



Janet's story

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The system that is supposed to believe children has silenced them. The system that is supposed to support protective mothers — like me — has attacked me.

Despite my daughter being sexually abused, I have been subjected to a Child Safety investigation.

The trauma that comes from that is unimaginable. The pain of being accused by the very agency that is meant to protect — of being treated as a threat for simply reporting my child's abuse — is beyond comprehension. That anyone could think I would ever wish this pain on a child is devastating.

The system that was supposed to help... failed me and my children.

My brave daughter is trying to navigate the long, painful road of recovery from sexual abuse. Disclosures come in waves. They show up as emotional meltdowns. Bed wetting. Trouble transitioning. Fear. Confusion. Rage. So many emotions, all in a tiny, hurting body.

And since I was investigated, every time she discloses something, I'm terrified. Terrified that she will say something new. Terrified that I'll have to report it. Terrified that the system will twist it — and blame me again.

“Malicious intent.” “Coaching.” “Mental dysfunction.” “Emotional harm.”

Child Safety Commission of Inquiry



These are the words that echo in my head — words from reports, from forms, from strangers — and they hang like a dark cloud over me. Only it isn't just a fear. It's real.

Will my daughter be dragged from her classroom again? Will she be taken into a room of strangers and questioned about her mother — her hero, her safe person? Will my children be taken from me?

I lie awake at night after a disclosure, numb with fear. My body won't move. I force myself to write everything down — every word my daughter said, every detail, every response I gave, every context I can remember. I send it straight to her counsellor. Then I wait, dreading the answer: Does this need to be reported? Is this new information? Please don't let it be new.

This is what systemic abuse looks like. It makes protective mothers terrified to report. Terrified to speak. Terrified to breathe.

And worst of all — it leaves us wondering: Who can we trust?

But even in the face of this fear, I will never stop. I will continue to advocate. I will continue to protect. And I will speak up — for my children and for all children that have been silenced by the system

To the other protective mothers out there: Even when the system tries to break you — **SPEAK UP.** Your children need you. And you are not alone.