

# CHILDHOOD STORIES

Akash Paul, Child Protection services

**M**y name is Akash Paul. I work in Child Protective Services which reaches out to parents for the safety and well-being of their children.

With that being said, one of the most frustrating incident I encountered was that of a mother who was emotionally and mentally abusive to a daughter who had mental health issues. The mother, daughter, and brother were survivors of an extremely physically abusive father. The children at a very young age that very clearly caused them immense trauma that manifested as mental health issues like ADHD, violent outbursts, inability to regulate emotions, several other things all piled together. I became involved years after that man was out of the picture.

Mother spent the entire time I was involved with the family essentially blaming everything on the daughter's outbursts and as much as said with her daughter present and old enough to understand "she was forced on me when he took off his condom" with regards to whether the daughter was planned or an accident. I spent several days working with this family and not once did I hear the mother say anything resembling love, affection, caring, kindness, or understanding towards her daughter and the vast majority of the time the mother was trying to elicit sympathy from other adults in terms of how difficult the kid was to manage.



She made multiple disparaging comments about her daughter as if she wasn't present in the room, coldly ignored her for large periods of time while sitting right next to her, etc. She very obviously still had her own trauma from the abusive ex and seemed to transplant all of her negativity towards him into her behavior towards her daughter. We had statements by police officers involved after one of the violent outbursts by the daughter that the mother told them in front of daughter "take her away, take her anywhere, I don't care where she goes, just get her the hell out of my house".

The daughter wasn't even a teenager. I have no idea what happened following my involvement but yeah...that kid's got a rough future ahead no matter which of several possible scenarios plays out. Child abuse can lead to many difficulties

including: shame, guilt, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Additionally, your parents' actions have formed who you are, what you think about yourself and what you think is normal behavior. It had been ten long years since the family had been happy.

The parents had divorced and the children were left to fend for themselves. The eldest, a girl of just eighteen, was the only one who still spoke to her father. The rest of the siblings were angry and resentful. They blamed their parents for the misery in their lives and were determined to never forgive them. But now, after all these years, the parents have decided to try and make things right. They have both agreed to go to counseling and to work on their relationship. The children are grown now and want their own families to be happy and whole. They are willing to give their parents a second chance. It will be a long road.