

In April of 2001 I was chosen as a juror for the case against Connell Watkins and Julie Ponder. Reckless child abuse resulting in the death of 10 year old Candace Newmaker was the charge. During the trial we were told that Candace died during a rebirthing process. As we viewed hours of video tape, we witnessed child abuse way before the rebirthing ever took place. The holding therapy (I use the word therapy loosely) that we witnessed on tape, WAS the child abuse. We watched, and wept in horror as Watkins shook this sweet child's face. We saw Candace's fear as she trembled to "please" her abuser. We watched a 190 pound grown man (again I use the word man loosely), Jack McDaniels sit on her skinny legs as Watkins grabbed her face and shook it back and forth yelling "got it?". Candace begged repeatedly for mercy. She wept while being forced to call her abuser "ma'am." This was reckless child abuse. This all took place BEFORE the rebirthing. Because of Candace's guts and courage during the holding therapy she was treated with even more abuse during the rebirthing therapy, which we thought was more on the lines of second degree murder, manslaughter at the least. Have you all seen these tapes? Have you seen this vibrant child screaming during this so called holding therapy? I've heard all the ridiculous rhetoric about Candace having a heart condition. Have you read the transcripts from the trial? The coroner and a heart specialist both swore under oath that this healthy vibrant 10 year old had no heart condition prior to coming to her Evergreen torture chamber. How many children are going to be abused in the name of therapy. I am now a student working toward a Masters Degree in Social Work and throughout all my studies, I've yet to read or research ANY therapy that requires sitting on a child, shaking her, screaming at her or calling her a "stupid liar." The fact that I even have to spell it out for you is reprehensible. Stop the torture. I know for a fact that there are many other therapy's that offer safe and nurturing practices.

Sincerely,

Juror for Candace