

Count Me In

I endorse the mission of the Emancipation Project and would like to help advance this cause in the following ways: (check appropriate boxes and fill out the form)

I want to join the Emancipation Project by making a tax-deductible donation for:

\$500 – Platinum Membership

\$250 – Gold Membership

\$100 – Silver Membership

\$ 50 – Regular Membership

_____ – Other

Check enclosed (payable to Spectrum Institute)

Please charge to my credit card as follows:

Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

Put me on the e-mail list for news updates and action alerts.

I would like to volunteer my services. (Please include a letter describing areas of expertise or types of help you can provide.)

Please clip this panel and return it to:

Emancipation Project of Spectrum Institute

Post Office Box 11030, Glendale, CA 91226

323-210-9025 / fax 323-210-1504

emancipationproject@earthlink.net



Nora J. Baladerian, Ph. D.

President

Dr. Nora J. Baladerian, President of the Emancipation Project, is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Marriage and Family Therapist, and Certified Forensic Examiner.

Since 1972 she has worked in the areas of abuse of children and adults with disabilities. She frequently presents workshops at national conferences on abuse and violence. She conducts trainings for law enforcement agencies, therapists, and child welfare workers on abuse detection and intervention.

Dr. Baladerian is the author of more than 50 articles related to the abuse and neglect of people with disabilities. She has served as a member of the California Children's Justice Act Task Force and is currently an Advisory Board member of the American Bar Association's Council on Victims.



Thomas F. Coleman, J.D.

Executive Director

Thomas F. Coleman, Executive Director of the Emancipation Project, is an attorney with 32 years of experience in human rights advocacy.

He has successfully litigated cases in the U.S. Supreme Court and in the Supreme Courts of California, Alaska, Georgia, and Michigan. His advocacy has resulted in the passage and defeat of bills in many legislative bodies.

Coleman has convinced Governors and Mayors to issue executive orders on a variety of human rights issues. He has served on government study commissions and has written public policy reports for elected officials.

Coleman works closely with the media to accomplish his objectives. He has been quoted by dozens of newspapers and has appeared on scores of radio talk shows and national television programs.

The Emancipation Project is a function of Spectrum Institute, a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit corporation.

www.emancipationproject.org

EMANCIPATION PROJECT



Our mission is to:

– Advocate for the human rights of minors who are abducted and forced into mental and emotional reprogramming at private residential facilities;

– Encourage parents, judges, and child welfare professionals to use safe and effective alternatives for the education and treatment of teenagers who have difficulties at home or school;

– Promote government regulation and foster community awareness to prevent and prosecute child abuse by private residential facilities; and

– Help current residents to enforce their rights and enable survivors to make abductors and abusers accountable for the harms they have caused.

Our methods include:

Professional Conferences

We make presentations at national and regional conferences of lawyers, psychologists, child welfare workers, and other professionals to enlist support for our cause.

Educational Outreach

We work with the media and communicate with elected officials to create an environment conducive to public policy reform.

Litigation Support

We provide strategic and technical advice to lawyers representing victims of abuse or fraud by private residential facilities.

Administrative Intervention

We assist relatives and other rescuers of abducted or confined minors to prepare the documents needed for intervention by child protection and law enforcement agencies.

Legislative Analysis

We monitor and analyze pending legislation which may affect the rights of minors confined in private residential facilities.

Investigative Reporting

We investigate instances of abuse or neglect and issue reports documenting patterns of child maltreatment at specific facilities.



**Behind
Closed
Doors:**



Ending

Child

Abuse...

in boarding schools,

boot camps,

and private residential programs



EMANCIPATION PROJECT

Join us in liberating minors from abuse.

Abuse & Neglect of Minors by Unregulated Businesses



Each year thousands of teens and pre-teens are forcibly removed from their homes by distraught parents and banished to months or years of confinement in unlicensed residential facilities in remote rural areas of the United States. Some are sent to facilities in foreign nations.

About 400 businesses confine nearly 14,000

troubled teenagers and generate \$1 billion in annual revenues.

Many minors are abducted by unlicensed "transportation services" and are taken thousands of miles away to be mentally reprogrammed at so-called "boarding schools" or distorted "behavior modification" programs or "boot camps" which charge parents \$50,000 or more per year.

Too many of these businesses lure the parents with false advertising and fraudulent claims. Usually the parents are required to sign a contract purporting to turn over total parental authority to the residential facility.

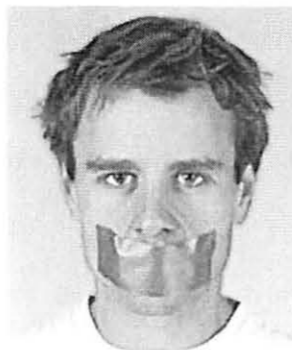
Some minors have been victims of ongoing abuse and neglect in the family home. Some parents intentionally send these victims to a remote facility as a way to minimize the risk of official intervention. Prosecution of the parent is unlikely if the victim is unavailable to be interviewed by authorities.

Once admitted to such a facility, the child is stripped of basic freedoms. Parents are forbidden to visit or communicate with the child for several months. Concerned relatives are not allowed to see or speak with the child and often cannot even determine the child's whereabouts. When letters are finally allowed, parents are warned not to believe allegations of abuse since, they are told, such complaints are merely the child's attempt to manipulate the system.

Educational needs are compromised, since many facilities lack credentialed teachers and have no classroom lectures or student discussions.

Although many of these children have serious mental health problems, therapy is not provided unless the parents pay extra, which most do not. A risk to physical health is aggravated by the fact that in many facilities, controlled prescription drugs are dispensed by unlicensed personnel.

Despite repeated complaints by juveniles of abuse, and complaints by parents of fraud, there is virtually no regulation of this industry by federal, state, or local governments. Since most facilities are not licensed, official intervention is rare.



Many programs prohibit the children from speaking with each other, doling out harsh punishments if the silence is broken. Social isolation for months or years takes a toll on the child's psychological well being. Children are often punished for looking out the window, on the theory that such behavior indicates a desire to run away.

Examples of Abuse & Neglect

By not requiring these facilities to be licensed and subject to unannounced inspections, states are allowing physically abusive practices and psychologically harmful activities. The danger to children is aggravated by the remote locations in which many facilities operate.

The failure of officials to intervene may be caused in part by conflicts of interest. When a facility virtually "owns" the town in which it is located or "buys" political protection through large donations, those beholden to the facility may ignore warning signs or complaints from outsiders.



These are some of the abusive and neglectful practices which have been documented by affidavits, lawsuits, and newspaper reports.

Private Abductions

Minors are abducted, often as they sleep, and forcibly transported to reprogramming facilities which may be hundreds or even thousands of miles from home. Such abductions are traumatic and can emotionally scar these children for years. Interstate transportation of furniture is regulated but not the transport of children.

Forced Confinement

Minors may not be confined in a state operated facility without due process of law. A petition must be filed in court, reasons for confinement must be proven, and the minor must be provided an attorney. Why should confinement in a private facility, at the instigation of a parent, be immune from legal challenge? Concerned relatives should have standing to determine the whereabouts and well-being of a missing child. Minors who are 14 years of age or older should be given an opportunity to object to a private placement and to challenge the cruel or unsafe conditions of their confinement.

Social Isolation

Many of these private residential programs forbid the minors from talking to one another. Months of enforced silence is cruel. Preventing minors from communicating with concerned relatives should also be illegal.

Lack of Treatment

Minors are often denied medical treatment until serious harm has occurred. Licensed therapy for known psychological conditions is generally absent. Prescription drugs are often dispensed by unlicensed staff. Learning and physical disabilities are not accommodated as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Unsafe Conditions

Dangerous restraining practices are used by untrained staff. Contaminated food and water is not uncommon. Blocked doors, sealed windows, and no smoke detectors are fire hazards and endanger children.

Educational Deprivation

Teachers are usually not credentialed. Classroom lectures are rare. Student classroom interaction is forbidden. Academic standards are sacrificed to profit motives.

What You Can Do

Become a Member

Make a tax-deductible donation and become a member of the **Emancipation Project**. We need financial strength in order to successfully challenge the abusive practices of an industry with \$1 billion in annual revenues.

Share Your Experiences

Send us e-mails, letters, and sworn affidavits. Include your name and contact information and tell us your experiences as a:

- juvenile who was abused at a facility
- parent who was a victim of fraud
- staffer who wants to blow the whistle
- rescuer who tried to save a child

Stay Informed

Visit our website periodically and keep up to date on progress and setbacks as we monitor, expose, and challenge the abusive practices of businesses which exploit parents and mistreat children entrusted to their care.

Whether you are an advocate, judge, probation officer, social worker, therapist, child protection worker, or elected official, you should stay abreast of current events in this political and legal battle for human rights.

Volunteer Your Services

Offer your services to this cause by:

- writing letters to elected officials
- writing letters to newspaper editors
- calling radio talk shows to stir things up
- distributing our brochures
- donating professional services
- joining us at professional conferences