Children's Voices Matter

Why are children's voices being ignored in the family court system? This story is about something I am still experiencing. The major characters are me, my two sisters, my mother, my stepdad, my father, and my father's girlfriend. I strongly believe in bringing awareness to the lack of children's voices in the family court system. The court system cares more about keeping a family together than the health of the family.

There has been continued conflict regarding custody, due to emotional abuse. The courts kept us in the horrible inhumane situation, and didn't make us feel safe. We were scared and confused like lost puppies. We have had multiple CPS cases opened, and the abuse had only gotten worse after each one, so we grew too frightened to say anything about what was really going on. Our parents have gone to court, but we haven’t, and the conflict was involving us.

I could see why people would think that a child should not have a say in a court hearing. They might think that they are too immature, too easily bribed, too easily manipulated, or that they should not be involved in dealing with this big "adult problem.” If the court would make the child feel safe and protected, the child would feel they are able to speak up and tell the truth. If the court puts this big "adult problem” into simpler forms for the child, then they could get all the details they need to truly make the right decision for the child/children involved.

The way this whole problem worked out was unnecessary, if the court would have just listened to what we had to say in the beginning, this problem would have most likely been less messy and damaging. My mom wanted to have us kids come to a couple of the court hearings and speak about what was going on, but she was told no, that it would be too traumatizing to the children. What resulted was the abuse continuing for three more years, and many more threats and conflicts from my father, until the unexpected happened and my stepfather was murdered. Eventually we moved to get away from our father, we are still fighting so my mother can get full custody of us. Everybody should have equal rights, they say, but shouldn't that include children as well? I wish I could have been more brave and spoken up, but that’s why I am telling my story and spreading awareness of the injustices in the family court.

In conclusion Everyone's voice matters and should not be silenced. There are always many sides of a story and you can never truly tell who is lying without hearing the voices of all involved. So for this reason we should allow all sides to have their say and stop this horrendous injustice.

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Fighting Against Injustice