




## “Professional Kidnappers” at Arizona Child-welfare Agency Terminated for Truth-telling T-shirts

Eight Arizona Department of Child Safety  (DCS) employees were fired recently for committing the gravest sin a government worker can commit: telling the truth about what his agency really does.

The former employees of the Prescott DCS office were photographed wearing T-shirts with two incendiary-but-honest messages. On the front, the shirts read, “Professional Kidnapper.” On the back, they asked, “Do you know where your children are?”

One of the former staffers told the [Arizona Republic](#) that “the T-shirts [were] an inside joke and a way to relieve the stress of the job.”

That may have been how they were viewed among the DCS employees and other child-welfare workers who shared the photo electronically, but once the picture became public knowledge, the reaction among many was totally different.

“A woman whose child was removed by one of the fired investigators said the photo enraged her,” wrote the *Republic*. “She declined to give her name for fear it would jeopardize her ongoing case in juvenile court.”

“It really illuminates that people in the system are biased against parents,” Claire Louge, executive director of Prescott-based Prevent Child Abuse Arizona, told the paper. Louge’s organization believes — and DCS claims to believe — “that children are better off with their parents, as long as troubled families can get support,” noted the *Republic*.

However, as [The New American](#) has previously reported, “The goal [of the child-welfare bureaucracy] is not to protect children, but to interfere with family government as much and as often and to whatever degree they deem appropriate, without regard to the natural rights of parents to raise and train children according to their own best efforts and their own religious beliefs.”

Children have been taken from parents because they were being [homeschooled](#), their parents [objected to vaccinating them](#) or [requested medical treatment hospitals deemed unnecessary](#), or they were being [reared in a Christian home](#). Women whose children have been snatched by child-welfare agencies have even been [forced to have abortions](#) in order to get their kids back.

Ashley Thompson, a recovering addict whose children were taken by the Prescott DCS office, was particularly incensed at the now-infamous T-shirt photo. “It was completely disheartening to know these are the people who have control over my children’s needs and well-being right now,” she told [PJmedia](#).

Thompson said the original complaint to DCS was about the children’s father, who is now incarcerated and has no contact with them, and she has done everything required to get her kids back, but DCS won’t budge. “I completed treatment, all services, still testing and I have my youngest son back,” she said, but the other four kids remain in foster homes, which are often [pipelines to sex trafficking](#).

“Instead of making reasonable efforts to keep our family intact ... they made every effort to tear us apart,” Thompson wrote in a letter to the court when DCS took her kids.



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on August 19, 2020

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The DCS firings, which occurred June 19, left the Prescott office with just one case investigator; but given its lax hiring practices, the office shouldn't have much trouble filling its open positions. One of the fired employees, Karen White, had been dismissed in 2009 by the state Department of Economic Security, where she worked in child-support enforcement, "for sharing information about child-support cases involving her sister, as well as one of White's friends, in violation of the agency's conflict of interest and confidentiality standards," reported the [Republic](#). Five years later, DCS hired her as a case aide and later promoted her to case investigator. Shortly thereafter, when she was caught violating DCS policies, she was suspended for a week and then reprimanded.

"They think they're so untouchable, they don't think they can get caught," former DCS unit supervisor Christina Sanders told the newspaper. Sanders, who said she was fired last year for "refus[ing] to move a young boy to a group home in Phoenix, arguing it was not a proper placement," claimed there "was a long-standing practice of bullying and entitlement in the Prescott office" that was tolerated and even encouraged by supervisors.

But they did get caught, and now these "professional kidnappers" are getting a sample of the pain and humiliation they most likely inflicted on families over the years.

Photo: Tinnakorn Jorruang / iStock / Getty Images Plus

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