Official Inquiry into the Release of Public Documents by the Florida Department of Children and Families

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International Survivors Action Committee will be referred to as ISAC for the remainder of this document.

The purpose of this document is to show repeated inconsistencies discovered during a review of public documents released to ISAC.

ISAC is requesting a full and complete explanation as well as supportive documentation for these inconsistencies.

ISAC is further requesting ALL public documents, including investigation reports and correspondence, by the State of Florida and/or DCF regarding SAFE, GROWING TOGETHER, and STRAIGHT, INC. from 1975 to the present time.

ISAC Questions the Current Employment of David Crock by the Department of Children and Families (DCF)

On the application for employment originally submitted in 1990 by David Crock to the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS), now DCF, Mr. Crock claimed to be employed by Straight, Inc. from June 1976 to May 1986.

DCF was provided with copies of documentation of its own investigations into Straight, Inc., which began with a warning in 1976. Straight, Inc. was investigated numerous times, eventually resulting in its closure. In 1982, the District Attorney filed 13 criminal indictments against staff members of Straight, Inc. In 1993, the FBI investigated Straight, Inc. for insurance fraud.

In a document dated May 1993, DCF investigated Straight, Inc. for child abuse and neglect. The conclusions of the report are as follows:

1. On an August 22, 1989 follow-up site visit to the St. Petersburg facility, the HRS licensing team was prepared to recommend that the license for Straight, Inc. **NOT** be renewed.

2. An investigation by the office of the inspector general revealed that there was a **definite** pattern of abuse or excessive force used against clients while at Straight, Inc. facilities.

3. There were indications that outside influences were involved with this licensing issue.

David Crock was employed by Straight, Inc. and claims responsibility for the training of staff and implementation of Straight, Inc. policies during this same period of time.

In a document dated February 26, 2003 DCF states that the abusive acts committed by David Crock while employed by Straight, Inc. are "allegations." However, DCF is aware of an Affidavit by one of his victims describing the horrors of his abuse.

On or about 1981 a client of Straight who has signed an affidavit for us reports that David Crock was physically abusive himself. She reports that Mr. Crock on one occasion ordered the staff to lay her on the floor of the bathroom face down near a drain, where her face was forced into the small grates of the drain for almost nine hours. This is but ONE example of the abuse that took place at the hands of Mr. Crock.

However, in the employment application David Crock submitted to HRS, he stated the following regarding his position at Straight, Inc.:

> *"Supervised, trained and monitored professional and para-professional staff. Interviewed, hired and terminated employees. Made decisions and interpretation and implementation of policies and procedures. Designed and implement a program to train new para-professionals, then trained other professionals to run it."*

By David Crock's own admission on the application for employment submitted to HRS/DCF, he was responsible for the supervision of employees and implemented <u>all</u> policies of Straight, Inc. By his own admission, he was also responsible for the training of Straight, Inc. staff members.

As early as 1976, Straight, Inc. had received warnings regarding holding children against their will. Straight, Inc. was investigated numerous times between 1982 and 1993. In almost every case abuse was either substantiated or a lawsuit was initiated.

This is the same time frame during which Mr. Crock was in charge of implementing those abusive policies and was responsible for the training of staff members.

On 2/28/96 David Crock submitted a second employment application for a position in the economic services department within DCF. Mr. Crock stated he was employed by HRS from May 1990 to the present date, (then 2/28/96).

His job description states: Maintain a caseload of customers, which includes eligibility and application interviews, on going changes, and data exchange alerts done on the Florida Computer system and processed within required time frames. **To investigate and report on possible fraud cases.**

David Crock's application lists no other position or experience past or present that would qualify him to be an HRS caseworker EXCEPT his employment at Straight, Inc. This would indicate that he was hired by then HRS BECAUSE of his experience and position at Straight, Inc.

The "certification" section of the application for employment submitted by David Crock states:

> *"I am aware that any omissions, falsifications, misstatements or misrepresentations above may disqualify me for employment consideration and if I am hired may be grounds for termination at a later date."*
>
> *"I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief all of the statements contained herein and on any attachments are **true**, **correct**, **complete** and made in good faith."*

David Crock signed this application on 2-28-96

ISAC has asked for the termination of David Crock on numerous occasions. However DCF has responded with the following statements regarding his employment:

> *"There is no information in the referenced employees record that would indicate that he should not be employed in his current position as a Economic Service Clerk Typist Specialist." – Suzanne Sewell Office of Inspector General, December 3, 2002*
>
> *"There is nothing in Mr. Crock's background screening for employment which would indicate he should not be employed in his current positions, unless specific information is obtained that would disqualify Mr. Crock for his position." – Suzanne Sewell Operations Supervisor, November 31, 2002.*
>
> *"There was nothing in Mr. Crocks's background screening for employment which would indicate he should not be employed in his current position." – Mr. Richards, DCF, Dec 3, 2002*

Conclusion:

1) It is evident that David Crock was hired in 1990 on the basis of his experience and position at Straight, Inc., as he listed no other relevant experience for the job he applied for. In the opinion of ISAC, this is GROSS negligence on the part of the background screeners.

2) David Crock, by his own admission on his employment application, was responsible for the training of the staff at Straight, Inc. These same staff members had 13 criminal indictments pending in 1982 for child abuse and negligence as well as other criminal actions.

3) Mr. Crock, by his own admission on his employment application, was responsible for the implementation of procedures at Straight, Inc. HRS/DCF concluded that abuse took place on more than one occasion in Straight, Inc. throughout David Crock's tenure with the program. **HRS/DCF knew or should have known of the abuse that Mr. Crock participated in since he admitted to being responsible for the implementation of policies at a facility that was repeatedly investigated by HRS/DCF.** DCF now states there is NOTHING in David Crock's background to justify the termination of his employment. In the opinion of ISAC this is an example of GROSSLY negligent employment practices on the part of DCF.

4) Given David Crock's history, the members of ISAC find it incomprehensible that Mr. Crock was hired to investigate fraud and work with clients.

5) DCF reports they have no "legal reason" to show that David Crock should not be employed by DCF – despite the fact that DCF is in possession of documents that prove Mr. Crock's involvement in the policies and training of the staff at a facility that was found by HRS/DCF to be abusing children **and** had 13 criminal indictments filed against the very staff trained by Mr. Crock.

The explanation for the hiring of David Crock and DCF's refusal to terminate his employment could only be negligent hiring practices, failure on the part of DCF to do a full background screening and the failure of DCF to refer to its own documentation regarding Straight, Inc.

ISAC will be making this report available to the press and public immediately.

ISAC will also be forwarding a copy of this report to Governor Jeb Bush, the Office of the Inspector General, and all Florida senators and congressmen.

ISAC urges DCF to reconsider its decision to continue the employment of David Crock.