

May 31, 2016

BC Ministry of Children and Family Development  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor 1727 W. Broadway Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6J 4W6

**RE: Alex Radita's death**

To Whom It May Concern:

On May 23, 2016, upon hearing of the tragic, preventable death of Alex Radita in 2013, I was deeply troubled and filled with much sadness and anger. How could a boy of 15 years weigh only 37 lbs. at the time of his death? How could his health deteriorate so steadily to this tragic end, without any medical attention in the five years prior? This heart-breaking news was brought to my attention the day before the start of his parents' trial for first-degree murder.

I first met Alex in 2004 when he was enrolled at B.C. Christian Academy in Port Coquitlam, B.C., where I taught Kindergarten along with my teaching partner. Alex was assigned to our class and I remember a chubby little boy with a sweet smile, a chatty and inquisitive little fellow. We had been informed of his preschool history, his diagnosis of type 1 diabetes, the withholding of insulin by his parents and his near-death hospitalization. Alex had been removed from the family home prior to coming to our school and was in the care of a lovely woman with whom we corresponded regarding his progress. Alex had learned to test his own blood sugar levels, which I monitored, recorded and reported to his foster mom each day. His diabetes seemed to be under control and he appeared healthy and happy. We never did meet Alex's parents or any of his eight siblings, but we were aware that he did have regular, supervised visits with them. When a judge made the decision to return Alex to his parents, we were concerned for his wellbeing. We feared that his medical needs would not be met, that the insulin he required would again be withheld. Once back with his parents, Alex did not return to our school. Apparently, our fears were realized when, in 2008, the Radita family moved to Alberta. For the next five years it appears that Alex suffered immensely without his insulin, until his death in 2013.

We live in a broken world and we're all flawed individuals. Mistakes are made. I believe that Alex was failed on so many levels by so many flawed people. Primarily by his parents, who failed to provide for his life-sustaining needs. Secondly, by the BC Ministry responsible for providing the best care for him when his parents did not. Thirdly, by the judge who made a difficult, yet, I believe, wrong decision to return Alex to his parents. Finally, by family members, friends and neighbours who knew of and/or witnessed Alex's illness and deterioration and yet remained silent.

I hope that Alex's tragic death will bring about necessary changes regarding follow-up and monitoring in serious cases of neglect, when once apprehended children are returned to their parents. His life story of suffering and premature death demands that greater, more open sharing of information between provinces be implemented. The most vulnerable must be protected!

I will never forget Alex's sweet face and the privilege it was to teach, support and encourage him during his Kindergarten year. He is free of his suffering now and resting in peace.

In sadness,

Sandy Wong (Cochrane, Alberta)  
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CC: Alberta Ministry of Children and Families, B.C. Christian Academy (attention: Ian Jarvie, Principal),  
Calgary Herald, Vancouver Sun, Tri-Cities News