

March 18, 2018



Becky Seville

February 8, 1984 – February 23, 2018

We would like to take a moment to honor a courageous woman, wife, mother and GRANDMOTHER that didn't give up. Becky the Co-Founder of Grand Family Coalition, Inc. advocated for change and awareness on issues involving grandparent's rights and child welfare reform. She advocated in the court system for the safety and well-being of her four grandchildren. Her dedication shows on the GFC website, every flier, newsletter, and logo. She always preferred to be the partner behind the scenes, but her work has become the face of GFC.

“You can do it, you don't have to do it alone”

Looking for strength, courage and empowerment Becky became involved with a Grand Family Coalition, Inc. and formed a bond with Gail Engel. The two of them understood that the job of raising grandchildren and being that advocate was an isolating, emotionally long journey. They knew that grandparents and other kin needed to be supported and feel connected in order to rise their grandchildren to become resilient and courageous kids. With the philosophy that “you can do it, but you don't have to do it alone”, Becky and Gail created a non-profit organization that would help support the social and emotional needs of kinship families

Unfortunately, Becky passed away before she knew that President Trump signed into law “THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT” on February 9, 2018. The Family First includes long-overdue historic reforms to help keep children safely with their families and avoid the traumatic experience of entering foster care. On February 28th the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee's unanimous passage “SUPPORTING GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN ACT (S. 1091)”. Generations United has joined with several child welfare organizations to request a portion of these funds to address the Opioid crisis to be used to help children and families impacted by the crises.

Becky's Story

In June 2008 I got the call from CPS. My daughter's boyfriend arrested for domestic violence, resisting arrest and child endangerment. CPS noted my daughter had bruising around her eyes and refusing medical attention. She insisted the bruising was from an unrelated incident. Having been concerned about my daughter and two grandchildren's wellbeing for quite some time the next several months I cooperated with CPS in an attempt to keep the children safe which included CPS custody and placement outside the home. I was quickly blamed by my daughter and boyfriend for all their problems with CPS. As long as the CPS case was active I had contact with the children. During this time a third child was born. Since he was not a part of the D&N, the parents retained custody of him. As soon as reunification occurred, my contact was shut off. In 2009, just before the case was closed, I filed a motion to intervene, but was denied. The parents were deemed capable of making the decision not to allow me visitation.

In August 2012, the children were again being removed from the home. Meth use was suspected, along with child neglect and domestic violence. I had no contact for 3½ years, but another relative had seen the children recently. The oldest mentioned them when asked about others they knew. The family has access to the children again, a true blessing. Now we wait to see if the parents' treatment plan is sufficient to reunify the children with them. It seems like a broken record... the children go home, we lose contact... another child is born. Yes, my daughter is pregnant again with child number four! I don't think it is the record – but the system that is broken.

My daughter's boyfriend arrested for domestic violence, resisting arrest, child endangerment and suspected abuse to my daughter. As I Cooperated with CPS in an attempt to keep the children safe, this included CPS custody and placement outside the home. I was able to keep contact with the children. A third child was born but since he was not a part of the D&N, the parents retained custody I filed a motion to intervene but was denied. The parents were deemed capable of making the decision not to allow me visitation.

In August 2012, the children were again being removed from the home. Meth use was suspected, along with child neglect and domestic violence. It seems like a broken record... the children go home, we lose contact...another child is born...and is pregnant again! I don't think it is the record – but the system that is broken.

Becky
2017

The Story Continues:

Unfortunately, Becky's daughter succumbed to the drugs addiction. She came to her mother expressing her desire to get clean. When she went to tell her husband it was over, they got high, one last time. Becky's daughter was found the next morning frozen to death under a tree. Becky buried her daughter in 2017. But not before finding wonderful foster parents to take in all four children. Becky passed knowing her grandchildren were safe. The youngest grandchild was born blind and placed with a Kinship Placement – His therapy/teacher. The three others placed with a foster parent. The children stay in close contact with the family and each other thanks to the two foster placements.

Gail Engel, Executive Director

February 18, 2023