

## **Tom Coleman**

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**From:** Thomas F. Coleman [tomcoleman@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 11, 2004 2:36 PM  
**To:** 'ISAC Director'; 'research.director@isacorp.org'  
**Subject:** my role at the press conference

I am pleased to participate as a presenter at the upcoming press conference of the International Survivors Action Committee (ISAC) in San Diego.

Those who attend should be enlightened by the presentations of some of the survivors of these reprogramming facilities, their parents, and by representatives of human rights agencies.

The recent closure of Casa by the Sea by the Mexican government, and the more recent suicide by a teenager girl at Spring Creek Lodge in Montana, serve to underscore the need for public attention to this problem.

Here is a brief outline of the focus of my planned remarks.

1. My 30+ year background and experience in human rights law and politics
2. My recent "crash course" in teen abductions and reprogramming facilities
3. I coordinated an effort to rescue a teenage girl from SCL in Montana
4. I became aware of ISAC and the need for international oversight
5. I was disappointed by the failure of the federal government to tackle this problem
6. I was surprised by the lack of federal and state regulation of this "teen trafficking" industry
7. I am determined to help bring clarity and commitment to stop these abuses
8. I am dedicated to creating a national multidisciplinary "think tank" to focus on this industry
9. My colleagues and I are committed to creating a national plan of action to stop trafficking in abducted teens
10. The "think tank" of service providers, academics, and advocates will focus on the implementation and/or reform of:
  - a. International human rights and children's rights treaties
  - b. Federal anti-trafficking laws
  - c. Federal child labor laws
  - d. Federal interstate commerce regulations
  - e. State judicial placement procedures and guidelines
  - f. State and federal licensing of "special transportation services"
  - g. State child abuse / family violence laws and regulations
  - h. State health and safety laws regulating child reprogramming facilities
  - i. Interagency cooperation in monitoring and regulating this industry

So I think that my remarks will focus on how I was drawn into this, how complicated it all seems, how government agencies and officials seem to keep passing the buck, and how there is a critical need for coordinated investigation, oversight, and regulation of this large and ever growing industry that is making huge profits on the abduction, transportation, and incarceration of troubled teenagers.



**ISAC Corporation Sponsors A Panel Forum On Abuse Within Privately Owned Boarding Schools And Behavior Modification Facilities For Juveniles**

**WHAT:** "Profiting from the Torture, Trafficking, and Imprisonment of Children," "Survivors Speak Out"<br>

**WHO:** ISAC Corporation<br>

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 16, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.<br>

**WHERE:** Westin Horton Plaza<br>

910 Broadway Circle<br>

San Diego, California 92101<br>

California Ballroom 'B'<br>

**MEDIA:** Contact Shelby Earnshaw at 540-522-9276 or Karen Grant at 760-443-3422 to confirm your attendance.

Media Advisory

SAN DIEGO/EWORLDWIRE/Oct. 13, 2004 --- ISAC Corporation ([www.isaccorp.org](http://www.isaccorp.org)), a 501(c)(3) organization, sponsors a panel forum on abuse within privately owned boarding schools and behavior modification facilities for juveniles.

Every year there are countless reports of sexual assault, beatings, misuse of chemical and mechanical restraint, medical neglect and even death within privately owned youth facilities.

Former students, parents, and others will be sharing their personal experiences with these unregulated facilities, as well as requesting congressional hearings, federal investigations, and an investigation by international human rights agencies.

**Facilities owned by Michael Palmer**

Five former students of these facilities will be sharing their experience:

*Genesis by the Sea, Ensenada, Mexico* - Closed by Mexican authorities in September 2004 for suspected child abuse and neglect. Officials found a punishment cell and illegal prescriptions medications at the school.

*Victory Christian Academy, Jay, Fla.* - Relocated from California after a state judge banned Michael Palmer from ever working at another unlicensed facility in the state. California officials had found a punishment cell, students tethered to one another, expired prescription medications including a "dewormer," and declared the school a fire hazard.

**Facilities Connected to the World Wide Association of Specialty Programs and Schools (WWASPS):**

Nine facilities connected to WWASPS have been closed following allegations of torture, physical and emotional abuse, sexual assault, and medical neglect.

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Nine facilities currently operate in the United States and abroad.

**Twenty former students and parents of students from the following facilities will be sharing their experiences:**

*Spring Creek Lodge Academy, Thompson Falls, Mont.* - A student committed suicide at the facility on October 7. Difficult students are imprisoned in a small, sparse building called "The Hobbit."

*Casa by the Sea, Ensenada, Mexico* - Closed by Mexican authorities in September for suspected child abuse and neglect. Officials also found an unlicensed pharmacy on the property.

*Majestic Ranch Academy, Randolph, Utah* - This facility accepts children as young as 9. Director Wayne Winder was banned from one-on-one contact with students after children accused him of sexual abuse. Children have reported brutal physical restraint and ritualistic abuse.

*Carolina Springs Academy, Donalds, S.C.* - Investigated by state authorities for suspected child abuse and neglect. Officials with the Department of Social Services banned Owner Narvin Lichfield from the property.

*Academy at Ivy Ridge, Ogdensburg, N.Y.* - Investigated by the New York State Police and the FBI for suspected child abuse and neglect.

*High Impact, Mexico* - Children report being held at the facility in 2002 although it was officially closed in 2001 after Mexican officials witnessed children strapped facedown on the ground inside of dog cages.

*Cross Creek Programs, LaVerkin, Utah* - Source of many complaints of brutal physical restraint, excessive use of isolations rooms and medical neglect.

*Tranquility Bay, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica* - Source of many complaints of rape and torture including brutal physical restraint resulting in broken bones and the use of pepper spray against already-restrained children.

*Paradise Cove, Samoa* - Closed after repeated reports of child abuse, medical neglect, falsified court orders, and the holding of legal adults.

*Academy at Dundee Ranch, Costa Rica* - Closed by Costa Rican authorities in May 2003 after officials found evidence of torture, abuse and neglect. Officials in Costa Rica say owner Narvin Lichfield plans to re-open the facility.

These facilities prohibit verbal communication between children and parents until the "student" reaches a certain level in the program. Once the child earns this privilege, staff members monitor the conversations. Staff members force children to rewrite letters home until they espouse only positive views about the facility, or a message from the staff is included instructing parents to ignore the "lies" and "manipulations."

Children who try to report what they are suffering, are severely punished.

This industry generates over \$100,000,000 per year, with some facilities charging more than \$4,000 per month - yet there is no government oversight, training, licensing, or regulation. Many "schools" lack a single certified teacher.

These American children, labeled as "liars" and "manipulators," have had no voice for many years. Now they will be speaking out, demanding that the federal government listen to their allegations of prolonged abuse, and they will be calling upon law enforcement to intervene on behalf of the children still imprisoned.

HTML: <http://newsroom.eworldwire.com/wr/101304/10692.htm>

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**CONTACT:**

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