

SUBMISSION FROM MHAIRI BOUSTEAD

1. My son is 5 and he is autistic. This means that he needs more support, help and supervision than children of the same age without autism.
2. He has a right to an education, but no legal right to help or support in education to help him.
3. He has a right to join organisations, but they have no legal right to take him, so can refuse him entry because he needs additional support.
4. He has a right to live, but has no law to support his requirements for living.
5. I have had to give up my employment, after 22 years, to help my son be educated, supported and helped because there is no law which entitles him to this. I have therefore lost my annual earnings of £15,000 to be given £53.60 a week to provide all the things that he needed before, plus all these additional things for my son, because legally he is not entitled to any of them, but in reality he needs them to survive and function.
6. My son is unable to use public transport, due to his autism.
7. He is unable to walk any distance without becoming distressed and therefore endangering himself and others.
8. He needs to be restrained, and to be supervised at all times everywhere. At home, in the garden, at school and even in bed.
9. I am now having to go to an tribunal to try to receive the benefits that my son is entitled too, because there is no law for his entitlement to these.
10. My specialist health visitor has submitted paperwork five times to try to get my son this benefit, which she firmly believes that he is entitled too.
11. My family unit is falling apart under the strain of all this additional work and stress and, very soon, I fear my husband and I will separate.
12. My daughter has to be more responsible than she should be for her nine years of age, as she has to do more and more things unsupervised.
13. We will, as a unit, end up costing the taxpayer far more money, simply because there is no law or legal requirement to help us in our quest for a normal life for our autistic son.
14. We have probably, as a result of there being no legislation for autism, cost the country a lot more money that we could have if there was legislation, as

everything we try to achieve for our son requires medical professionals, speech and language therapists, additional support needs staff, teachers, assistants, health visitors, other specialist doctors, and our own general practitioner taking huge amounts of time to submit , and re-submit, medical information, reports, tests, analysis etc when the written certified letter of our sons autistic diagnosis could legally be acceptable as proof and therefore as entitlement to the services and benefits that he should be getting.

15. I am just asking that a law be made to help all parents with autistic children to have a quality standard of living that will benefit their autistic child and also hopefully the Scottish country that we are born in and live in.
16. Thanks you for taking the time to read my appeal for a Scottish bill for autism

Mhairi Boustead
6 October 2010