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By **A Former Police Investigator** July 9, 2026



This is the latest in a series of articles we are publishing in TCW designed to challenge one of the most powerful orthodoxies shaping family justice across the Western world, an orthodoxy that is harming children and parents alike. You can read the first four [here](#). Today's article shows the importance of not treating allegations as facts.

I WORKED in the Domestic Violence Unit of the police and now support people facing allegations and investigations. I've sat with frightened victims, listened to accounts of violence, coercion and control, seen bruises, injuries and fear. I've witnessed the devastating impact that genuine abuse has on individuals and families.

This is precisely why I feel compelled to speak about something that appears to be an uncomfortable subject for many people to discuss: false allegations. It's not a popular subject and in today's climate even raising concerns about false allegations can result in accusations that you're somehow undermining genuine victims. Those who know me know nothing could be further from the truth.

The reality is that both things can exist at the same time. Genuine victims deserve protection, support and justice. Equally, innocent people deserve protection from false allegations that can destroy their lives.



During my policing career, I became increasingly uncomfortable with what I was seeing. Domestic abuse investigations should be focused on evidence. Investigate thoroughly, gather facts and follow the evidence wherever it leads. Gradually, I became concerned that the emphasis on truth was changing and that the narrative appeared to be becoming more important than the evidence.

The issue I had was simple. An allegation is not evidence. An allegation is the starting point of an investigation, not the conclusion. Over time I became increasingly aware that false allegations were not as rare as many imagine. Some were motivated by anger, jealousy, revenge or family court disputes.

Human beings are complex, emotional creatures. When relationships break down, people can behave in ways they never imagined they would and unfortunately, when allegations are weaponised, the consequences can be catastrophic.

What concerns me most is where those allegations often end up. People tend to think about allegations in terms of police investigations, but from what I've seen, some of the greatest damage happens afterwards in family court.

An allegation doesn't stay neatly in one place. It gets repeated, over and over, so often that even the accuser starts believing their own story. A report to police becomes a safeguarding concern. That safeguarding concern appears in a report. Before long, decisions are being made about children, contact and family life based on allegations that may never have been properly tested.

I've seen allegations that resulted in no further action somehow continue to follow somebody for years. I've seen reports written in a way that leaves people with the impression that a person escaped prosecution rather than there being no evidence in the first place. I've seen allegations appear to gather credibility simply because they've been repeated enough times.

And, from what I've seen, family court can often become a place where allegations take on a life of their own. The consequences are enormous, and we're not talking about a damaged reputation. We're talking about children. Fathers missing years of their children's lives. Relationships that may never recover. This is about memories that can never be recreated or returned to. The public rarely see the reality of these false allegations. They don't see the police car outside the family home. The father trying to explain to his children why he suddenly can't come home. They don't see him sitting alone staring at photographs of birthdays he missed. They don't see the panic attacks at 3am. The antidepressants in the kitchen drawer. The shame of walking through a supermarket convinced everybody is looking at him. They don't see a man slowly losing faith that anyone will ever listen. Careers are lost. Friends disappear. Family members start asking questions. His reputation can be destroyed before a single piece of evidence has been tested. Even if he is ultimately cleared, the damage has often already been done. People assume that when somebody is cleared, life simply returns to

normal. It doesn't. The rumours remain, hand in hand with the continued anxiety.



The relationships that fell apart rarely repair themselves. Some spend years trying to rebuild what was destroyed in days. Mental health deteriorates. Some lose everything they've spent decades building. Tragically, some lose their lives.

Since leaving policing, I've spoken with hundreds of individuals facing false allegations. I've reviewed countless cases and I've listened to people describe experiences that mirror one another with alarming consistency. Recently, I sat with a former police officer who'd spent years in prison. He shouldn't have been there. Before meeting him, I'd spent many hours reviewing his case material. He should never have gone to prison and he should never have lost access to his children.

More importantly, his children should never have lost access to him.

I asked whether he would consent to me using extracts from a diary he had written during his ordeal and he agreed. Then he became emotional. Not because of the prison sentence, the destruction of his career or the financial devastation he's left with. He became emotional because he could tell me the exact number of days since he had last held his children's hands. The exact number. Not approximately. The exact number. Then he said something that brought a lump to my throat: 'I don't even know what they look like now.' As I sat there listening, I realised that statistics, policies, court judgments and official reports never truly capture the human cost.

This was not a dangerous man. This was a father who still remembered the colour of the pyjamas his daughter wore the last night he tucked her into bed. His children were still alive. Yet he was grieving for them as though they had died.

When allegations become narratives and narratives become accepted truth, challenging them becomes almost impossible. Domestic abuse allegations can have enormous influence on decisions relating to child contact and residence. Of course, genuine concerns must always be investigated and taken seriously, nobody disputes this. But the difficulty arises when allegations are accepted too readily without sufficient scrutiny. The stakes are simply too high.

What upsets me the most is the apparent lack of accountability when allegations are proven to be false. We rightly expect consequences for genuine perpetrators, however, when somebody knowingly makes a false allegation, there are often no meaningful consequences at all. The case disappears and the innocent person is left to rebuild their life alone. Meanwhile, valuable resources have been diverted away from genuine victims who desperately need help. In my experience, there are many decent and hardworking professionals within both policing and the family court system who genuinely want to do the right thing, so this is not an attack on them.

Eventually, these concerns contributed to my decision to leave policing. I entered policing because I believed in fairness, evidence and treating people as individuals rather than statistics. Increasingly, I felt those principles were

becoming harder to defend. That discomfort ultimately led me to start supporting people who were struggling to navigate allegations, investigations and proceedings.



Truth matters

Not some of the time, or when it is convenient. It matters every time. Behind every allegation is a human being. Behind every statistic is a family. And behind every failure to pursue the truth is a cost that somebody, somewhere, will spend the rest of their life paying. Innocent people should not become expendable. No father should ever find himself counting the days since he last held his children's hands.

And more than anything: children should never lose a loving parent because someone was vindictive and their allegations were treated as facts.