



because every child is savable.

May 16, 2003

Mr. John Wilhelmsen  
Chief Substance Abuse Quality Assurance and Licensing  
Bureau of Health Systems  
State of Michigan  
Department of Consumer and Industry Services  
G. Mennen Williams Building  
PO Box 30664  
Lansing, MI 48909

MI. DEPT. OF CONSUMER & INDUSTRY SERVICES RECEIVED

MAY 29 2003

SUBSTANCE ABUSE QUALITY ASSURANCE & LICENSING

Dear Mr. Wilhelmsen:

Pathway Family Center and other long-term treatment programs are being unjustly attacked by an organization that calls itself the "International Survivors Action Committee," "Thestraights, or "Straightinc." This group is comprised of a small number of anonymous individuals who claim to be past clients of a former substance abuse treatment program known as Straight, Inc. The Straightinc.'s web site links its organization to the Drug Policy Alliance, a group that supports the legalization of drugs and the reduction of punishment for drug law offenders. Straightinc. attacks organizations like the Drug Free America Foundation, the Partnerships for a Drug-Free America and Straight Inc. Alumni, which is a group of Straight graduates who believe the program helped them.

Pathway Family Center has a 10-year history in adolescent substance abuse treatment. Our program is based on the medical model of addiction as well as the 12 steps of Alcoholic's Anonymous. We use a combination of cognitive, behavioral and psychodynamic therapy. At Pathway, the entire family is treated. Our success is attributed to our well-rounded approach and our team of experts consisting of Master level therapists, Psychologist, Psychiatrist and a Medical Doctor.

Dr. John Franklin of the University of Detroit Mercy College of Education and Human Services conducted an independent study of outcomes for Pathway clients. From a response of approximately 51 percent of all program participants surveyed, the survey found that 98 percent of those clients did not return to their prior drug severity and 82 percent remained clean and sober three years after treatment. Dr. John Franklin, who conducted the study claimed, "I have worked in the addiction field for almost 27 years and I have not seen any program with outcome percentages this high."

In addition, our program meets the stringent requirements of accreditation by the Council on Accreditation for Child and Family Services (COA) and licensing agencies in Michigan and Indiana. In its more than 10 years of operation, there has never been a lawsuit filed against our organization for any reason, let alone client mistreatment.

The mission of Straightinc. is to eliminate all long-term treatment programs and in particular any that have even a remote link to the 1980s treatment program called Straight, Inc. We have been advised that the

**X ISAC IS NOT ANONYMOUS!  
X 10 OR 25?  
years**

**SEE 2005 AD FOR KHK**

*In Michigan:*

Village Office Center  
23100 Providence Drive  
Suite 300  
Southfield, MI 48075

Phone: (248) 443-0105  
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*In Indiana:*

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Suite 108  
Indianapolis, IN 46250

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International Survivors Action Committee is attacking Pathway Family Center because it believes we are Straight operating under the name of Pathway Family Center. Contrary to their accusations, we are not.

When Straight closed in 1993, Pathway served a few of its clients who chose to seek treatment with us and Pathway's founder was a parent in the Straight program. Also, Dr. George Ross, a leader in the field of adolescent substance abuse and the author of *Treating Adolescent Substance Abuse* developed a therapeutic treatment model that many adolescent programs adopted. The result of Dr. Ross' work and research has contributed to part of the treatment philosophy at Pathway Family Center. Straight also used this philosophy. These connections do not make us a Straight program operating under a different name as the International Survivors Action Committee is alleging. As I am sure you know, each individual program and how it applies theories varies greatly.

We are concerned about the International Survivors Action Committee because they have attempted to hurt our good name in the community with untruths. Their attack tactics clearly show an unwillingness to look at long-term programs in an unbiased and straightforward manner. Those tactics include attempts to recruit negatively biased comments about our program, using the Internet to post negative comments and labeling positive comments as coming from "brainwashed" people, and calling our accrediting agency and other supporters in attempts to discredit us. As a result, members of this organization may contact you. If this happens, please keep in mind that the person calling is making accusations about Pathway from their experience at an entirely different program. We are evaluating the options available to us legally to end their misinformation campaign.

It is also our opinion that this radical group is not interested in an honest and reasonable conversation that will result in a rationale analysis of our program. This makes it difficult for us to defend ourselves in any other way but to forewarn our supporters.

Pathway Family Center appreciates your support and as always welcomes you to visit our facility at any time. If you have any questions regarding this matter, or any other, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Terri C. Nissley  
President & CEO

\* ISAC REPORTS ABOUT  
ABUSE, FRAUD, ETC,  
NOT LIMITED TO PFC

\* - ? - ISAC

\* ISAC LEFT MESSAGE  
WITH Terri Nissley,  
SHE NEVER CALLED BACK.



A member of Henry Ford Trinity Health Network  
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May 16, 2003

Ms. Kathryn Heard  
Chief, Substance Abuse Quality Assurance  
and Licensing Section  
Bureau of Health Systems  
State of Michigan  
Department of Consumer and Industry Services  
G. Mennen Williams Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 30664  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Ms. Heard,

As Chairman of the Board for Pathway Family Center, I am proud to say that the organization of which I am a part has helped hundreds of teens and their families have a second chance at life over the past decade. The service Pathway provides helping adolescents and their families suffering from serious substance abuse problems has been invaluable to the communities it serves.

In an independent study conducted by the University of Detroit-Mercy, Pathway's success was much higher than the researcher had encountered in his 27 years in the field. These outcomes are the result of Pathway's concern for, and vigilance in, delivering quality care to its clients and their families. I personally have served on the agency's quality improvement committee and can attest to the fact that there is a constant examination of programming, delivery methods and measures geared toward improving the program to best serve adolescents and families.

On May 9, the Boards of both the Indiana and Michigan facilities attended Pathway's Annual Board Retreat. At this meeting, we had a lengthy discussion about the accusations being made by the ISAC organization. This organization is making claims that are lies and half-truths. ISAC's claims are based on experiences from other treatment programs no longer in existence. No one from ISAC has visited Pathway Family Center. No one from ISAC has made direct contact with Pathway to learn about its treatment model or outcomes.

★ Due to the unethical and inappropriate methods being used by ISAC to discredit Pathway, the Board has directed Pathway's management not to contact ISAC, but rather to work directly with any licensing, accrediting or funding agency contacted by this group.

**REPORTING ABUSE, FRAUD, ETC  
IS NOT UNETHICAL**

Ms. Kathryn Heard  
May 16, 2003  
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Like other long-term treatment programs for adolescents, Pathway is struggling financially. A lack of insurance reimbursement has created a very difficult environment for long-term chemical dependency programs. This is evidenced by the paucity of programs across the country providing long-term, innovative therapy like Pathway's. That number dwindles further when successful outcome measures such as Pathway's become the benchmark.

The Board believes that ISAC is causing Pathway Family Center to use its resources unproductively, focusing on defending its excellent programming rather than helping families on the difficult road to recovery. This vicious disease steals so much from teens and their families, it is distressing to find individuals spending their time and money organizing and fighting on behalf of the disease. It will be even more distressing if they are allowed to win.

The Board and Staff at Pathway Family Center welcome any questions or visits that your agency deems appropriate to evaluate our services. If you have any questions for the Board, I am happy to respond on its behalf. Please feel free to contact me directly at (586) 263-2889.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Adler".

Scott Adler  
Vice President, Community Integration

C: Terri Nissley, President & CEO, Pathway Family Center

PFC Monthly Budget \$30,000  
AVERAGE SINGLE CLIENT FEE \$40,000  
27-50 CLIENTS / YEAR - NOT FINANCIALLY  
STRUGGLING