



Problems & Corruption in Child Protective Services (CPS)

The articles on this page expose some deep problems that shouldn't be ignored within Child Protective Services (CPS).

We recognize that there are good child welfare workers and good judges, and the child welfare system, even with its faults, works better in some places than in others. We appreciate the good workers within the system, and recognize that no one has a right to abuse a child and that intervention is sometimes necessary. However, we also wish to speak out for those suffering innocently and expose aspects of child protection that need changed.

The problems in the CPS system also emphasize how important it is that children not be taken unless they truly need intervention. Sadly, though, as other pages on this site show, many children end up in this broken system unnecessarily. **This needs to stop—parental rights need to be protected.**

Examples of Issues in the CPS System

Note: Parental Rights Foundations does not necessarily agree with all views expressed in these articles. They are provided here to give a glimpse into what is happening in the news.

- [This Is Not Okay – Visualizing Foster Care Placement Instability](#) – As the author admits, this is not most children. This is a few of the many. But it is not okay. In many cases, this could be avoided simply by keeping the original family together.
- [New Push to Provide Legal Advice to Parents Facing Abuse and Neglect Investigations](#) – “Memo released in November by the federal Children’s Bureau recommended early access to counsel as one way systems could avoid “unnecessary parent-child separation,” across the country, access to counsel during a CPS investigation is almost non-existent.”
- [American Horror Story: U.S. Parents Separated from Children by Abusive Government Agencies](#) – Leite’s baby girl died tragically after a well-check up visit...and what followed was a nightmare that illustrates a problem that desperately needs addressed by changing the legal landscape to protect #ParentalRights.

“Leite was never charged with any crime, either that night or later, but Arrugio demanded that she sign a paper allowing her remaining children to go into foster care the same day she just lost her baby.

“Many parents report social workers overstating their authority but have no recourse against them. ‘Something is very wrong with a social worker who assumes she’s got the authority to carry out one of the most serious civil rulings in the country,’ continued Wright. ‘No one should force a signature. That’s called duress. But if you scare someone enough, they will sign.’ Leite was not only in a state of shock from just losing her baby, but she was completely terrified at the prospect of losing the other two, so she signed it.”

- [Norway Under Scrutiny for Its Child Welfare Policies](#) – Note: While not looking at the CPS, this is included here because it is an example of what unchecked power in the “child welfare” system looks like. There are places one can find this in American today, as well. But if we don’t want to see it in the everyday as in Norway—even more, if we would see it stopped altogether—we must stand now to preserve parental rights and halt the erosion of our families and our rights.

“On 17 October 2018, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg heard the case of *Strand Lobben v. Norway*. The case is one of a number of cases where the authorities have removed children from their parents without proper justification. For example, a three-week-old child was taken away from his mother in 2008 based on doubts about her ‘parenting abilities.’ The child was placed in foster care and the mother was allowed only twelve hours of contact per year with her son. Ultimately, all visitation rights were denied, the mother’s parental rights were removed, and the child was put up for adoption.”

- [Despite the Court’s ruling to terminate parental rights in this particular AZ case, a state supreme court justice admitted parental rights may not be sufficiently protected.](#)

“A ‘glaring omission’ in state law, he wrote, is the lack of due-process considerations for parents who are making progress in state-ordered services to get their kids back.

“The 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling [*Santosky v. Kramer*] required states to make ‘diligent efforts to encourage and strengthen the parental relationship.’

“That requirement does not exist in Arizona law, neither in how DCS views efforts to help reunify families, nor in how the courts treat termination requests, he wrote.”

- [Activists Say Return of Little Falls, Minn., Boy Shows Overreach by Child Welfare Officials](#)

“The child protection system in Minnesota is unjust and harmful to children, an advocacy group argued Tuesday, and as evidence, pointed to the decision by a state judge last week to return a 1-year-old boy to his mother....Erick Kaardal said the child protection system is a ‘public health abuse’ because counties can remove children before a trial.”

- [13 Investigates: DCS Violated Parents’ Rights, Took Kids Away](#)

“Judges from the Indiana Court of Appeals have issued a scathing rebuke of the state’s Department of Child Services, saying the agency repeatedly violated parents’ rights. The appellate judges identified ‘significant violations of due process occurring in termination of parental rights cases throughout the state.’”

- [Thousands of parents show support of child protective services lawsuit against Minnesota](#)

“Robin Stoltman moved two of her children out of Minnesota to maintain custody of them. Amanda Weber did the same thing. And so did Dwight Mitchell when he regained custody of his two children.

“The three are among thousands of parents clamoring for change in Minnesota’s child custody laws.”

- [Dozens Rally for Foster Care Reform](#)

“Right now in our state, criminals have more rights than parents. I’ve had families that don’t even meet their attorney until their hearing.” – Denise Johnson, Board Member, Montana Child Protection Alliance

- [Florida Illegally Separating Children of U.S. Citizens from their Parents – Where’s the Outcry?](#)

In the Tampa area of Florida, a peer review team appointed by the head of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCS), Mike Carroll, found that fear of media consequences has led to illegal seizures (we would call those “kidnappings”) of large numbers of children “needlessly.”

- [DCF and the Poor: Is the System Fair?](#)

“The confusion of poverty with neglect is the single biggest problem in American child welfare,” said Richard Wexler, executive director of the National Coalition for Child Protection Reform. Poor parents are more likely than middle-class parents to have their parental rights terminated because they’re more likely to have their children taken in the first place, he said.

- [FERRIER FILES: Do Criminals Have More Rights than Parents in Tennessee?](#)

“And even if you do absolutely nothing wrong, your children can be taken from you.”

- [A Broken System: Child-Parent Sanctity \(CPS\)](#) – This article explores some of the failings in the CPS, pointing out how innocent families often suffer and lack protection. While there are good workers within the welfare system, this article points out some issues that need to be addressed before more families suffer.

- [5 Times Child Protective Services Separated Kids from Parents for No Good Reason](#) – While acknowledging that there are situations where children need to be taken from their parents, this article highlights several cases that illustrate how there is often simply “no good reason” to separate families, yet they are being separated anyway.

- [Official Snatching of Children: A Growing Business Paid for by Your Taxpayer Dollars](#)

“What happens when a system that was designed to protect children fails?”

“Many caseworkers and social workers are great at what they are charged to do....On the flip side of this, there are caseworkers and social workers who are often guilty of fraud.”

- [CPS Won’t Save the Kids, but It Can Destroy Them](#)

“Since the late 1970s, the debate over child protective services has been driven by horror stories that have become a meta-narrative: social workers screw up by missing the telltale signs of abuse, kids get hurt, laws are reformed, and thus more at-risk children are taken out of their homes and given to loving adoptive families.

“At least, we’re left to assume the kids live happily ever after, since newspapers rarely mention the terrible things that happen to many of the children who get kidnapped by the state. What you see in the newspaper is a very tight-focus shot of the very worst corner of the system, usually the product of a law requiring state agencies to publish reports on child deaths. But the system itself is vast and haunted throughout by evil.”

Thank you for [helping us tell the other side of the narrative](#)—of letting the public know of the innocent parents and children so often needlessly torn apart.

- [Has Child Protective Services Gone Too Far?](#)

“She’s been devastated. She couldn’t send her son to take the garbage out—she was afraid to do that.’ — Diane Redleaf on her client, Natasha Felix”

- [When CPS Kidnaps Children for Money](#) – 2018 Note: *While this is an older article, the problem it points out is still going on; the CPS system is still set up where there are monetary incentives for adopting children out. Under current federal law, including the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), federal funds are made available to the states based on the number of children taken into state care and the length of time they remain in state custody. The new Family First Prevention Services Act that recently passed will help matters by allowing states to spend federal dollars on efforts to keep children and families together, including programs to help parents overcome addiction before child removal becomes necessary.*

“Every time CPS seizes a child, it gets money from the federal government. Lots of money.”

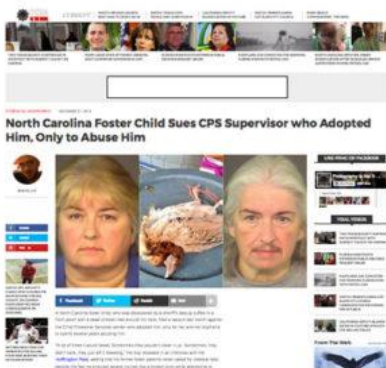
- [Mom Brings Coughing 10-Month-Old to the Hospital. Days Later, Cops Take the Baby.](#)

“This practice—overly suspicious government officials seizing children from their parents—isn’t confined to Minnesota.”

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Lying in Court

In a Texas case, a child services investigator had to be [sanctioned by a judge](#) for lying in court to illegally remove a child from her father.



Abuse in Adoption

In North Carolina (2016), a young man [sued the child services supervisor](#) “who adopted him, only for her and her boyfriend to spend several years abusing him.”

Workers Force Way into Home

In [Loudermilk v. Administration for Children, Youth, and Families](#), a federal district court ruled that Arizona child services investigators were protected by immunity when they **forced their way into a family’s home without a warrant using threats of taking the couple’s children away**. Such threats, according to the court, do not constitute coercion, so the parents’ Fourth Amendment rights – says the court – were surrendered voluntarily.

Report Hidden from Parents

In California, a diabetic child services investigator took a little girl from her mother’s (Vanessa Wilson) care under the incorrect assumption that the diabetic girl’s blood sugar numbers should be comparable to her own. When checked at the local hospital, the little girl was found to be healthy and stable, her numbers improved from when she was recently diagnosed with the condition.

Yet **child services investigators and prosecutors withheld the doctor’s findings from the judge and parents through two separate hearings**. They kept the child for more than a month before parents finally saw the report and had the child returned.



Vindictiveness

Social workers in Kentucky [proved completely vindictive](#) when a mother (Vanessa Shanks) stood up to them. Social Services **took her children, took children of her relatives** (at 3:00 in video), and **even removed the children of her lawyer** (at 4:15) from the lawyer’s home!

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