

THOUSANDS DEMAND JUSTICE FOR KIDS

How many voices will be enough for the N.D.P. to save our children?

Autism strikes children in infancy, cutting off their chance for a normal life. Early Lovaas-style Applied Behavioral Analysis treatment gives these children a fighting chance at recovery —nearly half are indistinguishable from their peers by the beginning of school, and ALL benefit greatly. The BC Government refuses to cover this treatment under Medicare. In fact, they claim there is *no* treatment for Autism, despite three decades of scientific research across the continent proving otherwise. What's wrong with this picture?

Parents of children with Autism are justifiably outraged by this Government malpractice. Now, their fellow citizens are adding their voices to the demand for justice. On June 4 in Victoria, Ted Nebbeling, Liberal MLA for West Vancouver-Garibaldi, delivered a petition to Glen Clark, signed by more than EIGHT THOUSAND British Columbia taxpayers:

"We the undersigned, agree that the right to medicare, as one of the defining features of Canadian Nationhood, must include medically necessary autism treatment for all children who require it. It is fundamental that a child's access to medically necessary autism treatment be solely based on need and not individual ability to pay. We agree with sixty-three (63) B.C. Psychiatrists who believe medically necessary autism treatment must be fully funded by the Medical Services Plan, the B.C. Ministry of Health or both. We support the immediate establishment of an independent task force to find a way to provide medically necessary health care for *all* children with autism."

Asked why he is so committed to helping with this struggle, Nebbeling says, "I am appalled with the lack of government understanding of a program that has been proven to help these children. To deny children a quality of life otherwise unattainable, condemning them to a life sentence in an institution, this is a negligence which should be considered criminal. How can we deny a child our help, when we know a proven treatment method?"

Lovaas-ABA is a safe, effective treatment, pioneered 34 years ago at the prestigious University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), proven by three decades of research data, and most importantly, with practical results — recovered children, leading happy, normal lives.

The scientific data proves that the earlier Lovaas-ABA is started, the better the results. With Government stalling, apathy and bureaucracy robbing these children of their futures, their parents are left with only one option — mortgaging their families' future to pay for treatment themselves. These parents being buried under a crushing, lifetime debt by Government malpractice are the LUCKY few. Most families without homes to mortgage, or credit lines to run up, must simply sit and watch their children's only chance evaporate.

There is no ethical, moral or legal way the BC Government can justify their current position of abandoning children with Autism. More than 8000 ordinary BC citizens have already demanded action. How many voices will be necessary, before this Government opens its ears to listen?

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For more information on Lovaas ABA and Families for Early Autism Treatment of BC (FEAT BC)
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