

Dear Gov. Haley,

I am writing you today as a parent who is concerned for their child's well being. My son, James Roberts age 14, is currently a resident of Three Rivers Midlands. He was placed into this facility by the Department of Mental Health in conjunction with the Department of Juvenile Justice. He was convicted of 2 counts of assault and was sentenced to an indeterminate sentence until the age of 21. While I do not condone his actions, I am severely concerned with his overall well being especially his mental well being. At the age of 6 he was diagnosed with ADHD, Depression, and slightly autism with a learning disability. After incarceration he was also thought to be Schizophrenic or Bi-polar. He suffers from PTSD and has had a very difficult time all his life in coping with his feelings. While incarcerated at the DJJ facility in Columbia SC he attempted suicide and was taken out of DJJ and admitted to a couple of different mental health facilities. His latest placement has found him a resident of Three Rivers. Since his admission to Three Rivers I have noticed several very concerning changes in my child. Shortly after admission the doctor at the facility took James off of almost all of his medication. Before admission he was taking Adderall (ADHD), Clonidine (high blood pressure), Prozac (depression), Intuniv (ADHD), Depakote (mania and depression), and Geodon (schizophrenia). Now is is only taking Vistaril (mild sedative for anxiety). While he was not exactly 100% stable at the time of admission, exemplified by his suicide attempt while in DJJ, he has since taken a drastic turn for the worse. He has become increasingly depressed, has resorted to cutting himself, and again expressed a desire to commit suicide. I do not feel the doctors and staff at Three Rivers are adequately attempting to help my child with his psychological issues. He does not receive the counseling and therapy we were told he would receive and have on several instances witnessed a lack of caring and willingness to help my child. I am deeply disturbed by the reports I receive, as well as the responses of the doctors and staff at the facility to my child's pleas for help during monthly meetings we have with the staff. In our most recent meeting I witnessed my child's so call "therapist" becoming seemingly irate and making inflammatory comments towards my child. At one point during the meeting when James expressed a desire to kill himself, his "Doctor" made the comment, "Oh, your not going to do that, that's just in your head. There's nothing wrong with you or your mind.", while at the same time saying that my child was a cutter. The same doctor also made the comment in the same meeting that they weren't going to put James on any medication because they were concerned he would sale it. Maybe I'm wrong but I was under the impression that in a mental health setting the staff was responsible for ensuring the patients they are given charge of took their medications as prescribed. I was also under the impression that any threat or expressed desire to commit suicide was to be taken seriously, not simply brushed off, and self mutilation was a precursor to suicidal behavior. So how can a state licensed doctor so blatantly contradict himself and dismiss a serious cry for help? As I stated earlier my child does suffer from a learning disability, and instead of any type of counseling to help him work through his issues, they give him paperwork to read and questions to answer, information that he can not comprehend alone. In my most recent visit with James he brought some of this "paperwork" with him and I set with him and helped him complete some of it. It was obvious that he didn't understand the specifics of the reading material or what the questions were asking. The monthly meeting took place the next day and when he handed it to his therapist and told her he had done his work her response was to throw his work down on the table and scowl at him, "Well, that's not good enough." It was my understanding these people are suppose to be there to assist my child not belittle him and make him feel worse about himself. They are suppose to be helping him work through his feelings and emotions, not getting angry and losing control of theirs. What help is that and what lesson is that teaching him? At the same visit in which I assisted him with his paperwork, I was preparing to leave and James had his belongings, clothes that I had brought him, in a plastic bag. While we were saying our goodbyes the bag tore open and he dropped all of his belongings on the ground. I witnessed several of the other children laughing and picking on him about it while the staff just stood there and did absolutely nothing to curtail their

laughter, rude comments and gestures. If they aren't going to correct inappropriate behavior and try to teach them, then what good are they? Why are these children in this facility if not to get help and learn? How are they suppose to learn from paperwork they don't understand? What is this place doing to help them? And what is the State doing to ensure they are doing their job? We have been told on numerous occasions that most of the children at this facility don't have parents that are actively participating in their child's treatment like we are. Does this give them the right and free reign to slack on their jobs because there is no one that is interested in the well being of the children? If this is the case it is a sorry state of affairs and I will not tolerate it. I will speak up for these children and let it be known what is going on behind the fence of this so called "Psychological Treatment Facility", not just for the sake of my child, but for all of their sakes. I do not feel this facility or it's staff are interested in the betterment of their patients. What type of mental health facility give patients work they can't understand and then gets mad when they don't do it? Why are they not conducting counseling sessions in which they interact with the children, talking to them on a level that they can understand, and try to make the patient a better person? If this is any indication of the level of care that all state run facilities operate by then it's no wonder so many challenged people end up in prison, or living on the streets. They've never truly been helped. Just shuffled around from one home to the next after the current one get tired of dealing with them, causing more pain and suffering to an already damaged and fragile mind. It is a disgrace. I know my child was wrong in doing what he did and there has to be consequences. Once he was put into the system I had hope that he would get the help that I have tried for so long to get him. Instead, that hope has turned into despair as I continue to watch my son fall deeper into depression and a state of self loathing. While those that are suppose to be responsible for his care get to end their days and go home to be with their families, while mine is still incarcerated with no hopes of ever returning home because they aren't doing their jobs. I am begging you, please look into this matter before something drastic happens and my son becomes another tragic story on the evening news. I don't want to have to bury my child because he has lost hope in a system that has overlooked him and turned it's back on the general public.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joey Dore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.