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Drug Program Told To Allow Lawyer Access

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A federal judge ordered yesterday that participants in a controversial Fairfax County **drug** rehabilitation program be allowed access to their lawyers or lawyers hired by their parents on 24 hours notice.

Lawyers for **Straight** Inc., the **drug** program, disputed the need for the order, saying that that it already allows its participants such access--a statement that was challenged by a lawyer who said that the participants may be "unable to speak . . . for fear of retribution."

U.S. District Judge Albert V. Bryan Jr. denied at the hearing in Alexandria two other requests by lawyers for Fred Collins, a 20-year-old Fairfax County man who has filed a lawsuit claiming he was held against his will by **Straight** personnel. Collins had asked that **Straight** be ordered to advise all participants over 17 years old that they are free to leave and to enjoin **Straight** from inflicting physical abuse on participants.

Straight attorney Ronald Goldfarb argued that an order stopping alleged physical abuse of participants would be like "issuing an order to stop beating your wife."

Bryan said Collins' attorneys had made "some showing of a possible violation of access to an attorney." Collins, a former participant who claims he was involuntarily imprisoned by his parents and **Straight** personnel for 5 1/2 months, is seeking to have his suit recognized as a class action on behalf of all **Straight** participants. The **drug** program has denied his allegations.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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