



New Documentary to Court TV, Frontline etc.

Family Court Failures

Please READ

[Note: Please respond the author of the message below, Meena Fox at Abusesolutions@aol.com (and cc me at AuthorTalia@aol.com) Thanks!]

From Meena Fox:

Today I met with Dominique Lasseur of Tatge/Lasseur Productions, who just finished making the PBS movie that comes out this Thursday about Protective Parents, Family Court failure and PAS entitled "Breaking The Silence: Children's Stories." Dominique is passionately interested in continuing his work in this area, as he can see how raising the public's consciousness about this problem and indeed, creating a public outcry about it, will be key to achieving the reforms we seek in Family Court.

Dominique would like to focus next on judicial accountability for these tragedies, and sees media exposure of the judges' heinous misconduct in these child abuse cases as the best way to make an impact on their future behavior. I know you will all agree that this is a project that would be worth its weight in gold if he can pull it off. He envisions marketing a series on Family Court failure to Court TV, Frontline, America Undercover, or all three, if we can get him enough information, footage and support.

The reason he met with me about this project is because I know all of you and he was hoping I could rally you troops to help him with his project, and I assured him I would be glad to. He is interested in getting together a powerful collection of video tapes of Protective Parents' court hearings, the type he used in "Breaking The Silence: Children's Stories" in which Richard Ducote was arguing a motion in Shelly's case to keep her daughter Manya from being given into the custody of her father after disclosing years of abuse by him, where the judge said the timing is suspicious, therefore I will deny the motion and send her to live with the father. These types of courtroom video tapes are used in most California Courtrooms in lieu of a court reporter, and are available for sale at the court clerk's office. I assume that most other states use these tapes as well. Shelly's case was in Washington State, and Dominique has good footage from a Nevada court too. So far these are the only two court tapes that he has, but he wants to compile a big collection of them and use them as the basis of

his new series.

Dominique needs each of you to send him videotapes from your cases where judges were awful to Protective Parents, i.e. treated them disrespectfully or inappropriately, blew up at them, or just made completely illogical or punitive rulings against them, or all of the above.

Dominique requests that we contact all the Protective Parents who might have access to such evidence and ask them to look in their legal files, try to determine what day these rulings occurred on, and then each order the tape from the courtroom for that hearing. Next he needs each Protective Parent to preview the tape and keep track of where on the tape the good footage is, so that when we forward them to him, all he has to do is put the tape in the VCR (or the DVD on the computer), and watch it, and he'll see the best footage. He does not have time to watch hours and hours of tapes looking for when the right hearing was called and trying to find the outrageous parts, he needs us to do that for him.

Once we have compiled a good collection, he will make these into a proposal piece to market a series for Court TV on Family Court failure to protect child abuse victims. He could also market the idea to Frontline or to HBO America Undercover, or all three, if we can get him enough footage to start with. He has excellent footage that Richard got him from Shelly's trial, only some of which he included in the movie.

I suggested that we ask Crystal Streiloff to see if she can get Dominique some videos from her case. I think that anything from Wendy Titelmans or Idelle Clarks cases would be great examples. These were just my first thoughts because these are cases I know a lot about and worry a lot about all the time, but I know there are thousands going on all around the country and each of you knows at least ten others who you could forward this email to or suggest that I get in contact with. Please do so!

Anyone who has the videos of their children's MDIC Interview where the child discloses about the abuse should send Dominique a copy of that.

Also, anyone who has audiotapes of conversations with their kids on the phone where the kids are pleading to be protected from the abuse or telling about the abuse should send these in too. Shelly and Manya's conversation like this in the Breaking the Silence Movie was probably the most compelling part.

In my experience many Protective Parents have videotaped child visitation exchanges and have footage of children screaming and pleading not to be forced to go with the abuser. This kind of footage

is so powerful! I have seen the tape of Idelle's daughter in this situation and it made me come completely unglued.

Also, some children left in the custody of their abusers stop eating and become anorexic. Before and after photographs of victim children in this type of situation would be very visually compelling. Amy Neustein, Crystal Streiloff, do you have these? Anyone else? Send them in!

Make sure that each tape or photograph is clearly marked with the Protective Parent's Name and contact information, and whether or not the face of the child or mom must be blurred out by Dominique in order to protect their identity. Clearly, if the tape they send is their only copy and they need it back, they should either get a copy made first and mail that, or include a letter saying by when it must be returned to them, in which case Dominique would need them to also give him permission to make a copy for him to use. He said it does not matter if the quality of the tapes is bad, that this is just a reality of the way they are made and will not affect their impact.

I want to start compiling a master list of who are all the current Protective Parents so that we can be sure that we ask everyone to participate, both in this project and in the California Protective Parents Association's Protective Parent Survey, which so far has only had 157 respondents! You seem to be the ones with the most contact with moms, so would you be willing to help us get the moms going on this filming project?

Please forward this email to all the Protective Parents you can think of, and urge them to email me their name, email address, phone number, mailing address, and if they would be willing to participate in sending information in to Dominique or at least in filling out the two page questionnaire for the Protective Parent Survey Research, or if they would simply like to be included on the list of Protective Parents so that they can network with each other or get support from each other or get group emails about Family Court reform initiatives that Child Abuse Solutions, Inc. is working on.

Time is of the essence on this one, since there will be a swell of interest starting on Thursday evening when the movie first airs on PBS, and Dominique would like to capitalize on that media interest to start marketing the idea to the stations he thinks a series on this topic would be best suited for. Will you please help me help him get this information together? I am willing to be the one to receive all the tapes and photos and keep them organized for Dominique. Please send everything to me at:

Meera Fox
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Child Abuse Solutions, Inc.

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Call me with any questions at: 510-521-0438

and have all the Protective Parents you can think of anywhere in the country email me at abusesolutions@aol.com to get on the master list of Protective Parents!

Make sure everyone knows about the incredible new book available from Barnes and Noble entitled "From Madness to Mutiny: Why Mothers are Running from the Family Courts--and What Can Be Done About It" by Amy Neustein and Michael Leshner. If every one of us sent one copy of this book to our local Family Law Judge we would see a huge change in how these cases are handled. I sent one copy to one judge who cares, and he sent 25 copies to 25 other judges, on his own steam and at his own expense! Please try this.

Note that Dominique is working on getting permission to distribute copies of the movie. Child Abuse Solutions, Inc. is planning to purchase the first 250 copies to include in a mailing going out to all family court judges in California about the devastating effects the PAS fad has had on abused children and their Protective Parents. I have volunteered my web site, www.childabusesolutions.com, as a place where Dominique can make the Breaking The Silence: Children's Stories documentary available for sale in the future.

Please note that Garland Waller's excellent documentary "Small Justice" is available from Intermedia, and would be an excellent gift for your local family law judge as well.

Finally, encourage everyone you know to watch Dominique Lasseur and Catherine Tatge's PBS documentary this Thursday night: Breaking The Silence: Children's Stories. Please let Dominique know if you have any connections to individuals or corporations who would be willing to provide funding to get this new series on Family Court Failure project going. Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation has generously underwritten both Breaking the Silence Documentaries, but this new project will need similar support from other organizations or companies or people who care. If we all put our creative thinking heads together, I know we can help him. Please let him know any ideas or leads in this regard. I can forward his email to anyone who wants to contact him directly about any of these issues.

Thank you!

For any Protective Parents or concerned professionals receiving this email as forwarded from one of the original people I sent it out to who do not know me or of me, I have included my bio, and I encourage you to visit my website at www.childabusesolutions.com.

Meera Fox, J.D.:

[Before becoming a successful sole practitioner representing Protective Parents of sexually abused children in Family Court custody proceedings, Meera Fox worked for attorneys Richard Ducote and for Alan Rosenfeld, helping Protective Parents in Family Courts all over the country. She also represented juvenile wards of the Dependency court as an attorney for Children's Law Offices. After a three-year stint as director of new programs at the Child Abuse Forensic Institute, working with Seth Goldstein, Ms. Fox now serves as the Executive Director of Child Abuse Solutions, Inc. Ms. Fox regularly speaks at conferences, testifies before the California legislature on child protection bills, and trains court professionals on various aspects of child abuse and the law. Meera Fox is a proud member of the Family Court Reform Coalition.

Child Abuse Solutions, Inc. is a non-profit educational organization committed to training Family Court and other related professionals to be responsive to the needs of abused children. It offers workshops, training, consultation, advice, referrals and resources to judges, evaluators, mediators, and attorneys. Its education focuses on best practices in child custody evaluation, litigation and adjudication involving allegations of child abuse, sexual abuse, and domestic violence.]



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