

Sense sational Therapy

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My name is Adriane Wilson and I am the mother of 3 special needs children. I am also the owner of Sense-sational Therapy, a brand new sensory-based and traditional Occupational and Speech Therapy office located in Fort Gratiot that my business partner, Tanya Keefe, and I opened in June. I am here today to speak to you about my concerns regarding St. Clair county CMH.

I was a life long resident of St. Clair county until about 12 years ago when both of my sons were diagnosed with Autism. I struggled so hard to be able to find any kind of help or treatment for them in this community. I ended up moving to Macomb County due to the services my children would be able receive there. Although Macomb County is just the neighboring county, it might as well be a world away when it comes to the differences in services available for people with developmental disabilities.

In Macomb county my children were able to receive Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapy, twice a week (per therapy), an in-home Behaviorist once a week, CLS and respite staff, even in home equipment - all of which Macomb County CMH was able to bill Medicaid for. I have worked diligently as an advocate and public speaker in Macomb county to inform parents of their rights as well the different services that are available to them. Through out my advocacy and speaking events , I have been approached frequently by parents from St. Clair county who had been trying desperately to obtain services and therapies for their children, to no avail. Research clearly shows that early intervention is the key to producing the best outcomes for children with Developmental Disabilities.

My youngest son was diagnosed Sever Classic Non-verbal Autism at the age of 3. We used to have to use communication boards in order for him to be able to express himself, and to be able to communicate his wants or needs. By the time my son was 8 years old, after receiving intensive therapies that were provided by Macomb County CMH, my son had been mainstreamed into a general education setting in school, and was verbal! My son is now 12 and has been student of the month twice, on the honor roll, and Star Student - all with out the aid of a Para Pro - and has competed at both regional and national competitions for piano, earning a AAA score, which is the highest score he could receive. My son has made son much progress that he will be used as a case study for hope in the treatment of Autism in an upcoming book written by a neuropsychologist.

Sense-sational Therapy hopes to help the children of this community, these children need help to be able to live their lives to the fullest potential. It is every child's right to be able to speak, to be able to eat regular food, to be able to button and zip their own clothes, or to possibly be able to write their own name. Yet, we were informed by a St. Clair county CMH contracting representative yesterday via email that our services were not needed at this time in.

I beg to differ..we currently have 72 children on our wait list for Speech and Occupational Therapy services and a vast majority of them are medicaid recipients. We have also had CMH Case Managers come to our office inquiring about how their consumers can receive services through our office. We are THE FIRST and THE ONLY Sensory-based Occupational and Speech Therapy clinic in St. Clair county specializing in pediatric therapies, and sensory based therapies.

It is my understanding that CMH laws are governed by the State of MI , The Medicaid Provider Manual and The Michigan Mental Health Code and are not mandated by county officials. I fail to understand how OT and Speech are not needed in this community. Macomb County has 8 contracts with Clinics like ours. I called the St. Clair County CMH access line yesterday to inquire about what services were offered. I was given two options which were substance abuse treatments or mental health. When I asked about services for Developmental Disabilities, I did not receive an answer. The developmental needs of children in this community need to be serviced.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of countless parents in our community who struggle daily to better the lives of their children.