



CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

December 14, 1998

File # 19982 [REDACTED]

Barbara and Joe Rodrigues
[REDACTED]

Penticton, B.C.
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. and Ms. Rodrigues:

Re: Jeremy Rodrigues

Thank you for your letter dated October 28, 1998 in which you indicated you wish to proceed with your complaint about the Ministry for Children and Families ("MCF"). According to this letter and other correspondence with the Children's Commission, you disagree with MCF's decision not to provide individualized funding for the Lovaas method of therapy for your autistic son, Jeremy.

The Children's Commission will conduct an external review of this MCF decision pursuant to *Section 10(1)(b) of the Children's Commission Act*, a copy of which is enclosed for your information. Under the Children's Commission Act, the commission is restricted to reviewing complaints made about MCF services to children and/or possible breaches of the rights of children in MCF's care. We are unable to review complaints you may have about MCF which do not directly relate to MCF services provided to Jeremy.

We observe the MCF regional complaint process concluded, in a letter dated October 14, 1998 from Rob Houston, MCF Regional Administrator to you, that *regional staff have been directed to follow current policy, which does not allow for individualized funding to pay for Lovaas treatment.*

As required under *Section 12 of the Children's Commission Act*, we are notifying the following individuals about the Children's Commission's external review:

- Diane Johnston, MCF Assistant Deputy Minister
- Rick Childerhose, MCF Regional Operating Officer
- Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate

Please note that pursuant to *Section 9 of the Children's Commission Regulations*, our office may also notify additional persons in the future.



If you, or any other participant, wish to raise any jurisdictional issues regarding this complaint, we ask that you do so within 14 days of receipt of this letter.

Nancy Bell, Complaints Officer, will begin the first stage of the Children's Commission external review process by gathering factual information and exploring possible resolutions. The *Children's Commission Act* recognizes the importance of alternate dispute resolution and is committed to exploring all possible avenues of resolution before engaging in more formal hearings and review processes. This approach requires a willingness by all persons involved in the complaint to engage in problem solving processes that focus on the child's needs and interests. When a complaint is not resolved, the Complaints Officer will prepare a report to be shared with the participants and then provided to the Children's Commissioner. The Commissioner will consider the report and decide whether to refer the matter back to staff for further resolution efforts, dismiss the complaint or refer it to the Tribunal Division for further review. Enclosed for your information and review is a copy of the *Children's Commission Participant Guide to the External Review of Complaints*.

If you have any questions or require further information concerning this review, please contact Ms. Bell at our toll free number 1-800-859-1441 or in writing at PO Box 9207 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9J1.

Thank you for contacting the Children's Commission. We look forward to resolving this matter on behalf of Jeremy in a timely and responsive manner.

Sincerely,



Lauri Balson
Acting Team Leader

Enclosures

Cc Diane Johnston, MCF Assistant Deputy Minister
Rick Childerhose, MCF Regional Operating Officer
Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate