



FOUR STEPS

to take if

**CHILD
PROTECTIVE
SERVICES**

shows up at

YOUR FRONT DOOR

HERITAGE DEFENSE



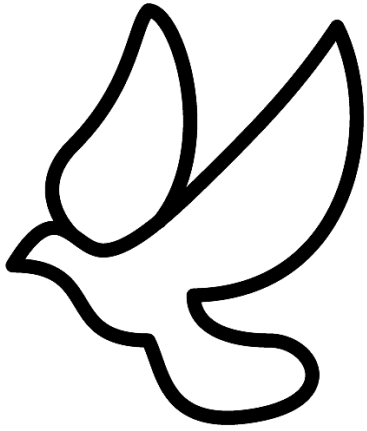
If a social worker showed up at your door, what would you do?

TODAY, more than ever, even good parents are being falsely reported to social services by overzealous doctors, disgruntled neighbors, estranged family members, and many others.

These social services investigations typically begin at your front door, where the social worker will normally show up unannounced. This gives you little time to think or regain your composure.

It is under the pressure of this initial encounter with a social worker that critical mistakes are most likely to occur.

Successfully handling your very first encounter with social services is vital to keeping your family safe and protecting your children from unnecessary trauma.

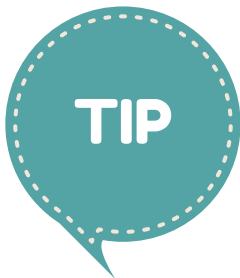


Step 1

Stay Calm and Be Polite.

Of course, this is easier said than done! Knowing that someone has falsely reported you to CPS will naturally make you feel angry, afraid, confused, or all of the above.

Nevertheless, it is critical that you maintain your composure. Showing hostility or fear may be interpreted as evidence of guilt and result in a social worker becoming combative or aggressive with you.



If the social worker becomes threatening in spite of your politeness, it may be wise to video the remainder of the interaction after advising the social worker of your intention to do so.



Step 2

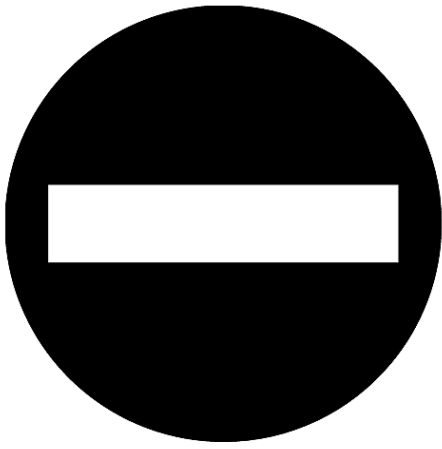
Do Not Volunteer Any Information.

Do not answer any questions or share any information about your home or family. The social worker is there to get you to talk and open up.

Unfortunately, the number of parents who thought they had nothing to hide, shared information, and later regretted it, is too many to count. The right to remain silent is important and protects the innocent.

Remember, just because you have a clean conscience about the decisions you make for your family does not mean that a social worker will agree with them. **What you say will probably be used against you.** While you may think you have nothing to hide, you have everything to lose.

You can always say something later once you have had an opportunity to think, talk with your family, and speak to an attorney. **Now is not the time to try to defend yourself.**



Step 3

Do not let them in your house or allow them to talk with your children.

You are **not required** to allow a social worker to enter your home or talk with your children unless they have a court order/warrant (which is rare) or there are "exigent circumstances" (i.e. an emergency).

Many Christian families have unwisely invited social workers into their homes out of a misplaced sense of hospitality. However, the social worker is not there to borrow a cup of sugar. They are there to pry into the most private and intimate details of your life with the presumed power to take your children away if they do not like what they find.

Once a social worker is in your home, the door is opened (literally) for unlimited interpretations and even misinterpretations about what they observe.



If they claim they do not need a warrant, ask them to specify why not. If they are making these kinds of threats, you should definitely get your video camera rolling after advising the social worker of your intention to do so.

If they do have a warrant (which, again, is rare), ask for a copy and read it. The warrant must specifically state the places to be searched and the things to be seized.

Some CPS workers also use the threat of calling law enforcement to get families to allow them in the home, but do not be intimidated by this. Actually, the presence of law enforcement often makes these situations go more smoothly because the officers have better training and understanding of your constitutional rights.

As we said before, after talking with your family and speaking with an attorney, you can always decide later to allow a social worker to have limited access to the house or children, but on **your** terms. You are in a much better place to make that decision after the social worker leaves and you have had time to think more clearly and get good advice.



Step 4

Call Your Attorney.

Politely inform the social worker that you need to get your attorney on the phone. The social worker may start peppering you with questions to get you talking while you are still without legal counsel. **Do not let them slow you down in exercising your right to an attorney.**



Say something like, "Please excuse me one moment while I get my attorney on the phone." Then, step inside, close the door, and call your attorney.

Once the attorney is on the phone, you can briefly discuss the situation together. Then step back outside, hand the phone to the social worker, and let your attorney speak on your behalf.

If you and your attorney decide to refuse entry to the social worker, it is much better for your attorney to "be the bad guy" and refuse on your behalf. This helps mitigate the stigma of it looking like you have something to hide.

FINDING AN ATTORNEY

What if I don't have an attorney?

If you are a Christian and you educate your children at home (or your children are not yet "school-age"), join Heritage Defense.

Membership dues are **less than than the average cost of one hour with an attorney** and include full legal representation by experienced, Christian attorneys who are available 24/7 and trained to handle these kinds of situations.

What if I am not a member?

If you are not eligible to join Heritage Defense, we encourage you to identify an attorney in your area that you can hire and have on retainer.

CONCLUSION

We pray that you never need to use this information, but we have handled too many cases for good families to tell you that it cannot also happen to you. Almost everyone we represent tells us that they joined Heritage Defense as a ministry to others. **They never thought they would need us themselves.**

While it is chilling to think of your family as the object of a CPS investigation, **wisely preparing for such an unpleasant possibility may spell the difference between a manageable situation and utter catastrophe.**

We highly recommend having an experienced attorney be your advocate to keep these situations from getting out of control.

If you are a Christian and educate your children at home (or your children are not yet "school-age"), please join Heritage Defense and let us stand beside you to protect your children, preserve your freedoms, and defend your heritage.

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