



January 5, 2010

Dear Parents:

As a parent of a child diagnosed with a developmental delay or disability you know the value of parental involvement in the choice of treatment and in support of that treatment. You also know just how unique your child is and are in the best position to make the critical decisions that will assist your child.

As California continues to grapple with a financial crisis, it is important that parental choice be maintained. We know that the increased incidence of Autism coupled with the reduction of state funds for Regional centers means that some changes will have to occur. But we hope that any changes will increase parental choice and involvement rather than limiting them.

You've seen the progress your child has made using the developmental approach of D.I.R./Floortime. We know that if the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the Regional Centers could see that progress as well, they would agree that this option should be available to all parents. And since developmental treatment programs such as D.I.R./Floortime often cost less than comparable alternative treatment measures that may not be as effective for a particular child, they make financial sense as well.

In order to ensure that the California Department of Developmental Services and the Regional Centers recognize the value of developmental treatment programs such as D.I.R./Floortime, we need your help. They need to hear your story.

Attached is a sample letter addressed to the California Department of Developmental Services Director, Terry Delgadillo. If you could write a letter in your own words following the guidelines in the sample letter and include your own observations about your child and his or her treatment, it would be a great help in educating the Department of Developmental Services and the other State decision makers about the value of developmental treatment programs in the treatment of Autism and other developmental challenges.

Once you have drafted a letter, and, of course, you are under no obligation to do so, please send it back to me. I will see that the Governor, the Legislature, the Department of Developmental Services, the Regional Centers and anyone else that needs to will see it so they can be informed of the value of keeping parental options as open as possible.

We know that more cuts to the State Budget are on their way and we want to ensure that the appropriate decision makers have all of the information they need to make the right decisions and we need your help to do that. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

***Diane Cullinane, M.D.***

Diane Cullinane, M.D.