

From:

Donna Lowe

Colby, KS

To Whom it may concern:

My experiences with the foster care system have been more like a horror movie. My experience started May 9, 2018. My daughter was 15 years old. I was raising her on my own as my husband was living with his new girlfriend, yet we were still married. I was living on disability and did not receive child support. It was determined by the Rexford high school that maybe foster care would provide a better environment for my daughter to learn and thrive. A court hearing was scheduled, and it was determined that foster care was the best. The first night my daughter was in foster care she was placed in a rural setting in Healy, KS and I learned she and another foster care child had run away from the home and were with men who were much older than they. I was not informed of this situation until days later after she had been placed in another foster home. I did not receive any RE/FC/AD Acknowledgement of Referral Notification of Move/Placement/Change documents. It seemed like I did not receive communication on a regular basis until I hired a lawyer. This put a hardship on me financially. The more I tried to provide information to the case workers that I thought would be helpful the more it was turned against me and I began to feel as if I was the criminal.

Another problem I found with Social Services was with the Case Planning Meetings. I usually was not provided the dates and times in a timely manner. They usually called me the day of and asked if I could be there. Because I am battling cancer, I usually had doctor appointments already scheduled. Social Services expected me to cancel my appointments that are usually scheduled three (3) or more months out to attend. If I was unable to attend the documents made it look like I refused to attend or was not interested which was not the case at all.

Another issue I had was how visitation with my daughter was conducted. It was to be an "in person" and supervised. Because I did not have a vehicle, they would have a driver sent to my house at 6:45am. I would be ready. I was not to eat or drink in the vehicle so unable to have breakfast or even a cup of coffee while driving. My daughter was in Wichita at the time in a secure facility. I would let the receptionist know when I got there so I could get through security and into the visitation or therapy meeting on time. Many times, social services would not let me come in till after my time was up. Other times no driver would arrive as planned and I was not informed that there was a change. I was still ready. Sometimes if there was a court hearing and it was our visitation day, I would not be allowed to spend time with my child after the hearing because "my time was up" per the clock.

On many forms, documentation was contradictive. A document from one party would say one thing and then from a different party, be totally different in the next document for the same incident. This was very frustrating and hard to trust anyone with the truth.

I believe an Office of the Child Advocate would be a great asset for both children and parents so my experience will not happen again to anyone. There needs to be a "neutral" party to assess, oversee, and inform both parent and child in the social services system and be able to keep them informed as

to what is happening about the child to the parent or the parent to the child. If you need more details and supporting documents for the horrors, I encountered being a victim of Social Services I have them saved.

Kind regards,

Donna Lowe