

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES

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THERE CAN BE HOPE AFTER DEATH

How Our Team Uses Wrongful Death Cases to Make the World Safer

One thing I love about our team is that we are all extremely invested in every case we take on. I think our care and attention helps us be better representatives for our clients, but sometimes, getting so close to a case is difficult. That is particularly true for wrongful death cases, which are both the saddest and most hope-filled cases we take on.

Over the years, we've helped families seek justice for loved ones killed at daycare, in foster care, in car or trucking accidents, and in their own homes during easy-opportunity crimes. The common thread is that those deaths were preventable. A person or company did something wrong, and an innocent person was killed.

Every phone call we get for a wrongful death case feels like a gut punch. But we always answer those calls and take those cases because our firm was built for them. Every single person on our team, including me, has been through a tragedy or dealt with a death in their own family or circle of friends. Personally, I lost several childhood friends and two close mentors to untimely deaths. I want to make sure people in similar situations have a place to turn to for help.

I also want to give our clients the resources they need to fight their psychological battles while we fight for their lost loved ones in court. There are two enemies in a wrongful death case: the opposing person/business and their insurance company, and the overwhelming grief felt by the survivors. The first one is much easier to deal with than the second. Moving through the seven stages of grief (shock, denial, bargaining, pain/guilt, anger, depression, and acceptance/hope) is one of the toughest things I've ever experienced. It's been decades, and I still question why my childhood friends died and what I could have done differently in their final days.

Our clients are the same way. One set of parents we worked with, for example, felt wracked with guilt after their 18-year-old son was killed in a trucking accident. They thought it was their fault for letting him drive in the first place. But in reality, 18-year-olds drive safely all the time. They couldn't have known an exhausted, distracted truck driver would have been on the road texting. Because we understand those feelings, we know grief counseling and psychology can help our clients, and we point them toward those resources while we deal with the other enemy: the insurance company.



Sometimes insurance companies are like cartoon supervillains. Faced with a grieving person who has lost both parents and their child in a car crash with a driver high on meth, they say things like, "Well, you can't put a value on death, so why try?" and "Surely a person's life isn't worth that much." They see us as gold diggers, and I hate it. I want to shout, "Our clients would give any amount of money to have their loved ones back. They would give the clothes off their backs and the shoes off their feet! Why is that so hard to understand?" Instead, I channel my frustration into winning in court. Every settlement is a small piece of justice.

By holding those companies accountable, we can answer our clients' questions and get them justice and closure. In the best circumstances, we can even offer hope. Sometimes a wrongful death case can inspire a change in the law and make an industry safer. We've been able to do this multiple times in childcare and premises liability cases. When someone dies, the industry notices, and change becomes possible. It's terrible that a tragedy needs to happen for companies to sit up and pay attention, but it helps to know the person's death will have a life-saving legacy.

If you or someone you know has lost a loved one in unfair circumstances, there IS hope, even if it doesn't feel like it right now. Call our office, and we will help you find it.

Russell Button

214-888-2216

LAWYERS, MEET YOUR NEW FAVORITE PODCAST

BEHIND THE SCENES OF KENNETH BERGER'S 'BEST PRACTICES'

Are you a podcast listener? Which genre is your favorite? Some people go for true crime, breaking news, or fictional storytelling. Others — including our team — love to use podcasts as a tool for continuing education. There are dozens of legal podcasts we love, but this February, a new one debuted that stands above the rest: Kenneth Berger's "Best Practices."

Kenneth is a brilliant attorney and one of Russell's best friends. He runs the personal injury firm Law Offices of Kenneth E. Berger in South Carolina, and he's always on the hunt for ways to improve as a lawyer. That quest led him to start "Best Practices," where he interviews the nation's top lawyers and legal consultants about their personal strengths (aka their best practices) and how listeners can replicate them.



"One lawyer is great when it comes to closing arguments, and another lawyer is fantastic at expert depositions, or focus groups, or appellate work, or advertising, or anything else that pertains to legal practice," Kenneth says. "[For each area,] we want to get that person on the podcast to talk to them about the thing they're great at, enjoy, and enjoy teaching others about."

Kenneth has interviewed trial consultant/lawyer duo David Ball and Nick Rowley about jury trials in a post-COVID-19 world; talked with attorney Karen Koehler about surviving the four-month, \$123 million "Duck Boat" jury trial; and even had Russell and Ashley on the show!

"It was an honor for me and Ashley to be interviewed for 'Best Practices' this winter," Russell says. "I had a great time chatting with Kenny and sharing insights into our cutting-edge processes, our team's approach to law, and how those strategies tie into our daycare cases."

Kenneth is used to the back-and-forth of the courtroom, so he's right at home hosting a podcast.

"It's not that different from a direct examination," he jokes, adding, "My job, like that of any good interviewer or lawyer, is to simply create an avenue for my guests to share the truth and dig a little deeper."

Want to add "Best Practices" to your podcast feed? Head to BergerLawSC.com and click "Podcast" under the "Free Info" tab to listen now, or download episodes on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or any other major platform.

LAWYER BY DAY, COMEDIAN BY NIGHT

How Ashley's Improv Classes Improve Her Litigation

If you've ever seen an episode of "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" then you're familiar with improvisational theater — a category of live theatrical performance where some, if not all, of the content is made up on the spot. Improv is hilarious to watch, but that's not its only perk. According to BLF trial lawyer Ashley, it's also the secret weapon of many top attorneys.

"I started taking improv classes because I heard that some famous and well-known trial lawyers had all gone through them," she says. "Improv helps you learn how to think on your feet, listen, and react, while also being aware of your body language and your audience. The skills I've gained can be applied to what we do every day at BLF, including everything from depositions to trial work. A lot of what we do requires thinking on the spot and being prepared to speak and present new ideas without a lot of prep time."

Ashley started looking for an improv class in 2020. She was on the verge of enrolling in a course at CSz Houston when the pandemic lockdowns closed the show. It was disappointing, but she didn't give up. This March, CSz Houston reopened, and Ashley got into an in-person Level 1 Intro to Improv class. She loves her instructor, Benji, and said the whole experience has been safe and fun.

"I really feel like this is something for everybody. I'm the only lawyer in my group of eight. There are people from all walks of life, with different careers, reasons, and motivations for joining the class," she says.

Ashley's class lasted eight weeks and will wrap up with a showcase this month. (To learn more about all of the shows CSz Houston offers, visit ComedySportzHouston.com.) When it's over, she'll enroll in Level 2 to continue



learning more about herself and sharpening her litigation skills for the courtroom.

"At the end of the day, improv is all about vulnerability — being able to put yourself out there and not worry about what people are going to think. It's the one thing in my life I can't prepare for, which has been a relief!" she says.

We're proud of Ashley for going after her passion for improv and can't wait to see her on stage.

REPORTING DAYCARE VIOLATIONS JUST GOT EASIER

Spread the Word About Our New Resource!

As you probably know by now, daycare cases involving abuse, neglect, and/or serious injury are one of our specialties here at The Button Law Firm. Our reputation has gotten around in the legal community, and in the last few years, we've started working with lawyers in other states on these kinds of cases, too. We're always happy to help, but during that process, we discovered a problem: Every state has different reporting requirements for daycare violations.

As crazy as it sounds, less than a dozen states require daycares to report incidents of abuse and neglect. In most places, reporting isn't mandatory, and it falls on the parents of the children impacted and/or their lawyers. On top of that, the reporting process is complicated and confusing, and it varies from state to state! This means there are probably hundreds of daycare abuse, neglect, and serious injury cases that go unreported every year.

When our team realized this, we knew we had to find a way to step in and help. So, we created a special page on our website to help people all over the country report daycare violations: ButtonLawFirm.com/Library/How-to-Report-Daycare-Injuries-by-State.cfm. This page breaks down the reporting process for daycare injury cases by state and makes reporting as quick and easy as possible.

Reporting daycare violations to the state is crucial to keeping kids safe. When someone reports a violation, that triggers an independent agency to investigate, collect evidence, and gather testimony. It also holds daycares accountable and, when it's publicly shared, helps parents find safe daycares for their kids.

If you or someone you know has a child who has been a victim of daycare abuse, neglect, or serious injury, and that case

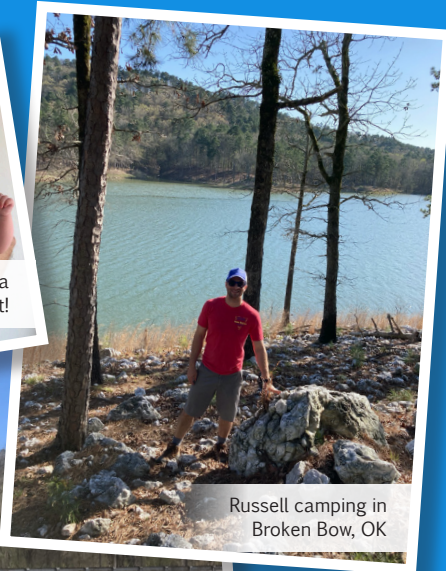


hasn't been reported (or you're unsure if it has), please visit ButtonLawFirm.com/Library/How-to-Report-Daycare-Injuries-by-State.cfm today. Reporting is the first step toward getting justice, and you could save a life!

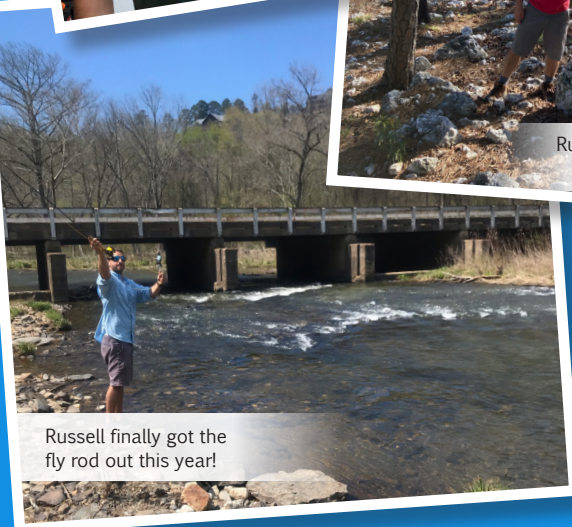
BLF HIGHLIGHT REEL



Russell and Aria ready to work out!



Russell camping in Broken Bow, OK



Russell finally got the fly rod out this year!

CLIENT REVIEW



"Amazing team from Mr. Russell Button himself down to Ms. Rosie Melendez who was very proactive and responsive with all my questions and concerns! Great communication and very empathetic team. They made my son's case feel personal to them and not just a case number. I highly recommend them. They won't charge any fees until you recover. They're a gem in their industry!"

Patria

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JUSTICE IS SERVED!

BLF Wins a Catastrophic Car Crash Case

Last year, we helped out a client whose case was a textbook example of why it's so important to not only buy uninsured and underinsured motorist (UM/UIM) coverage, but also to buy a *lot* of it. There are hundreds of unsafe and uninsured drivers on the road in Texas who you need to protect yourself from — like the reckless woman who hit our client.

At the time of the accident, “Dave” was in his car at a complete stop. He was yielding to oncoming traffic and preparing to make a left turn. Then, it happened: Another driver slammed into his vehicle from behind. The impact shoved his car forward into oncoming traffic, where another vehicle smashed into him.

By the time it was all over, Dave had serious head and neck injuries, including whiplash, a concussion, and brain damage. He also injured his chest and spine and

was rushed to the hospital right away. Luckily, after Dave recovered a bit, he found our firm through an online search. He engaged us to fight for him both inside and outside of the courtroom.

Because of our experience with car crash cases, we were able to connect Dave with the best possible treatment providers for his brain damage, neck injuries, and other orthopedic issues. We tracked his recovery closely and ultimately used that evidence (and evidence from the accident itself) to help Dave collect the maximum insurance payout. We also helped reduce his medical bills, and with the compensation he won, he was able to pay all of those bills and move forward with his life.

This was a great outcome, but of course, we wish Dave didn't have to go through it at all! He's a nice fellow who didn't deserve the trauma of a catastrophic car accident. We hope you and your loved ones never

have this kind of experience, either, but to prepare for the worst, *please* consider adding or increasing the UM/UIM coverage on your automobile insurance package. This insurance is affordable, and it will cover you financially if an irresponsible, underinsured driver

hits you. Give us a call if you have any questions or would like us to take a look at your insurance coverage.

