

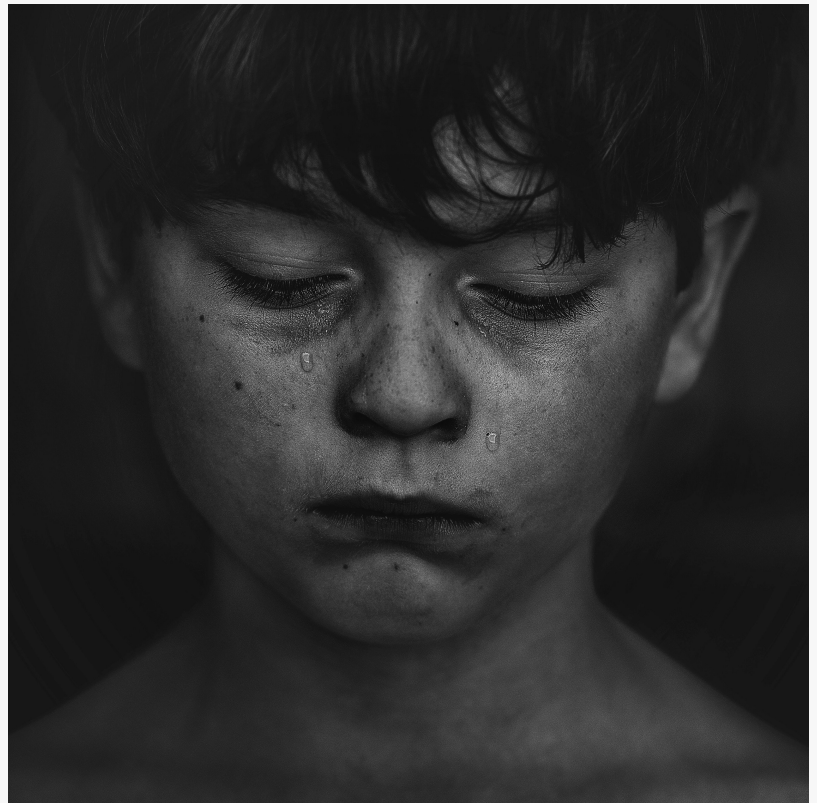
# Mental Health Watchdog Calls Baker Acting of Children in Florida a Human Rights Abuse

*More than 36,000 involuntary psychiatric examinations have been initiated on children, some between the ages of 2 to 5-years-old.*

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, February 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Almost a month after the Baker Acting of a 6-year-old little girl in Jacksonville, media across the world is continuing to report on Florida and the fact that the mental health law is being abused and [parental rights](#) are in jeopardy. [1]

The Florida mental health law, commonly called the [Baker Act](#), allows for the "willing help of family or friends" to help a person in crisis, including a child, yet parents are not being contacted prior to a Baker Act and are not being given the opportunity to help their child. [2]

The Florida chapter of the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR), a watchdog organization that investigates and exposes abuse in the mental health industry, is calling the failure to bring parents into the process a violation of parental rights and a human rights abuse.



It was reported during the Baker Act Task Force that an estimated 30% of the children being Baker Acted in Pinellas County alone did not meet the criteria.

“

The simple fact is that if parents were being brought into the process before the initiation of a Baker Act a large percentage of these situations would be resolved.”

*Diane Stein, President CCHR Florida*

“In watching the police body cam footage, it appears that the Baker Acting of this little girl could have been avoided by simply calling the mother and giving her an opportunity to help her daughter,” stated Diane Stein, president of CCHR Florida. “This is why the law needs to be amended and parental rights protected.”

Currently there is a bill filed in Florida by Representative Erin Grall to create a parental bill of rights. This is the second year that Rep. Grall has sponsored such a bill with the intention of creating a new chapter in the Florida statutes that clearly lists the fundamental rights of parents to control the education, health care and mental health

care of their children. [3]

According to the executive director for Parental Rights, Michael Ramey, "If passed, the Parents' Bill of Rights will not suddenly halt all the abuses of the 50-year-old Baker Act. But it will raise the status of parents in the eyes of courts, schools, and administrations throughout Florida—and that itself should help to reduce abuses like the one Nadia and her mother suffered." [4]

CCHR agrees that passing a Parents' Bill of Rights would be a step in the right direction while pointing out that it has been known for decades that the Baker Act of children is a serious human rights abuse that needs to be addressed. Over the past several years, lawmakers have filed bills to require parents to be notified before the initiation of an involuntary examination but to date none have passed. Additionally, in 2005 the Florida Senate published an Interim Project report clarifying the Baker Act requirements as they relate to children and in 2017 a task force was created due to concern in the dramatic increase of Baker Acts involving children since 2002 but none of these efforts have resulted in parents being brought into the process. [5,6]

Among the recommendations made by this task force was "increasing parental/family involvement" yet this recommendation has not been put into effect despite it being made known during by the task force that an estimated 30% of the children being Baker Acted in Pinellas County alone did not meet the criteria. [7]

"While the overall issue of children in crisis is complicated, the simple fact remains that if parents were being brought into the process before the initiation of a Baker Act a large percentage of these situations would be resolved," stated Diane Stein.

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



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.



The Florida chapter of CCHR is a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the protection of children.



information please visit  
[www.cchrflorida.org](http://www.cchrflorida.org).

Sources:

[1] Mother wants answers after she says 6-year-old in Duval school ordered to mental health facility

<https://www.jacksonville.com/news/2020/2/10/mother-wants-answers-after-she-says-6-year-old-in-duval-school-ordered-to-mental-health-facility>

[2] Involuntary Examination Criteria  
[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0394/0394.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0394/0394.html)

[3] 'Parents Bill of Rights' wins bipartisan backing in first House stop  
[https://www.tampabay.com/news/grad\\_ebook/2020/01/23/parents-bill-of-rights-wins-bipartisan-backing-in-first-house-stop/](https://www.tampabay.com/news/grad_ebook/2020/01/23/parents-bill-of-rights-wins-bipartisan-backing-in-first-house-stop/)

[4] Florida, Special Interests, and Parental Rights

<https://parentalrights.org/florida-special-interests/>

[5] [http://archive.flsenate.gov/data/Publications/2006/Senate/reports/interim\\_reports/pdf/2006-103cf.pdf](http://archive.flsenate.gov/data/Publications/2006/Senate/reports/interim_reports/pdf/2006-103cf.pdf)

[6] <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/361/Analyses/h0361z2.CFS.PDF>

[7] TASK FORCE REPORT ON INVOLUNTARY EXAMINATION OF MINORS

<https://myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/involuntary-examination-minors/docs/20170720/20170720-minutes.pdf>

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Involuntary examinations are being initiated on children without parental knowledge. The parent finds out AFTER their child has been Baker Acted.



### 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](http://www.cchrflorida.org)



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The Florida mental health law allows for the "willing help of family or friends" to help a person in crisis, including a child, yet parents are not being contacted prior to a Baker Act and are not being given the opportunity to help their child.

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

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