



Pleas for help fell on deaf CCAS ears

**Despite caseworkers' frequent visits, horrific abuse
continued for almost 20 years**

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Pauline" abandoned her children, beat one until she was deaf in one ear, tied her children to bed and confined them to their room for days and rubbed one's nose in feces.

All of these nightmares -- spanning from 1967 to 1983 -- occurred while Pauline and her tormented children were under the watchful eyes of Toronto Catholic Children's Aid Society, whose workers, along with those from the CAS, paid frequent visits.

The children -- who are now adults -- still bear the physical scars of abuse and psychological scars of a childhood marked by sexual terror and torture.

Pauline faced justice only once when she pleaded guilty in 2001 to three counts of failing to provide the necessities of life.

"It was typical for the children, in particular the complainants, to be left with other adults, both men and women," Justice David Watt said at sentencing. "Judging by their abilities and inclinations, these surrogates took a back seat to no one when it came to physical and sexual abuse."

'VIOLENT ABUSERS'

"Pauline's life partners, sanctioned by law or otherwise, were manipulative, domineering, violent abusers. They spared neither Pauline nor her children.

"No disposition (sentence) that I impose will ever repay to the (victims) what was so wrongly taken from them. Sentences in criminal

cases are simply incapable of rising to that task."

Justice Watt sentenced Pauline to what Crown attorney Maggie Lazaridis and defence counsel Ted Kelly both called for: A six-month conditional sentence and three years probation -- and abstinence from alcohol and illicit drugs.

The guilty plea -- before the same judge who on Friday found Jeffrey Baldwin's grandparents guilty of second-degree murder -- touched only the surface of this horrific case of child abuse.

Pauline wasn't sentenced for the appalling sexual or physical abuse her children suffered, only for her criminal breach and appalling failure as a parent.

The allegations of a \$1.4-million lawsuit -- settled and now covered by a confidentiality agreement -- outline both horrific abuse and mind-boggling supervision by the watchdog agencies protecting children.

The settlement was reached without any agreement on legal liability by the CCAS or a Toronto school board also named in the suit.

"Some of my clients say that a child like Jeffrey Baldwin (who was starved to death) is the lucky one because he died in care," said lawyer Simona Jellinek, who represented the children in this case and specializes in child abuse civil lawsuits.

"Their suffering is over. The abused children become tormented adults who suffer alcoholism, drug abuse, relationship problems,

under- education, under-employment and psychiatric ailments. Their lives are ruined."

The Sun is not naming the plaintiffs or their mother because of privacy reasons. They declined to be interviewed.

SUICIDAL

Pauline, now 56, was herself a Crown ward until she married "Garr" at age 16 and they had four children by her 20th birthday. By March 18, 1970, the CCAS were under a court order to supervise the mother and her children.

Seven months earlier, a CCAS caseworker requested service because of a myriad problems in the house, including the fact the father was "immature, violent and not supporting the family," the suit alleged.

Garr reported to a CCAS worker in August, 1969, that Pauline was an irresponsible mother and was suicidal. Garr arrived home one night from work to discover one child unconscious having consumed many sleeping pills. Pauline was "aware of the child's state but hadn't taken the child to the hospital. Garr immediately took the child to hospital," the suit alleged.

"Notwithstanding the information received by the CCAS from the father of the mother's neglect, indifference and irresponsibility towards her children, Kay and Bob, the CCAS failed to follow up on the mother's conduct towards her children," the suit alleged.

On Nov. 14, 1969, Pauline again abandoned the children. Their maternal grandmother brought them to the CCAS for care because she couldn't locate Pauline and they had been left on their own.

"At some point, when Pauline finally did return home, she claimed she had been partying, ran out of money and couldn't get home," the suit alleged.

"The grandmother told the CCAS that she believed that Pauline was using drugs again and had admitted to using drugs in the past. (Despite this) the CCAS didn't conduct a followup in the matter."

Two days later, the grandmother phoned CCAS as Pauline had "again disappeared." The

next day, Pauline signed the forms enabling her children to be placed in foster homes.

Kay, who was then 18 months old, was "undersized and underweight," a doctor indicated. A month later, another doctor noted Kay should be watched closely "because of her supposed self-mutilation habit of violently pulling her hair. Kay states her hair loss was a result of Pauline dragging Kay by her hair."

For the next four months, the children remained in foster care and rarely saw their mother. But after a pre-return visit with her children, Pauline "refused to return the children to the CCAS or co-operate with the CCAS."

The children remained in Pauline's custody -- despite the abandonment episodes, neglect and drug use -- under CCAS loose supervision, the suit alleged.

In the early 1970s, the sexual abuse started.

"Kay recalls physical and sexual abuse at the hands of her mother, Garr and numerous other pedophiles (who were invited into the house) consistently and an appalling number of occasions lasted until Kay ran away from home in 1983 at age 15," the suit alleged.

The following are some of the most startling allegations -- contained in the children's lawsuit -- of abuse inflicted upon them:

BRUISED, BLOODIED

A pedophile "Donnie" punched, violently choked, whipped with a coat hanger and cut the girls whom he sexually assaulted. The girls were bruised, bloodied and had trouble walking from the pain between their legs. On one occasion, Donnie knocked out many of Tammy's baby teeth.

When Tammy tried to protect her sister by hiding her, Pauline "backhanded" Tammy in the head.

Tammy's deafness in one ear resulted from Pauline bashing her child's head into a sink and walls, the suit alleged.

Kay was beaten and raped so viciously that she had difficulty walking to school and required her sister Tammy's help. No teacher or

principal asked her about her physical injuries, the suit alleged.

Once Kay told a visiting nurse -- who wasn't a school board employee -- about the domestic abuse. The nurse contacted both the CCAS and Pauline, who said the children were involved in a car accident.

The suit alleged "no follow-up to this incident was ever done by either the CCAS or the teachers or principals of the school board."

The children attended school "with visible cuts, bruises and other physical injuries." The children also came to school so hungry that they stole other kids' food.

The CCAS discontinued its support services in August 1973. Almost two years later, Pauline told the CCAS she had tied her two sons to the bed. Despite this admission, the CCAS didn't follow up and didn't talk to the children about it, the suit alleged.

In February 1975, Bob, then 6, was again placed in a foster home, underweight and with bruises and flea bites.

"Bob manifested violence towards his mother and when there was any violence on TV, he would get upset, jump up and wave his hands fretfully," the suit alleged. "He also self-inflicted pain, often banging his head on the floor, pulling his hair and scratching his face." Pauline admitted to the CCAS that Bob was "very close to being a battered child" and she often severely beat him.

"Although the CCAS caseworkers' notes state that Bob was psychologically abused by the mother and despite her own admission of violence towards Bob, the CCAS didn't investigate how the other children, Tammy and Kay, were treated by their mother. The CCAS didn't question the other children or order that they undergo medical or psychological examinations," the claim alleges.

REJECTED SON

"After Bob was admitted to foster care, the mother rejected Bob, refusing to see him or speak to him. She also forbade the other children from talking about him or mentioning

his name. If they mentioned his name, they would be beaten by their mother."

The CCAS ordered she undergo psychiatric therapy and arranged an appointment for her. She didn't show up and CCAS failed to follow up, the suit alleged.

In July 1975, Pauline attempted suicide after a common-law relationship ended.

Pauline was hospitalized at Centenary Hospital, but the CCAS failed to investigate how her children, who remained in her care, were being cared for, the suit claimed. Bob became a Crown ward in 1976.

In 1978, the CCAS discontinued service to Pauline's family.

In 1983, Kay remembered the horrifying last episode of physical abuse by Pauline when she backed her into a steaming kettle.

The next day, Kay phoned from a friend's to see if she could stay late and her mother said: "Get home now, and when you get here, I'm going to kill you," the suit alleged.

Kay never came home. She was 15 years old.

Jellinek, the children's lawyer, said Bob, now 38 and battling cancer, was a former gang member. Kay, 37, is a single mom who has never reached her work potential and Tammy, 34, is an under-employed housewife of three, Jellinek said.

"The extent of the abuse, physical and sexual, and the length is so horrific, yet no one noticed or cared enough to remove children from a situation that cried out for it," said Jellinek.

CCAS lawyer Barry Marta declined comment.

"I have a privileged relationship with my client and I don't have the authority to discuss lawsuits, whether resolved or pending," Marta said.

She invited pedophiles into her home to molest her children. Her two daughters, Kay and Tammy, and son, Bob, were paraded naked in front of the deviants. The kids were forced to perform sex acts on each other and sometimes the perpetrators made pornographic films.