

Child endangerment essay



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Is it necessary to remove a child from their home? Unit 5: Reading Week - Midterm Essay Louissy Burns-Taylor CJ102-07: Criminology I Professor Elycia Daniel November 16, 2010 Is it necessary to remove a child from their home? A recent policy was implemented by Anytown's Department of Job and Family Services regarding the issue of child endangerment. Any household that has one or more documented offense of domestic violence, child abuse, or drug or alcohol related offenses committed by the mother, father, guardian, and/or caregiver, will result in the removal of any child or children from the home. The child will be placed in the care of the state, or foster care services, until documentation can prove that the offender has undergone any or all of the following, and has thus been "offense free" for a period of no less than six months: alcohol and/or drug treatment, counseling, family therapy sessions, mental health treatment, anger management, life skills classes, and/or parenting classes.

So to answer the question, is it necessary to remove a child from their home. I would have to say yes, in accordance to the above scenario. In this paper I will support my reason by, identifying potential ethical / moral issues that could arise from implementing this new policy. Also taking into consideration the impact whether it be positive and/or negative, on those involved in the above situation, specifically as it pertains to the overall welfare and well-being of the child. Finally, did the Department of Job and Family Services misinterpret or misapply the social learning theory when planning and implementing the policy? In answering this I will be sure to demonstrate how the social learning theory either does or does not apply to this scenario.

For starters, I will address the potential ethical / moral issues that could arise from implementing this new policy. Many can agree as to why this policy should not be implemented. The child can and will endure some psychological setbacks if abruptly removed from the only home and family they ever knew. What validates my statement are not only studies on foster care but also my own personal instincts in caring for my child in whom I feel that no one will ever provide and care for my own as I do. There needs to be a key and consistent figure in the lives of these parents, and/or guardians to ensure that they get the support system they need and in turn they can effectively provide a nurturing environment so that the child needs are met, ensue becoming productive citizen of the future.

If this action doesn't occur or is not implemented, the propensity for these children who are victims of abuse or have witnessed domestic violence and/or drug and alcohol abuse within the home, will inevitably become categorized statically as a deviant in which he is prone to develop a lack of concentration followed by poor grades in school, joining gangs, and even bullying. As stated in the National Institute of Justice, An Update on The "Cycle of Violence" research brief " Being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59 percent, as an adult by 28 percent, and for a violent crime by 30 percent" (Windom & Maxfield, 2001). One might even say that this policy is a means to discriminate only targeting inner city families also known as the " Ghetto" which is said to have a higher rate of children being exposed to violence within the home. In hopes for a better future and only seeing the positive that can come from this policy I hope such accusation hold no truth and that this policy is not to

be imposed on certain groups of certain backgrounds but that everyone as a whole is subject to this treatment.

Last, one might say that this policy violates their privacy, being that whatever happens in their home is their business alone and no one else's. In some instances this holds truth but, what one fails to realize is that once the authorities are called to the home, then it becomes the state's business. With that being said, if the state knows that a child was present during the incident and believes that the child may be endangered being that the parent/s failed to protect, provide and serve as a positive role model for that child, the state by all means have the right to intervene and access the situation. Furthermore, the impact falls mainly on the child himself; whether it be positive and/or negative, on those involved in the above situation. A family violence report which recently came out stated that " Family violence, including child physical and sexual abuse, child neglect and maltreatment, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse, takes place in homes across the country every day.

Exposure to such violence has a devastating impact on both children and adults in those households and communities, whether they are direct victims of abuse or witnesses to it. Children exposed to such violence at an early age are likely to become either perpetrators of abuse or victims of violence in adulthood" (Family Violence, 2010). Prior to this report the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), a detailed report which is comprised of gathered data about crimes using an ongoing, nationally representative sample of households in the United States, found that " between 1993 and 1998, the average number of victims of intimate partner violence who lived

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with children under the age of 12 was 459, 590" (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). The research at hand is astounding. Many are exposing the child to certain situations which are not suited for their age.

This policy will not only protect the child but also assist the parent in becoming positive role models. This policy will also test the will of parents/guardians, seeing how far they are willing to go to educate and seek help for themselves, which will teach them how to do right by, as well as rebuild a relationship with these children. I do fear that parents/guardians who would rather have the system take their children away, would leave the child emotionally scared. Yet I also believe that these children would be better off anyways and that a suitable home would be more appropriate (in my hopes of seeing some positive results in their adulthood).

Finally, did the Department of Job and Family Services misinterpret or misapply the social learning theory when planning and implementing the policy? In answering this I will be sure to demonstrate how the social learning theory either does or does not apply to this scenario. The social learning theory proposed by Albert Bandura, assumes that people are born good and learn to be bad by means of observational learning, this phenomena is known as imitation or modeling. This theory suggest a combination of environmental (social) and psychological factors influence behavior. There are four component processes influenced by the observer's behavior following exposure to models which are: attention; retention; motor reproduction; and motivation.

Attention, anything that gets you to selectively concentrate on one aspect of the environment while ignoring other things. Along the lines are, retention, remembering what one has observed, motor reproduction, the ability to reproduce the behavior observed. Last but not least, motivation is an apparatus for good reasoning for wanting to adopt the behavior. In Bandura famous “ Bobo doll” studies, he demonstrated that children learn and imitate behaviors they have observed in other people.

The children in Bandura’s studies observed an adult verbally and/or physically being abusive towards a Bobo doll. When the children were later allowed to play in a room with the Bobo doll, they began to imitate the aggressive actions they had previously observed. In reference to the scenario on abuse within the household, another prime example of what can become of a child who is exposed or who is a victims of abuse are criminals. Also stated in the brief “ General delinquency research shows that childhood abuse (physical and sexual) is often associated with delinquency and that the early onset of maltreatment may increase the variety, seriousness, and duration of problems.

It is also widely suggested that violence begets violence—that today’s abused children become tomorrow’s violent offenders” (Windom & Maxfield, 2001). So to answer the question, no the Department of Job and Family Services did not misinterpret or misapply the social learning theory when planning and implementing the policy. In closing, I would say the success rate for implementing such a policy is that the benefits outweigh the risks. This policy will enforce a parent and/or guardian to be just that, a parent and/or guardian, who is meant to protect, provide and serve as a positive

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role model for these children, whom are meant to become productive citizens of the future. For those who may oppose, it was never about them but about the welfare of these child in the long run. Personal experience shape my stance in this article from both family and friends of what hardships can come from abuse; neglect; maltreatment and no one there to help.