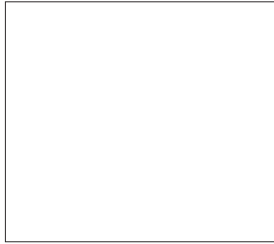


21.11.2010



To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to voice my frustration and despair that yet another young child has been let down by the very agency who should have cared for her, and protected her.

As a classroom teacher I am exposed on a daily basis to a variety of issues which can, and do, affect the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of some children.

This year I have had the misfortune to have to watch a child suffer constant abuse in her home and have felt powerless to do anything to protect her and keep her safe. Almost on a weekly, (sometimes daily), basis, I have reported my real concerns about this child to management who in turn have contacted the child's social worker with the concerns. This child has come to school with black eyes, a swollen face, swollen nose, bruises, abrasions and infected wounds that have all been explained as her being 'clumsy and accident prone'. However she is only accident prone at home, she has not had a so called accident while at school.

The general response has consistently been that everything in the child's home is fine and that social services are working with the mother to ensure the best outcome for the child. Last week the child in question was hospitalized and the other children in the family taken into care (not for the first time in their short lives). What happened to this child should never have happened, the constant calls to social services from the school should have been acted on.

Why do we have to wait for a child to be seriously injured or killed before action is taken?

Whenever you hear in the media about sick and cruel abuse meted out to yet another innocent child, the public catch cry is always 'someone must have seen what was going on, why didn't they speak out, or seek help?'

I am now left to wonder if people have spoken out in many of the historical cases of child abuse but were just not listened to until it was too late.

The emotional toll on myself this year has been extreme, I have been distressed by the plight of this child and by the feeling that there was absolutely nothing you could do to protect her and make her life better. Constantly having my concerns about this child dealt with as if they were of no consequence was a deciding factor in my resigning from my permanent teaching position.

'Why did no-one listen?', 'Who is held accountable for the unnecessary suffering of this child?'

It appears no-one is, she is just another statistic. I implore you to look at the procedures and processes currently in place within our social services and address the obvious shortfalls so that no other child falls through the cracks and ends up in a hospital bed or the mortuary.

Whatever happens with this particular child, I will forever feel a sense of guilt that I was not able to keep her safe. If she comes through this latest beating it will be one more thing to add to her already damaged soul.

The governments add campaign asking people to speak out against abuse almost seems hypocritical in this instance as constant concerns were voiced but were ignored. Where is the incentive for people to speak out when there is no acknowledgement that their concerns have been heard or have been taken serious.

Please, please don't let what has happened with this child continue to happen to other children. Listen when someone voices a concern, especially when concerns are being constantly voiced about that child.

I sincerely hope that you take the time to read my letter and that it opens up your mind to the shortfalls that are in our current system. A young innocent child has suffered unimaginable pain that at her age she should not have suffered, please don't sit back and do nothing. In your position you are able to have a much stronger voice than I can, I implore you to use your voice to ask questions and put procedures in place to prevent this happening with another child.

Yours sincerely,