

DEPARTMENT OF

# Health & Rehabilitative Services

District Five

2255 EAST BAY DRIVE, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33516

Bob Graham, Governor

July 14, 1982

Miller Newton, Ph.D  
Straight, Inc.  
P. O. Box 40052  
St. Petersburg, FL 33743

Mr. John Bustle

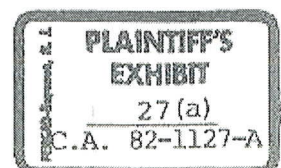
Mr. Terrell Harper

FRANKIE GOLDSBY

Dear Dr. Newton:

As you are aware, this office has received an official complaint regarding your program, which was investigated by Mr. John Bustle and Mr. Terrell Harper on July 6, 1982. Seven program clients were interviewed on that date. The following issues of concern surfaced in those interviews:

1. Marathoning: One client stated that she had been "marathoned" for 70 hours, allowed three hours sleep and then kept up for another full day before being allowed a full night's sleep. Marathoning was described as a disciplinary technique in which the client is forced to stay awake for long periods and confronted by rotating shifts of clients.
2. Spanking Machine: The "spanking machine" was described as a disciplinary technique where clients are made to crawl through a line of other clients while being spanked. Two youngsters interviewed stated they had gone through the spanking machine. Both felt that the experience had been more humiliating than painful.
3. Confrontation: Several clients related episodes of being "confronted" for various program infractions which ranged from "yelling and screaming" to being taken into a restroom by other clients and pushed, poked, and "nitpicked." Nitpicking was described as being restrained while being pinched and having one's hair pulled.
4. Peanut Butter Diet: Two clients indicated they were placed on a diet of peanut butter, bread and water. One client stated this lasted 25 days and the other stated it lasted two weeks. You have indicated this technique is used for discipline and behavior modification.



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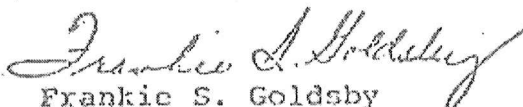
5. Retention in Program: Two clients, ages 18 and 19, indicated they had not been permitted to leave the program when they requested. One client stated she had put two requests through the "chain of command" and received no response. This client also added that she no longer wished to leave. The other client stated, "I am 18 years old and being held against my will." This issue has been brought to your attention and it is my understanding that this client has been discharged.

These issues are of concern to this office because of their potential adverse impact on clients and your program. As you have indicated in your conversations of July 6 with Mr. Bustle and Mr. Harper a willingness and intention to re-evaluate these practices, I suggest the following actions be taken:

1. A written response to these issues addressing particularly the corrective actions to be taken be developed by Straight, Inc. and submitted to this office as soon as possible.
2. A meeting be scheduled to include yourself, your medical director and board members, and MRS District V staff to review the plan developed.

It is hoped that by this action a resolution may be developed that will meet the needs of all parties involved. Your prompt response to this request will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
Frankie S. Goldsby  
Alcohol, Drug Abuse and  
Mental Health Program Supervisor

FSG:jf

cc: SDPM (Smith)  
SDLC (McPherson)  
SDDA (Wester)  
SDA (Hoppe)