

Negligent Parents, Guardians Can Face Legal Action Under Child Act

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By Ahmad Muliady Abdul Majid

KUALA LUMPUR, March 4 (Bernama) -- Many are still unaware that parents and guardians who are negligent in caring for their children to the extent of them going missing or losing their lives can face legal action.

Executive committee member of the National Council of Women's Organisations Malaysia (NCWO), Datuk Faridah Khalid said this offence came under the Child Act 2001 (Act 611).

"If convicted, the parents or guardians involved can be fined up to RM20,000 or jailed for up to 10 years, or both," she told Bernama, here.

However, she said, in many cases the negligent parents escaped legal action due to compassion on the part of the authorities for the family's sufferings over the loss of their child.

"We have a specific law, the Child Act 2001, to protect the rights of children in this country," she said.

Faridah, however, regretted the lackadaisical attitude of some parents towards the safety of their children, resulting in the children's disappearance or death in some cases.

"And it is as if there's a trend now where parents would leave their children in the car for hours while they shop in the supermarkets.

"I remember a case where a child died from suffocation after the mother left her in the car to shop as she had forgotten that she had brought the child along," she said.

Faridah said it was sad that such cases happened in this country, which should not.

She said parents were fully responsible for caring and protecting their children from any threat to their safety and they could not run away from that responsibility.

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