

Inside Child Protective Services – Why You Need to Know Your Rights and Be Careful

We are led to believe government agencies designed to serve and protect the public do just that, but evidence to the contrary suggests corruption and ineptitude play an ever-growing role in American government institutions.

In my last year of college I worked with my local CPS office in three capacities: I completed an internship in the CPS office, I ran a therapy group for a domestic violence center for women with active CPS cases, and I worked as a parent aide with women with open CPS cases. I was also married to a CPS worker. Believe me, I got the inside scoop.

The first startling discovery was that my husband (later my ex) was the only parent in his unit. Yes, most of the workers who were investigating child abuse had never been a parent. On first thought this doesn't seem important, but I will never forget the day my husband called me to confirm the fact that our children had in fact suffered from severe diaper rashes a few times even though I changed their diapers religiously. Everyone in the office was sure the mother in question was neglecting her child based solely on the fact that he had a bad diaper rash. Another case that year, though not in our office, was about a child placed in protective custody because his mother confided in her social worker. The nursing mother revealed her concern that she found nursing to be a little sexually stimulating and wondered if her reaction was normal.

Throughout that year, I struggled with many concerns about CPS. One of clients was mercilessly criticized for being an

exceptional housekeeper. She was “abnormally” clean and tidy. She wasn’t obsessive-compulsive, she was just clean! Her caseworker also misreported the case in every meeting, stating there were three incidents involving the child when there had been two. Although I corrected him each time, he continued to misrepresent the case – in meetings and in court.

In another case, children were sexually molested and emotionally scarred by the father, but he had friends in the criminal justice system and he never faced time. The mother who caught him in the act was not believed and the daughter who was abused, who did not want to see her father, was forced to endure supervised visits for years.

My final year in school was followed by ten years with the local county mental health center. In my last years, I served as the lead intake worker, the first person to interview an applicant for services. It was sad and disheartening to interview one after another and learn how many had suffered sexual abuse as a child.

I learned that many suffered more from the system than their parents’ homes. Many were molested by older foster children and foster parents, in addition to suffering from the loss of their families.

The ineptitude I witnessed along with the subtle, but ever present, abuse of power led me to believe the entire system needed to be overhauled. This was years before the system in another state failed my family, accusing my son of molesting his daughter and putting us through an unending nightmare. Our case was one of pure ineptitude from start to finish.

We live in a day and age where we have to think twice before touching a child, an age where teachers are told never to give a pat on the back for a job well done. There is a good reason for this. It is an age where an unsubstantiated claim of abuse, with no proof and no substance, can result in prison

time for the alleged abuser. It is an age where any anonymous claim of abuse can tear a life apart. It is also a dangerous time for any family that chooses a path outside the accepted norm. These suspect choices include homeschooling, co-sleeping, vegan diets, and medical decisions, including refusal to vaccinate.

The more we allow our government to chip away at our rights, on any and every front, the more likely we are to lose our parental rights. The time to stand up is now, before it is too late. Your vote counts. Choose wisely.

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