

Sarah Navratil
15 years old

June 15, 2004

To whom it may concern,

About one week ago, I was walking to school and I saw Mark Navratil looking for me. I turned and ran and hid behind a car. I guess he saw me because he caught up to me where I was hiding and he asked me why was I shaking. I said I don't know.

He said I should "say the word" and he would be out of my life. He said he "can't wait for me forever".

He said I should talk to Bonnie Miller Bonnie Miller. I said I didn't want to. I don't want to ever talk to her again because she made up lies. He said just talk to her and then he gave me 20\$. He said "my heart and door is open for you always." [Sure]

He stayed and stared at me for about 3 minutes. I didn't move or say anything because I was SCARED that he might take me away. Finally he left.

I went to school. I didn't think about what happened in the morning because he means nothing to me and has hurt me too much to believe him. I hope what he says he means cuz I want him out of my life.

If I did "say the word" and he didn't keep what he said he would probably be back right back away - try to get me and lie that he never said that. And if he did keep it -what he said - he would be gone. !!!!

Since I heard about what happened the last time in court I do not want to be with my dad at all ever now because I can't trust him and he lies and he will always be the same to me. The abusive careless father that I KNOW.

Since the last court hearing he has:

Tried to report me as a missing child.

Told a few people that he wants me to go to juvi.

The principal told me that he want on a RAGE at school in front of the principal ordering our policeman to go get me. The principal has told me these things so far.

Before that court I didn't even know who Bonnie Miller was and he made me talk to her and talk to her and she said she was trying to help and I feel pissed because now I feel THIS is starting all over again and this has already hurt me so much.

After the court when I called and told him I wasn't coming back he said that if you don't it will be bad and when you do things will not be good.

When the principal told me what happened when Mark Navratil TOLD the police man to go get me they started to yell and scream at each other and then Mark left so I didn't see him. He was also threatening the police that he wants me to go to juvi or go to a foster home or group home. Why?

Before all this the principal came up to my class and asked me if I wanted to talk to him and I said NO! She said He's down at the office. I still said No!

I don't understand why it's ok to live with my Mom for 6 or 8 months while he goes away on vacations and doesn't hardly try to see me and I am happy then I do go visit him and I can't get out. I can't get away from him. He wouldn't let me see my Mom and told me she doesn't care for me and only let me call her once. So I had to run back to her when he left the house and then I find out he does this in court and I'm supposed to be with him 4 ever? He tells me I can't see my Mom or talk to her? He wants me to talk to Bonnie Miller instead who just lies like he does.

I think that's messed up. I don't think that's right at all. I think he is trying to put me in a bad place and put my Mom in jail or make her leave. I have not gone to his house since court. I don't call him except when I WAS checking in and now I don't even have my phone he bought.

I know he has bothered the people at my school and tried to cause trouble there. They have told me that they will protect me from him when I am at school and they have. I think he is bothering my friends or their parents, maybe threatening them and telling big lies to everyone about me and probably about my Mom too.

I have tried to get help many times from many people in many places.

I have made documents in my own words that have gone into the courts.

I have warned the principal and my counselors and teachers at school making them aware of what is happening to me. I went to the cop at school and asked him to protect me from Mark. Then he goes into a rage at the same cop!

I have given copies of those documents to my school too.

I made another movie about 3 months ago by myself telling how I feel.

I have called news reporters and talked with all of them and told them my story. One reporter wrote the whole thing and she said it **WOULD** be in the paper but for some reason it hasn't been in the paper.

I have spoken at a meeting with some government supervisor people in San Mateo.

I wrote a letter to Bonnie Miller telling her You're fired!

I have spoken at a meeting in Sacramento or near Sacramento with some other kids in front of a group that helps children when the court is hurting the children. I spoke my own words about how I feel and how this has hurt me. I spoke for 2 minutes to them and to some adults afterward. My story, the one I read to them there about 2 months ago is on the internet now along with the other kids speeches. Some of the information from that group is attached. I got it from the internet. It says so much of how I feel and what has happened to me. I guess it has also been done to other kids – the same kinds of things and they are hurting like I am hurting.

I went to do everything I could to get help and to be safe. I just want to go home.

I have stayed with different friends but that is hard to do and to go to school and move around and miss my Mom and be scared Marks going to jump out at me everywhere and do what he said – like it wouldn't be good. He can be very scary.

I don't want to be with my dad or be around him. I am saying “the word”. I don't want to be around him for the rest of my life because of what he's done lately. He has ruined my life for years. He has taken me away from my Mom and has never cared about what that does to me. He has tried to make trouble all over town with his lies and his threats and with his fake promises. He makes me sick. I am saying “**THE WORD**”.

Sarah Navratil

I wrote this letter!

Fighting the "Silent American Holocaust" of Court Abused Children

We are a growing group of young people, whose childhood was shattered by biased and inhumane court rulings, which forced us to live with our abusive parent, while restricting or sometimes completely eliminating contact with our loving and protective parent.

Some of us, whose mothers tried to protect us from abuse, did not see our mothers for years, or were only allowed to see our mothers under oppressive supervised visitation orders. We were not allowed to hug our mothers, or talk about how we felt. Some of us were separated from siblings, grandparents and extended family. We lost our home, pets, toys, friends,... our childhood. We lived in fear, depression, hopelessness and helplessness for years. Some of us ran away from our abusers. Some could not handle the trauma and committed suicide.

We who survived, got older, stronger, and are boldly proclaiming: "ENOUGH!"

We have been mentally, physically, sexually, verbally, emotionally, and psychologically abused by court order.

We have been misrepresented by court-appointed attorneys; facts were falsified or twisted by court-appointed evaluators; we were forced through mind-games (brain-washed) by court-appointed counselors to be silent about the abuse. Neither our voices, nor the voices of our protective parents, were heard.

Judges and court appointees turned on our protective mothers with a vengeance. They refused to allow our mothers to present evidence or witness testimony to prove that our fathers had abused us, and refused to listen to anything we, the victims, had to say about being abused. Most of our mothers were completely stripped of custody, leaving us motherless, and with no protection from our abusive fathers. All of our mothers were treated like villains, and all of us kids suffered because of the way the courts treated our mothers. In the courts' frenzy to punish our mothers for trying to protect us, the courts failed to realize, or didn't care, that they were punishing us too.

Taking children away from safe parents and placing them in the custody of abusive parents has been called "America's most darkest, shameful secret" in an award-winning article by Kristen Lombardi, a Boston Phoenix reporter

Our first speaking engagement was at the Tenth Annual Northern California Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Conference in April 2004. We got a standing ovation and everyone said our talks made a big impact on them.

Some of us kids are not able to speak out yet, because we are still stuck with our abusers and we are too afraid of how they, and the courts, will retaliate against us and our protective parents if we speak out. But we are getting support online from others in the Courageous Kids Network who managed to escape. Knowing there are other kids like us out there, who we can talk to and who understand what we are going through, helps those of us who are still trapped not to feel so alone.

For those of us who can speak out, we know that if we put our voices together, we can make a difference and change the family court system that is wrecking so many kids' lives.