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I recently had a discussion with an attorney who is defending a mother against Child Protective Services (CPS) attempts to terminate her parental rights. This attorney stated that the mother - her client - made a mistake when she took her child with her to a friend's house to visit, especially since she stayed out past 2 A.M. She complained that the child should never have been allowed to sleep on the couch while mom visited, that she should have been home in her own bed. She believed mom should have hired a babysitter. The fact that mom was on welfare and couldn't afford a babysitter seems to have escaped her.

I challenged her judgement. Good grief, I remember taking my baby and toddler to a friend's house to play cards late into the night. My husband was in the Army. We lived in Germany. He was only an E-4. He didn't bring home much money and I was a stay-at-home mom, so I didn't bring home any money. Playing cards was cheap entertainment. The kids would play until bedtime and we'd bed them down on the floor or the couch.

When we finally tired, we'd carry the kids to the car, drive home, and put them to bed. They rarely even awoke during the entire process. The next, time, we'd host the card party and our friend's kids would sleep on our couch or our floor. No harm done. My folks did it with us kids, my husband's folks did it with him. But today, this is actually being used as grounds to terminate parental rights.

If this isn't horrifying enough, consider what's going on in California. Social workers are actually in hospitals assessing whether parents should be allowed to take their newborns home. Can you imagine, having just endured hours of labor, and then having to face a social worker and be on your best behavior lest she determine you would be an unfit mother? You must answer personal questions that invade your privacy and actually put your values on trial. Is it any wonder so many mothers are choosing to forego the hospital delivery room for a nice, quiet, private birth at home? This is happening in many hospitals nationwide already.

Today, parents risk losing their children simply for spanking them. Fortunately, the ones who fight this rabid invasion of their rights usually win. However, when children are removed from the home for whatever reason, the law often requires a treatment plan be in place to remedy the problem that caused the intervention. These treatment plans universally contain an 'anti-spanking' component. What this means is that all parents who must suffer social services intervention are forbidden by the court to spank their children, even if spanking wasn't the issue that caused the intervention. And the kiddies know you can spank them. And, naturally, they exploit it. But spanking isn't the only parenting no-no.

A Colorado mother has been ordered by a court to put her home-schooled daughter into public school, simply because the judge is against home-schooling. The fact that the mother has complied with all legal requirements for home schooling parents and that the daughter tests in the 85+ percentile on national standardized testing appears to be irrelevant.

You don't dare leave your sleeping babes in the locked car momentarily while you run into the pharmacy to fill their prescription. You'll be reported and you could lose them.

Don't expect your lazy child to perform up to his potential. If your 'Peter Pan' doesn't want to grow up or be responsible, you are not allowed to push him.

Don't read the Bible to your children, lest the state swoop in and find you unfit to interpret scripture.

Don't seek a second medical opinion for your child unless you want to risk losing him based on a 'medical neglect' charge. An emergency room visit may save his life but put you at risk of child abuse charges.

What is developing is a mentality where the state expects parents to fit their perception of what a perfect parent is. They have gone beyond the concept of whether or not a home is good enough for a child into the realm of placing children into homes that are 'better' for one reason or another, which usually means at least a middle-class economic level of politically correct parenting. Children are no longer being allowed to be exposed to poverty, high expectations, humiliation, pain, or criticism. The child saver's perfect world will not allow a child to experience any pain. If you do inflict pain on your child, you are an unfit parent.

Pain, emotional and physical, is a part of life. We cannot protect anyone from those experiences, and to attempt to do so would be foolish. As a child experiences pain, even the deliberately inflicted pain of a spanking as the consequence of disobedience, they learn to manage and control their emotional response appropriately. Imagine a child who has been so protected from pain that once he reaches adulthood, he cannot respond to it properly. Pain is part of the growing process, the learning process, the maturing process.

The child saver's model of parental perfection is so high and so unrealistic, and the definition is so vague that virtually any parent runs the risk of failing to meet that standard. The agencies mandated to protect children have overstepped their authority to protect children from harm and have extended their reach into the practice of ordering parents how to parent. Many hapless parents actually try to comply, and many fail and lose their children.

This busybody trend is very disturbing. In practice, parents are being relegated to the position of breeders for the state. They are losing their rights to control the education and upbringing of their children, little by little. They're not even aware of it until the social worker comes knocking on their door. And then, it's almost too late.

The hysteria over the huge numbers of children being abused today has triggered this phenomenon. The child savers love to tout their horrifying figures but fail to point out 2/3 of all child abuse reports are false or unfounded right off the top. If you can guarantee that for every 'substantiated' report, that two other innocent families must endure the invasive scrutiny of some child saver, you will have established a pretty poor record for protecting the rights of innocent families.

But it gets worse. Analysis of the remaining 'substantiated' reports reveals that 80 -90% of those cases are actually false, too. But what would a CPS agency do if they actually revealed that only 10-20% of child abuse reports represented true child abuse. They could never justify their budget or bureaucracy on those slim figures. So they MUST inflate the figures, regardless of who it hurts in the process.

Parenting is an occupation at risk. This puts our children at risk. We have reached the point where we can no longer lounge safely complacent in front of our television sets. These agencies are no longer thieves in the night. They boldly go into schools and day care centers to take what they want. They pick and choose which laws they will follow. They dare you to defy them while they hold your children hostage.

Maybe it's time to reevaluate your priorities as a parent, before someone does it for you. Think about it, even if you get off scott-free, will your kids be as fortunate when they become parents?