

Mental Health Watchdog Reviews Statewide Campaign to Protect Children

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights launched a statewide campaign in 2016 to prevent unjust involuntary examinations of children under the Baker Act.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, September 19, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following the publishing of the Annual [Baker Act](#) Report in June of this year, the Florida chapter of the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR) reviewed their campaign to protect children from abusive use of the mental health law, commonly referred to as the Baker Act.

Viewed as a statewide crisis, there were 32,763 involuntary examinations initiated on children during 2016-2017 according the Baker Act Reporting Center. [1]

“Our organization receives regular calls from the parents of children that have been Baker Acted without their knowledge,” said Diane Stein, President of CCHR Florida. “In our opinion this is a violation of the rights of the child and the parent and something must be done.”

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Diane Stein, President CCHR Florida

Taking action to protect children and put an end to this abuse, CCHR, a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the eradication of abuses committed under the guise of mental health, began educating families on their rights reaching over 184,000 families with information on the Baker Act as well as providing them with a form designed to help prevent unjust [involuntary examination](#). The form makes it clear that the

parent/guardian is not relinquishing their parental rights and also clearly states that the parent is not giving permission for a psychiatric examination of their child for any purpose. The basis for the form is the mental health law itself, which, provides for a willing family member to help a person who is in crisis rather than initiating a Baker Act.

“The criteria for involuntary examination exist to protect the rights of all Floridians and this includes children,” said Stein.

The Baker Act law covers all aspects of mental health including involuntary examination and commitment. Originally designed to prevent the indiscriminate incarceration of individuals



Who Speaks for the Child?

INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENT of MINORS
Parents or legal guardians should be given the opportunity to take full responsibility for their child, as stated in the Baker Act criteria, for the purpose of obtaining consent for a voluntary examination **prior** to Baker Acting.

The Baker Act Criteria clearly allows for a person to be assisted through the help of willing family members or friends or the provision of other services **instead** of being Baker Acted.

It's the parent's right to be a voice for their child. This is **NOT** being done. The parent finds out **AFTER** their child has been Baker Acted.

Protect Children's Rights and Ensure Parental Involvement
Citizens Commission On Human Rights
Call 800.782.2878, for more information
www.cchrflorida.org



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without just cause, this statute was named after Maxine Baker, the former State Representative from Miami who sponsored the Act and who stated, "In the name of mental health, we deprive them of their most precious possession – liberty." However, over the years, the Act that was intended to protect and preserve the liberties of those people labeled as mentally ill has instead become a human rights abuse.

CCHR's campaign educates families on their rights at local events and at free seminars delivered at their headquarters located in downtown Clearwater. Concerned parents are encouraged to contact CCHR to learn more about their rights under the law at 800-782-2878 and to sign a petition asking Florida lawmakers to amend the Baker Act.

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: "Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the 'free world' tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of 'mental health,'" he wrote in March 1969. For more information visit, www.cchrflorida.org

Sources:

[1] Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Annual Report

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/samh/publications/The%20Baker%20Act%20-%20FL%20MH%20Act%20-%20FY%202016-17%20Annual%20Report%20-%20Released%20June%202018.pdf>

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The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater



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