

PRESS RELEASE: For Release April 22, 2026

FEDERAL AGENCY ACCEPTS NHELD REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION OF CT'S DCF

In February of this year, National Home Education Legal Defense, LLC, (NHELD), filed a formal Complaint with the **United States Department of Justice** requesting that agency to conduct an independent investigation of Connecticut's Department of Children and Families, following the recent rash of abuse, neglect, captivity, and deaths of children in the State, sparked by cases in Waterbury and New Britain..

Those cases were the impetus for the Governor and many in the legislature to call for regulation of homeschooling, even though those children were enrolled in the public school system and were never homeschooled at the time of their captivity, starvation, or death. But, to some, it was a good excuse to deflect attention away from DCF and to achieve their long sought after desire to regulate homeschoolers. That may seem like a harsh assessment, but the facts bear out the allegation.

The families involved in the Waterbury and New Britain cases had been reported to DCF for suspected abuse and neglect of the children, **repeatedly**, DCF became involved, but their services proved extremely ineffective, for reasons as of yet still unknown, in that the Waterbury child was held captive for the next 20 years following the last report to DCF until he set his house on fire to escape, while the New Britain little girl was killed after having had DCF in her life from the day she was born. In fact, the little girl was taken from her mother by DCF at birth because the mother already was in jail at the time after neglect convictions. Years later, however, the mother received custody of the little girl, nonetheless, and the little girl's body later was found stuffed in a storage bin.

The fact that DCF was well aware of suspected abuse and neglect in these cases, was involved in the lives of the suspect families repeatedly, but the children were left in the custody of the families where severe harm and death occurred, seems to have been a pattern regarding DCF for years, going back at least to the starvation and death of another child in Hartford in 2018.

Since 2018, NHELD has been calling, repeatedly, for any appropriate state official or agency to conduct an independent, objective investigation of DCF, to find out exactly why so many children involved with DCF have been abused, neglected, and killed on DCF's watch, when DCF is the very agency charged with protecting children and preventing such harm to them. NHELD has been extremely disappointed by the total lack of response to our cries for an independent investigation by State officials for years. Each call has been met with complete silence. Until now.

No, the State officials still have not heeded our call. They remain silent. Each and every time that such horrific stories are revealed in the media, instead of demanding a completely impartial thorough investigation to find out why DCF failed these children, State officials have chosen to deflect from scrutiny of DCF and blame homeschoolers who had absolutely nothing to do with the harm that came to these children. Homeschooling became the scapegoat for DCF, wrongfully so.

Hopefully, that is about to change. That's because, now, the federal government is involved.

We are announcing today that we recently received notification from the **U.S. Department of Justice** not only reviewed our Complaint, officially listed as **Docket #715248**, but the DOJ has now **forwarded that Complaint for further review by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** for additional consideration.

Thankfully, the federal government is taking note of what is happening in Connecticut and, very possibly, our request for a full, complete, and independent investigation of why so many children are harmed or killed on DCF's watch finally will become a reality.

These children deserve justice, and no other child in the State deserves to be abused or die because DCF didn't do what it was supposed to do.

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