# NO ROOM FOR CHILD ADVOCATES

Why I was Kicked off of DC's Child Fatality Review Committee

# MY CHILD ADVOCACY WORK

- Child Welfare Monitor
- Special projects (AEI child fatality database)
- Monitoring child welfare in DC



# WHAT IS CHILD DEATH/FATALITY REVIEW?

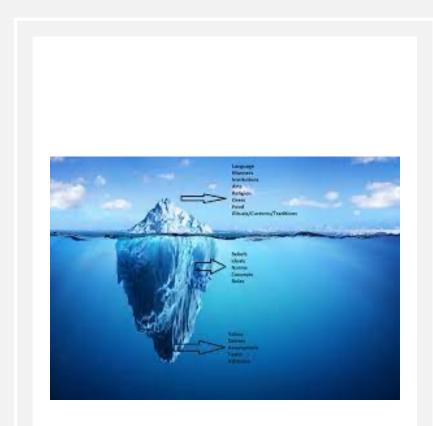
- Child Death Review (CDR) is a multidisciplinary, prevention-focused process where teams meet to discuss case information to better understand how and why children die. (From National Center for Child Fatality Review, ncfrp.org)
- Started in '70s and '80's to review suspicious child deaths and determine whether they were due to abuse or neglect to improve justice system response
- All 50 states now have CDR programs., varying by core functions, type of deaths reviewed, state or local level of review, agency responsible, funding and more.

### WHAT IS CHILD DEATH REVIEW

- Many states and DC have broadened focus from maltreatment deaths only to focus on injuries, suicides, and natural causes: DC reviews all child deaths and certain deaths of young adults aged 18-21.
- Study of cases reviewed in 2014 found that few (0 to a little more than a half) resulted in recommended systems change or prevention activities, and very few of those recommendations resulted in any action.

# WHY I JOINED CFRC

- Concerns that kids being left in dangerous homes since drop in child removals starting 2012
- Child fatalities are the tip of the iceberg: the conditions that lead to child deaths also cause harm to many more children who do not die.
- Participation on CFR enabled me to see case details that are kept secret from the public.



### WHAT I LEARNED

- Most families had prior child welfare involvement regardless of cause of death: Not just CAN but also unsafe sleep, accidents, gun violence. Jibes with research on CPS reports and all-cause mortality.
- Prevalence of chronic multitype maltreatment: many families had multiple calls on issues including school truancy, lack of supervision, physical abuse, sexual abuse.
- Overrepresentation of large families among families with a child fatality.



### HOW I TRANSGRESSED

- "Picking on the Child and Family Services Agency"
- Going against the ideological climate
  - Empowering the "racist family policing system"
  - "Judging" parents
  - Considering parental substance abuse (including marijuana) dangerous to children
  - Mentioning birth control
  - Prioritizing data sharing despite privacy concerns

# THE MORAL OF THE STORY

Beware the influence of . ideology on perception of reality – in self and others. Those who are blinded by ideology can hurt those they are trying to help.



Vince Pryor @VincentPryor · Jun 10 There needs to be accountability for this. This paper is violently racist and should not be tolerated in academia. @SageJournals @BrownSchool @mdsocialwork @UNC SSW @PSUSocCrim

况 Alan Dettlaff @AlanDettlaff · Jun 10

This is what happens when White Rage & White Fragility take over any sense of reason. This group will not stop until they prove that anti-Black racism does not exist in CPS. And they simply don't care about the harm they cause along the way. @SageJournals is complicit as well.

**Research Articles** 

Poverty or Racism? A Re-Analysis of Briggs et al. 2022

Brett Drake<sup>1</sup>, Dylan Jones<sup>1</sup>, Jun-Hong Chen<sup>1</sup>, Sarah Font<sup>2</sup>, Emily Putnam-Hornstein<sup>3</sup>, Richard P. Barth<sup>4</sup>, and Melissa Jonson-Reid<sup>1</sup>

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# REFERENCES

- Why I was kicked off CFRC: <u>http://childwelfaremonitor.org/2023/04/18/no-room-for-child-advocates-why-i-was-kicked-off-dcs-child-fatality-review-committee/</u>
- CPS reports and all-cause mortality: <u>http://childwelfaremonitor.org/2021/09/07/report-of-maltreatment-a-major-risk-factor-for-child-mortality/</u>
- Chronic multitype maltreatment: <u>http://childwelfaremonitor.org/2023/01/03/chronic-maltreatment-a-blind-spot-for-child-welfare/</u>
- Attacks on research: <u>https://www.city-journal.org/article/child-welfares-ideological-enforcer</u>