

September 27, 1998

Mr. Rob Houston
MCF Complaint Manager
Ste. 400- 1726 Dolphin Avenue
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9R9

Dear Mr. Houston:

RE: Jeremy Rodrigues

We have been advised by the Children's Commission that we must first put in a complaint to you before they will intervene on our son's behalf.

Jeremy is a 4-year-old boy who has been diagnosed with autism. Currently, due to his autism he is classified as severely disabled. We have two doctors' letters prescribing the Lovaas method of ABA treatment for our son. We have used the inadequate and incompetent services/supports that are provided by Ministry of Children and Families and watched in despair as each year our son grew worse. We now have a treatment that is working and the MCF was providing support financially via a program that provides aides to children in preschool/day care. This money was via a contract for 'in-home day care'.

The money was sent directly to me as it was only a portion of the total cost of therapy. My contract is up at the end of this month and I received a fax from my social worker saying that they would pay me the equivalent of a full time aide. Now, Ms. Middleton is telling me that there is no longer 'in-home day care' and that my girls have to be hired through the Supported Child Care Program. This would be unacceptable as these girls work for our son. They are trained in Lovaas therapy upon which we fly the Consultant up from the States and pay for that. They are doing a Lovaas program with our son. The MCF knew this when they first granted our contract in April of 1998 and they knew this when they sent the fax of July 20, 1998. We can see no reason that this contract is not be renewed and the fax dated July 20, 1998 is not being honoured other than a Class Action Lawsuit was filed against three Ministries for this 'medically necessary' autism treatment to be covered. We also know that a fax was sent out to all Regional Operating Officers stating that no funding for Lovaas programs was to be granted. This doesn't apply to us as our contract was to be renewed and was promised to be increased before the date of August 1998.

We are hoping that you can help us to have our contract renewed showing the increase for a full-time aide. There are no programs or interventions that can compare or even come near this treatment. We see no reason why the subsidy cannot be sent directly to us as it is in many other regions of the province.

We are also aware that Supported Child Care's mandate is 'The best needs of the child' and Jeremy's best needs are met with Lovaas treatment in his own home.

We have stated to the local MCF staff that we are prepared to do whatever it takes to get our son the help that he requires. This will include among other things publicity over the lack of cooperation and consideration for our son's rights and his needs.

We look forward to your help in this very urgent and very frustrating matter. We thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Barbara Rodrigues

Joe Rodrigues

cc: Janet Donald, Children's Commission File#199823427
Mr. Rick Thorpe, MLA, Okanagan/Penticton