

Flawed System Fails to Protect Children

CAROLINE REN
Editor in Chief

Social issues have existed for centuries, and as a result, programs have been created to address these rampant but perhaps hidden concerns. As a whole, the system of child protection services (CPS) generally remains largely unnoticed and out of the public's sight. The very notion of the program is vague at best, with one main goal: to lower the rates of child abuse and maltreatment. However, upon closer examination, CPS tend to have extraordinarily low success, with families and children in similar condition to their pre-case situations.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 was designed to promote more extensive data collection for child abuse cases, yet the CPS that were subsequently established neither prevented nor treated the long-term problem. According to a 2010 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), seven key

risk factors remained unaddressed even after visits from caseworkers: social support, family functioning, poverty, maternal education, maternal depressive symptoms, anxious/depressive and aggressive/destructive child behaviors.

Essentially, while caseworkers are primarily concerned with immediate dangers such as substance abuse or domestic violence, the system fails to adequately address other base issues as well. These solutions save children at the moment but allow underlying problems to exist, meaning that children in those families stay at high risk for future abuse or neglect.

Furthermore, follow-up is crucial to ensure that maltreatment and violence do not reoccur, but

only 38 percent of children receive post-investigative services. Where the problem resides is the fact that caseworkers are spread too thinly; one worker is assigned too many cases, reducing the effectiveness of solving any single case because of time constraints and the need to move on to the next family.

What CPS need to do is collaborate with physicians, other professionals and programs such as those for parent training and behavioral therapy to target specific problems after the period of home visits has passed. To effectively address the issue of child maltreatment, CPS must realize that a hit-and-run approach simply will not eliminate

many serious risk factors, and it is time for the system in its entirety to step up to the plate in tackling a tremendous social concern.

Citizens can aid the effort to reduce child abuse by supporting public awareness programs, such as Children's Trust Funds, Prevent Child Abuse America and the Blue Ribbon Campaign. Another important aspect is reporting any suspicion of abuse; knowing how to properly do so could potentially save lives. Officials who are mandated by law to report potential abuse cases include physicians, dentists, licensed nurses, school employees, psychologists, firefighters and emergency medical technicians, as well as many others. While these mandatory reporters do make up the bulk of reported cases, it is important to remember that each individual possesses a moral duty and an opportunity to make a difference. As Edmund Burke once said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."



Never Put Off For Next Year What You Can Do This Year

JOSEPH NEY-JUN
Staff Writer

Out with the old and in with the new, it is 2014! Jan. 1 is recognized throughout the world as New Year's Day, a tradition taken from Julius Caesar's reformation of the Roman Calendar many New Years ago. On New Year's day it is an old tradition to make a resolution. The concept of the New Year's resolution is traced back as early as the ancient Babylonians.

The Babylonians would make such a pledge to their gods. By fulfilling this pledge, they would be granted the favor of the gods

but in the event that they would fail, they would incur the wrath of the gods. They would always follow through on their promise, or so old textbooks, encyclopedias and the internet says. However, according to *The Journal of Clinical Psychology* at the University of Scranton, only eight percent of Americans reach their resolution.

In any case, a resolution is not something to be thrown aside or taken lightly, it is meant to be followed.

Almost all resolutions are based around self improvement, but it seems that we have lost the will to improve ourselves, save

the eight percent of the population. Why is the hope of a better self not incentive enough? People used to stay true to their cause for whatever it may be, through thick and thin. "Never put off for tomorrow, what you can do today," as founding father Thomas Jefferson once said. The other 92 percent of today's population is not so old-fashioned, as people put off their goals for tomorrow, then the next day, and the week after that, and the month after that.

We may as well be living in the "Procrastination Nation." Even the term procrastination is being generous; the word still implies

that something will get done eventually. More than anything else, this inability to keep our word has to do with the unrealistic expectations we put on ourselves.

The Babylonians made simple promises, such as repaying debts and returning borrowed farming equipment. They made realistic promises, things that they knew they could stay dedicated to, unlike many of us.

We need to stick to the things that we say, and follow through by accomplishing one goal at a time.

With 2014 make a promise to keep the promises—a much needed resolution for all of us.



The Factory of Graduates

CINDY LUO
Staff Writer

Due to states allocating funding for public universities based on graduation rates, universities are proposing new ways to graduate more students more efficiently. For instance, some schools are changing graduation requirements and others are letting students use credits earned by taking online courses.

Though it is understandable that colleges are under the pressure of graduating students more quickly for less money and tying graduates' skills to workforce needs, the idea that assumes that lowering standards in order to pass more students can be a solution is incorrect. In recent years, the reasons for attending college have become unquestionably linked with career develop-

ment and better income potential, but higher education does not guarantee a good job. Instead, education is a tool to help increase students' knowledge in their intended field all while improving their chances for a more successful future. According to *The Atlantic*, most of the curriculum proposed by school officials lack the focus of what students should learn for intended field. Instead, colleges have turned into a mass production stamping out graduates without strict inspection of their qualifications, diminishing the reasons for education. If more and more colleges follow this flow, higher level institutions will turn into academic factories that only aim for the sole purpose of the diploma and neglecting the quality of education. MOOR graphics by SIMON ZHAO

the alhambran yearbook \$80 purchase today