**Parents Access to DCS Reports**

**Thank you for your wonderful responses and research. Through contacting our local DCS director, he confirmed that parents can request a 311, which is a copy of the report that DCS gets from the hotline. In some cases, the accused parents that may want to appeal the case are automatically given a copy of this report. The reporter is still kept confidential (blacked out), but through this report many are able to figure out the reporter. Below are more responses, I didn't include all as I received so many. Thank you for all the support. This topic is one to advocate if we wish to see it changed, as it is a concern to many. We have a sometimes tough, but very rewarding job to be a position to help these kids!**

**💠** I was concerned when I saw your post so I called DCS and spoke to Cari Martinez.  I asked her about the protocol and if anything had changed about the anonymity when we report.  During my conversation with her she did say that more parents are asking for a report of the findings when they investigate and determine a case but this is most likely due to a court custody battle going on and parents want the report for their personal use in court.  She states that parents can request a copy of the report, but DCS redacts names, etc from the report prior to giving it to parents.  She told me that in Steuben County the judge is pretty firm on maintaining anonymity for those making reports even IF a parent chose to subpoena the records via court hearing.

Recently I have also had a parent tell me they were told by DCS worker that the school made the report, which was concerning to me!  So I did call our local office today and let them know that I was concerned about other school counselors talking about lack of anonymity with reporting on the statewide school counselor listserv.  I think it is worthwhile to mention to them our concerns about this very important protocol to maintain, perhaps they will discuss it at their staff meetings and review the policy because of our advocacy?

💠 It's part of DCS policy to allow parents and perpetrators to request a copy of the completed report (311) once the assessment has been completed. Not all request a copy but many do. However, these reports should have revealing information about the report source redacted. Sometimes even if reports are made anonymously, people can have phone records subpoenaed to reveal the report source. But at the end of the day, a lot of people know when it is the school that makes a report because of the nature of the language in the report and the type of information they have access to. Greater lengths should be taken to protect the anonymity of the report source especially if they don't want people deterred from calling in reports. However, I'm personally so used to making reports that I could care less if they know it's me

💠 That happened to me as well. More than once. So, it does seem to be a trend. Makes it really difficult.

💠 I have had the same result. I have been confronted by parents who know through the report that I made the report.  It doesn't have my name but it had school counselor and since I am the only one it doesn't take much to figure it out

💠 It seems to me that this could be a real safety issue for the person making the call. This is very concerning.

**💠** I think we need to keep perspective in all of this. As a school employee we are legally obligated to make a report. End of story, it's what we tells parents and what we stand by, we are not there to make judgements and say it happened or not, if we have a suspicion we make the report.

We have that protection for us, we have to report. We can still build a relationship with that family and help them figure out how to work through the process regardless if we agree or disagree.

I will say I do not like that they can figure it out, but as mentioned it happens anyway, so speak to them about the concern and help them. Help them process it, and help them understand how the whole thing works and the services that can be provided to them with DCS involvement. It does not have to be fear of removal of the children, it can be a way to help them.

As far as telling the parents a report was made, that should not happen, let the course play out with the report, its best to not get involved and let the investigation take place if needed.

And remember it's our job to help our students :-) that means reporting if needed and help them understand the process too!! We do goo