

CHELSEA RECORD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 1984

Helpline to serve Chelsea . . .

Rights group attacks psychiatric treatment

Beth Cieslinski of the Citizens' Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) was in Chelsea this week to announce the start of CCHR's new Mental Health Abuse Helpline for parents, children or any individual who has been mistreated, abused or criminally assaulted by psychiatrists or other mental health professionals. Anyone who falls into the above categories or has a family member or friend who falls into these categories is asked to call CCHR immediately for direction and assistance.

As an example of the type of problems in the current mental health system, Cieslinski cites the indiscriminate housing of children on adult wards. She quotes a recent study undertaken by the State Legislature which indicates that government agencies are "sending more than 1300 admission of children to adult wards annually."

Cieslinski contends that this can only result in a "worsening of the child's problem, virtually eliminating any chance for recovery or help."

"We hope to hear from parents whose children have been caught up in the mental health system," comments Cieslinski. "Mental patients are perhaps the most vulnerable and abused class of people in America today. And children have it far worse than the adults."

"For years, psychiatrists were, in effect, above the law," rages the 34 year old Cieslinski. "Unexplained deaths, suicides, and ravaged lives were the all too common result of psychiatric 'care' yet little was done to criminally prosecute the psychiatrists responsible. Now that the public is becoming more concerned about physical and sexual abuse of all classes of people, things are beginning to happen."

Cieslinski acknowledges that the trauma, embarrassment and guilt associated with any kind of sexual or physical assault often prevents people from coming forward and seeking justice.

"CCHR started the Mental Health Abuse Helpline so that anyone - parent, guardian, individual - will have some place to turn if they have been criminally or otherwise mistreated or abused by a mental health worker," concluded Cieslinski.

The CCHR and the Mental Health Helpline can be reached by calling (617) 623-1540 or by writing CCHR at 89 Mass. Ave., Suite 213, Boston, Ma. 02155.