

8 February 2018

ChildStory update – Department starting to listen to the PSA

The ChildStory debacle received extensive coverage in the weekend media – see [HERE](#).

A front page headline of “Wiped Out” followed by more reports on pages 6-7 in *The Sunday Telegraph* led to a communication to staff from FACS Secretary Michael Coutts-Trotter on 5 February 2018. This is the first time the PSA has seen an email from a Department head that seeks to downplay serious and complex matters by using expressions like “holy moly” and “hunky dory”.

Child protection is serious business and such expressions trivialise the very real problems you are experiencing on a daily basis. The Secretary then went on to state we were either wrong or exaggerating the problems and things were being fixed in any case.

You can read the Secretary’s email [HERE](#).

The PSA met with Lisa Alonso Love and Greg Wells from the ChildStory team on 5 February 2017. Also in attendance were Catherine Carvolth and Vicki Wong from Employee Relations, Safety and Wellbeing.

We stated these meetings cannot be effective without the involvement of the Secretary and requested to meet with him. We can advise this request was accommodated within 24 hours and the PSA is meeting with the Secretary on 14 February 2018. We’re hopeful that the last few months of executive group think, organisational defensiveness and attacks on the PSA are behind us and there is a plan to fix ChildStory.

We will be advising the Secretary that the problems and defects with ChildStory are so severe that the Department has no option but to abandon the proposed roll-out of phase 2 (March 2018) until all necessary remedial action is taken during phase 1.

Michael Coutts-Trotter said that “the buck stopped with him” and we intend to hold him accountable for his mismanagement of ChildStory.

Other actions agreed to by the Department at the meeting with the ChildStory Team are [HERE](#).

This group will meet monthly and we will also be holding them to account to deliver on agreed actions and reporting back to members. Members can be assured that if we see a need to escalate issues we will not wait for another month and will raise directly with the Secretary.

The PSA thanks members who have advised us on a daily basis about the problems they with ChildStory that are adding to caseworkers’ already heavy workloads and exposing children and young people to risk.

We will continue to fight for a system that is fit for purpose so you have a computer system which allows you to do your work as opposed to being a hindrance, which ChildStory has proven to be.

If you or your colleagues have not yet had your say through completing the PSA survey on ChildStory, please do [HERE](#). It is important and will only take two minutes.

