

Sheila Matthews Cofounder www.ablechild.org
Contact: (203) 253-0329

Ablechild is a nationally recognized 501(3)c non-profit parent's rights organization. Ablechild was recently featured on CNN Special Projects, Perry's Principles (Quick to Medicate) December 10, 2011. Ablechild contributed to the groundbreaking Diane Sawyer ABC 20/20 year long investigation into the drugging of foster care children which was shown to be a major problem not only within the state of Connecticut, but throughout the Nation.

Ablechild was founded by two moms, Patricia Weathers and myself, Sheila Matthews. Both our schools diagnosed our boys with ADHD through the IEP process in our school system. This diagnosis was based off a "subjective" ADD checklist. We were never informed during the entire IEP process that this ADD/ADHD checklist was subjective and was not endorsed and had never been endorsed by the Board of Education, the State or Federal Government. We have submitted below letters from the Board of Education, State of Connecticut and a Federal Document that states they do not endorse this type of identification of children.

We were never told this checklist came from the Association of School Psychologists through research: behavioral, and clinical drug trials grants. We were never at any time informed that there is no test in existence to diagnose the condition and the diagnosis itself was not based in science. We were never informed at any time that this was a psychiatric label and that we were in essence labeling our children "mentally ill." We were never informed that there were any other treatments for this diagnosis other than drug treatment. We were never informed at any time what the risks of this recommended drug treatment were and the fact that many of the drugs recommended were not even FDA approved for children.

In fact, we were never informed that we even had a choice to "opt out" of a school psychologist and his or her testing of our child. During this whole process we were only offered mental health services and little if any educational ones. Parents must have the right to have an education or speech and language specialist test their child instead of a psychologist. All parents should have the right to educational services that are evidence based rather than subjective not only within special education but throughout the entire education system.

For the past five years, Ablechild has fought for legislation to prevent what happened to us from happening to other parents. We in many ways have been fortunate. Our children are survivors of this very risky process. Other children have not been so lucky, being injured and having died from misdiagnosis and recommended drug treatment.

Ablechild and all of its parent members continue to urge this committee to pass an informed consent bill which focuses on full disclosure to protect not only parents informed consent rights but our children's health and safety. Each year for the last five years, a bill for informed consent has been rejected, and it is our hope this year, that you as a committee seriously consider this issue since it involves both the protection of parent's rights and our children's health and safety. We are requesting that you incorporate Representative Hetherington's proposed bill #5007 last proposed in 2011, AN ACT CONCERNING PSYCHIATRIC AND PSYCHIATRIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS FOR PARENTS, on informed consent into the language of this bill 5353.

AN ACT CONCERNING PSYCHIATRIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING
OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS FOR
PARENTS

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/TOB/H/2011HB-05007-R00-HB.htm>

We cannot stress enough how important it is to incorporate the Hetherington bill language "5007" within bill "5353" for parent and children's rights.

We would be happy to expand on our request and answer any questions you may have.

Thank You for Your Consideration
The Staff of Ablechild.org

My son's checklist given to me by New Canaan School

ADHD RATING SCALE-IV: HOME VERSION

Child's name _____ Sex M F Age 7 Grade 2
 Completed by: Mother X Father _____ Guardian _____ Grandparent _____

Circle the number that best describes your child's home behavior over the past 6 months.

	Never or rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1. Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
2. Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
3. Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
4. Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected.	0	<u>1</u>	2	3
5. Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.	0	<u>1</u>	2	3
6. Runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
7. Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish work.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
8. Has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.	0	<u>1</u>	2	3
9. Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities.	0	<u>1</u>	2	3
10. Is "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor."	0	<u>1</u>	2	3
11. Avoids tasks (e.g., schoolwork, homework) that require sustained mental effort.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
12. Talks excessively.	<u>0</u>	1	2	<u>3</u>
13. Loses things necessary for tasks or activities.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
14. Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.	0	1	<u>2</u>	3
15. Is easily distracted.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
16. Has difficulty awaiting turn.	0	1	<u>2</u>	3
17. Is forgetful in daily activities.	<u>0</u>	1	2	3
18. Interrupts or intrudes on others.	0	1	<u>2</u>	3

From *ADHD Rating Scale-IV: Checklists, Norms, and Clinical Interpretation* by George J. DuPaul, Thomas J. Power, Arthur D. Anastopoulos, and Robert Reid. Copyright 1998 by the authors. Permission to photocopy this scale is granted to purchasers of *ADHD Rating Scale-IV* for personal use only (see copyright page for details). ADHD criteria are adapted by permission from DSM-IV. Copyright 1994 by the American Psychiatric Association.

FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE USE OF BEHAVIOR
MODIFICATION DRUGS ON GRAMMAR SCHOOL CHILDREN
OF THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY INQUIRY

HEARING
BEFORE A
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 29, 1970

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Operations



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1970

82-268

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office,
Washington, D.C. 20402 • Price 65 cents

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Joseph Gallo

203-966-2840

NEW CANAAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GARY G. RICHARDS, E.D.D.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

March 28, 2001

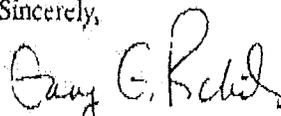
Ms. Sheila Gallo
104 Pocconock Trail
New Canaan CT 06840

Dear Ms. Gallo:

In response to your request for a statement:

The New Canaan Board of Education does not have a policy on Attention Deficit Disorder testing.

Sincerely,



Gary Richards
Superintendent of Schools



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



May 21, 2001

Ms. Sheila Matthews
104 Pocconock Trail
New Canaan, CT 06840

Dear Ms. Matthews:

Your letter to Governor Rowland was forwarded to me for a response. I understand that you already expressed your concerns about the ADD checklist with Nancy Cappello and George Dowaliby from the Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services at the Department of Education. There are many checklists on the market that are used by physicians and clinicians to determine the existence of ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). The State Department of Education does not endorse any checklist nor recommend treatment or service for ADHD.

You may obtain a copy of the Connecticut Task Force on ADHD by visiting our website at www.state.ct.us/sde. It may be found under Special Education.

Sincerely,

Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

Model Hatch Amendment Letter, Version 2



For this reason society requires that the education of youth should be watched with the most scrupulous attention. Education is a great measurer, forms the moral character of men and morals are the basis of government. Noah Webster, 1758-1843

The original "Model Hatch Amendment Letter," crafted by Senator Orrin Hatch's (R. Utah) office, was sent to Family Friendly Libraries by a dedicated New York mom who heard it on a "Turning Point" program by Dr. David Jeremiah. Another wise mom from Michigan has since used it with some additions that we believe are helpful, particularly when you still have some definite positive connections with your child's school and want to keep those positives going. The result is an alternative letter which retains its strong parental rights message while encouraging good relationships that exist to continue. Feel free to use either model or adapt it to your own situation even further. Let us know what is happening in this parental rights arena, please.

Dear _____,

As the parents of _____, who attends _____, we thank you and your staff for your interest and effort in seeking to provide an excellent education for our child. Your commitment and skills are deeply appreciated! We are proud of the level of excellence in education that _____ provides in each classroom, and we thank you for all that you do to contribute to the education of our _____.

We would like to address the issue of our ability to review classroom material via this letter. Our desire is that we are able to review materials and address issues with our child concurrent with the curriculum and within the framework of our family, as well as having the appropriate knowledge to discern the curriculum's alignment or lack thereof with our family's beliefs.

Under U.S. legislation and court decision, parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education, and students have certain rights that the school may not deny. Parents have the right to be assured that the schools do not unknowingly or knowingly impair or weaken the student's beliefs, moral values and belief systems within his or her family unit. A student has the right to hold his or her values and moral standards without direct or indirect manipulation by the schools through curricula, textbooks, and AV material or supplementary assignments. Schools and families successfully working together as partners in education and communication of curriculum content will further strengthen the ability to provide students an excellent education in a way that strengthens individual families and our community.