



The  
Family

# Lifeline

Fall 2004

Working to Keep Families Together

## VOCAL State of the Family Report

A Report to Congress, the State Legislatures, the Media and the Families of America

**This revealing, shocking and eye opening report comes on the 30 year anniversary of the Mondale Act or CAPTA** (The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act), which was originally enacted in 1974 (P.L. 93-247). This legislation allowed Federal funds or grants to go to the states for funding and advertising, to identify and prosecute suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. It helped establish the state 1-800 child abuse hotlines and registries of suspected child abusers.

Since 1984 this Act has been amended several times, including the Adoption Assistance Child Welfare Act (P.L. 96-272) in 1980, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (P.L. 105-89) in 1997, and most recently amended and reauthorized by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-36).

All statistics throughout this report that are **in bold**, are either quoted directly or calculated per statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Children's Bureau (CB) website at, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/> or HHS' National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (NCCANI) website at, <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/> unless otherwise stated. Please refer to footnotes on each page. (The latest consistent statistics available when preparing this report were from 2001, although some statistics from 2002 were beginning to appear on the web when this report was almost complete. Please note that some of the statistics on these footnoted websites may have changed slightly as the department updates them)

All other statistics, cases and comments are based on the almost 20

years of professional experience of VOCAL (Victims Of Child Abuse Laws) of Missouri, Inc., in helping the thousands of individuals and families, who have contacted us from 48 states and Canada seeking advice, assistance and help (The majority of which were from Missouri).

### **Abuse Hotline Statistics**

**In 2001, 3 million referrals concerning the welfare of approximately 5 million children were made to CPS agencies throughout the United States (FN1). In 2001, the total U.S. child population was 72,941,000 (FN2).** If 5 million children are subjects of child abuse hotline investigations in one year, that's about 1 child in every 14, of the total U.S. child population, that is being questioned and put through an investigation every year. So statistically, if there were no multiple reports, every child in the U.S. could be subjected to a child abuse investigation within 14 to 15 years, or most certainly between birth and before they could reach the age of 18. Even us at VOCAL, who knew things are bad, are totally shocked at these statistics.

### **False Allegations and Removing Children**

**In 2001, approximately 903,089 children were found to be victims of child abuse or neglect throughout the U.S. (FN3).** If only 903,089 children out of 5 million were considered as victims, that means about 4,097,000 or 82% of the total number of accusations were unfounded or false reports in 2001. With over 4 million unfounded or false reports in just one year, how many false reports have there been in the last 30 years since CAPTA

was enacted? One can only guess!

Needless to say that's sure a lot of harassing false accusations, that needlessly have brought an unfathomable amount of hurt, harm and destruction to the children and families of this country. Not even to mention the billions of wasted tax dollars being squandered by a system, that statistically 82% of what it generates is wasted time, energy and paper work. What business could operate at an 18% efficiency?

In the almost 20 years of our existence, and hearing thousands of cases, VOCAL of Missouri has never seen a family where these false investigations have not brought harm emotionally, financially, as well as dismantled and destroyed parental authority. CAPTA is creating over 4 million new victims (Victims Of Child Abuse Laws) every year. These children are victims solely because the very system, that was supposed to protect them, has failed them. In this state and country millions of children, who have been through past investigations, must live in fear every day of being taken away from their parents. VOCAL's understanding is, President Nixon had vetoed CAPTA, stating it "would destroy families," but it was passed anyway.

**In 2001, approximately 295,132 children were removed from their homes as a result of a child abuse investigation or assessment throughout the U.S. (FN4).** That is about 1 child out of every 247 children of the total U.S. child population (of 72,941,000), that was removed from their family in 2001. That is almost 33% or about 1 child out of every 3, that was removed, of the total 903,089 children that were considered as abused.

FN1 <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/factsheets/canstats.cfm> (NCCANI) Child Maltreatment 2001: Summary of Key Findings (document changed to 2002 numbers)

FN2 & 3 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table3\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table3_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 3-2 Child Victims by Disposition, 2001

FN4 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/tables/entryexit2002.htm> FY 1999-2002 Foster Care; Entries, Exits, and In Care on the Last Day

**In reality though only 171,542 of the (295,132) children, that were removed from their homes, were actually victims of abuse. 103,144 children who were removed from their homes were considered as non-victims or had unsubstantiated dispositions (FN5).** (Note: 171,542 plus 103,144 only equals 274,686, so there were an additional 20,446 children who also entered foster care, that the statistics did not show.) That is about 35% (or more than 1 child out of every 3) of the total 295,132 children, who were removed from their families, who in reality were never even victims of abuse, but were removed nonetheless. This is unfathomable! How can this be going on in America?

**In 2001, Missouri removed 3,174 victims, or (34.4%) of 9,237 total victims, from their homes (FN6),** (or 1 child out of every 3). This is above the national average of 33% stated above. **In addition to this in 2001, Missouri removed 9,205 non-victims from their homes, almost 3 times the national average (FN7).**

In 2001, Missouri removed 3 non-victims for every victim removed, or about 75% of the children removed from their families were never even victims of abuse, but were removed nonetheless. This is way more than twice the national average of 35% stated above. Missouri ranked the worst of any state percentage wise for non-victim to victim removal. 9,205 children or about 9%, of the U.S. total 103,144 non-victims, were removed from Missouri alone, in 2001.

Children are considered victims and removed from their homes and families, when in reality they are not victims at all. Then, only about 800,000 of the 903,089 children were supposedly abused (subtracting the 103,144 who were removed but not really abused). So that would make the total number of false reports 84%, not 82% as stated earlier. That leaves only about 16% of all reports that would supposedly then have been true reports of abuse, but one must certainly question the accuracy or validity of these statistics, when children are considered victims who are not victims at all.

The question is: why are this many children who were not even victims of abuse (35%) placed in foster care? There can be only two answers to this question. Either CPS agencies are grossly

incompetent having a 35% mistake ratio or this is deception, fraud, cooking the books or whatever else you would like to call it, to illegally get additional Federal money. Regardless, the fact still remains, more children in foster care, can only equal more Federal money.

VOCAL is totally outraged by these statistics, that this many children are being put through the trauma of being removed from their families, when they have never even been abused. This is not even to mention the unconstitutionality of what is going on. There is no law that allows agencies to remove children, who have never been abused, from their homes and families.

VOCAL has seen numerous cases where children, who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security, are retained in foster care despite the fact that their siblings have long been returned home. There is usually no reason that these children are still in foster care, except that these checks come directly to the county agency, kind of like a bonus, above and beyond the normal money they get for each child they have in their care. We also have seen children, who were still being held in foster care against their wishes, even after they had turned 18.

**In 2001, Missouri removed a total of (12,379) children (adding 3,174 and 9,205) from their homes (or 1 child out of every 115 children), of the total state child population of 1,431,000 (FN8).** This is more than twice the national average of 1 in 247, as stated above.

Nationally in 2001, how many of these 295,132 children really needed to be removed from their families because they were really in harm's way? Certainly not the 103,144 children who were removed from their homes, who were considered non-victims or had unsubstantiated dispositions.

Over the years, the numerous cases VOCAL has seen, parents are usually assumed guilty, until they can prove themselves innocent and therefore the children are most of the time removed first and then questions asked later. Sadly enough, once the gears begin to turn, child protective workers will never go back to the judge and admit they were wrong and that what they stated in an affidavit was a lie or a half-truth. At this point the worker is locked in, where they must continue to lie and dig dirt on mom and dad just to

cover themselves and make their case, even though they know it is false.

The question that remains is: how many of the 171,542 remaining children (subtracting the 103,144 who were removed, but not really abused, from the total 295,132), that were considered as victims, really needed to be removed from their homes because they were really in harm's way? VOCAL over the last several years has surveyed numerous foster parents, who have called us. We ask: how many foster children have you had over the years? The answer is usually 100 or more. Our next question is: when these children were first removed from their homes and placed with you, how many of them could you tell had really been abused; they had large bruises, broken bones or it was clearly apparent to you that they had been abused in some way. The answer is always zero or on one or two occasions the foster parent remembered one child. So then, what are all these children being saved from?

**The Missouri State Auditor reported, in a performance audit of the foster care program, that DFS had prior contacts with an average of 70% of all child fatalities during a five year period (FN9).** DFS (CPS) spends so much time placing so many children in foster care, that don't really need to be there, that they don't have time to find or deal with the real cases where children are really being abused and as a result we repeatedly hear stories in the media of children dying or being seriously abused.

VOCAL has seen numerous cases where the real issue was poverty, not real abuse. Issues like: inadequate housing or income, electricity or gas shut off, inadequate heat in the house, lack of adequate food in the house, lack of sufficient clothing, lack of transportation, lack of medical care, among other things, are all considered as neglect or abuse. Other issues like: a parents ill health, a dirty house (even when a family is in the process of moving in or out of a house or doing some remodeling), children missing to much school (many times because they were sick), or teenagers who don't want to follow their parents rules or want to live somewhere else, are also considered as neglect or abuse. Families who deal with these types of issues, many times have their children removed, instead of receiving services from the agency or community.

FN5, 6 & 7 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table6\\_5.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table6_5.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 6-5 Victims and Nonvictims Removed from the Home, 2001

FN8 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table3\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table3_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 3-2 Child Victims by Disposition, 2001

FN9 <http://www.auditor.state.mo.us/press/2003-25.pdf> Performance Audit of the Foster Care Program: Report No. 2003-25: Table 1.2 (page 6)

Many times the agency's criteria or grounds for removal, is not that a child has been abused (as was the case, in the 103,144 non-victims mentioned above), but may be at risk of being abused some time in the future. When this type of star wars criteria is used to remove children, it does not leave one child in this country, that could not be removed at the sole discretion of any child protective worker who chooses to do so. There is no real bar set as to what is abuse and at some point almost everything is considered abuse.

Parents who have rules are considered emotionally abusive. Parents who do not have enough rules are considered neglectful. Parents who spank their children are almost always considered abusive, but even when parents place their children in time out in their room, we have seen that it is considered abuse. Many times there is nothing that a parent can or can not do that will not be considered abuse or neglect. There is no ground left for parents to stand on to even have a family.

VOCAL sees the agency always second guessing parents' rules and thereby undermining and dismantling parental authority and control in the home. As a result, many times it is the very actions of the agency, that actually create the situation or cause, that the agency later uses to remove the children.

Child abuse has nothing to do with committing a crime, most of the time. Even most of the parents, VOCAL has seen, who actually had their parental rights terminated, not just their children removed, had never committed or been charged with a crime.

During the 1970's and 80's the states were in the beginning stages of finding and prosecuting "child abusers." Many families had their children "stolen" from them by the state. These children who were stored in foster homes are now coming forward to tell their stories. As these children come of age, we will begin to see them filing lawsuits. VOCAL hears numerous complaints of abuse by foster parents, adoptive parents and institutions. Families and now adult children are asking us more and more often how they can bring lawsuits.

Many children have been lied to about the reason they were removed from their families. Many return to their families, when they are too old to be kept in foster care and the money to keep them housed by the state is no longer available,

only to find out the truth, that they should never have been removed from their families. How do you restore those lost years? No amount of money can compensate for the heartache and time lost to these families.

Some of these children have parents who have been incarcerated, based upon the false testimonies they were coerced into giving. How do these children now live with that? Some parents lost jobs, businesses, homes, and their life savings trying to defend themselves against the unlimited resources of the state. They don't call it Division of Family Services for nothing. (Is that why they changed their name?) Now they call themselves the Children's Division (here in Missouri).

The more things change, the more they remain the same. The people who call our helpline, call with the same allegations. Many families in the throngs of divorce, accuse each other of abuse. False allegations, especially sexual abuse, have become the weapon of choice, when it comes to getting custody of children in many ugly divorce cases. Just ask any divorce attorney. We see many, many cases where it's not merely just a matter of hatred for the other parent, that brings these false accusations, but rather a matter of not wanting to pay child support. We have seen numerous cases where large amounts of back child support were forgiven, when there was a change of custody because of false accusations.

False allegations, also come in many other forms. They are used as retaliation by disgruntled family members, neighbors, co-workers, employees, or whoever else that wants to call the hotline anonymously and they never have to give their name. These anonymous calls are destroying lives and families, at the rate of over 4 million false accusations per year, as stated earlier, and these people don't have any recourse, because by law they can not even find out who is calling on them.

As times change, so do the false allegations. Most recently we have seen the agency accuse parents of being "terrorists" or accuse them of neglect when they were overseas serving their country. These new types of allegations are no more bizarre than some of the old standbys where parents are accused of being in a cult, wearing black robes, killing animals, locking children in attics, tying children up, just to name a few.

When we see the agency make these type of allegations, it almost always ends up being no more than a witch hunt.

VOCAL has heard of numerous cases where people have been hot-lined ten, twenty, and even more times. DFS (Child Protective Services) often calls their own hotline, either so they can show cause to initiate court involvement, so they can remove the children, or to make more allegations to perpetuate a case when it looks like the court could be sending the children home. Many times court involvement is initiated, not because there is real cause, but because the case workers have no authority to order the family around when they seem less than cooperative. Many times we have seen where the agency fabricated false allegations, solely to meet their own agenda. The real issue many times is power and control and not really abuse. DFS in making more allegations also causes parents to break mentally and emotionally, so that they will give up.

**Nationally in 2001, social services and mental health personnel made about 15.1% of all hotline reports. In Missouri it was approximately (18.8%) or 9,728 calls out of 51,752 (FN10). That's almost 1 call out of every 5, that DFS workers are calling their own hotline, here in Missouri.**

Children are taught in school to report parents for the slightest incident. Many have no idea of the tangled web they weave, once they open the door to DFS (Child Protective Services). Sometimes schools have special assemblies concerning child abuse. In some states, schools pass out business cards with the 1-800 number to the state child abuse hotline. This clearly undermines and dismantles parental authority and does no more than to give every less than compliant child or teenager another weapon in his arsenal to disobey his parents.

## **Targeting the Poor**

**To receive subsidies for foster and adoptive children, states must operate under title IV-E of the Social Security Act. However, eligibility for title IV-E historically has been linked to AFDC eligibility (FN11).** (Read more about Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Programs in the Federal Dollars section, later in this report.) In other words, states only get this money for the poverty level children they put into foster care, and they receive money again when they adopt these same children.

FN10 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table2\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table2_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 2-2 Reports by Source, 2001

FN11 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/tables/sec11gb/history.htm> Legislative History

Needless to say, most of the calls VOCAL receives are from poor people, who the system can take advantage of, because they are the most vulnerable and the least likely to be able to fight back. They usually can not afford their own expert witness and attorney, and many times face the system with no attorney or one that is appointed. These “public pretenders,” as many people call them, most of the time side with the state, and many times demand parents sign court papers, admitting they abused their children, when they really haven’t done anything.

We have even seen cases where they have had parents sign all of their rights away. Many of these parents are not very educated and most of the time they never even knew or understood what they were signing, until after the fact, when it’s to late. Their attorney never explains to them what they are really signing, and it’s kind of like sheep to the slaughter. VOCAL has actually received calls from parents, questioning, why they now were no longer allowed to see their children.

### **Abuse in Foster Care**

**In 2001, there were approximately 544,510 children in foster care in the U.S. That was about 1 child out of every 134, that was in foster care, of the total U.S. child population of (72,941,000). By comparison in 2001, Missouri had approximately 13,349 children in foster care. That was about 1 child out of every 107, that was in foster care, of the total state child population of (1,431,000) (FN12). In 2001, Missouri had about 20% more children in foster care than the national average.**

**The Child Welfare League of America reported that, there are currently about twice as many children in foster care than there were in 1987 (FN13). Do all these children really need to be in foster care? Certainly this proves that the system is not working to keep families together, but instead is breaking up more and more families every year. When will this stop?**

**In 2001, 4,239 foster parents abused (5,133) children, while in their care. In 2001, 1,241 staff members, at residential care facilities, abused (1,448) children (FN14). That’s a total of 6,581 children or over 1.2%, of the total 544,510 children, who were abused while they**

were in care. Nationally in 2001, 1 child out of about every 82 children was abused while in care.

**By comparison in 2001, in the general population, 660,116 parents abused (772,989) children (FN15). If the total U.S. child population was 72,941,000 in 2001, as stated earlier, that’s 1 child out of about every 94 that was abused by his parents in the general population, (compared to 1 out of 82 in foster care). So by comparison, children in foster care are about 10 to 12% more likely to be abused in some way, than if they were just left in their own homes.**

**In 2001, in Missouri, about 65 children were abused by foster parents and 119 children were abused by staff members at residential care facilities (FN16). That’s a total of 184 children or 1 child out of about every 72 that was abused while in care, of the 13,349 children that were in care in Missouri in 2001. Children in Missouri are about 10% more likely to be abused in foster care (1 child out of every 72) than the national foster care average of 1 child out of every 82.**

**In 2001, in Missouri, about 7,637 children were abused by their parents. That’s about 1 child out of about every 187, of the total state child population of (1,431,000)(FN17) So statistically parents in Missouri abuse their children about 50% less or 1 out of every 187 compared to the national average of 1 out of every 94. Yet in 2001, Missouri had about 20% more children in foster care than the national average, as stated earlier.**

According to these statistics, children in Missouri foster care are 260% more likely to be a abused (1 child out of about every 72), compared to the general Mo population (1 child out of every 187).

**Also percentage wise nationally, when there was abuse: parents physically abused their children 17.4% of the time, while foster parents physically abused children 28.2% of the time and residential facility staff 22.4% of the time; parents sexually abused their children 4.7% of the time, while foster parents sexually abused children 9.5% of the time and residential facility staff 17.6% of the time (FN18). So by comparison, the chances of a child suffering more serious harm by being abused physically or sexually are about twice as likely or about 200%, when they are placed in**

care (Four times or 400% more likely to be sexually abused in residential care).

Why is foster care so unsafe and why is there so much sexual abuse occurring in foster care? We at VOCAL get calls all the time about abuse in foster care, including numerous calls concerning sexual abuse. Many children and families have told us, that they have reported abuse, and many times sexual abuse, to DFS (CPS) and it was ignored and nothing was done about it. Sadly, there is no place to get it investigated, because the state officials that are supposed to be protecting children many times instead choose to protect the agency and as a result the very abusers themselves, because they are foster parents.

Many times children are removed from less than perfect homes and are placed in foster homes that are no better and many times worse or even very abusive. This is not to say that all foster homes are abusive, but the fact is that most children who spend years in foster care, usually end up being moved through several foster homes, and therefore stand an almost 100% chance of being abused sometime through this process.

If children report to the agency that they are being abused by their foster parents, the workers say they are lying. If natural parents call the hotline about their children being abused in foster care, the agency considers it harassment. Foster parents who abuse children, know that it will be overlooked and as a result repeatedly continue the abuse. This eventually results in some children dying in foster care. These cases usually make the media, but VOCAL hears of near death cases in foster care, that never make the media, where children have spent months in hospitals with brain injuries, from which they will never totally recover. Sadly children in foster care have almost no protection from being abused by their foster parents. Apparently asking CPS workers to protect children from abuse in foster care, is kind of like putting the fox in charge over the hen house.

Over the years, VOCAL has clearly seen, that protecting the agency almost always is paramount over protecting the children in foster care. Placing children in foster care, to save them from abuse, is a noble sounding cause that no one can argue with, but what happens

FN12 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/tables/entryexit2002.htm> FY 1999–2002 Foster Care: Entries, Exits’ and In Care on the Last Day

FN13 <http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/factsheet.htm> Child Welfare League of America: Foster Care: Facts and Figures: Children in Care (document changed)

FN14 & 15 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4\\_3.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4_3.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 4-3 Perpetrators by Relationship to Victim and

Types of Maltreatment, 2001 (Child File) (add numbers to get totals)

FN16 & 17 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 4-2 Perpetrators Relationship to Victim, 2001 (C File)

FN18 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4\\_3.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table4_3.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 4-3 Perpetrators by Relationship to Victim and

Types of Maltreatment, 2001 (Child File)

when the cure becomes worse than the problem itself, and now the question is: who will save the children from the child-savers themselves (in years past these type of CPS organizations or agencies referred to themselves as the “child-savers”)?

From numerous cases VOCAL has learned, because the agency covers up abuse, that foster care has clearly become a haven where child molesters are safe from being exposed (like the churches who for years never reported child molesters to the police). VOCAL receives calls all the time, about children who were sexually abused by their foster or adoptive parents. We are usually called because the DFS or CPS agency has refused to do anything about the abuse. We have seen cases where young children who were placed in foster homes and some even adopted, who were basically used as sex toys. When the agency was confronted, they did nothing, but cover it up.

It was brought to VOCAL’s attention that one of the top officials over DFS was an accused child molester and had apparently sexually abused his own children. We did some investigation and found public records which had accused him of the abuse. About two years ago, when the Senate was conducting public hearings, all around the state, concerning DFS, we were able to bring up the problem of child molesters in top positions running DFS. We had stated one individual’s name, the deputy director, who was actually at that hearing and he never denied the accusations, but only became embarrassed. Within a week he was gone, because the Governor had asked him to resign. If a child molester can be the second person in charge over an agency who’s job it is to protect children, who only knows what other positions in DFS are held by pedophiles. Is it any wonder then that, VOCAL gets all these calls about children being molested in foster care.

The media recently reported a foster dad, in Springfield Missouri, who was taking in foster girls and using them as “sex slaves.” Many times the agency treats children as though they were no more than property down on the plantation. Has foster care not only become a haven for Pedophiles, but also a place where they can actually get paid for what they like to do? In effect, this is no more than Federally funded or subsidized child molestation.

In the numerous cases VOCAL

has seen, most of the time, the very same incident, that is considered abuse in a parent’s home, in foster care is considered or dressed up as a “licensing violation.”

When a parent spans a child it’s considered abuse. When a foster parent spans a child it’s considered a “licensing violation.” VOCAL has heard of cases where a child has actually died in a foster home and the foster parents are still licensed.

Most times a child with behavior problems is removed, instead of the agency supporting the parents and working with them to keep the child in the home. The child’s behavior usually gets worse instead of better, because of the trauma of being removed from his home and family and many times his school and friends as well. The child’s behavior is now much worse than it was at home and the end result is the foster parents end up abusing the child, because they are unable to deal with his behavior. Foster parents also do not have an emotional bond like real parents do and therefore may end up reacting or dealing much worse with the same situation. Older children many times use foster care as a means to get away from their parents rules. Parents report to us, all the time, at VOCAL, how their children who are now in foster care are allowed, to drink alcohol, use drugs, have sex, be out on the street all night, etc. This is great neglect and as things deteriorate, the end result is, these children end up being kicked from foster home to foster home and eventually end up being placed in lock down institutions.

Numerous parents have asked us, why doesn’t DFS want their children to get better? To which we can only reply, either its to keep the SSI checks coming every month along with all the other Federal money that is available to take care of children with these types of serious problems, or it’s just plain neglect and incompetence. In other words, if the children get better, they could go home with mom and dad and they would cease to be a cash cow for the agency. We see the agency applying to Social Security for SSI payments on every child that has any behavioral problems whatsoever. These checks come directly to the county agency, kind of like a bonus, above and beyond the normal money they get for each child they have in their care.

VOCAL heard of one case in Arkansas where the state had a mentally slow, young pregnant woman locked in prison till her pregnancy got far enough

along so they could do a C-section and sterilize her at the same time, placing her baby up for adoption. Can these kind of things be going on here in America?

When children became pregnant in foster care, DFS (CPS) usually tries to force the child to have an abortion, or if the child refuses, they either take the baby and adopt it out, or close the case and sent both baby and mom home to grandma and let her deal with the mess they have created.

**The Children’s Bureau reported that nearly half of all foster children have behavioral or emotional problems. That Foster children face difficulties when entering the system; e.g., separation from parents, adjustment to new caregivers, or multiple placements (FN19).**

Once children are removed, especially young children, the parental bond and authority is broken and undermined creating many times a totally irreparable situation resulting in the family and children being scarred for life. VOCAL has seen numerous cases, where workers have intentionally undermined parental authority or even tried to create or escalate a conflict between teenagers and parents, so they could have cause to remove the children. As a result, children many times end up being put on mind altering psychiatric drugs, being hospitalized or institutionalized in residential care facilities, in an effort to now control their behavior. VOCAL receives reports all the time, of abuse in these facilities, even to the point of boys having their heads pounded into the floor or sexual abuse. How is this helping these children?

We at VOCAL get reports all the time from parents telling us, that their children are doing much worse since they were removed and placed in foster care. Children who are removed from their homes and families usually feel they are victimized instead of saved, even when their situation at home may have been less than perfect. When children, especially young children, are removed from their parents it is very traumatizing to them, many times, to the point it is irreparable. Many times children are even denied visits with their parents, for long periods of time, which they perceive as abandonment and rejection.

**The Child Welfare League of America reports that, each year more than 20,000 young people age out of foster care(FN20).**

FN19 [http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/articles.cfm?issue\\_id=2004-03&article\\_id=780](http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/articles.cfm?issue_id=2004-03&article_id=780) Children’s Bureau: Research: Well-being of Children in Foster Care  
FN20 <http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/factsheet.htm> Child Welfare League of America: Foster Care: Facts and Figures: Older Youth

When children age out of foster care they, many times, become homeless, if they do not go back to their own family. Children who have been in the system since they were young usually don't even know who their parents were, so they could even find them. Many of these children, who for years ended up being tossed from foster home to foster home and institution to institution, end up on the street and eventually in prison, because they are now unable to form bonding relationships, as a result of the state for years never providing them a stable home, but moving them every few weeks or months to a different home. Providing children an unstable lifestyle, where they can never learn to form bonding relationships, does no more than to create criminals.

VOCAL has received numerous calls from parents who had not seen their children since they were 14 or 15 and now they are in their late 20s calling mom and dad, because they are getting out of prison. We have heard it stated that in Massachusetts, 60% of the state's criminals come from foster homes or state institutions. In California, that number is 69%. The question is: is the system doing more harm than good, is it saving children from abuse and making good outstanding citizens out of them, or is the system in reality creating criminals and only making society worse as a whole?

**The Child Welfare League of America reports that, research indicates that youths in foster care are at high risk of engaging in early, unprotected sexual activity and experimenting with alcohol and other drugs, thereby increasing their risk of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. One survey reported, that 86% of all teens 15 and older who were in custody reported they were sexually active. Another survey reported 17% of the girls surveyed had been pregnant at least once by the time of their discharge from foster care. In another study 42% of the youths responding had either given birth to or fathered a child (FN21). Needlessly placing children in foster care, who really don't need to be there and then providing them no rules or structure, is certainly adding to the moral decay of our society.**

## Deaths in Foster care

**In 2001, there were a total of about 1225 children who died in the U.S. In 2001, there were 18 children who died in foster care, out of the (544,510) total number of children in foster care in the U.S. (FN22).** Statistically, that's about 1 child out of every 30,000, that died in foster care. By comparison in 2001, that leaves 1207 children (subtracting the 18), who died in the general U.S. child population of 72,941,000. Statistically, that's about 1 child out of every 60,000 that died in the general population. So statistically, chances of a child dying in foster care are about twice as likely or about 200%, when compared to the general population. Foster care is supposed to protect children, but instead it is actually killing them.

While cases of children dying in foster care, usually make the news, VOCAL also hears of near death cases in foster care that usually never make the media. One must take into account, any child that dies after they were adopted, would be categorized under the general population. Also, children who have grown up and have been released from foster care, who later commit suicide because of the guilt of having allowing themselves to be coaxed into falsely accusing their parents and sending them to jail, and now no one will listen. We have heard of several cases where parents have committed suicide because they could no longer deal with the accusations or they had lost all rights to their children and no longer had anything to live for. Nonetheless, CPS agencies are responsible for far more deaths than just those in foster care.

Also, in following deaths in foster care, in the media, there are far more deaths than those that actually were reported. The total number of children reported to have died in foster care in the U.S. in 2001, were 18 (as stated above) and the latest figures, that just came out, for 2002 were 17 deaths.

**A report released by the Texas (state) Comptroller of Public Accounts, on foster child fatalities, reveals that in Texas 38 children died in state care in 2001 and 44 in 2002 (FN23), while only 3 deaths were reported to the Children's Bureau in 2001 (FN24) and 4**

**deaths were reported in 2002 (FN25).** That's more deaths than were reported to have occurred in foster care, in the whole United States. The actual number of deaths, in Texas, in foster care were 11 times what was reported in 2002, and almost 13 times what was reported in 2001. Apparently, states are required to only report the child deaths that occurred as a result of actual abuse. When states can judge and choose which child deaths they should report, it definitely gives them the option to not report numbers that would make the agency and state look bad.

**In 2001, the total Texas child population was 6,009,000, of which 206 children (or about 1 out of every 29,000) died (FN26). In 2001, the total Texas foster care population was about 19,739 children (FN27).** If 38 of those children actually died in foster care, that's 1 child out of about every 519. So statistically, chances of a child dying in foster care in Texas are over 55 times or about 5,500% more likely, then compared to the general population. (That's not even subtracting the 38 from the total 206 that died.) This totally shocks the conscience! Is this supposed to be a child protection system, or a death camp?

If this is a representation of how deaths in foster care are covered up, then the statistics nationwide could be this bad also. Regardless, this certainly is an issue that needs further investigation. So if the 103,144 children who were removed from their homes and families, although they were never even abused (as stated earlier), are subjected to a system where 1 child out of about every 519 dies, that means that hypothetically 198 of those 103,144 children, who had never even been abused, can be expected to die in this so called child protective system. Does that sound like a death camp, or what? How is killing children, supposed to be saving them from abuse?

## Threats and Intimidation

VOCAL hears of many cases in Missouri and across the country where parents are threatened, that their rights will be terminated on all of their children, unless they plea bargain to willingly give up some of their children, or risk losing them all. This is clearly extortion of the worst kind, because it involves children.

FN21 <http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/sexualityforyouth.htm> Child Welfare League of America: Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use, Pregnancy and Parenting Among Youths in Foster Care

FN22 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 5-2 Child Fatalities in Foster Care, 2001

FN23 <http://www.window.state.tx.us/forgottenchildren/ch05/s0505.html> Chapter 5: Foster Child Fatalities

FN24 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5\\_2.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5_2.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 5-2 Child Fatalities in Foster Care, 2001

FN25 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm02/table4\\_3.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm02/table4_3.htm) Child Maltreatment 2002: Table 4-3 Child Fatalities in Foster Care, 2002

FN26 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5\\_1.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/table5_1.htm) Child Maltreatment 2001: Table 5-1 Child Fatalities, 2001

FN27 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/tables/entryexit2002.htm> FY 1999-2002 Foster Care; Entries, Exits' and In Care on the Last Day

These cases almost always involve the younger children, only because they are adoptable and in reality there is no difference between these cases and a black market baby ring.

Many times parents are coerced through threats and intimidation into admitting they have abused their children, when they really haven't. They are told to sign papers admitting abuse or else: their children will be taken away; their children will never be returned and be adopted; they (the parents) will be arrested or spend time in prison. If parents refuse or are unable to pay child support to the state, their rights are threatened to be terminated. This is clearly extortion.

Court involvement is initiated many times, not because there is real cause, but because otherwise they have no authority to order the family around.

VOCAL has heard of numerous cases where children were placed with relatives, who were receiving no financial help from the state and yet the state was still collecting child support from the parents stating, the money was for "paper work." This clearly is fraud and extortion, and it all comes back to the money.

VOCAL has heard of cases where accusations are reduced from abuse, to insufficient income, a dirty house, etc. In many instances the Juvenile Court is being run like Traffic Court, where they modify a speeding ticket to a loud muffler.

Many times mothers are allowed to keep their children, only if they agree to file restraining orders, separate and eventually divorce their husbands. VOCAL hears these cases all the time, where the state is trying to force people to divorce. We can not even begin to count the marriages and families that have been broken up. Their goal here again is divide and conquer, and many times when all is said and done the state ends up with the children.

Many times schools report children with behavior problems, and if parents refuse to drug their children they may find themselves, not only, with child abuse or neglect charges, but also the loss of their parental rights.

VOCAL has seen that many times there is nothing a parent can do to ever get their children back. Cases are purposely set up so that parents will fail. Parents many times are denied an attorney, when they can not afford one, so they often show up for court without one. They

are asked to go to counseling, parenting classes, anger management classes, have psychological evaluations and drug screenings and then asked to pay for most if not all of these services. Even the most well intending parents, who are trying to shuffle all these services, as well as keep a job to pay for all of them, and their attorney, and the child support the state is now expecting them to pay, and then visiting their children as well, end up failing somewhere along the way. There are not enough hours in a day and it's just not going to happen!

We see these parents many times losing their job, because they were missing to much work going to all the services the state was demanding of them. On the other hand if they go to work, they usually end up not completing some of the services the state had required of them. So regardless, the state says they are uncooperative, or do not care about their children and they many times end up losing their children and having their rights terminated, purely because their case was purposely set up by the agency so they would fail. In the many cases, where VOCAL has seen this happen, the first question we ask is: are the foster parents wanting to adopt your children? The answer is almost always "yes." Many of these cases amount to no more than stealing babies for adoption.

Also, VOCAL sees when parents are sent to the agency's chosen counselors or service providers, the reports are far more likely to come back bad, than if the parents find their own providers. Many times, most services are only used to try to find more abuse and in reality are only more investigation disguised as services, kind of like a wolf in sheep's clothing. When a counselor supports the parents or makes a good report, the agency will usually attempt to remove them from the case and send the parents or children to someone else.

Numerous families have reported to us that, when their case got hot, DFS (CPS) hired private investigators to try to dig dirt on them and to watch and follow them everywhere they went. We have had several parents tell us that, when they went to the media and began to call everyone they could call telling about how their children had been unjustly taken away, they were actually shot at to shut them up.

Older children many times do not want to go home, only because the state has offered, or bribed them with, an Inde-

pendent Living check, of about 350 to 400 dollars per month, as soon as they turn 18. They can receive this money till they turn 21. What 15 or 16 year old teenager can turn down an offer like that?

## **Termination of Parental Rights**

**The parental rights were terminated on 79,000 children in foster care, in 2001, throughout the U.S. (FN28).** VOCAL has seen parents have their rights terminated because they were poor and could not provide their children everything the state thought they should, or they had health problems, were terminally ill, or just depressed and were having trouble taking care of their children.

Since 1997, as a result of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, VOCAL has seen the number of terminations skyrocket. We have seen numerous cases where parents had their rights terminated, not because they had ever abused their children, but solely because there were foster parents waiting in the wings who wanted to adopt, or because the children had been kept in foster care long enough now, that law allows the children to be put up for adoption. **The Adoption and Safe Families Act required that States initiate or join proceedings to terminate parental rights on behalf of children who have been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months (FN29).**

We have seen numerous cases, where when the judge ruled against termination or the court of appeals overturned the termination, they just filed a second or even third time, till sometimes they are finally successful. So parents can never really win, or ever hope to resolve their case and almost all parents will eventually run out of money, to keep on fighting. How can parents ever even hope to fight against the state, that has unlimited financial resources and power?

Sadly, when parents lose rights to their children, grandparents lose all rights and contact with their grandchildren as well. Many times grandparents are not even allowed to visit their grandchildren in foster care. Children being allowed no contact even with their extended family of origin, not only denies the child any knowledge and belonging of his heritage, but also further traumatizes and punishes the child for something that was not his fault. This is very inhumane treatment to put a child through, as though he were no more than a puppy being removed from his litter and given to a total stranger.

## Adoption

**50,000 children were adopted from the public foster care system, in 2001, throughout the U.S. (FN30).** As a result of CAPTA, since 1974, thousands of legal orphans were created who had no place to go and lingered in foster care year after year. In 1980, in an effort to bring some balance to the system, the Adoption Assistance Child Welfare Act (P.L. 96-272) was passed, requiring states to make “reasonable efforts” to keep families together. For the most part these guidelines were ignored and not followed. In 1997, to again try to deal with the growing number of children in foster care, the Adoption and Safe Families Act was enacted to fund the adoption of these orphans.

Unfortunately, no one wanted to adopt most of these children because of their emotional and behavioral problems, which resulted from them spending years in the system, being traumatized and rejected again and again, as they not only lost their parents, but were tossed from foster home to foster home.

Because most of these children were not adoptable, the Adoption and Safe Families Act never reduced the foster care population, as it was meant to do, but has only resulted in the system seizing children solely because they are young and adoptable, and not because they are really being abused. VOCAL has seen numerous cases where, a parent’s rights were terminated selectively only on one or two of their younger children, while they were allowed to keep their older children. In every such case there were always foster parents waiting in the wings to adopt.

The other trend, that VOCAL has seen since 1997, is that the agencies are looking and even advertising for people to license as “adoptive foster parents,” whenever they can, instead of just foster parents. These prospective adoptive parents can request just what type of baby they want and the agency basically calls them when one comes in. Sadly, many times this results in the agency removing children because they fit the bill and are adoptable, and not because they are really being abused. Because most babies that are taken into care are being placed into these “pre-adoptive” type homes, the goal can only be assumed as being adoption, although because of Federal law the agency will always state that the case goal is reunifi-

cation with the parents. CPS has become no more than a Federally funded black market adoption agency.

In 2003, the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act was enacted to fund the adoption of specifically older foster children, because as a result of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, only the younger children and babies were being adopted from the foster care system.

## Denial of Due Process and Constitutional Rights

In the majority of the cases, that VOCAL has seen, there is always a blatant denial of due process, and violation of civil and constitutional rights. Children have been removed and placed in foster care for months, even years, and have never been adjudicated as being abused, or have had an actual trial or evidentiary hearing, to prove that the parents have actually abused or neglected them. Basically the children are being taken, without any due process as provided for under the U.S. Constitution and being kidnapped. Even without a hearing, it is demanded that parents pay child support to the state, if they ever expect to get their children back. This is no more than a state run criminal enterprise, holding children, for ransom payments.

In one case a mother called VOCAL after she had gotten a letter in the mail, notifying her not to come visit her children next week, because her rights had been terminated. She stated she had never even seen a judge. How can a parent’s children be taken away for months or even years and they even lose all rights and they not even be given a hearing? How can this be going on in America?

VOCAL has heard about judges who have bragged that there are no constitutional rights in their court room. We have seen one judge that, no parent had ever won a case in front of. What we are seeing today in America is the blatant civil rights violations of millions of people. Sadly, when CAPTA was enacted there was no thought given or provision made to ensure constitutional rights or due process. These agencies and workers hide behind the immunity the courts have given them. VOCAL has seen several cases where agencies, who were sued for civil rights violations, still are blatantly doing the very same thing to other families.

## Underground Families

VOCAL is aware of many underground families; families in Missouri and other states that have had their rights terminated to previous children and because of the threat from the state to remove newly born children at birth, they go “underground”. These children are usually born through the assistance of a midwife, they are home-schooled and have no social security numbers or birth certificates.

Sometimes families come to Missouri from other states, hoping to hide, only to find out things are even worse here. Some have asked if we know of an “underground railroad”. We have many times heard of “safe houses” in other states, where children and families are hid out, kind of like past history, where people hid slaves and Jews.

VOCAL hears many cases where children, who are begging to go home with their parents, run away from foster care, even threaten or attempt to kill themselves, all because they just want to go home with mom and dad. Most of the time we see the state put these children on mind altering psychiatric drugs, put them in institutions and deny them any visits with their parents, many times for months or years. Their goal here is divide and conquer, hoping through this separation they can get the children to admit the allegations of abuse against their parents. Many times these children end up being brainwashed or tricked into admitting their parents abused them, only because they were led to believe they would be allowed to go home.

VOCAL hears many cases of teenagers living on the street and in hiding, because they have run away from foster care and are afraid to go home, because some have been arrested at gun point by police and returned to foster care. They know they can never return to the arms of their families and their own beds. We have heard of cases where judges have actually closed the case because DFS (CPS) had “lost” the child.

**The Missouri State Auditor reported, in a performance audit of the state foster care program that, in 2002, when DFS did a statewide inventory of children in foster care that by January 24, 2003 there were still 142 children the agency could not account for. As of Oct. 2002, division personnel classified 167 children as runaways (FN31).**

FN30 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/afcars/publications/afcars.htm> National Adoption and Foster Care Statistics: Trends in Foster Care and Adoption  
FN31 <http://www.auditor.state.mo.us/press/2003-25.pdf> Performance Audit of the Foster Care Program: Report No. 2003-25: (pages 10 & 11)

The Missouri State Auditor reported, that in 2002, by Oct. 14, there were already 137 runaways in Jasper, Jackson, Green, and St. Louis counties and the city of St. Louis alone, just specifically from residential care facilities. Also, they were tracking 299 children that had ran away from residential care facilities, in fiscal year 2002 (FN32). Apparently, there are hundreds of children running away who don't want to be in foster care and because they are not allowed to return home, they are homeless.

### **Federal Dollars**

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (NCCANI) reports that, the Urban Institute estimates in FY 2000, total spending (Federal, State and local) for out-of-home care was at least 9.1 billion dollars (FN33).

The Children's Bureau alone has an annual budget of over 6.7 billion dollars, with which it provides grants and funding to state and local agencies (FN34).

5,063,500,000 dollars were appropriated, in FY 2001, through the Title IV-E Foster Care program, to help states fund the placement of children outside their homes (FN35).

1,197,600,000 dollars were appropriated, in FY 2001, through the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance program, to help states fund adoptive homes for children. This program provides ongoing financial and medical assistance for adopted children with special needs (FN36). Almost all children who have been in foster care are considered special needs.

21,026,000 dollars were appropriated, in FY 2003, through the CAPTA State Grant program, to help states fund their child protective service systems (FN37). These (CPS) systems do intake, assessment, screening and investigation of reports of child abuse and neglect, and keep registries of all reported child abusers substantiated, as well as unsubstantiated.

In FY 2002, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded 14.9 million dollars in

bonuses to states for increasing the number of adoptions of foster children. HHS' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides a bonus payment to each state that completed more adoptions in 2002 than in each of the five previous years. Each qualifying state receives a bonus of \$4,000 per child adopted beyond its next best year's total. States may also receive a bonus of \$2,000 for each child with special needs adopted beyond the largest number of special needs children adopted in any of the previous five years (FN38). Almost all children who have been in foster care are considered special needs. Missouri received 366,000 dollars in Federal bonus dollars, in 2002 (FN39). The Missouri State Auditor reported, in a performance audit of the foster care program, that DFS received 1.2 million dollars in Federal Bonus Awards from 1998 to 2000 (FN40).

### ***State Grant Programs***

This is a complete listing of all the State Grant Programs (FN41) that the Children's Bureau gives and the dollar amounts that we could find. (Some we had also mentioned above).

Title IV-E Foster Care  
**\$5,063,500,000** (FY 2001)

Title IV-E Adoption Assistance  
**\$1,197,600,000** (FY 2001)

John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program  
**\$200,000,000** (FY 2003)

Title IV-B, Subpart 1, Child Welfare Services  
**\$291,986,000** (FY 2001)

Title IV-B, Subpart 2, Promoting Safe and Stable Families  
**\$305,000,000** (FY 2001)

CAPTA State Grants  
**\$21,026,000** (FY 2003)

Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (formerly the Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program)  
**\$31,500,000** (FY 2003)

Children's Justice Act  
**\$17,000,000** (FY 2003)

The total in State Grants is:  
**\$7,127,612,000** (7.1 billion dollars).

### ***Discretionary Grants***

The Children's Bureau also gives numerous **Discretionary Grants** (FN42). Some of them are listed below and the dollar amounts that we could find.

Adoption Opportunities  
**\$27,419,000** (FY 2001)

Child Welfare Services Training  
**\$7,000,000** (FY 2001)

Child Welfare Research and Demonstration  
(? \$ not given)

Abandoned Infants Assistance Program  
**\$12,207,000** (FY 2001)

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Research and Demonstration Projects  
**\$18,000,000** (FY 2003)

Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (CBCAP) (formerly the Community-Based Family Resource and Support (CBFRS) Program)  
**\$1,300,000** (FY 2002)

Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP)  
**\$8,600,000** (FY 2001)

The total in Discretionary Grants is:  
**\$74,526,000** (74.5 million dollars)

### ***Competitive***

### ***Discretionary Grants***

The Children's Bureau also gives numerous **Competitive Discretionary Grants** (FN43). Some of them are listed below and the dollar amounts that we could find.

Adoption Opportunities Demonstration Activities  
**\$7,144,337** (FY 2003)

Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Activities  
**\$7,363,379** (FY 2003)

Child welfare Training Project Activities  
**\$4,906,732** (FY 2003)

Promoting Safe and Stable Families Activities  
**\$2,346,871** (FY 2003)

The total in Competitive Discretionary Grants is:  
**\$21,761,319** (21.7 million dollars)

FN32 <http://www.auditor.state.mo.us/press/2003-115.pdf> Performance Audit of the Foster Care Program: Report No. 2003-115: (pages 7 & 8)

FN33 <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/factsheets/foster.cfm> Foster Care National Statistics: Cost

FN34 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/index.htm> Children's Bureau Programs

FN35 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/4efc.htm> Title IV-E Foster Care: Appropriation

FN36 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/4eaa.htm> Title IV-E Adoption Assistance: Appropriation

FN37 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/capta.htm> CAPTA State Grants: Appropriation

FN38 & 39 <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2003pres/20030912.html> News Release: HHS Awards \$14.9 Million in Bonuses to States for Increasing Adoptions

FN40 <http://www.auditor.state.mo.us/press/2003-25.pdf> Performance Audit of the Foster Care Program: Report No. 2003-25: Table II.1 (page 26)

FN41 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/state.htm> State Grant Programs (lists 8 programs)

FN42 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/discretionary.htm> Discretionary Grant Programs (lists 7 programs)

FN43 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/funding/fy2003ga.htm> FY 2003 Children's Bureau Competitive Discretionary Grant Awards (lists 4 groups of programs)

## **Adoption Bonus Dollars**

Adoption Bonuses (also mentioned above).

**\$14,900,000 (14.9 million dollars)**

### **Totals**

State Grant Programs  
**\$7,127,612,000 (7.1 billion dollars).**

Discretionary Grants  
**\$74,526,000 (74.5 million dollars)**

Competitive Discretionary Grants  
**\$21,761,319 (21.7 million dollars)**

Adoption Bonuses  
**\$14,900,000 (14.9 million dollars)**

### **Grand Total**

**\$7,238,799,319 (7.2 billion dollars)**

**That's only the funding for HHS' Children's Bureau Programs. In addition to this the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information also lists a menagerie of other agencies with programs that address child abuse and neglect. (FN44).** (These are listed below.)

### **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**

1. Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
3. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
4. National Institutes of Health (NIH)
5. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)
6. Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS)
7. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

### **Department of Justice (DOJ)**

1. Office of Justice Programs
2. Federal Bureau of Investigation

### **Additional Federal Agencies with Funding for Children's and Family Programs:**

1. Department of Agriculture (DOA)
2. Department of Defense (DOD)
3. Department of Education (DOE)
4. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
5. Department of the Interior (DOI)
6. Department of Labor (DOL)
7. Department of Transportation

On the last two pages we have listed over 30 Federal programs or agencies that receive funding to address child abuse and neglect issues. So clearly the grand total of all spending far exceeds the 7.2 billion dollars listed above. The bottom line is: is all this money doing what it was intended to do? Is it helping children and families, or is it only causing more harm than good?

## **Summary and Conclusion**

In America, about 1 child out of every 14 is being investigated for abuse every year. At least 84% of those reports are false. About 1 child out of every 247 is removed from their home and family every year and about 1 child out of every 134 lives in foster care. Child protective services have become a shame and embarrassment to our country, just like the Salem Witch Trials, in past history, when people are accused and their lives and families are destroyed, based on mere accusations of some anonymous caller and not facts and evidence.

America is spending at least 9.1 billion dollars every year on a child protective system that only places children in greater harm, than if the children were just left in their own homes. A system that, 35% of the children it removes from their homes and families have never even been abused. According to their own statistics, children in foster care are 10 to 12% more likely to be abused in some way and 200% more likely to be killed or suffer more serious harm, by being abused physically or sexually (400% more likely to be sexually abused in residential care).

Although, as we had stated earlier, according to the statistics for Texas, a child there is over 55 times or about 5,500% more likely to die in foster care, than compared to the general population. We at VOCAL, can only conclude that many of the reported death statistics are no more than smoke and mirrors, to cover up how many children are really dying in foster care, in an effort to protect the system. A system that kills and molests children to save them, is doing no more than using them to play Russian roulette.

If foster care has nothing to do with protecting children, then what is it all about? Is it's purpose no more than to fill state coffers with Federal money? Is it no more than some agency or caseworker wielding power and authority over the subjects in their fictitious kingdom? We know that these are harsh words, but it's from their own statistics, foster care could be construed as a Federally funded death camp or commune for pedophiles.

Over the years as more money has been poured into the system it has not gotten better, but has only resulted in more and more children being warehoused in foster care, yet people in the system still state all they need is more money. The states that are spending the most on foster care, are also having the most problems (i.e. California and Flor-

ida). The bigger the system gets the more corrupt, unmanageable and like a tyrant it becomes. Families are at risk of being destroyed and children are being harmed for Federal money. It is fraud for the system to receive Federal money for children who have never even been abused, yet nonetheless the system, according to their own statistics, had 103,144 such children in their care, in 2001.

The state or institutions will never be a good mother for children. The system is not geared to ever get children with problems well and send them back home. The trend is more and more children are being raised in foster care and other government institutions. Our society has come to the place, that every less than compliant child is at risk of being removed from his home and family and being placed in foster care or an institution. The home and the family is literally being replaced by these institutions. The goal or primary focus of the child protective system is clearly not family preservation or working to keep families together, by providing them help and services, but instead breaking families up and destroying them.

With about 1 child out of every 134 living in foster care, the family is destined for doom, at this rate. Unfortunately, families don't have lobbyists, like corporations do, to protect their rights and interests. Congressmen nationwide it's up to you, let's save the American family. After 30 years of CAPTA it's time to re-evaluate what the system is doing to American families. Apparently, President Nixon was right after all!

## **Some Recommendations for Change**

The passage of a family rights bill to protect the Civil and Constitutional rights of families. This bill needs to:

1. Shift Federal funding, from foster care and adoption, to providing services to keep families together.

2. Set a bar as to what is abuse and what is not. (This should not be left up to the whim of some case worker.)

3. Eliminate sole parental custody of children. Children should have two parents. (This will stop most of the false accusations used in custody disputes.)

4. Eliminate the termination of parental rights. (Children should at the very least be able to have supervised visits, even if their parents, are in prison, or are otherwise unable or unwilling to take care of them. They also need contact with other members of their family of origin.)

# Support VOCAL of Missouri today by a yearly membership or monthly partnership.

We need to keep the heat on D.F.S. (CPS) more than ever before. Your tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated and will be used wisely. VOCAL is a completely volunteer organization, so 100% of your donations are used toward expenses to fight D.F.S. (CPS). We have helped families in 48 states and Canada.

**Mail to:** VOCAL of MO, Inc., 7620 Augusta Ave., St. Louis, MO 63121. **Make checks payable to:** VOCAL of MO, Inc.

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- \$\_\_\_\_ Additional donation, to continue and expand our research and the education of the media, the State Legislatures and Congress, to change the laws. **(100% of this amount will be used for these expenses)**.
- The address above is a new address or has a correction from the label on back.
- Please remove me from all future mailings.

## A Letter to our Families, Friends and Supporters

We know that this newsletter has been a long time in coming. We had intended to get it out early this Spring, but the more research we did the deeper it got and as a result we felt more needed to be said. VOCAL has never before put out a report like this. In fact we do not know of anyone else that has ever done a report like this.

We have taken the child protective system's own numbers and documentation to show what the system is really like and what they are really doing. **This newsletter will also be posted on the VOCAL website at [www.vocalofmo.org](http://www.vocalofmo.org) and we will eventually, have links to all the footnoted documents that we refer to in this report.**

VOCAL will be E-mailing this report to every Senator and Representative in the Country, as well as every member of Congress and every media outlet that we can find an E-mail address for. We who volunteer for VOCAL, are just a few people, but our families, friends and supporters are in the thousands. We need thousands upon thousands of E-mails

going out. **As soon as we get this report posted on our website, we are encouraging everyone that knows how to use a computer, to E-mail the link to this report to anyone and everyone, especially your own Senators and Representatives, both state and federal and also, members of the media and other pro-family organizations. Please make as many copies, of this newsletter as you like and mail them out. See copyright notice below.** We will also be posting a sample E-mail on our website, that you can cut and paste to send out. It's up to all of us to get this message out. Many of you have asked us here at VOCAL what you can do to help. Well this is your golden opportunity. Together we can get the truth out and help bring about real change.

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Phone # (314) 381-0754  
E-mail: [help@vocalofmo.org](mailto:help@vocalofmo.org)  
Web Site: [www.vocalofmo.org](http://www.vocalofmo.org)**

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The advice given in this newsletter, during meetings, and by members directly and in telephone conversations, should not be taken as legal advice. It is the opinion of the person answering the questions at the time, and the answers are based upon legal advice that attorneys have given in similar situations. Consult your attorney or one of our recommended attorneys before taking any action in your case.



Check out our Web Site at: [www.vocalofmo.org](http://www.vocalofmo.org)  
HELPLINE PHONE: (314) 381-0754

**NOTICE:** We are changing the way our **Family Support Meetings** are scheduled, so we can better help more families. We are scheduling future meetings by appointment only. Please call the number above and we will call you back. This will help us avoid meetings that are to large or to small and enable people to come who had to work during our previously scheduled meetings. Please bring your paperwork.

Help us use our funds wisely. **If you do not want to receive future mailings**, write remove next to your mailing label, cut out this portion of the letter, and mail it back to us. Thank you.

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

**TO:**

# VOCAL State of the Family Report

## A Report to Congress, the State Legislatures, the Media and the Families of America

### Highlights from the Report

About 1 child in every 14, of the total U.S. child population is being questioned and put through a child abuse investigation every year.

About 4,097,000 or 82% of the total number of accusations were unfounded or false reports in 2001.

About 1 child out of every 247 children of the total U.S. child population (of 72,941,000), was removed from their family in 2001.

About 35% (or more than 1 child out of every 3) of the total 295,132 children, who were removed from their families, in reality were never even victims of abuse, but were removed nonetheless.

Many times the agency's criteria or grounds for removal, is not that a child has been abused, but may be at risk of being abused some time in the future.

In 2001, about 1 child out of every 134, was in foster care, of the total U.S. child population of 72,941,000.

Nationally in 2001, 1 child out

of about every 82 children was abused while in care.

Children in foster care are about 10 to 12% more likely to be abused in some way, than if they were just left in their own homes.

The chances of a child suffering more serious harm by being abused physically or sexually are about twice as likely or about 200% when they are placed in foster care.

The chances of a child dying in foster care are about twice as likely or about 200%, when compared to the general population.

Parents are threatened, that their rights will be terminated on all of their children, unless they plea bargain to willingly give up some of their children, or risk loosing them all.

Parents had their rights terminated, solely because there were foster parents waiting in the wings who wanted to adopt, and not because they had ever abused their children.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act never reduced the foster care population, as it was meant to do, but has only resulted in the system seizing children solely because they are young and adoptable, and not because they are really being abused.

In the majority of cases, there is always a blatant denial of due process, and violation of civil and constitutional rights.

Children, who are begging to go home with their parents, run away from foster care, even threaten or attempt to kill themselves, all because they just want to go home with mom and dad.

Teenagers are living on the street and in hiding, because they have run away from foster care and are afraid to go home, because some have been arrested at gun point by police and returned to foster care.

In FY 2000, total spending (Federal, State and local) for out-of-home care was at least 9.1 billion dollars.