

Testimony before the Human Services and Select Committee on Children

December 18, 2008

Good afternoon, chairs and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee and the Select Committee on Children. My name is Mary Lou Hill, and I am a registered voter and a resident of East Hartford, in this great state of Connecticut.

I am here today to ask for your help. There is a need for specialized trauma/sexual abuse services in both residential AND community settings here in Connecticut. I am not asking to build more but use the facilities we have to fill the need with the service. You can help fund, and supply this need with specialized professionals, for these centers.

My children and I are survivors of domestic violence. After my divorce I later found out that my children (here are their photos - Trisha now 15, Tyler 13) were victimized by their father. I contacted the Department of Children and Families, requesting voluntary services. Due to their severe trauma and rapes they have spent a lot of time away from me. They have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, post traumatic stress disorder, borderline personality disorder and a few others.

My son spent three years in residential treatment centers starting at the age of six, and numerous acute, sub acute hospitals, and partial hospital programs, not to mention the in home services. My daughter is now a sever cutter and she too has a list of facilities she has participated in. None of these facilities ever touched on the sexual trauma they had endured. Here next to me is some of the paper trail if you will of my children's mental health past.

When working with the department of children and families, I did not feel as though I were receiving the same help as if I gave up custody of my children. The department could not provide the specialized treatment needed to help my children heal, because there aren't any in the State of Connecticut.

If you had a gall bladder problem would you go see an optometrist, eye doctor to treat it?

NO. Well there aren't any specialized residential centers for sexually abused children in Connecticut to help my children learn to heal. I have had to wait for beds, and then it is not the right placement. When we have a potted plant that is root bound in the pot, we take it out, cut off the bad parts so that the plant can live. We then repot a healthy plant. My children need the root of their trauma cut out, and there isn't a place here to do that.

I need your help in creating specialized trauma/sexual abuse services in both residential AND community settings for sexually abused children of various ages in our state of Connecticut. Our children are our future. We need to stop the circle of violence and help one another learn to live. Your help is needed in creating these specialized treatment centers for sexually abused traumatized children. We all want our children to live a healthy life.

Thank you for your time, I hope we can work together to create these specialized treatment centers with your help all things are possible.

Mary Lou Hill

191 High Street

Apt B 7

East Hartford, CT 06118

hm-860-569-7729, cell 860- 882-7038