



NEWS RELEASE

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Suzanne Burke, director of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services, responded today to the release of a Hamilton County Sheriff's report concerning a child abuse investigation.

At Ms. Burke's request, Sheriff Simon Leis ordered an investigation into Cincinnati Police procedures related to the domestic violence charge filed against Cincinnati City Councilman Sam Malone on May 13, 2005.

Ms. Burke released the following statement:

As director of HCJFS, it is my duty to assure that children who may be victims of abuse are protected and that actions are taken with the interests of the child foremost in mind. It is because of that duty that I turned to the Sheriff's department with concerns I had related to a child abuse allegation against Councilman Sam Malone.

I am grateful to the Sheriff's Department for acting diligently on my concerns. I am pleased that the Sheriff's investigation has addressed the questions I had about the handling of this matter and that it has been found Cincinnati Police handled everything properly. I would like to reiterate that it is important for 241-KIDS to be contacted prior to releasing a suspected child abuse victim into the care of any adult. I am persuaded by the Sheriff's report, however, that the police acted in good faith and with concern for the child's safety and well-being.

Hamilton County Children's Services works closely with Cincinnati Police, as well as with police departments throughout the county. We work in partnership with numerous other entities, such as Juvenile Court and Children's Hospital, to help keep children safe. That partnership involves a high level of cooperation, which I am confident will continue.