



St. Louis Area News

Families in crisis have many options in St. Louis Video

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KMOV

(KMOV) - It is a story that tugs at your heartstrings. How could a mother abandon her children at a grocery store?

We don't know the circumstances that led her to such a drastic decision but we do know there are alternatives for families in crisis.

When a mother abandoned her children at this Southside Schnucks yesterday, she not only came to the attention of those who could help, she also entered the system.

The state turned to one of the crisis facilities at the Annie Malone Children and Family Services Center, to care for the girls, ages 7 and 13.

Their mother, had she known, might have been able to get the same help.

Qualifying children in crisis can stay there up to a month; residential care is up to 18 months.

The mother told police she was homeless. Help from the housing resource center could be one phone call away.

The St. Louis Crisis Nursery has four locations in St. Louis and a 24-hour help hotline for parents.

And while it's assumed no child wants to be taken from a parent, even temporarily, that's not always the case.

Ultimately, the goal is to help families overcome their difficulties and stay together.

D.F.S. says the toll free child abuse hotline gets about 500 calls monthly, but only about 30 children are placed into foster care per month.

Regarding possible charges against the mother, the St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office says the law states child abandonment can be prosecuted if the child is left where serious injury or death could result and so far, no such warrant has been sought.

UNITED WAY CALL FOR HELP (314) 421-INFO OR 1-800-427-4626

[United Way of Greater St. Louis](#)

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-392-3737

HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER (314) 802-5444

ST. LOUIS CRISIS NURSERY 24 HOUR HOTLINE (314) 768-3201

[St. Louis Crisis Nursery](#)