

Role: Patient's parent

You are the single parent of a two-year-old child and a 6-month-old infant. Earlier in the day, while you were preparing lunch for your kids, the water started boiling over the pot, so you placed your baby on the couch to go drain the noodles. Before you knew it however, you heard a loud thud and your baby immediately started to cry. You ran over to pick him up, when you noticed a large lump on the front of his head. You waited 30 minutes, but when he wouldn't calm down you decided to take him to the emergency room.

This exercise starts with the medical team coming to inform you that they found a linear skull fracture on head imaging. Eventually, they will tell you that they need to report your case to child protective services (CPS) and that they will have to admit you to the hospital until CPS clears you to take your baby home.

At first you should react somewhat calmy, but absentmindedly. As the roleplaying continues, you gradually should get more and more worked up. You are thinking to yourself that you are a good parent who loves your children and only brought your baby to the hospital because you thought that would be what's best for him. Also, (do not refer to this unless specifically asked by the medical team if you have any prior history with CPS) you were taken from your parents and placed in brief foster care when you were a child. Not only that, but when you were a teenager, you once tried to report your cousin's boyfriend to CPS. They didn't do anything, and the boyfriend ended up beating the baby to death. Now, as you reflect on those situations, you are wondering out loud why CPS does nothing to actually protect children, but is only used to punish good parents like you when they bring their kids to the hospital.