



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on March 28, 2019

Police Raid Home, Take Children From Parents Who Failed to Obey Doctor's Orders

Parents in Chandler, Arizona, have lost custody of their children, at least temporarily, for failing to adhere to doctor's orders, in a story that is sure to terrify parents and all those who support parental rights.



The *Arizona Republic* [reports](#) that Sarah Beck, a pregnant mother in Chandler, Arizona, and her partner, Brooks Bryce, had taken their two-year-old toddler, Heber, to the doctor on February 25 for a fever of 105 degrees and were instructed by the doctor to bring the baby to the hospital because Heber was unvaccinated and the doctor feared the child had meningitis. The doctor reportedly called the hospital to alert them to the child's arrival, but by the time Beck had left the doctor's office, she states that the child was markedly improved and that his temperature had dropped dramatically.

"He's acting normal. He's dancing with his sisters in his car seat. And I take his temperature and it's 102," said Beck.

The mother made the decision that a trip to the emergency room was unnecessary. In fact, unless an actual emergency presents itself, trips to the emergency room for children could often expose them to illnesses they otherwise may not have contracted.

The parents also noted that an emergency room visit would have cost them \$2,500, money that they did not see fit to spend for a child that appeared to be healthy and recovering.

By the time Heber went to bed that evening, his temperature was down to 100 degrees.

Unfortunately for this mother, the doctor decided to take matters into her own hands. She contacted the Department of Child Safety (DCS), which then enlisted the help of the local police, asking them to "check the welfare of a two-year-old infant," according to police records. The police arrived at the family's home at 10:30 p.m. but received no answer from anyone inside. The parents later explained that they did not hear the officers because they were sleeping in the back bedrooms with their sick children. A passing neighbor noticed the police and spoke with them and when she learned of the situation, informed them that the neighbor was "a good mother." The police asked the neighbor to contact the mother and alert her to the fact that there were police officers outside.

Shortly after, a DCS caseworker arrived on the scene and updated the police on the situation, explaining about the fever and the doctor's instructions. When the police contacted the family doctor, the doctor reiterated her recommendation that the mother take the child to the hospital.

By 11:30 p.m., the caseworker told officers that the agency planned to obtain a "temporary custody order" from a judge to remove the child for emergency medical aid. Once that order came through, the situation quickly escalated into frightening territory.

"Based upon the court order, the intent of DCS to serve the order, and exigency to ensure the health and welfare of the child, the decision was made to force entry to the home if the parents refused to respond to verbal requests," according to police records. Police knocked, saying they had a court order



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and would force entry if needed, according to police records.

Officers reportedly kicked down the family's door bearing shields and weapons and forcibly removed the children from the home. Both parents were placed in handcuffs and taken outside. In addition to Heber, two other children, aged four and six, were found to have had symptoms similar to Heber, including fever and vomiting. Of course, it is not atypical for illness to spread through a home quickly. Still, all three children were removed from the home and placed into separate foster homes.

Officers reported that the home was "messy" with clothing piles and concrete floors. Then again, one would be hard-pressed to find a home with three young children that wasn't "messy." Health Impact News reports that the parents said the clothing piles were simply laundry on the couches.

Police also claimed that there was an unsecured shotgun found on the floor of the parents' bedroom, but the father has stated that the weapon does not work.

When the public caught wind of the incident, the Arizona DCS Oversight Group, a local advocacy group for parental rights, and State Representative Kelly Townsend (R-Mesa) spoke out in favor of the parents.

Townsend, who helped to draft legislation that requires DCS to obtain a warrant before removing children from their homes, said that DCS and the police distorted the purpose of that legislation, which was to minimize the number of children being removed by DCS and to restore due process and protections against illegal search and seizure.

"It was not the intent [of the law] that the level of force after obtaining a warrant was to bring in a SWAT team," Townsend said. "The imagery is horrifying. What has our country become that we can tear down the doorway of a family who has a child with a high fever that disagrees with their doctor?"

But when the parents appeared at a court hearing on March 7, Judge Jennifer Green sided with DCS, ruling that the removal of the children was lawful. She added that "the state had them on a family-reunification plan and wants them to regain custody of their children." As noted by the *Arizona Republic*, it could take months for the parents to regain custody, and that is assuming that they do.

Perhaps recognizing that this was a public-relations nightmare, DCS asked the judge to close the hearing to the public, but Judge Green refused. The DCS attorney complained that the family had been in communication with media outlets and that the agency had hoped to avoid media coverage.

The question, of course, is why? What are they trying to hide?

Meanwhile, immediately following the children's removal from the home, the children's grandparents sought temporary custody of them so they could be together and out of the foster-care system. DCS made that process a difficult and lengthy one.

Again, the question is, why?

The *Arizona Republic* reports that the state's attorney argued that the parents should not be reunited with their children yet because they were hostile to DCS workers and were not cooperating. The state's attorney added that the parents attended a DCS visit with members of Arizona's DCS Oversight Group who were combative toward DCS officials, and that the grandfather had attempted to videotape a meeting with the DCS, which is not allowed.

Not one of those reasons has anything to do with whether the parents are unfit to care for their children. Instead, it appears that the state does not like to be opposed and wants to punish the parents



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for it.

The parents also believe DCS is making it harder for them to get their children back because they dared to communicate with the media. The parents are now scared to participate in interviews with the media for fear that it will hurt their efforts to regain custody of their children.

Is this truly a free society?

A court-appointed *guardian ad litem* also observed that it is concerning that the children were placed in separate foster-care homes, something that is not typical.

But perhaps the most upsetting revelation is that these parents may have been targeted simply because their children are unvaccinated.

"It was brought to my attention that these parents may have been targeted by the medical community because they hadn't vaccinated their children," Representative Townsend said.

Townsend fears that doctors will be using parental opposition to vaccines as a reason to refer parents to DCS.

"I think if DCS decides to use this as a factor they would be violating a parent's right to have a personal exemption, a religious exemption and perhaps a medical exemption," she said.

The doctor claimed that because the toddler was unvaccinated, she was concerned that the child has meningitis. How does this make any sense? According to the [CDC's vaccination schedule](#), the recommended age for vaccination against meningitis is 11-12 years. A two-year-old generally would not have received that vaccine even if he had pro-vax parents, unless he was in a special situation, such as having an immune deficiency or was traveling to a country where meningitis is prevalent.

As it turns out, Heber did not have meningitis, but had RSV, a common respiratory virus among young children that generally requires rest, fluids, and nasal aspirations at home.

During the hearing, Judge Green also questioned why it was taking so long to place the three children with their grandparents. DCS claimed that they needed to conduct a home-safety check, which could take up to 30 days. The judge asked that they expedite the process. Fortunately, on March 15, the children were placed with their grandparents.

DCS is now insisting that the parents undergo psychological evaluations, despite having no history of mental-health issues. The wait for an evaluation is months, the *Republic* reports. Health Impact News reports that DCS has also canceled meetings with the parents at the last minute, which has further extended the process. Attorneys for the parents also state that DCS caseworkers have been unable to list the necessary steps required for the parents to regain custody of their children.

Judge Green also made certain to remind the grandparents and parents that they were no longer in control of the children's medical and health decisions, in case they had forgotten they were at the behest of the state.

Parental advocates are concerned that the Chandler case is setting a dangerous precedent.

Lori Ford, member of the Arizona DCS Oversight Group, warns, "If they can do this to one family they can do it to anyone."

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