

January 14, 1975

III-4556A

Mr. Joseph C. McKenna
Supervisor of Special Education Classes
Intermediate Unit I
Western State School and Hospital
333 Curry Hill Road
Canonsburg, Pa 15317

Dear Mr. McKenna,

Recent developments regarding my daughter Kim V [REDACTED] in connection with, her Health, Education, and Welfare. All of which interrelate for total growth needs. These needs created a deep concern, due to problems Kim had under observation during her visit home for the three weeks of the Christmas Holidays. Some of these problems can be rectified through initiation of changes by the IU. I'm hopeful these changes can be accomplished without difficulty.

It is a noted fact Kim has been sitting for (10 hours) a day. For at least ONE YEAR and a HALF. This practice is neither healthy nor practical if rehabilitation is the objective. In considering a tired and aching body will not respond at it's capacity nor can any potential be achieved if muscle deterioration has become fixed.

On home visit for three weeks of the holiday, Kim would ask to lay after three hours of sitting. As the days passed, I came to realize she could sit more erect and seemed more comfortable after those rests of one hour. Before entering Western State School and Hospital, Kim had thigh spreaders which kept her backside from sliding forward alleviating weight off her tailbone, the rounded shoulders, and the curved spine which in my opinion have become worse in the last few years. I could not expect otherwise. Since, I have been informed of the practices of what is overlooked when professionals have an overloaded situation. Another oversight which might prove valuable are the thigh spreaders she outgrew during the course of years at Western that were not reordered. They were previously used as an aid in sitting besides an aid to the hamstrings. This combination included shoulderhooks the Dennison School designed for her.. Since the discontinued use and practice of these aids have become questionable and maybe adding weakness incurred from the long hours of sitting contributing to her problems of growth.

I have asked after school personnel to lay Kim in a cart, periods of the day. They have indicated to me a change will be initiated as also with the additional food provided which they have failed to fulfill in the past. As I have asked of the welfare dept. I'm asking the IU, also, to take the same consideration during the course of the school day. At least once during the afternoon session this can be accomplished, possibly utilizing that period for co-ordination of motor movements. If not Clare Burgen might interject a thought in another direction. I would like you to consider also Kim had always been capable of feeding herself with a fork. She has become very weak in this development. Since only a spoon is utilized on the self feeding program. As long as supervision is maintained during feeding I give my permission to introduce the fork, since some form of the normal living is part of the educational program.

Concerning Kim's dropped wrist, and, the capabilities she has in the use of her hands and finger motor function could be more progressive if a wrist retaining band were used to aid in better control. A devise of this nature has helped many children with the same difficulty. A devise designed to fit her individual needs would enable her to function with less difficulty at the same time positive results of progress can be achieved.

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Mr. Joseph C. McKenna,

I am asking you to look into which type would be more suitable for Kim's particular needs.

I will be looking forward to the changes I feel your office can resolve. Please acknowledge developments on all the issues as they are met.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. M. A. M. [REDACTED]

cc:

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