

The Cerebral Palsy Association of British Columbia

“Knowledge Centre for CP”



For Immediate Release:

CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (CPABC) DOES NOT SUPPORT THE SO - CALLED ASHLEY TREATMENT

The Cerebral Palsy Association of British Columbia is speaking out against the so-called Ashley Treatment, or growth-attenuating therapy and surgery performed upon a young girl living with a disability in Seattle.

“As a parent of a daughter with Cerebral Palsy, which is also a life-long disability, I cannot support these parents in their decision to modify their daughter’s physical development through drug therapy and surgery”, says parent and CPABC board member Carol Stinson. “My daughter’s greatest wish is to be as typical as possible. Turning your child into a doll-like eternal child should not be an option for parents or medical professionals.”

The CPABC believes that the Ashley Treatment is a response to the difficulties all parents face when raising a child with a disability. Supports and services for parents and families are generally poorly funded (in British Columbia the responsibility lies with the Provincial Government) with very narrow eligibility requirements and long wait lists.

If adequate supports were in place for people with disabilities to live with dignity in their communities and if adequate supports for parents caring for children with disabilities were in place this “treatment” would never be an option and would be seen as what it is, a grave injustice against a person with disabilities.

There are two questions that need be asked:

1. Is this a therapy that would ever be considered for a child without a disability? Why would having a disability take away an individual’s right to live as typical a life as possible?
2. The parent’s concerns that they do not want their child “cared for by strangers” begs the question, What will these parents expect to happen when they die? Will the next step be euthanasia? Again, only in Ashley’s best interests of course.

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