

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Child Abuse Going Unpunished in Texas
Date: Tuesday, June 03, 2014 8:08:32 AM

From: Kevin Newsom
Sent: Monday, June 02, 2014 6:53 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Child Abuse Going Unpunished in Texas

Sunset advisory board:

I am writing in regards to what I consider to be misuse of public funds under HHS programming within the ACF funded programs known as Access Visitation programs. I believe these funds are being used incorrectly to provide legal assistance to one party in divorce/custody cases.

These funds are detrimental to the justice system. What is happening at a national level is alarming, and even more alarming is the Texas participation and exacerbation of these programs.

The end result are children being removed wrongfully from homes often taking advantage of other funding (such as kinship grants under Title IV-e); sometimes placed with (usually) a paternal grandparent then placed within months with (usually) the father (for av program money) -- who has in many cases had DOCUMENTED abuse either physical or more often than not sexual abuse.

In Harris County, four attorneys are receiving salaries via these funds on top of other sources of income these attorneys may have. El Paso has an attorney as well. In Tarrant County, only social workers are listed as receiving income via these grants. The ironic thing is the people receiving these grant monies for salaries, are already receiving a salary by county. So if you were to look up the same people listed in the contracts to Texas Tribune salaries listed for state employees you will see that these employees do indeed make significantly more than their peers.

Per the code for 42USC669b; visitation enforcement includes the following

activities: (copied straight from the verbiage online, and italics/bold are mine for emphasis)

The Administration for Children and Families shall make grants under this section to enable States to establish and administer programs to support and facilitate noncustodial parents' access to and visitation of their children, by means of activities including mediation (both voluntary and mandatory), counseling, education, development of parenting plans, ***visitation enforcement (including monitoring, supervision and neutral drop-off and pickup)***, and development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

NO where is litigation an allowed use of these funds, however, after obtaining and reading multiple contracts for these programs -- all of the contracts include the use of litigation under visitation enforcement.

Furthermore, I should, as a concerned citizen, be able to find a clear grant trail for each recipient of these funding sources from the federal level to the state level -- however, federal level shows only Texas Workforce Solutions at first glance to be receiving these grant funds. If you put New Day into TAGGS as one word you will find them as well. At the state level, the Texas Workforce Solutions is NOT listed by the AG, but New Day, Legal Aid of Northwest Texas and Tarrant County Family Court Services are all listed as receiving funding.

Ironic that New Day is a religious based institution, and receiving free office space in the county court house with judges mandating people receiving services there at times, and even more ironic that New Day Services for Families and Children serves as the treasurer for the Father's Coalition of Tarrant County, this alone should be enough for anyone to see that injustice is being served in our Texas Family Courts, and further investigation into the use of these funds is warranted without delay.

Texas children deserve better. So do the parents who are being mistreated for money.

Many Thanks,

Kevin Newsom
Dallas, TX