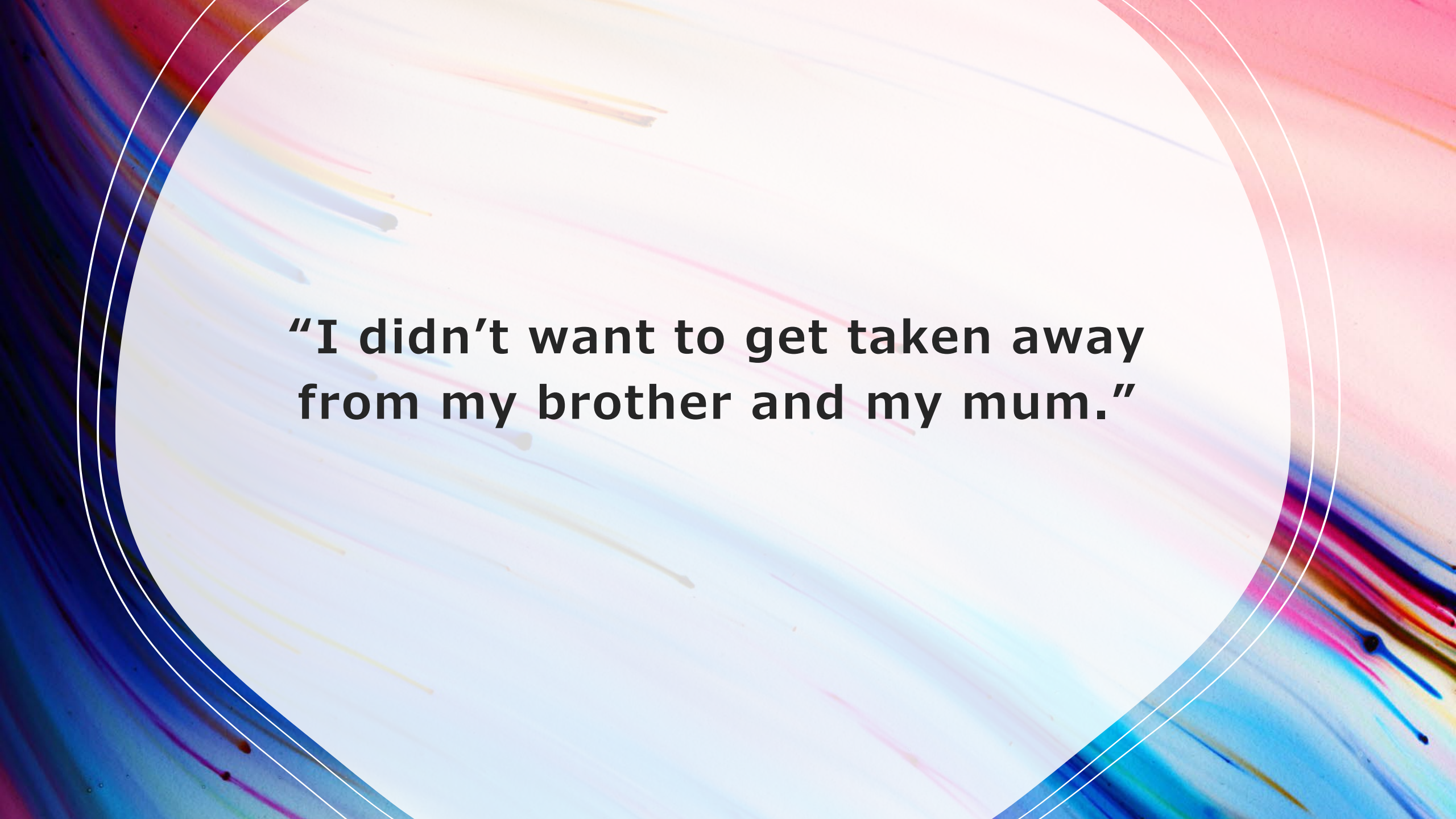
**“There’s a lot of even adults who  
don’t know the difference  
between punishment, discipline  
and abuse.”**





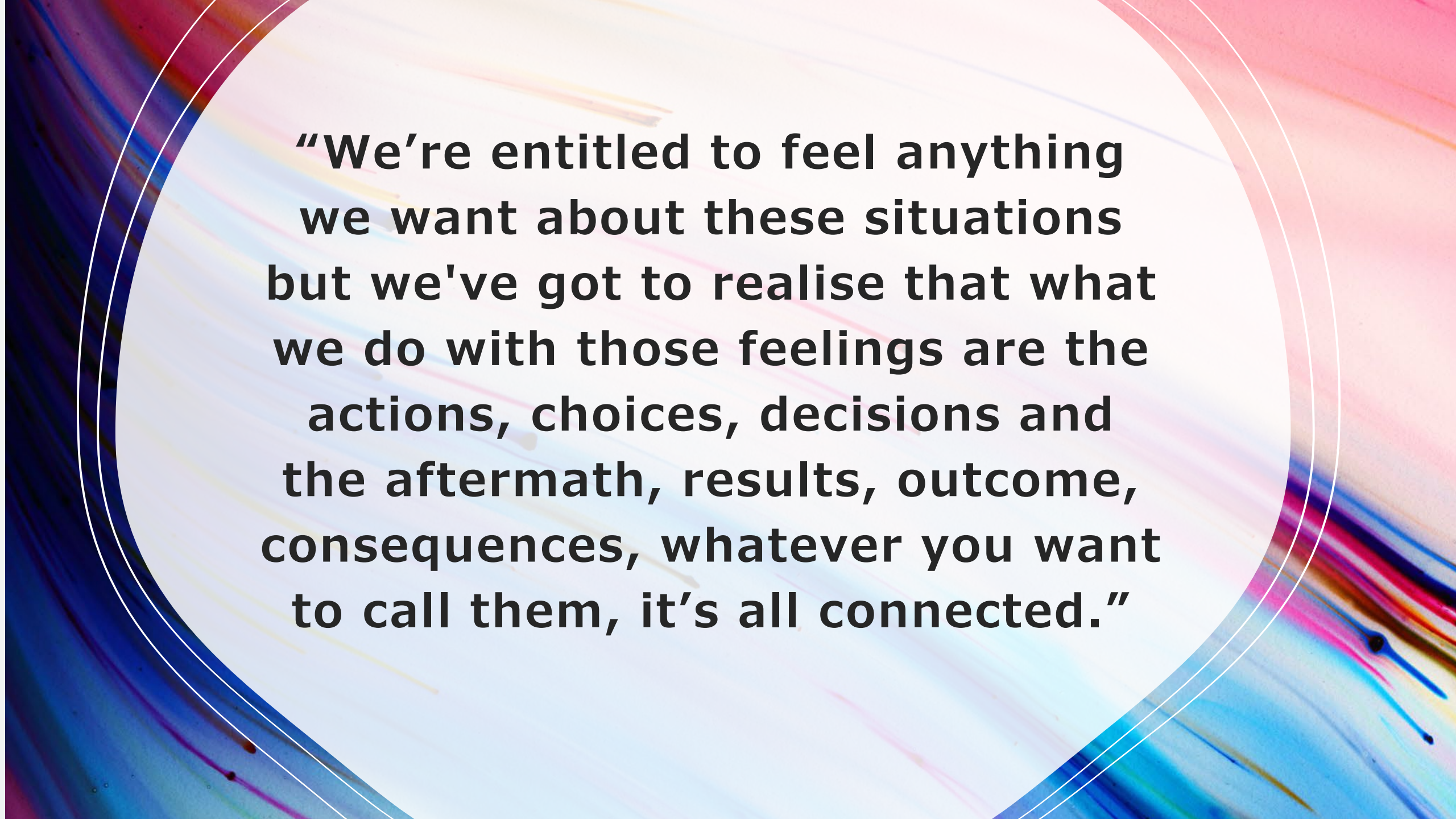
**“People say it’s confidential, can’t say nothing to nobody, then you go home and your parents get mad at you because of it. Because they’ve called home and said something to my parents. So it’s like what’s the point of even telling you if you can’t keep it a secret or keep it confidential.”**





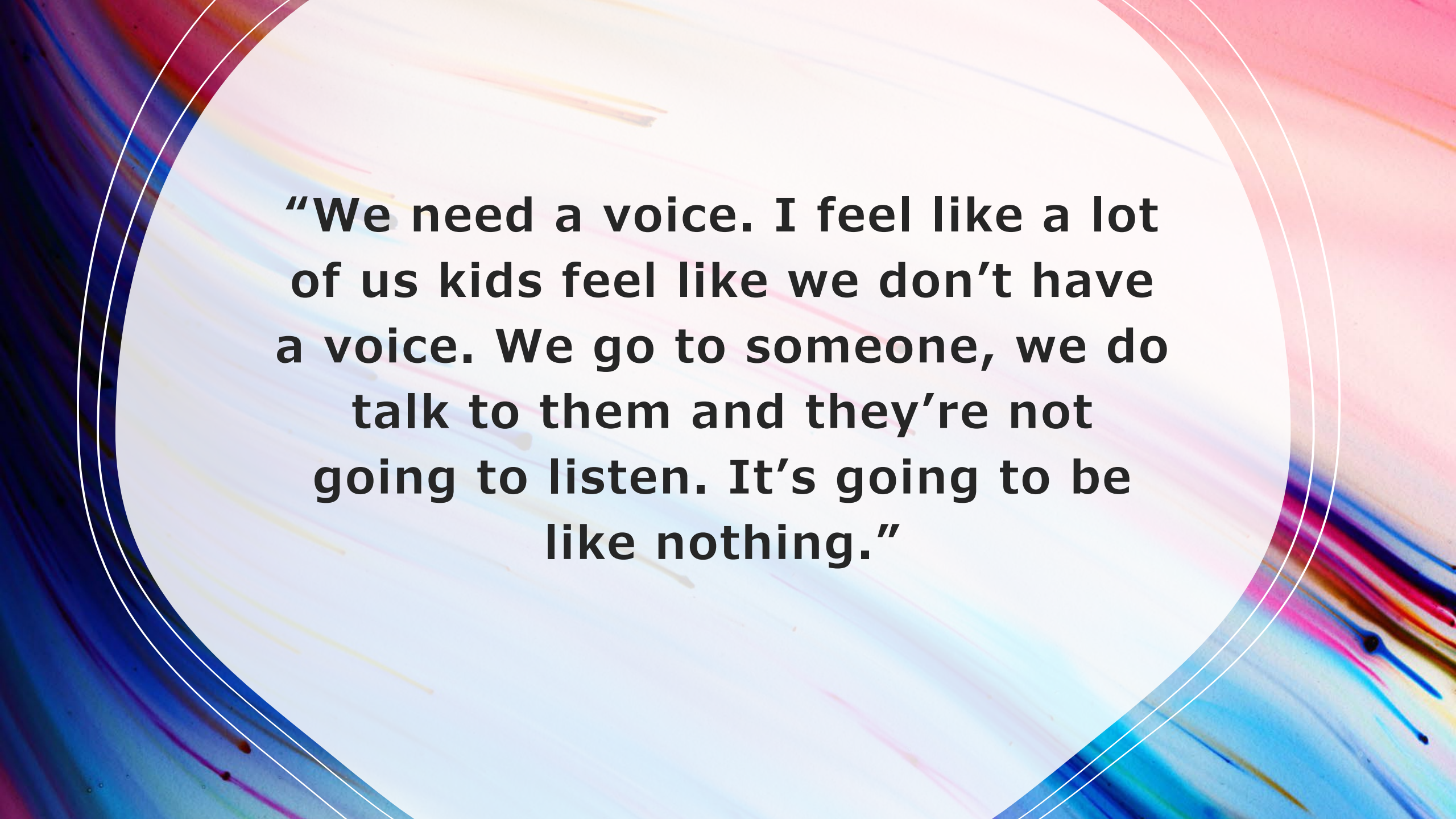
**“I didn’t want to get taken away  
from my brother and my mum.”**





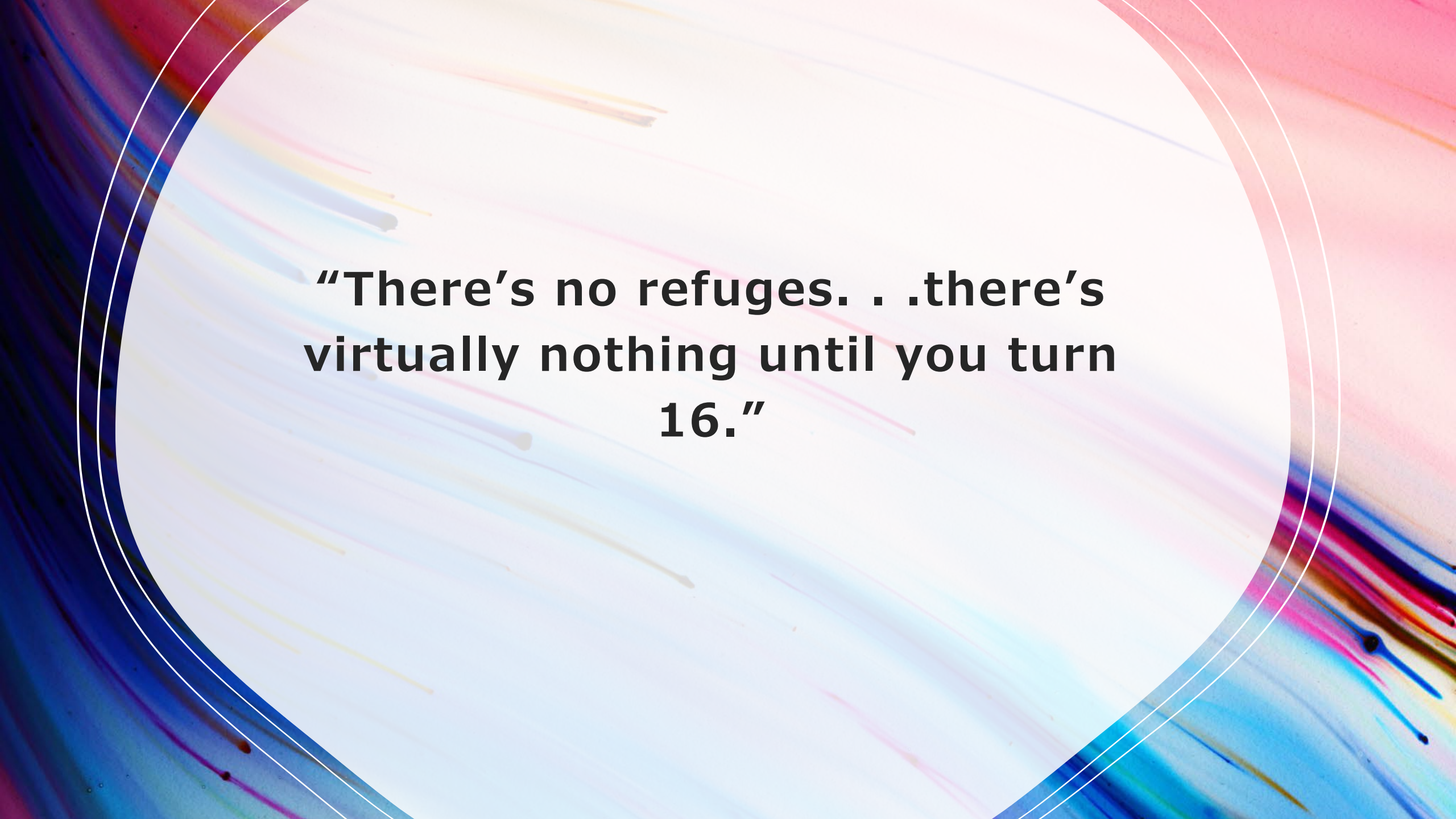
**“We’re entitled to feel anything we want about these situations but we've got to realise that what we do with those feelings are the actions, choices, decisions and the aftermath, results, outcome, consequences, whatever you want to call them, it’s all connected.”**





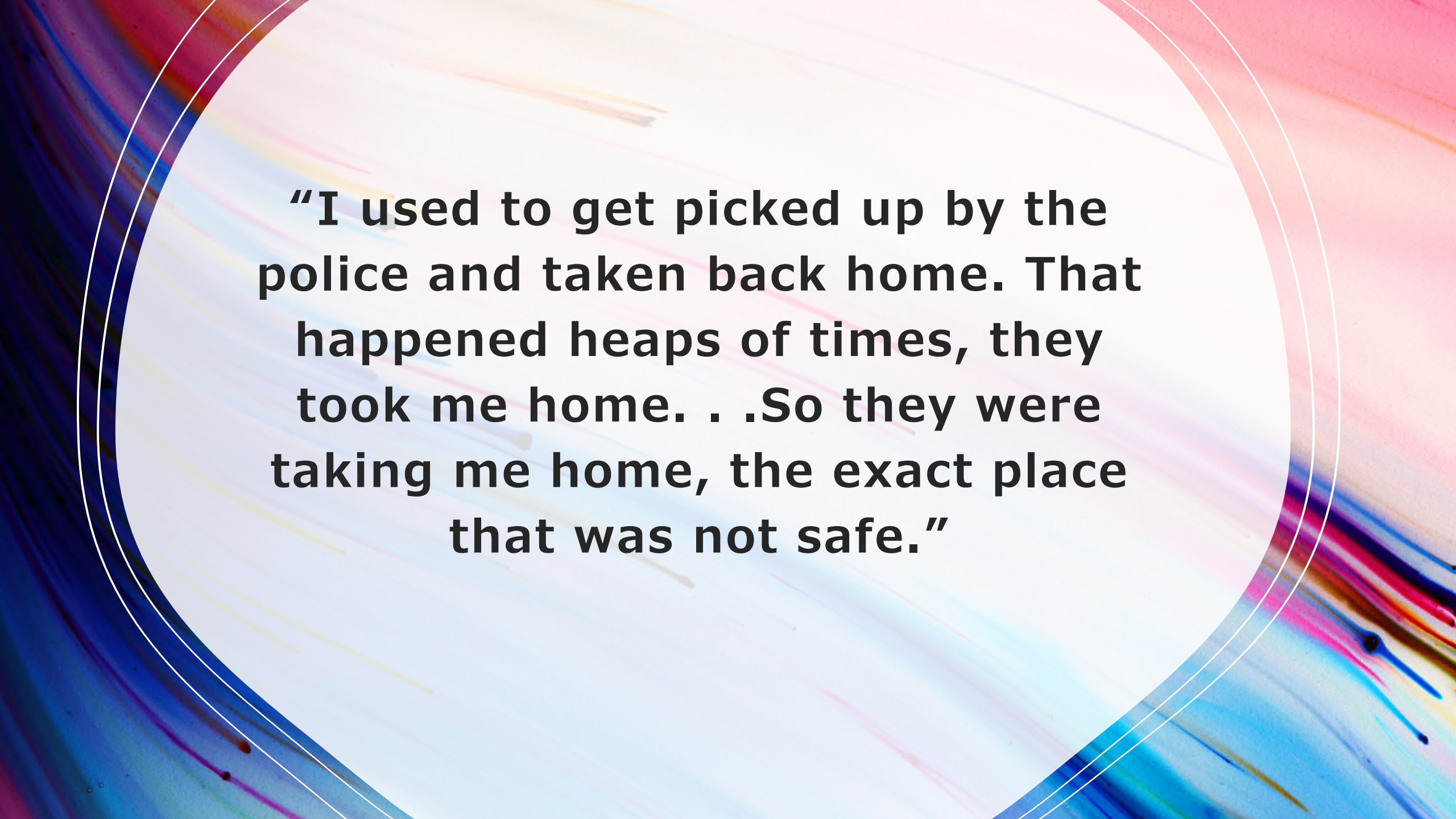
**“We need a voice. I feel like a lot of us kids feel like we don’t have a voice. We go to someone, we do talk to them and they’re not going to listen. It’s going to be like nothing.”**



The background features a vibrant, abstract pattern of diagonal brushstrokes in shades of blue, purple, yellow, and pink. A large, white circular frame is centered on the page, containing the text.

**“There’s no refuges. . .there’s  
virtually nothing until you turn  
16.”**



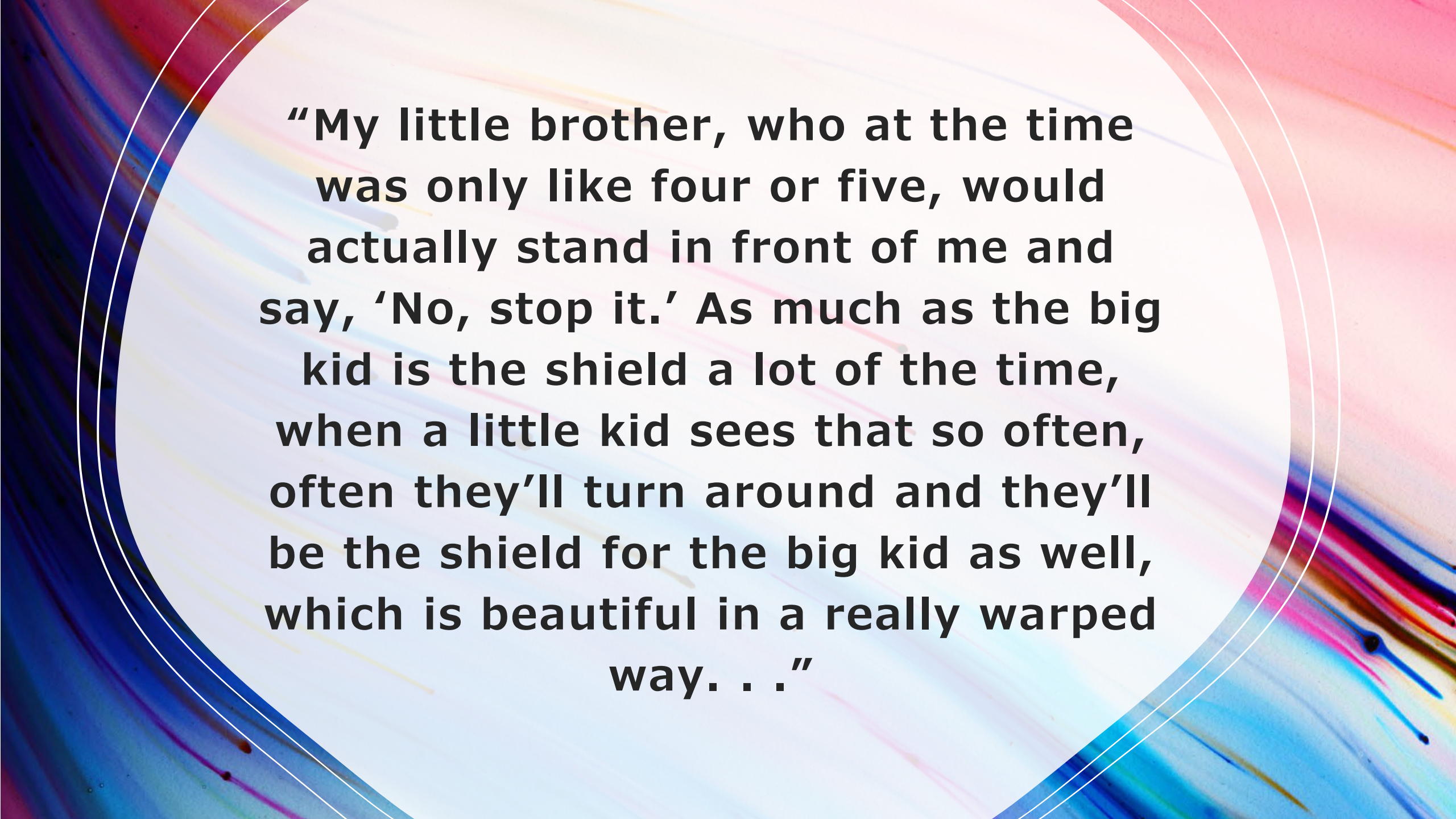


**“I used to get picked up by the police and taken back home. That happened heaps of times, they took me home. . .So they were taking me home, the exact place that was not safe.”**



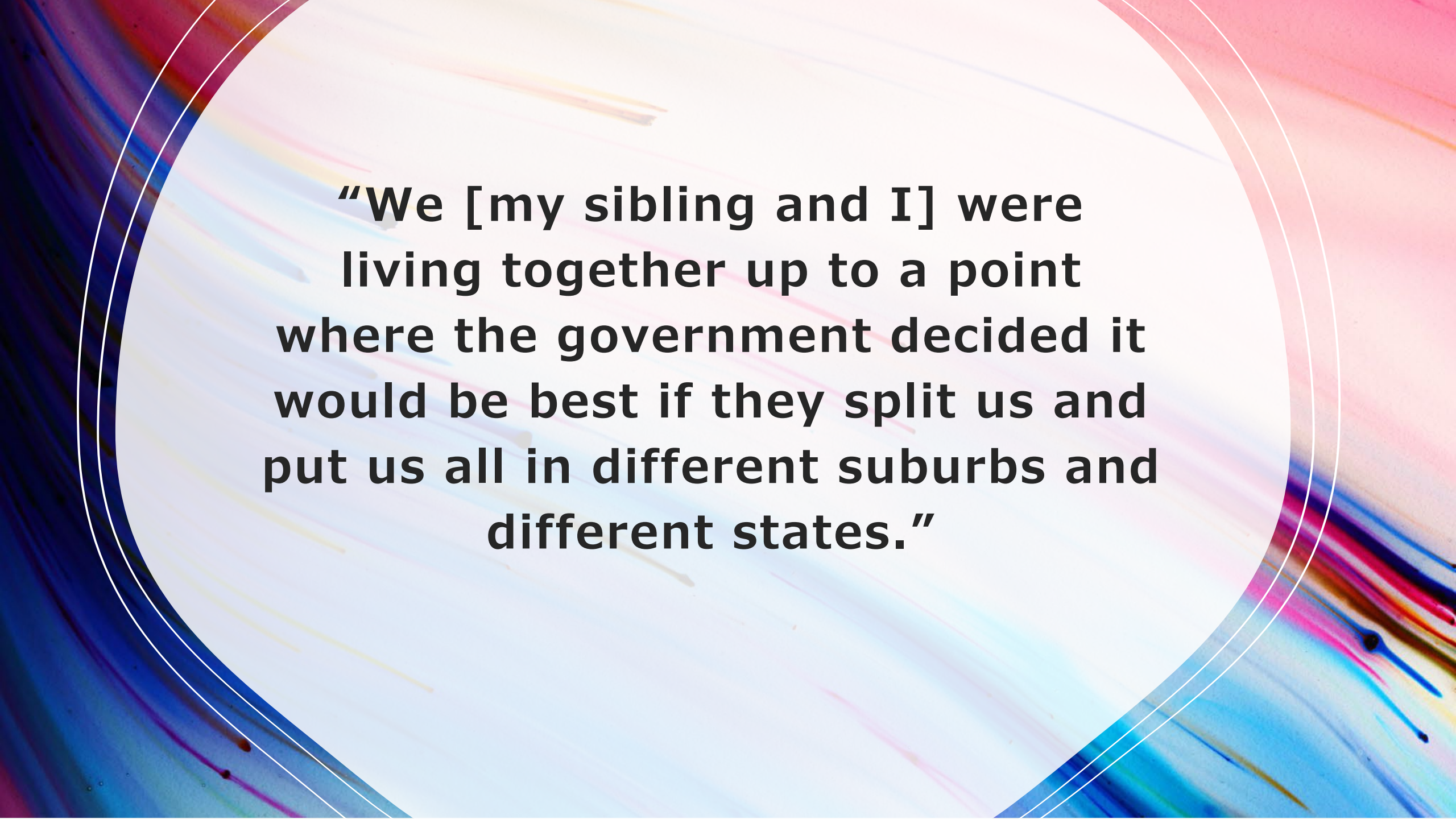
**“ . . .we were meant to get a housing transfer when my dad left, we’re still on the housing transfer list. . .it’s ridiculous because you can’t really heal I the place you got sick in the first place.”**





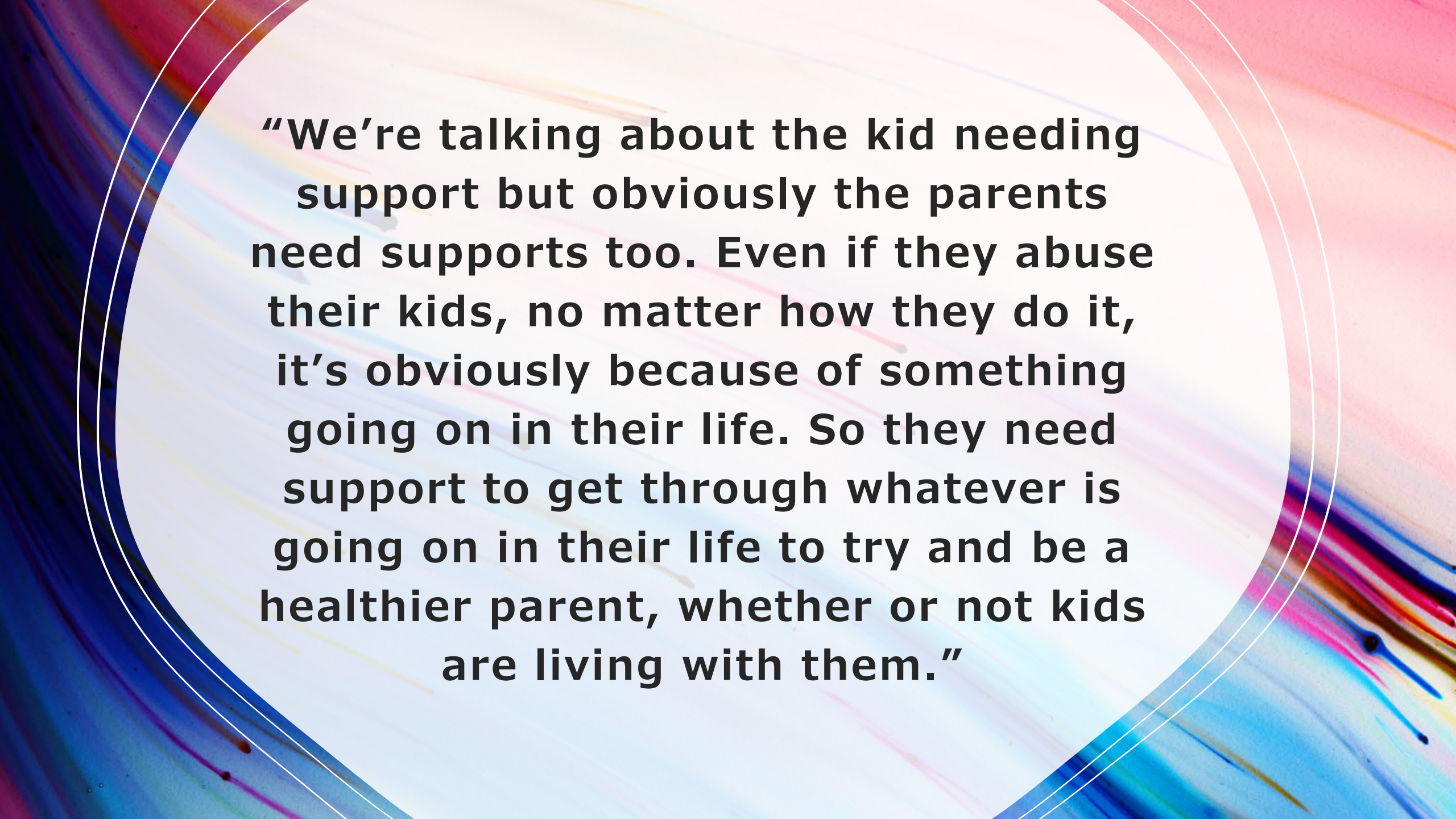
**“My little brother, who at the time was only like four or five, would actually stand in front of me and say, ‘No, stop it.’ As much as the big kid is the shield a lot of the time, when a little kid sees that so often, often they’ll turn around and they’ll be the shield for the big kid as well, which is beautiful in a really warped way. . . .”**





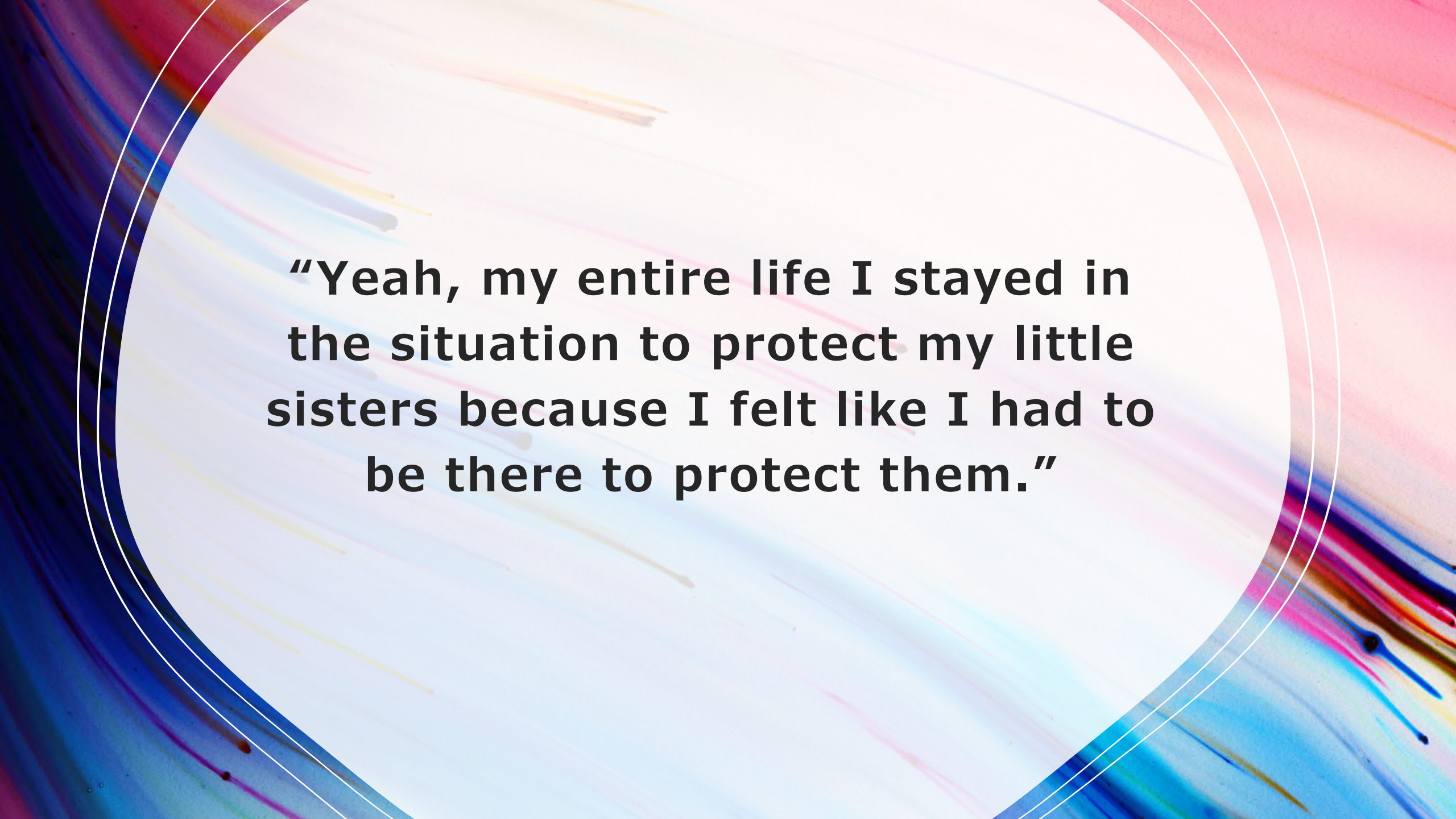
**“We [my sibling and I] were living together up to a point where the government decided it would be best if they split us and put us all in different suburbs and different states.”**





**“We’re talking about the kid needing support but obviously the parents need supports too. Even if they abuse their kids, no matter how they do it, it’s obviously because of something going on in their life. So they need support to get through whatever is going on in their life to try and be a healthier parent, whether or not kids are living with them.”**



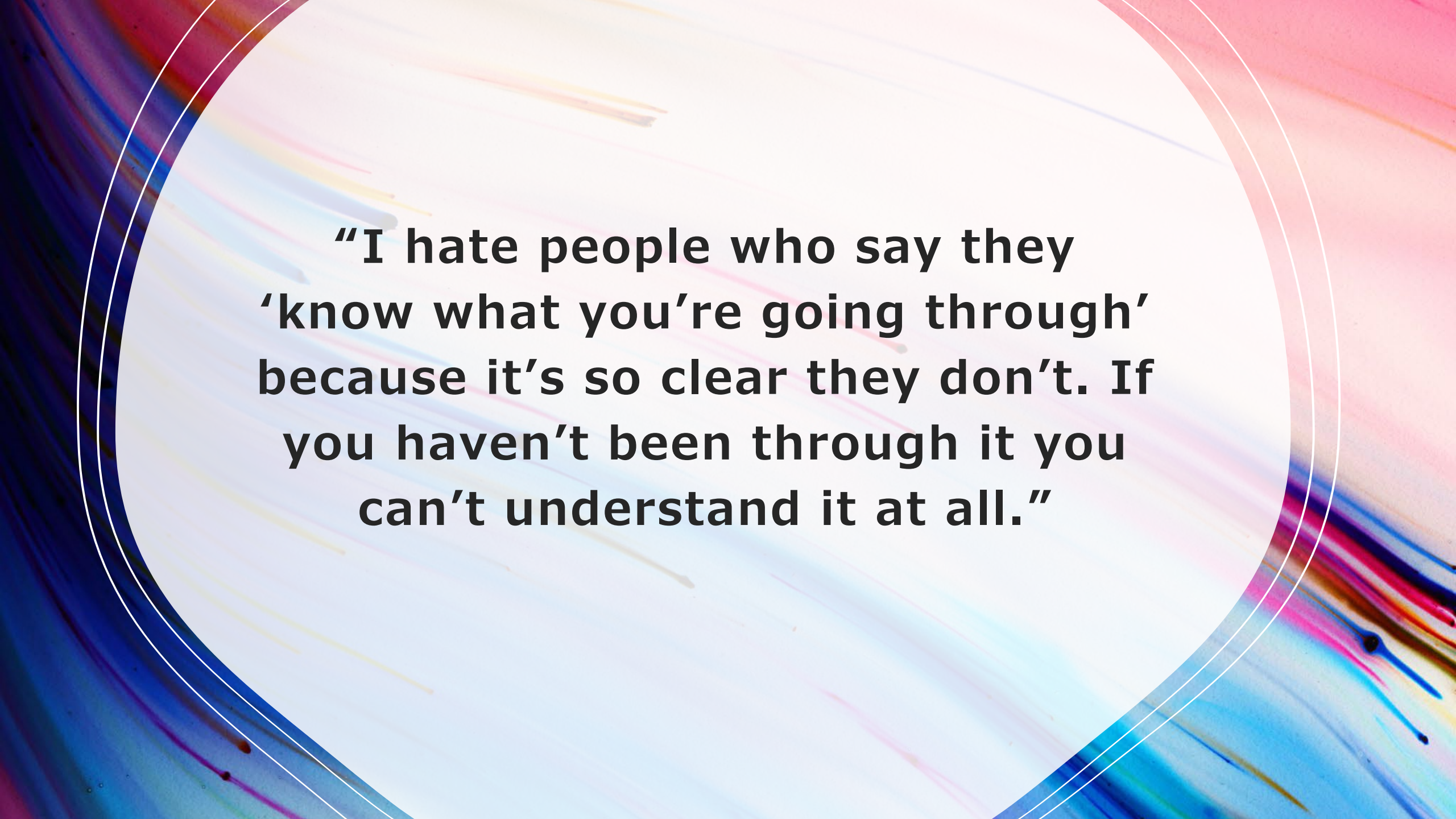


**“Yeah, my entire life I stayed in the situation to protect my little sisters because I felt like I had to be there to protect them.”**



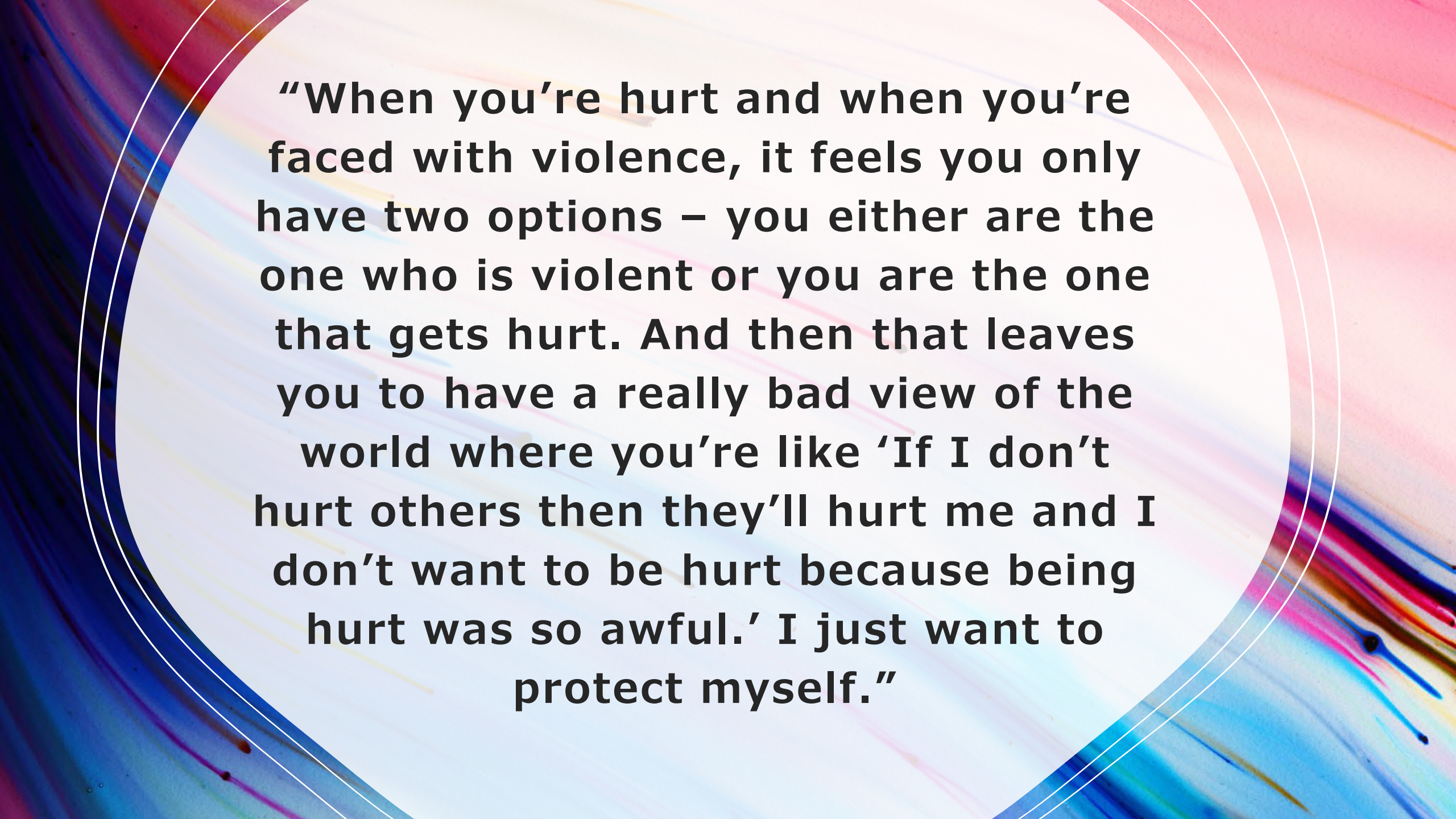
**“The look in [Mum’s] eyes because she was sad but very worried because she knows I would take Dad’s punches and then just would f\*ck off and all that stuff. She was worried that I would grow up like him, being very violent and stuff. She wasn’t far off. I still like hitting people and stuff.”**





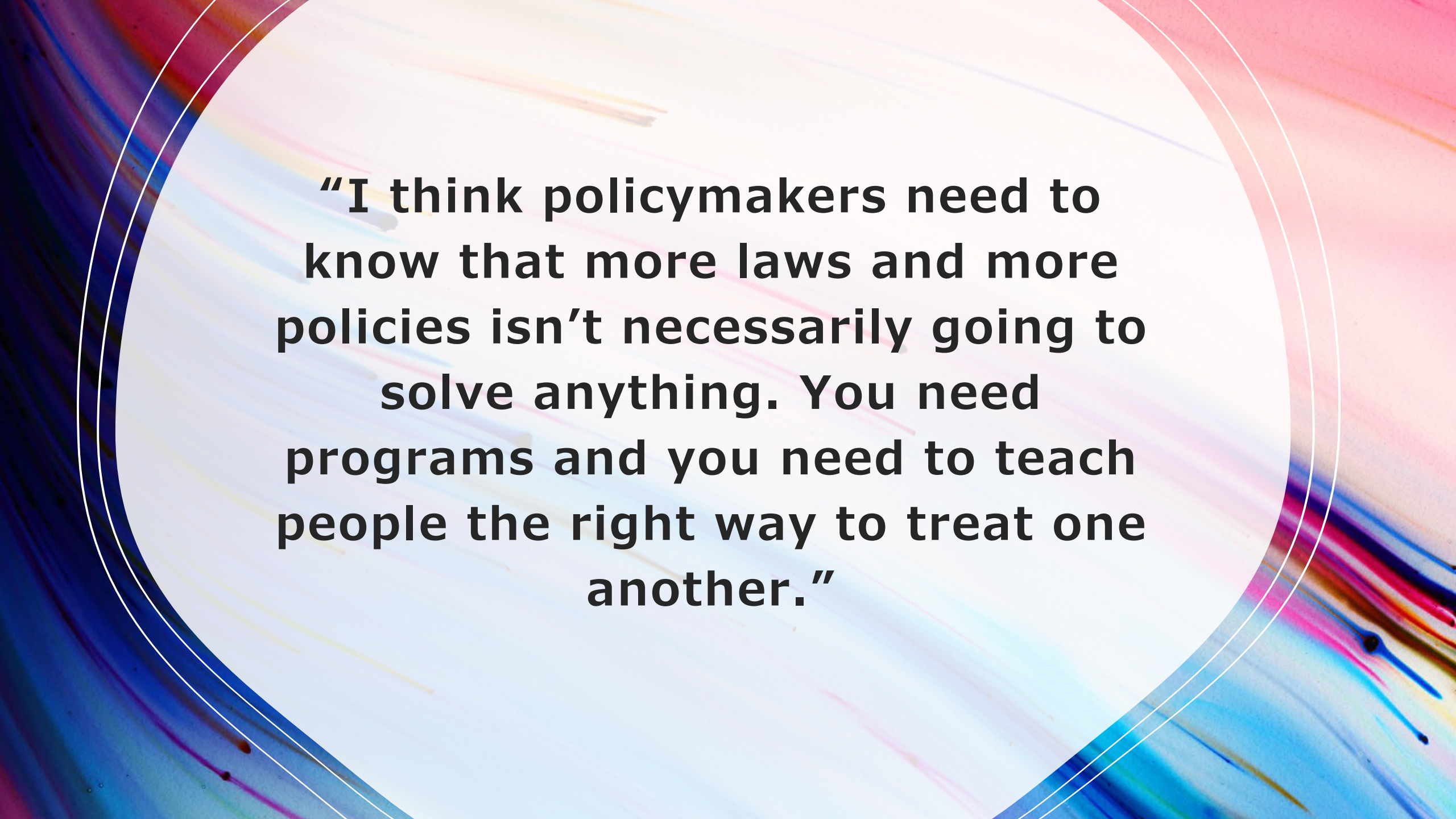
**“I hate people who say they  
‘know what you’re going through’  
because it’s so clear they don’t. If  
you haven’t been through it you  
can’t understand it at all.”**





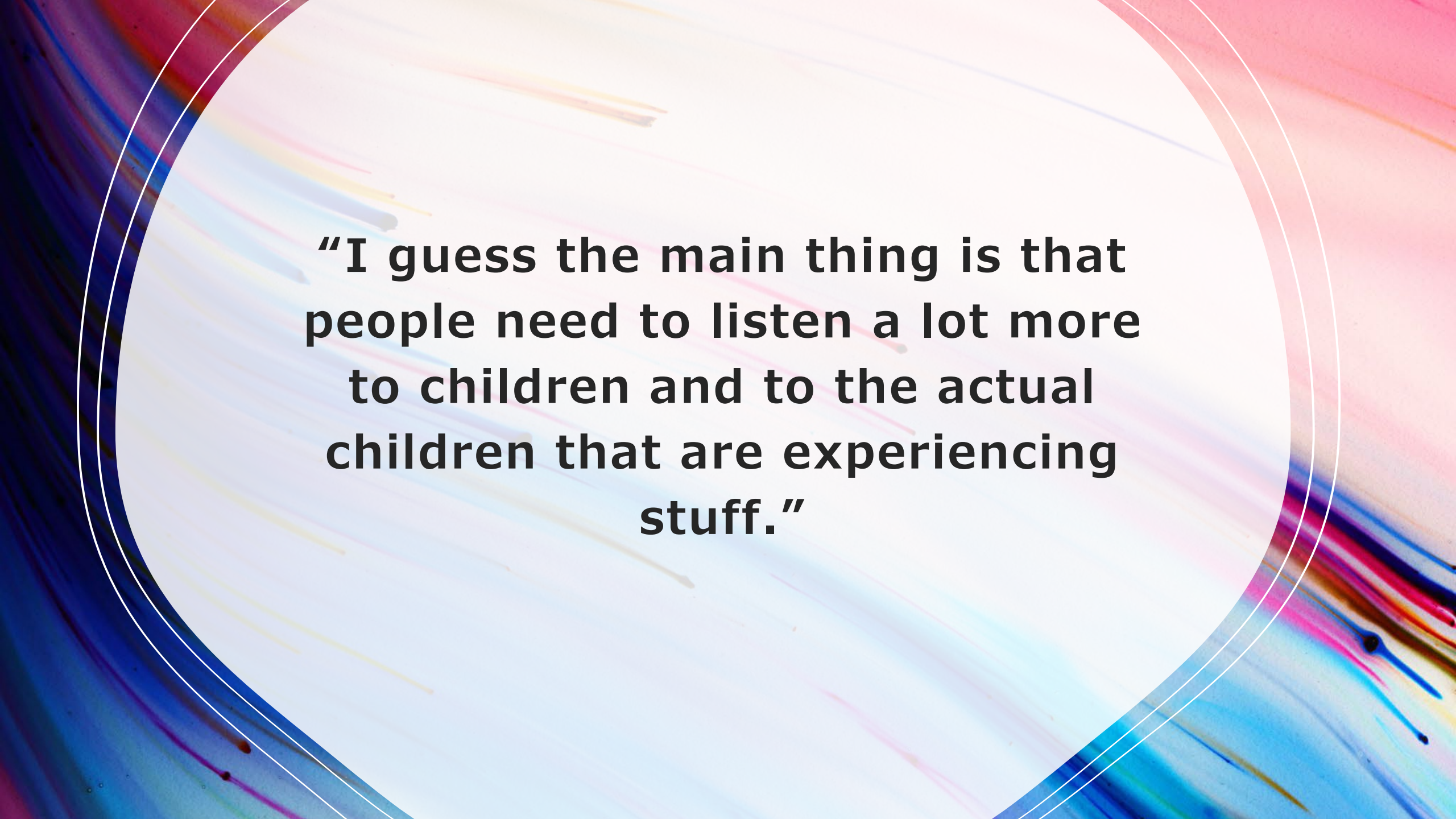
**“When you’re hurt and when you’re faced with violence, it feels you only have two options – you either are the one who is violent or you are the one that gets hurt. And then that leaves you to have a really bad view of the world where you’re like ‘If I don’t hurt others then they’ll hurt me and I don’t want to be hurt because being hurt was so awful.’ I just want to protect myself.”**





**“I think policymakers need to know that more laws and more policies isn’t necessarily going to solve anything. You need programs and you need to teach people the right way to treat one another.”**





**“I guess the main thing is that people need to listen a lot more to children and to the actual children that are experiencing stuff.”**



## Building blocks



All families enjoy **access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services** necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations **participate in and have control over decisions** that affect their children



Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are **culturally safe and responsive**



**Governments and community services are accountable** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples