

Good morning Scott,
I was unable to move my appointments around, I am sorry; I wrote this out. I wish I had more time to prepare. I hope it helps. Please let me know if there is anything more I can do to assist with this.

I wish I had more time to prepare a statement. This is an issue that child protection struggles with. Erroneous reports take away from real concerns. The Department of Health and Welfare has been overwhelmed with reports that are called in do to vindictive reasons. There are families that do not live the others do, so they get reported as being neglectful. Society seem to think that if my neighbor does not do what I want, I need to call child protection as a way to get revenge. A child protection report once assigned can take several hours to investigate. Law enforcement has to be coordinated with. This is a good practice, but when a report is erroneous it is a HUGE waste of resources. I am not sure about the monetary cost, as I did not have the time to investigate.

I also think about the impact on families when there are false reports made. Each child in a home has to be interviewed when a report is made. This can be scary for children. Parents get scared because child protection has been misrepresented as people who want to take their children. Their fear causes them to not want to cooperate. That leads to more time and resources spent on gathering the information.

As a parent I was a victim of false reporting. I had to take time off work to meet with the worker. My children were irritated because of being pulled out of class. It disrupted everyone's routine and caused my children to not trust the system. This hurt me the most. Licensed social Workers should be someone a child thinks of as a safe person to talk to, but when there are false reports it does the opposite.

I do understand the importance of mandated reporters. I do not want to have anything that stops people from calling in abuse, neglect or abandonment. I hope there is a way to stop the vindictive false reporting.

I wish that I had more time to discuss the impact of false reporting. I would like to talk more about this as I have several examples of how false reporting has made things worse for the families I work with.

Cynthia Coleman

Licensed Social Worker

Family and Children Services

515 M 16th Street

Payette, ID 83661

Phone 208-590-8010

FAX 208-642-7082