GOVERNMENT ABANDONS AUTISTIC CHILD
Mother pickets Southern Interior Ministry for Children and Families

PENTICTON — Barbara Rodrigues is taking her four-year-old son Jeremy's plight to the public, in a last-ditch attempt to overturn the vicious actions of the Ministry for Children and Families (MCF), who steadfastly refuse to provide the vital medical treatment he requires. Jeremy's autism worsened dramatically after two years of 'approved' government programs which amount to nothing more than baby-sitting. Just five months of privately-provided Lovaas Autism Treatment has created a remarkable improvement, but the MCF refuses to support any part of it, despite the fact that Lovaas Therapy is the ONLY scientifically-proven treatment for autism in existence.

Added to this outrage is the government's determination to crush any opposition to their established policy of abandoning children with autism to a life of total dependency and institutionalization. One week after a class action suit was begun in BC Supreme Court by a Surrey family, seeking Lovaas Treatment for all autistic children, the MCF sent out an order to all regional staff. This order cuts parents of autistic children off from ALL and ANY assistance which could help them provide treatment for their afflicted kids.

In Southern Interior Region, the MCF bureaucrats holding the axe over little Jeremy's future are Regional Operating Officer Rick Childerhose, Area Manager Doug Hughes, and Regional Team Leader Lynn Middleton. Against medical prescription and advice, and 34 years of scientific research, they are adamant in carrying out the government sentence of a life with no hope for a four-year-old Penticton child. Unless this policy is reversed immediately, it is unlikely Barbara and Joe Rodrigues will be able to continue paying for this vital Lovaas Treatment themselves. Their son's hope for a life and a future will be crushed, because a government refuses to accept its legal, moral and ethical responsibilities.

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**For more information, please contact Barbara Rodrigues at (250) 490-8568
or email joe_rodrigues@bc.sympatico.ca
or visit their website at http://digital-web.net/FEATbc/penticton**