



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 6, 2011

## Obese Children Removed from Home in Scotland

Officials in Scotland have decided it is fit and proper to take obese children away from their parents. In particular, parents of four obese children had received warnings from officials regarding the weight of their children. As those warnings were not heeded, those officials proceeded to remove the children from their parent's home.



According to the [Daily Mail](#), the three daughters are aged 11, seven, and one, and the only boy is five, and belong to obese parents. The family lived in government housing for two years, called a "Big Brother" house, where they were the subject of government scrutiny. A social worker was present during all meals to monitor the family, and imposed a strict curfew as well as set of rules regarding their lifestyle.

Regarding the living situation, the mother complained, "It feels like even prisoners have more human rights than we do." The father explained, "To have a social worker stand and watch you eat is intolerable."

Recently, the couple was given a three-month deadline to bring down the weight of their children, but when they failed at that task, the officials interjected.

*The Blaze* reports, "Last week, officials in Dundee told the family their four youngest children could be taken into foster care or adopted. A government spokesman said they would act in the children's best interests."

The parents also have three older children, two sons aged 16 and 13 and a 15-year old daughter. The state is permitting those children to stay with their parents as they are reportedly too old to be adopted. Though the parents are not being charged with a crime, and have not been accused of child abuse related to deliberate abuse or cruelty, they will be removed from the parent's care.

The mother told the *Daily Mail*, "We might not be the perfect parents, but we love our children with all our hearts. To face a future where we will never see them again is unbearable."

The father adds, "We have tried very hard to do everything that was asked of us. My wife has cooked healthy foods like homemade spaghetti Bolognese and mince and potatoes but nothing we've done has ever been enough."

Naturally, the decision provoked a harsh public response. Readers of the *Daily Mail* submitted an abundance of letters bemoaning the decision.

One letter indicated, "And yet children who have sex at a young age, young girls getting pregnant and living off benefits, children who bully others, use drugs, steal, continue to 'happily' live with their



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parents." Another remarked, "Talk about double standards." One woman protested, "Social services are opening a can of worms. If the obesity epidemic in children is as bad as they say, then they should be taking half the kids of parents across the country." A male writer called the move an indication of "fascism," while another compared social workers to "monsters" and simplified the decision as "child stealing by the state."

Residents in Britain are circulating an online petition to show their support for the family.

The parents plan to fight the government in their attempts to move the children. "We will have to fight to the end to get our beloved children back," they said.

*The Telegraph* [writes](#), "Critics said the case, which is without precedent in Britain, was a serious breach of the family's human rights and exposed the worrying extent to which the State can interfere in family life."

Sadly this type of familial separation has taken place in the United States as well. The Associated Press reports that children have been taken from their parents when children were unable to lose weight.

According to Dr. [David Ludwig](#), an obesity specialist at Harvard-affiliated Children's Hospital in Boston, proposed in a July 13 opinion piece that appeared in the American Medical Association that severely obese children be taken from their parents and placed in foster homes to get the proper care they need. Dr. Ludwig is seemingly unaware of the problems that plague the foster care system in the United States. A 2006 *Time* magazine cover story summarized the plight of the American foster care system in this way: "Often these children are held hostage to abuse and neglect, to bureaucratic foul-ups and carelessness, condemned to futures in which dreams cannot come true."

Many physicians take issue with the use of such Big Brother tactics to protect obese children. Dr. Manny Alvarez, managing editor of health news at the Fox News website, [contests](#) Dr. Ludwig's assertions, declaring that "To promote that the best thing for an obese child is to remove that child from a family is premature and could potentially be more damaging in the long run."

Meanwhile, the council in Scotland, which made the decision to remove the children from the parents, contends, "The council always acts in the best interests of children, with their welfare and safety in mind."

*Photo: Actor Norman Myers Chaney, who appeared in the [Our Gang](#) comedies as "Chubby" from 1929 to 1931.*



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