

Handout #1

THE SHREDDING OF FAMILIES

George Orwell's disturbing novel, " 1984 " , predicted dire events to be in place by that year. Mockery was to replace democracy as citizens' rights were replaced by a monolithic government. His predictions were accurate, but this diminution of liberty was so subtly introduced that its arrival escaped all but the most astute. Observe what is happening to education and what has already occurred to family values under the dictatorship of Children/Youth Services.

This tax-financed program has grown like a giant amoeba feasting upon families, and as it ingests additional children, parents and grandparents, it grows in size. Its insatiable appetite increases its strength both in numbers and money.

1. CYS TACTICS

Blemishes already perpetuated include the development of Gestapo-like tactics wherein children are snatched from families, often taken from schools, often without prior notification or hearing. Many of these children, " saved " by CYS, are transplanted to foster facilities many miles away from their homes, friends and families. Such facilities should be labeled "concentration camps" possessing primitive living conditions. Children are poorly supervised, poorly educated, medical and dental care substandard, and nutrition deficient. They are brainwashed, exposed to foul language, introduced to pornography, smoking and drugs.

One well documented case, a child of 15, was forcibly removed from her family because of school absences caused by physical illness. The depression she suffered upon separation from her family was treated by an antidepressant drug. Not only was this drug not indicated, but dosage was in excess of that recommended by the Physicians' Desk Reference. She received 3 hours of schooling and over 6 hours of television daily. As a result, upon her return to her family, she was unable to graduate with her high school class.

One child has been held " hostage " for almost 5 years, being incarcerated by

CYS since age 9. In this period of time, she has been shunted through 15 foster care facilities and 12 schools. While living with her grandparent, she was an honor student. Under the tutelage of CYS, she is a straight D student. Her dreams of entering college have been shattered, and she can only look forward to being a dependent of the state in her adult life.

Another child, age 15, was placed on birth control pills because a vaginal yeast infection was erroneously construed by a caseworker as an indication of sexual promiscuity!

In all cases, medications have been ignorantly prescribed without consultation nor approval of the family or even the family physician.

Children are punished and threatened with punishment if they object to or attempt to avoid the improper activities that are foisted upon them by CYS. Children are brainwashed and advised to report their parents or grandparents of any act of discipline. It is now commonplace for children remaining at home to threaten their families with CYS intervention upon the slightest correction of bad behavior. Children are encouraged to spy upon their parents and grandparents and report all activities to CYS and the psychologist involved.

Further examples are readily available.

2. CYS IS IGNORANT

The average caseworkers have a bachelor's degree, may be unmarried, and if married, may have no children, yet they persist in polly-parroting the one dose of brainwashing they possess. They presume to know more than the parents who have years of parenting skills and /or advanced educational degrees. They insist on parenting classes that are poorly supervised and improperly conducted.

Although poorly trained and inadequately supervised, they blithely continue their blundering ways, enslaving children, destroying families, as well as financially bankrupting the families' breadwinners.

3. CYS IS ARROGANT

Their investigations and actions are rampant with threats of removing all

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children if their most complex demands are not met. They force families to suffer the indignities of undesired household visitors under the guise of teaching an established family how to clean and cook ! Such individuals can be classified as Gestapo spies for CYS. They poke and pry into all corners, open refrigerators and drawers, violating one's privacy. They attach adverse importance to books in the library, books they have never read.

They deprive children of additional education and family activities by insisting they attend summer sessions of CYS-sponsored plans which is nothing more than babysitting under the guise of " worthwhile endeavors " and at taxpayers' expense.

They force children into afterschool activities when the children and family prefer to share their time with each other.

They humiliate children and their families at home, in the undesirable foster care facilities and enforce it in the gerrymandered court rooms.

In 1993, as predicted by the novel, " 1984 " , CYS has successfully managed to develop an organization comprising the combined powers of legislative, judicial and executive branches to the detriment of our citizens and a blow to our colonial ancestors who fought so hard to establish freedom from tyranny ! A rule is established by CYS and adherence is required or punishment follows as CYS sees fit, always to the detriment of the children and families.

The juvenile court provides a mockery of justice. CYS attorneys freely enter the judge's chambers during hearings; psychologists breach the confidentiality of families by consorting with the judge and CYS. Such hearings are improperly transcribed , a direct violation of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Too often decisions are made prior to the completion of the hearings !

Under the guise of restoring families, CYS routinely destroys them, unconcerned with the horrible aftermath suffered by the children so manipulated. The emotional scars will remain forever !

CYS must be curbed. Infringement of citizens' inalienable rights must be

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corrected. From the Director down, there must be a housecleaning procedure to provide new faces truly dedicated to the children who are so cruelly mistreated physically, mentally and morally. The use of the Accreditation Committee of the Child Welfare League of America* , based in Washington, DC, should be mandatory in view of the huge budget of \$20,000,000 ! To the advisors of CYS, the Commissioners and all legislatures, we recommend the following reading:

Wounded Innocents by Richard Wexler

The Child Abuse Industry by Mary Pride

Along with this, we urge the investigation of the large volume of evidence acquired by the Families For Freedom.

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February 2, 1993

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WELCOME TO FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM

We are a loosely affiliated, non-profit group of families who are attempting to redress many of the evils initiated and implemented by Children/Youth Services of Chester County.

Our origins are humble. We began with two families just 5 months ago, each of whom thought their individual experiences were unique, only to discover a fabric of intrigue practiced by the caseworkers of CYS. This was aided and abetted by CYS -employed psychologists, lawyers and CYS-influenced masters of Juvenile court whose decisions were rubber-stamped by supervising judges. Through word of mouth, advertisements in newspapers and Cable TV (Channel 7), our numbers have grown geometrically to more than 40 families and reinforced by relatives and friends and endorsed by several attorneys and clergy.

We found a common theme of punishment of children under the guise of "protecting them" . We watched families destroyed by an omnipotent CYS as they "reunited families" . It became apparent that breadwinners were financially devastated by their attorney's fees in deliberately drawn out court hearings. Furthermore, threats were imposed by CYS if families refused to pay daily rates (\$100 - \$ 114) for the unjustified incarceration of their children in foster facilities - the only orphanages in the world for children with parents! In addition, charges are imposed by CYS for children ordered by them to attend inappropriate schools, summer camps as well as psychological sessions and classes on parenting for the parents.

We have seen children snatched from parents and grandparents, schools and homes to be housed in less than desirable facilities where they have been exposed to pornography, undesirable companions, subjected to foul language not employed at home.

We are Families For Freedom. We are dedicated to address this wicked travesty, offering proof for our allegations. We ask you to join us in a common endeavor. There are no fees. Meetings are informal. Although in some respects we act as a support group, our primary function is to provide activity designed to change the entire fabric of CYS. We must change the direction and

personnel of this agency so that it may once again perform the function for which it was intended : to aid those abused and reunite families as quickly as possible.

We enclose literature that spells out some of the abuses encountered by our group. Also, some of our goals are set forth. We are positive you can help advance our cause that is so important to every child and every family of Chester County who has been deluded by bureaucracy.

Please call for further information. (215) 380 - 1363

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February 20, 1993

From the Introduction

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he problem with our child-protective system is not that it hurts parents, though of course it does. *The problem with our child-protective system is that it hurts children.*

It hurts children who have never been maltreated, by disrupting their families, invading their privacy, and jeopardizing the bond of trust that is essential for healthy parent-child relationships.

It hurts children . . . by making it too easy to pull them from their homes and place them in the nation's chaotic system of foster care. . . . "Foster care is the garbage dump," says a woman who survived it. "That's what they do with kids when they don't know what else to do with them—throw 'em in foster care."

Perhaps worst of all, the system does terrible harm to the children who need help the most, those who have been severely abused. False and trivial reports flood the system, cascading down upon untrained, inexperienced workers who already have far more than they can handle, stealing their time and attention from children who really do need their intervention. . . .

In the name of "child protection," children have been beaten. In the name of "children's rights," children have been raped. In the name of "erring on the side of the child," children have been murdered.



Prometheus Books

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om social services workers and
ed advocacy from attorneys for
parents. Only comprehensive
on of the reasonable efforts
judges, social services agencies,
will prevent the unnecessary
ren from their families and spur
t of services, which many chil-
need to remain a family.

guidelines, drafted coopera-
tional Council of Juvenile and
dges, the Child Welfare League
Youth Law Center, and the
for Youth Law, clearly outlines
responsibilities of each profes-
n foster care placement deci-
nks go to Carole Shauffer, Alice
mie Yee of the Youth Law Cen-
il and Alice Bussiere of the
for Youth Law, Robert Praksti
ouncil of Juvenile and Family
d Betsy Cole of the Child Wel-
America for their outstanding
ect.

read these guidelines carefully
n your daily work. We encour-
y personnel, and attorneys to
n contained in them to ensure
dren as possible have stable,
rtive families — not only dur-
rs, but for a lifetime.

Introduction

Attorneys' Responsibilities:

In 1980, Congress passed the Adoption Assist-
ance and Child Welfare Act (Public Law 96-272,
42 U.S.C. §§620 *et seq.*, and §§670 *et seq.*). One
requirement of the Act is that, prior to placing
a child in foster care, an agency must make rea-
sonable efforts to maintain the child in the home.
These efforts may consist of the provision of
direct services, financial or in-kind benefits, or
counseling assistance. To ensure agency compli-
ance with the Act, Congress prohibited the use
of foster care payments for any child unless a
court has determined that these reasonable efforts
were made.

The reasonable efforts requirement provides
attorneys for children and parents with a strong
tool for enforcing their clients' rights to services
and to family integrity. It offers agency attorneys
a way to determine that the agency is fulfilling
its responsibilities and that frivolous cases are
not brought to the juvenile court.

These guidelines outline a method for attor-
neys to use in presenting a case on reasonable
efforts to the juvenile court. They are, in effect,
principles that the attorney should follow in the
reasonable efforts determination.

These guidelines are in no way an exhaustive
discussion of adequate representation of clients
in dependency proceedings. They focus on only
a narrow aspect of those proceedings: the ques-
tion of whether services have been provided prior
to removal or, in the case of dispositional hear-
ings and six-month reviews, between the initial
removal and the hearing date.