

Legal Kids



12/31/00 - Day 0: I have decided I will start a hunger strike tomorrow. This was not an easy decision for me. I have discussed it with my dad over the previous two weeks. He is very concerned about this hunger strike and how it will affect me physically and emotionally. But he also likes to let me make my own decisions and he won't interfere other than by giving advice.

I'm fourteen years old and no one will pay any attention to my feelings and concerns unless they are embarrassed into doing so. I guess I want to embarrass the courts for what they did to me, but I also want them to be concerned about the decisions they make in the future for other kids. They should be accountable. I feel I should not have to go through this but it is the only way anyone will listen to me and even then I doubt that the court cares whether I live or die. However, I feel good about taking control of my life. This means that the last fourteen years are finished.

Tomorrow is going to be what I make of it. This is pretty scary. I am not sure if I have the guts to keep this going and I am also not sure if I can stand up to the people who will want me to stop my strike for their own agenda. I don't know if anyone will even learn of my hunger strike or read these entries. I don't know whether they will think it is wise or foolish. What will my friends and relatives say? What if everyone thinks the courts do an excellent job deciding how children should have access to their parents? What if I am wrong in the way I have interpreted what the court has done with me? I know I was victimized by my mother and the court, but will anyone agree?

01/01/01 - Day 1: Well this is it. I am on a hunger strike. Feel unsure but still pretty good about going ahead after making the decision yesterday. Not sure about what the future holds, but I will take it one day at a time. No one is going to know about this for a few days anyway. If I get too scared I can always quit before anyone finds out and I won't be any worse off. But I did use my Dad's fax to send a letter to Associate Chief Justice Sulatycky of the Court of Queen's Bench stating I had started my hunger strike ([see letter](#)).

No more steak and french fries (my favourite meal). No more cherry Pepsi. No Milk. Grandma's

cookies stay in the cupboard. No pizza (my second favourite meal). This is going to be hard. I'm already hungry just from writing this down. Actually, I am hungry because I didn't have breakfast but I can deal with it. But I wonder what tomorrow will be like. One positive point is that school doesn't start until next week so this is a good time to begin.

01/02/01 - Day 2: Woke up this morning thinking I would shower and then go down and have some chocolate chip Eggos for breakfast. Then I remembered I was on a hunger strike. What a letdown. Mornings are probably going to be hard until I'm fully awake and accepting that there won't be any meals today. So I had a shower and then went downstairs and poured myself a tall glass of water. Added a few ice cubes for flavour.

Realized I have to think of things to do to keep my mind off of food. Spent time on the computer surfing the net. Also played my Gameboy. I hope to get a Playstation 2 some day. Took my dog Abbi for a walk down by the river. The walk took my mind off of my hunger and helped me to think. Lots of thoughts are jumbled in my head and I have to straighten them out. I'm worried about the future. I'm going to try and update these entries everyday for the people who are interested and also for myself so I can look back and see how I am doing.

01/03/01 - Day 3: Woke up. Same Eggos. Same letdown. Same shower. Same water. Ice cubes were a little more flavourful I thought. Making a joke of the hunger helps to keep it away. Actually it doesn't and I feel sorry for the kids who go hungry all the time. I'm going hungry because I want to, they're going hungry because they have to.

I am getting frustrated knowing that I could be eating if I didn't have to fight for my rights against a court that wants to take them away from me and give them to my mother. I'm going to try and not think about the court system for a least today because it upsets me and there is no useful purpose to thinking about it.

Took Abbi for a walk again, this time down to the golf course. We hunted around for about forty-five minutes and found eight golf balls. Now Abbi plays with them in the house by dropping them down the basement stairs and then running down and hunting for them.

Dad brought me home a bottle of sugar-free sparkling water. It's cherry flavoured and he only brought one bottle in case I didn't like it - I hate the taste of diet pop. But I did like it. It only has two calories so it doesn't disqualify my hunger strike. I've asked Dad to stock up on the four flavours available as this could be a long haul and water just doesn't do it.

Dad and I played Risk. I beat him. Then we watched a movie, Mrs. Doubtfire, which was a little too close to home because it was about a divorcing family. I also thought it was unrealistic as far as I was concerned because in the movie the mother admits she was wrong for taking the kids away from the father and I have never heard my mother admit she was wrong about anything.

01/04/01 - Day 4: With each passing day this hunger strike gets a little easier but also harder at the same time. Today I vacuumed because of a deal between Dad and myself. The deal was when I got a dog I would vacuum and just because I'm on a hunger strike I don't think I should go back on a deal.

This also got me thinking about all the deals my mother broke with me and my dad. Like the one where her lawyer made a deal in court where my dad had to do something and then my mother would do something. I was in court observing when the deal was made. My dad followed through with his part but my mother didn't and the judge did nothing about it. I hate them more and more each day. There is a lot of gender-bias in the courts.

Today I went and got a haircut. It was nice to get out of the house for a few hours. I also watched WWF Smackdown tonight. I absolutely love wrestling. I watch it every Monday and Thursday. It is kind of a tradition that Dad makes steak and fries on Monday for WWF Raw is War and chicken wings and fries for Smackdown and we eat in front of the TV. Didn't have any food tonight so it wasn't quite the same but it was still great. I hope one day to become a professional wrestler.

At about 4 o'clock I had to go lie down for a bit because I had a monster headache. When I came down I could smell food. Dad was eating barbecued porkchops and fries which is the first meal he has cooked since I started my strike. They looked so good and smelled so tasty. Dad said he was trying to eat while I was sleeping so I wouldn't see the food but he got several phone calls and couldn't finish before I came down. He told me he would eat food I didn't like or eat before he came home so it wouldn't be so hard on me. He also brought home all four flavours of sugar-free sparkling water.

I am finding it very difficult not to think about food all the time. For a brief moment I almost decided to give up my hunger strike for a porkchop. Fortunately I didn't.

We played Risk again tonight. We each won once.

01/05/01- Day 5: Woke up this morning and laid in bed for half an hour. I didn't want to get up and face another day of hunger. It's depressing to not eat when you're in a house full of food. I have weighed myself over the fast five days and I am losing about two pounds per day.

I've learned that food is a very important social part of our lives. One of my favourite times of the day is eating supper while watching a movie. Also when you are bored it relieves the boredom when you can think about what you're going to have for lunch, make it, then eat it. Even thinking about tomorrow's meals can help to relieve boredom. The days seem much longer without food. Also there is a lot more time to think which is something I'm trying to avoid.

Today I was thinking a lot about next week. I have decided that on Tuesday I will go downtown and picket in front of the court house. I'm going to make up two signs, Q.B. JUDGES VICTIMIZE CHILDREN and ON HUNGER STRIKE, DAY 9. I have no idea what kind of response I'm going to get from the public or the court. I think the court will say that I am not thinking for myself but am being controlled by my dad. It's not true but the court has to say this so they won't have to take responsibility for victimizing me. The more I think about what those judges did to me, and probably to many other children, the angrier I get.

The evenings are the hungriest part of my day. While I'm making this entry I am very hungry. I

never thought I would look forward to going to bed but that is when the hunger eases a little a bit and I'm not hungry when I'm sleeping. This is only day 5 and it's pretty tough so I'm not looking forward to day 15 or day 30. But I am proud of myself for sticking to it.

01/06/01 - Day 6: Dad suggested we go to a movie tonight. It sounded like a great idea at first. But then I remembered how I really enjoy having popcorn and a drink. I can't now and it wouldn't be the same so I decided not to go.

This evening I started feeling sick and cold. I normally don't get cold. In fact, I'm usually the one complaining when the thermostat is too high. But tonight I had to sit in my Dad's big, reclining chair covered with a blanket. This lasted for the rest of the night. I went to bed feeling terrible. I couldn't sleep so I got up and had a drink of water and typed in my journal. But I am going to bed because I can't think straight right now.

01/07/01 - Day 7: I am feeling better this morning. Today is my sister Lindsay's birthday. She is twelve. She phoned to talk to my dad (my mother won't let my dad phone her even on special occasions). They talked from 12:02 to 12:07 and then my mother made Lindsay get off the phone. I feel sorry for Dad and Lindsay.

I got light-headed around 5 p.m. and had to go sit in Dad's recliner for a half-hour. Then I got up and worked on my web site. Also made a sign for my protest outside the Court of Queen's Bench this Tuesday, Jan. 9. Watched a movie on TV while my stomach ached for food, but the ache is less when I keep myself occupied.

01/08/01 - Day 8: Went to the courthouse today to get some documents. My parent's file came in three 4 inch thick boxes. I just saw the boxes and the orders I later posted on my web site. I was not allowed to look at any affidavits or reports or anything. Dad had to pay \$22.00 to get 10 pages copied by the clerk. Then we went to my school, Fairview Junior High, to get my books. Dad advised the principal that I would not be in school for a while. He arranged with the principal to have my teachers email or fax me my assignments which I will then complete and send back.

I have been working on my web site and Dad brought me a frosted mug with sugar-free lime-tangerine sparkling water. He says I'm not drinking enough and I could get dehydrated and start twitching and flopping around like a fish out of water. I think I'd like to be a shark. I know who I'd bite.

I have had a chance to read the documents we got today. One is the order from Justice Hutchinson giving my mother custody. Page 3, paragraph 3, is typical of these judges ([see order](#)). They just don't have a clue. That paragraph says that if Dad makes an application in court, his access to me and Lindsay is suspended. Who are these people? We are nothing but weapons to them. They use us to reward our parents when they do something the court likes and to punish our parents when they do something the court doesn't like. They dispose of us like we are a car or a house. If you ever read this, Justice Hutchinson, I want you to know something: I AM A HUMAN BEING. I have feelings. Pain, grief, love, anxiety, regret, joy. I have those feelings and lots of others. Take a look out your window when I am on the courthouse steps. I look a lot like you (two arms, two legs, a head) just smaller. I'm going to quit right now because I am feeling a

lot of hate.

Tom Njegovan of A Channel news came to the house tonight and interviewed me for the 10 o'clock news. He seemed very nice and was very concerned. He said somebody from A Channel would be at the courthouse tomorrow. I have had a lot of emails and phone calls of support. I did not think that so many people would be interested and it feels very good. I'm certainly not going to be alone with this. Good night everyone.

For those who have asked I will be at the courthouse tomorrow beginning at 8:30 a.m.

01/09/01 - Day 9: Dad woke me up at 7:00 a.m. to tell me that a man from Melbourne, Australia was on the phone. Shortly after that I got a call from Edmonton. I would like to thank both of you for calling and also for the other telephone calls which I received yesterday and this afternoon. I would also like to thank the many hundreds of people who have logged onto my web site. Many people signed my guest book. I really like to read those messages and I hope everyone who feels like it will sign in. Also thank you all for the emails. I will answer all of you although my answers may be short as I don't have too much energy sometimes.

I was getting up anyway at 7 to get ready to go down to the courthouse. But when I came downstairs I started to feel really sick and had to lie in Dad's chair for twenty minutes. Dad covered me in a blanket and turned up the thermostat. I think it was getting up so early that made me so sick because I wasn't sick on mornings when I slept in.

We got to the courthouse at 8:40. Things didn't start well because Dad put \$2.00 in the parking meter and nothing happened. Then he put \$4 in and it worked. I thought, I hope the rest of the day isn't like this. But it was a good day. About forty people stopped to talk to me and lots of people yelled encouragement or gave me a thumbs up from their car. All the radio and TV stations were there and interviewed me. All the reporters were really nice and treated me like a person. They were very sympathetic and encouraging and when I watched the news tonight I think they did a very fair job of reporting my story.

My mother's second husband was there hovering around and he was interrupting the interviews and making comments about my dad. He acted like a real a..... When I lived at my mother's house he was always using various swear words to describe my dad. I think he has always intentionally tried to keep the fire going between my mother and my dad. He is much older than my mother and I think he feels insecure.

My mother was also at the courthouse. She said a few words to me on her way in but I ignored her. Then I saw her on the news and she said she didn't understand, "why he's so angry at me." Mother you took away the father I adored. I appealed day after day to you to let me see him and you refused. You took me to psychologists and made excuses to my teachers for my terrible behaviour when you knew why I was behaving so badly. I got in lots of fights and could have gotten hurt but you didn't care. You ran me down back alleys so I couldn't pass my dad's car and wave at him. You brought the police to our house and made me swear out statements to say my dad talked to me and then you used those statements to put my dad in jail. I was eight years old mother! And you don't understand? Mother you loved your revenge much more than you ever

loved me.

I'm a little upset right now so I will quit writing for a bit.....

I went to the doctor at 3:30 and got checked up. I want you all to know that I am fine. My doctor doesn't want to see me, or anyone, on a hunger strike even for one day so he is not encouraging it. He sent me for some blood tests and will call Dad with the results tomorrow. I'm going to see him every few days, probably Friday and then Monday.

I heard on the news that the court set a date in February but I don't know when or for what. Are they kidding? I'll be a shadow of my former self by then. They'll be able to see right through me. lol Dad says that Associate Chief Justice Sulatycky is probably the most decent judge in the building so I hope it wasn't him who set that date. I wonder if my mother pointed out the obvious problem with that arrangement? Maybe I'm a thorn she wants removed any way she can.

Well I'm going to watch TV for a bit, answer a few emails and then go to bed. I'm going to the courthouse tomorrow again around 10 a.m.

01/10/01 - Day 10: I am very concerned. A couple of people have emailed me and said they are thinking about committing suicide because they can't bear the loss of their children. Please don't do that. Sure I thought about it many times and so did my Dad. But I hung in there and most important so did my dad. And now we are together again. My dad never gave up and you can't either. There was a dad here in Canada who was driven to suicide by the courts a few months ago and now his children will never get to feel his arms around them like I do with my dad. That is terrible for them and I feel so sad about it. Fight, fight, fight! Never give up! Your children love you. You can't see your children right now but you will. Please believe that.

TO ALL KIDS

(I'm going to say this using dad and mom because that is the situation I know about but the situation could also be mom and dad so you fit them in where they belong.)

If your mom (or dad) is not letting you have all the access you want to your dad or no access at all, then you have to ask her how she can say she loves you. **ACCESS IS THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD.** The Supreme Court of Canada says so and I am sure that every high court in every country says the same. Sometimes the local judges don't know the law or don't have the capacity to understand about our feelings. Also remember that if a court gave an order on your access it was because your mom asked for it . My mother used to say it was the court that said I couldn't see my dad and so I always blamed them. Yes they are to blame for not understanding how important both our parents are to us, but so is your mom/dad. So confront her/him right now and tell her/him that you don't believe he/she truly loves you if he/she won't let you see one of the two most important people in your life. This won't always work (it didn't in my case.) Talk to your grandparents or your neighbours or your parent's friends. Tell them how you feel and ask them to talk to your mom/dad. Telephone your dad/mom whenever you want even if your mom/dad

gets mad and grounds you or phone him/her from a friend's house. Set up a meeting with your dad/mom and then tell your mom/dad you are going to a friend's house (you have to watch this because your dad/mom might get in trouble. My dad didn't care. He said he'd gladly spend a year in jail for an hour with me.) I did all these things. If that doesn't work, then you might have to do the big one like me. I got on the bus and I went to my dad's house. Do this safely. Check the bus schedule first (they have a phone number too), don't hitchhike, go during the day or right after school but at least before dark. Have a friend go with you if you are scared. Remember, if there is any possibility of you getting hurt, DON'T GO. You might have to go to your dad's/mom's several times like I did but the first time is the hardest and then it gets easier. It took a lot of guts and I was really scared but I felt good about myself afterwards. I was twelve the first time. Finally, don't ever let anyone tell you your dad/mom is a bad person just because he/she and your mom/dad don't get along or he/she doesn't do something he/she was ordered to do. That has nothing to do with us. Why don't you call your dad (or mom) right now and tell him/her you love him/her. Tell him/her Clayton says, "Hey." (I edited this 01/12/01 because I think there was some confusion because even though I said at the top substitute mom for dad if applicable some people got confused.)

I was at the courthouse again today from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Bigger response today. All kinds of media people who were very understanding and positive. No one wants to see me on a hunger strike especially Dad. But I feel alright. I have lost eleven pounds as of this morning. That's good because I needed to lose weight anyway. My blood tests were normal and they showed ketones (is that spelled correctly?) which means I am burning fat but my electrolytes etc. are fine. I have a 10:00 a.m. appointment with the doctor for Friday.

Child welfare came to our home at 3.30. Checking to see if I am okay. They asked my dad to sign a release form so they could talk to the doctor. Get this. My dad can't sign the release form to give them the information they need to know about my hunger strike because he doesn't have custody which is why I am on the hunger strike so we can have the legal right to do these things. Ironic eh? Guess they will have to ask the mother I haven't seen for a year for that release.

I haven't heard a thing from the court about what happened in court on Tuesday. I think this shows that the court truly has no concern for the children whose best interests it is sworn to protect. I am not hard to find.

I will be outside the courthouse at 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. tomorrow but later on Friday because of the doctor's appointment.

01/11/01 - Day 11: Many people have asked me to end my hunger strike because I have now made a statement. I have considered all your requests carefully. Dad wants me to stop too but he won't make me (how can he.) He has always given me helpful advice and we spend hours just sitting around talking about anything at all. He will say what would you like to do and I will say let's talk. When I was younger (I'm tall now) he always had a special way of making me feel he was totally absorbed in everything I was saying. As soon as I started to talk, he would kneel or crouch down so his head was at my level and he would look right into my eyes with total concentration. I have never been afraid to tell my dad anything and he has never punished me for telling him the truth. When I do something wrong Dad and I discuss it, we both suggest alternative behaviours

that would have been more appropriate, and I remember and apply them. Each time I become a better person, not because I am afraid of being punished, but because I am enjoying being loved. So I feel confident that if my health is about to suffer in any way, dad will point this out in one of our talks backed by blood tests or whatever and I will quit.

Speaking of blood tests, I am going to pick mine up and post it on this site later today. I will do that with every blood test. If any of you or your friends are doctors, you can look at the blood tests and see the condition of my health. Also I am now drinking pure grape juice for natural sugar to keep my muscles from breaking down and having occasional sips of Gatorade along with plenty of water to balance my electrolytes just like the doctor ordered.

I am going to give the code to my web site to my dad. He is not computer literate but he has a friend who is and could help. Then if child welfare takes me away, Dad can tell you. Don't you worry, they can't keep me forever. Dad and I didn't fight this hard to be together to let them tear us apart again. Like Arnold always says, "I'll be back."

Also hi to my classmates and teachers at Fairview Junior High and thank-you for your support. And thank-you everyone all over the world. I love you. I'm scared now about being taken away but I'm not going to quit.

Now I have to go to the courthouse. If you are in town, please come down and say, "hey."

I left the courthouse earlier today because it was too cold and I wasn't wearing the proper clothes. Quite a few people spoke with me or drove by and honked their horns. Several people said they took time off work just to come down and wish me luck. The doctor phoned earlier and asked me to get some blood tests done so he would have it for tomorrow for my appointment. The television people met me at the lab and took pictures of the needle going into my arm. Then they came and filmed me at home. I should be at the courthouse longer tomorrow but probably not until 11:00 or 11:30 a.m. because I have the doctor's appointment at 10 a.m. I'll get both my blood test results then and post them at the same time.

Many people are urging me to quit because of child welfare getting ready to take me away. Like I said I am scared and always looking over my shoulder. If I was an adult I could strike as long as I want but because I am fourteen they are attempting to bully me into submitting.

01/12/00 - Day 12: I woke up this morning feeling emotionally exhausted. I am very well physically and I could keep on this strike for a long time. But once child services started threatening to take me away, my stress level went out of sight. They could grab me off the street and Dad would never know where I am. I would be one of "the disappeared."

The local news agencies have carried my story despite my mother's objections but nationally is a different story. My mother was able cancel a scheduled interview this morning by refusing to give her permission as the custodial parent. I guess I shouldn't feel so bad about being scared of my mother. She scared our national television network.

I have still not heard what happened in court on Jan. 9. The judge's secretary (403) 297-7536 used

to call my dad with dates and times to appear or not appear but she has not called him yet. My mother said on the news that we were supposed to appear in court again in Feb. but gave no date or time or reason what for. When a lawyer appears before a judge and the other party doesn't, the lawyer appearing is supposed to tell the one who wasn't there what happened. My dad hasn't heard anything from my mother's lawyer, Bob Boyden of Soby Boyden Lenz, office (403) 262-0000, fax (403) 262-6552, res (403) 229-2101. If anyone knows when the next appearance is scheduled and what for, would you please contact my dad or me.

I am doing a phone interview on 900 CHML talk radio in Hamilton at 8:30 MST this morning. I have done Vancouver, Regina, Edmonton (twice), London, and Montreal. From now on I will post the radio station and time so that the people in those cities will know to listen if they like. They can call in and give their opinions, for or against. If you want to yell at me, this is your chance. I apologize to Hamilton, I am just typing my entry while I am waiting for their call so you are not getting any notice. I will post all others as soon as I can get to my computer (most of the time the requests come to my dad's cell while I am out picketing - his Telus bill is going to be out of site) after I know the schedule.

I'd like my own .com site but there is no way I can pay for it. I just checked my account at the CIBC on the internet and my assets total \$369.06. That's also about one hour of lawyer time so for those people who suggested I get my own lawyer, now you know why not.

I'm going to be picketing down at the courthouse as long as possible today. My school gets out at 1:30 and many of my classmates have said they would like to come down so I will stay longer in case they do. No joke rubber steaks, okay?

I have just been booked on talk radio CJOB-680 in Winnipeg at 3:40 p.m. MST, 4:40 p.m. Central and will look forward to talking to you people in Winnipeg.

I left the courthouse early today because the wind is blowing hard and it is snowing. I hope nobody came down and found me not there. I'm at home and just warming up. Saw the doctor earlier and my tests are all normal so he says I am okay. But I am getting irritable. Like last night I had an idea and asked my dad to type it out on the word processor. When I got up this morning and asked to see it, he said he didn't do it. So I got angry with him even though he was up most of the night and was very tired. He told me I was unreasonable and I agreed and things were better but I'm not happy about how this is affecting me.

Also there are so many stories in the guest book and people are phoning me and emailing their stories as well. Everyone says there are lots of truths and lies and you have to question everything. I know I don't know everything and I want to explain something here. I don't want to know my parent's story. I don't care who said what and who did what. It has nothing to do with me. That is between them. What I know for sure is the last year of my life has been wonderful. I have a great time at my dad's and I am very happy here. I had behaviour problems at school and now they are gone. Kid's don't make judgments based on the truths or lies they hear. We judge people by how they make us feel. My dad makes me feel loved and protected. My mother did not. That is why I am here. And I am free to leave.

HERE IS AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT:

Last night I decided on an idea to end my hunger strike. Today (while freezing in front of the court house) I asked my dad to phone my mother's lawyer and make this offer. If she would agree to sign a Consent Order changing custody to my dad, I would end my hunger strike. A Consent Order is done without appearing before a judge and I would not have to appear before Justice LoVecchio (although he would sign it.) My dad phoned the lawyer at 3:00 o'clock today and advised him of my offer. he will give the offer to my mother. So far I have not heard back from the lawyer. It is now 7:00 p.m.

Day 13 tomorrow but I can rest up because I will be at home this weekend because there is no reason to picket outside a closed courthouse. Lindsay is here for weekend access. Also some long lost friend's came over. Nice to see you Jamie and Marg.

No answer from my mother. It's 11:00 pm. and I'm going to bed hungry but optimistic.

01/13/00 - Day 13: Child welfare was here again yesterday. We had a very nice meeting and I am no longer afraid of them. They are returning Monday or Tuesday to help me with ideas for continueing my struggle while not hunger-striking.

I was emailed a copy of a newspaper column today. The columnist attacked my father for an incident that happened ten years ago. It was a thinly disguised attack on children everywhere. She obviously has very little concern for my feelings and I would like to speak to a lawyer about her when things are quieter. I emailed her a response

I noticed I got the date wrong on the email. That's because dad was trying to set the time on the desktop yesterday and set the date instead. I teased him that he was computer illiterate.

I will be on "The Peter Warren Show" on CKNW in Vancouver at approximately 2:30 p.m. PST.

There is nothing yet from my mother. She said in her news interviews that she was willing to transfer custody to my dad on January 9 but we didn't show up for court. That is incorrect because Dad was told by the judge's secretary that it was a "case management" meeting. That is where you decide what dates you will discuss what things in the future. Basically just another adjournment.

Lindsay is here for the weekend. We are fooling around, wrestling with Abbi (my dog), and just being lazy. We just knocked over a glass of Coke so I had to get a wet cloth and clean it up. I am having a glass of Gatorade and entering into my journal and then we will watch a movie and then the three of us will play Risk later.

I was going to put my blood tests on this site because I was worried about child welfare but they have become an ally instead so there is no reason to. They were normal by the way. Next appointment is 3:00 p.m. Monday. No blood tests required.

Many people have signed the guest book commenting on this and that. I would like to reply to some of the comments:

If my mother could not brainwash me after thirteen years in her care, how could my father do it in one. Those people who say I am being manipulated should think about whether or not they really hear their own children.

I love my mother, I just don't like her. I might see her in the future but not right now. Dad is always suggesting I contact her. I'm sure he is angry with her for the time he lost with me that we can never regain. But he does not try to make me dislike my mother. My mother did that all by herself.

I will continue to operate my web site even after all these things are settled. I want to get kids like me a fair shake.

I will stop my hunger strike before I damage my health. I promised my dad I would quit if the doctor found anything wrong with me. He asked the doctor how I should start to eat and we have a menu planned for several meals with a slow buildup to a steak.

A columnist approached me when I was picketing outside the courthouse yesterday and asked me all kinds of questions about my mom and dad. Like which one said bad things about the other. And did I read Justice Hutchinson's reasons for judgment. She had a photocopy of the judgment and pointed out sections she had underlined and read them to me. I felt trapped and unable to get away from her. Everytime I stepped back from her she stepped up to me. She came back two or three times being very loud and demanding. I was very cold and hungry and she scared me badly. I was very upset by the time she finished attacking me even though I didn't understand what she wanted. Her final remark was that I should read my court file and that I should give my mother a call. When she left I went to my dad and asked him to take me home. That is why we left early and I apologize to any people who came down to see me and I wasn't there. She is the only media person who scared me and I hope she stays away from me from now on.

It is 9:30 now and I have still not heard from my mother's lawyer. I'm hungry and I'm going to bed.

01/14/01 - Day 14: I woke up this morning feeling much better. Yesterday was very hard emotionally because of the columnist. I know more about this now. It was to do with something my mother did that my dad objected to back in March, 1988. It was a war of words with paperwork jumping around. Everybody had an opinion and my mother's opinion was taken by

the court. A better judge would have ignored the whole thing. But I don't care and I am not interested in finding out the whole story. That's between my mother and my dad and doesn't concern me.

I'm only interested in what happens between my parents and me. I for sure know what happened between them and me because I was there. So I want to say this for about the thousandth time:

PARENTS PLEASE LISTEN

Kids don't care what you did to each other. If each of you tell us what happened and how the other parent treated you bad after a while we close our ears because we don't know who to believe and don't want to hear anymore. You might think we are listening but we are just nodding our head to some tune we heard earlier. We will always love you but if you want us to like you you should stop fighting each other and stealing our childhood. If we can't have equal time with both parents we will finally go to the parent who makes us happier. Smarten up, because as we get older, we are.

Some people ask me why a change of custody is so important. Because I turned fourteen on December 21, 2001 and I want to get my learner's permit. Because I'd like to go to Disneyland when my Dad can afford it (I forgot to tell you Dad had major surgery on his leg after a freak accident in July 1999, was in a wheelchair for four months, and just got back to work in September so we have massive bills to pay) but we can't cross the border without custody papers. Actually I'd like Disneyworld so I could bake in the sun. I've been cold for two weeks now. Because I can't get any kind of medical treatment from braces to surgery without custody papers. Because everything that requires some kind of paperwork requires my dad to have custody before he can give his permission. This custody thing is not about choosing my mother over my dad. It is about being able to do everything a kid from a regular family can do.

No answer yet from my mother so I had juice for breakfast. Her email is bmhluft@oanet.com.

Well I have to go do my homework now (it was faxed from the school) and I also have an exciting idea I want to discuss with my dad.

I have a new web site address now. It is legalkids.com (also.org and .net). Some very nice people donated it to me. They are also donating the hosting and designing. My new site will be up by tomorrow. You can see their web site at www.aspectdesignz.com.

I had a good day today. I watched the football games, talked to some media people, and answered as many emails as I could. I should tell you I don't answer my guest book so if you really want a response to your posting, also send me an email.

I'm going to bed now. I'll have a glass of water first. It sure would have been nice to receive a response from my mother, even "no" is better than nothing. It's hard to believe when she says she cares about me when she lets me go hungry all weekend.

I'll be outside the courthouse from noon to 1:00 p.m. tomorrow with my sign. saying "Hunger Strike Day 15" and on the other side "Q.B. Judges Victimize Children." Dad won't let me go for any longer because he says I can't fight the cold with no food in my stomach. We had a bit of an argument and I said I would take the bus downtown but I will do it like he says.

01/15/01 - Day 15: I slept in this morning untill 11:00 a.m. because I was very tired but it was mostly emotional. I had a glass of juice, looked at my new website and emails and then Dad and I left for the courthouse. We came home and then went back out to the doctor. The doctor says I am fine and I should return on Thursday at 3:00 p.m. Also I have to get blood tests again.

The reason why I am so emotional is because I have realized that my mother has never cared about me as a person. I spent the whole weekend waiting for a call that would end my hunger strike and it never came. This is so disappointing. I see her on the TV saying she loves me but it is all a sham.

I guessed that over the weekend and now I know for sure it is true. Several reporters have called and told me that they spoke with her and she is not going to sign over custody. She says it has to be done in court in February. In other words, she has her principles and she's willing to let me die for them.

I have received some emails and seen some of the guest book entries where people have told me to give my mother a second chance because she is probably a good woman. I guess she pulled the wool over their eyes. She said that she wouldn't be blackmailed into signing over custody. What I don't understand is how it's blackmail if she said she was willing to do it in the first place. What kind of a parent lets their kid starve because she wants to go to court over something she said she was willing to give up?

By the way I posted my mother's email address because mine is on the web site too and I think people should be able to send her the same comments for or against that they send to me. But I did remove her home and work telephone numbers because most people don't have mine.

Sorry for this late posting but we are still working on this new web address. Legalkids.com should have everything working well by Wednesday. Back to the courthouse tomorrow at noon. Goodnight.

01/16/01 - Day 16: I always have to wake up around 8:00 a.m. because my dog sleeps in my room in a kennel and whines at me so she can go out. I take her out and then I go back to bed. When I woke up the second time I was and am feeling well and rested.

I re-read the Canada AM transcript from January 14, 2001. Dan Matheson asks my mother if I have made any attempts to contact her and get her side of the story or some information. The transcript shows my mother said "No." But in fact back on June 29, 2000 I sent her an email asking if she would like to have a meeting with me so we could discuss our problems. I offered to meet her at 3:30 p.m. June 30, 2000 in Glenmore Park which is close to her house. She replied by email and refused to meet with me. I don't know why she would say that I never tried to talk to her about our problems when I did try.

Today I also read that columnist's latest article. This woman has shown a lot of integrity. First of all she writes an article that receives over 200 responses and yet fails to publish even one of them in her newspaper. For instance I sent her one. I also sent a letter to the editor and so did hundreds of other people but none of those were published either. Then I found out why. I looked in the letters to the editor section of the newspaper and found out she is the editor.

The columnist says she recorded a conversation with a fourteen year-old who's on a hunger strike. She says she had a tape recorder but I didn't see it. Now if she recorded all of this she should remember the part where she told my dad she was biased and would not continue to write about this situation. And yet she has written about me twice since she told my dad she was biased. I hope her publisher gets the tape and listens to it before it mysteriously disappears. I don't remember smiling when she came over to me, or when she left. If I remember correctly I found the conversation very disturbing and I went home early because she upset me so much. I forgive her though. She probably has more problems than I do.

I went to the courthouse again today for one hour. People walking by stopped to shake my hand and wish me good luck. Global Television came by and did an interview which was aired at 6:00 p.m. A-channel also took pictures. I have had phone calls and visits at the court house from reporters for the Calgary Herald and the Calgary Sun. All these people have been very professional and with very few exceptions they have reported this matter fairly. I don't wish to leave out anyone but these were the people there today. CFCN (CTV), CBC, National Post, Canadian Press, Globe and Mail, all have been by at one time or another and I would like to thank them all.

Yesterday Dad got a letter from Chief Justice Allan H. Wachowich of the Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton saying they will review the court file and Dad will receive a formal response thereafter. I don't know what a review means or when the response will come but I am excited anyway.

Social Services asked Dad to come downtown and meet with them tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. They also want me to see their pediatrician at 2:30 p.m. Dad said okay to both.

Dad sent a letter to my mother's attorney yesterday saying he would like them to sign a consent order which he enclosed. No reply. They have not responded to our verbal offer Friday or yesterday's letter.

The issue of child support has been raised many times. That is an adult issue that has nothing to

do with access. Access is the focus of this kid's forum. I will not address child support.

I have been carefully considering what I will do in the future after my hunger strike ends. I have future plans that will need a great deal of your support. I hope to make an announcement in the next few days. Please follow my journal.

I will be at the courthouse at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

01/17/01 - Day 17: Today I woke up at about 9:30 a.m. Funny I didn't feel hungry but I think I said before that mornings are not a difficult time for me. I drank a glass of grape juice and a glass of water. Dad dropped me off at the courthouse at 10:30 a.m. and then went to the meeting with child welfare. He came back to the courthouse about an hour later. He asked me if I wanted to leave. I did because I could hardly hold my sign, my fingers were so cold. I left at about 12:05 p.m., sorry if I missed anybody.

Dad told me his meeting with child welfare went well. They are still being supportive and have offered some free services such as counselling. I can see this hunger strike ending soon.

When I got home I vacuumed the house because there was a lot of dog hair around from Abbi. I have been neglecting this chore because of my strike. Usually I vacuum every couple of days. Abbi hasn't had a lot of attention either. I will try to play with her lots on the weekend.

I'll be leaving soon for my 2:30 doctor's appointment.

The doctor says I am fine. He was very supportive and shook my hand although of course he does not want to see me not eating.

I came home and read my guest book and answered my emails. Sometimes this can be overwhelming. There is so much pain out there. Many people with many stories about losing their children. Since each story has two children or more, can you imagine how many children are in the world right now missing a parent? Can you imagine how many children there are as unhappy as I was when I lost my father for three years? It is hard, as a kid, for me to understand what makes our parents separate their children from a father or mother. I've never been married so I can't understand what goes on in a divorce. But mostly I can't understand how my dad for instance went from being the person my mother wanted kids with to the person that wasn't fit to have kids, just because they divorced. In all fairness to my mother, I think she has had some bad advice. I don't think the people around her have had her best interests at heart. I think they just want to see her win because it's a contest to them.

Maybe some parents who are fighting right now will read my journal and understand what their kids are going through and maybe offer an olive branch to each other. And maybe they will ask their children to tell them what kind of access to their father/mother they want. And maybe the kids will be happier tomorrow. It's a nice thought to go to bed with.

I'll be at the courthouse at 11:30 tomorrow. Good night.

Late posting: the guest book is full and we are making another one. It will be ready tomorrow.

01/18/01 - Day 18: I went to bed last night but didn't get to sleep for a while because I was thinking about all of this. Many people are very supportive of me and see clearly what I am saying as a kid, "children have a right to see both parents regardless of what the parents say about each other." Other people bring up issues of child support, what one parent did to the other, and other things. It is these other people I have to reach.

When a kid asks to be heard these people say they support us, and then in the next breath they also say we are too young to know the issues, we are being manipulated, we don't know what our dad did to our mom, we don't know what our mom did to our dad and so on. If we could change these people into the supporters they claim to be, I probably would not be here right now.

I really am not affected anymore by accusations that I'm not capable of making my own decisions or that I'm being manipulated. Before I started my hunger strike I knew people would say that. I've heard that a million times since I was six. Some adults need to believe that to feel good about the hurtful things they do to kids in our "best interests". Dad asked me yesterday if I am nervous about going out in front of the courthouse. I said, "No." Because all I am used to is adults telling me they are only doing what is best for me, I don't feel any pressure because that is what I expect to hear. My goal is not to change adults who can't hear my message. My goal is to empower kids and adults who want to see a change.

I'm off to the courthouse now.

I'm back from the courthouse and vegging out. Stayed until 1:00 p.m. I was well dressed but got cold again only because my hands get cold from the sign. Dad keeps an eye on me and puts his hands over my ears if my ears turn red. I don't like wearing a hat because my head gets too hot.

Dad got flak today because he first said he would go on a hunger strike with me and then he didn't. That was what I wanted because if he was there carrying a sign my message "that kids should be heard" would be diluted by an adult standing there. There was another adult there last week with a sign but he left when I didn't want him there. But dad was kinda on a strike because he has had one decent meal since I started. He eats once a day, toast mostly, although today he had a sandwich when I was busy.

A fax just came in from my mother's lawyer saying what happened in court on January 9, which was the one I refused to attend. He writes:

"Given your non-appearance at the proceedings before the Honourable Mr. Justice LoVecchio on January 9, 2001, Ms. Harrison has been requested by the court to set a date with the court on notice to you for Justice LoVecchio to deal with the outstanding issues. We are in the process of preparing the appropriate Notice of Motion and supporting Affidavit in this regard."

In other words we could have been back in court on January 12, finalizing this matter. I thought the court slowed it down and now I find out it was her again. Well at least it is my mother who has to make the application so we will finally find out what she wants which she would never tell us

when we made applications. That's a good thing for the judge to do.

A kid named Matt came to the courthouse today and sat with me for a while. He said he and a friend wanted to do something for me and he gave me a \$15.00 gift certificate to Music World. That made me feel really good. Thank-you Matt and friends.

I also got an email from the New Jersey Basketball Association in Newton, New Jersey, offering me a scholarship to their July basketball camp. I don't play basketball but I was really touched by the offer. Thank-you Steve Pappas. I hope we will meet one day.

I have an announcement to make tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. at the Court of Queen's Bench where I have been picketing. A very nice lady named Louise Malenfant of Parents Helping Parents in Edmonton prepared a press release for me which I will send out tonight. I will also set the press release to post on my journal automatically at midnight, MST. There will be an large "announcement" block to click on, a new button on my home page and new email addresses. Click on the new button to see the press release and then send the appropriate email if you wish. I am very excited about this. I got the idea from something someone messaged me.

I will be at the courthouse tomorrow by 11:30 a.m.

01/19/01 - Day 19: I got up at 8:15 this morning to meet a columnist from the National Post who was coming to our home to spend part of the day with me. Her name is Rebecca Eckler and her column will appear Saturday. It was nice to have a media person try to get to know me personally even if I did have to get up at 8:15 in the AM.

I had a glass of grape juice and left for the courthouse around 10:30. Jenn and Lisa from my school arrived shortly after and they stayed the whole time. That was very supportive of them and I really appreciated it. We gave them a ride home.

Noel Roger was also there. Noel has been very supportive of me and kids everywhere. Noel has made several entries in my guest book which have inspired me greatly. His writing is very compassionate and understanding and he gets right to the heart of the matter.

As 1:00 p.m. approached the media people started to arrive. Many faces I had seen before and some new ones. I was eventually lost in a sea of microphones. Dad said he tried to get a picture of people taking a picture of me and he might have gotten a few but he's not sure. I had a big slice of pizza to officially end my hunger strike. I ate the whole thing and I can tell you it was great. Tonight I will have some soup and part of a sandwich. I'll eat light tomorrow during the day and have a small steak for supper.

I will be on 630 CHED Radio, 630am, Edmontom, tonight at 6:20 p.m. MST, on the Al Stafford show. On Sunday I will speak with Greg and Yvonne from Chicago on Radio Chicago, WSL Radio, 890am, at 10:00 a.m. MST.

There are lots of emails on the computer offering support for my journey. I will read them soon and start to reply as quickly as possible.

Well there is rain on my parade. Global News ended their news report about me stopping my hunger strike with the line, "His mom and the judges he criticized for nineteen days did not blink". It is disappointing that the same people who told me I could end my hunger strike and no one would criticize me for it, did.

Global also brought up child support which I have repeated over and over is not part of my issue. I'm guessing my mother provided them with the documents. I could state the true facts here but I won't because child support has nothing to do with access to my dad and I will always refuse to discuss it. Then Global said Dad didn't picket with me even though he first said he would. Dad and I first discussed this back when my mother got her last adjournment and we decided (my idea) that we would both picket and he wrote a letter to the judge saying so because they would not respond to me. But then I asked Dad to let me picket alone so that the issue would focus on kids, not dads, as the true victims. Then I wrote a letter to the judge about me hunger striking although I knew that they would not respond to me. But they did respond to my dad's letter.

Global was the only reporter of all the TV channels who disappointed me but it hurts more because that reporter was the one who showed the most interest in my story and encouraged dad and me to talk to him. I'll phone him and ask him why.

I'm also a little mad at Dad because I wanted to go to at least Monday and he convinced me to quit today.

Then there was a knock on the door tonight and Dad finally got the court papers we were waiting for. My mother somehow knew I was ending my hunger strike today and waited to serve them until tonight. She wants joint custody of me but doesn't offer joint custody of Lindsay. She also wants access to me on alternate weekends. She says she has changed her mind from when she first offered sole custody because I went on a hunger strike (which of course I went on because she wouldn't sign the sole custody papers). My mother also sent out emails in which she said I was being manipulated by my father and I was probably cheating on my hunger strike.

Well when I think some more about it, I guess I can live with the news coverage. I also want to thank the people who reported the story strictly from a kid's point of view. That was neat. Thanks everyone for getting the point.

I'm going to go give Dad a hug and go to bed. I'll start planning my journey tomorrow.

01/20/01 - Day 20: What a difference a meal makes makes! I've had Ichiban soup and a sandwich to add to the pizza slice I had yesterday. I noticed my emotions are not so up and down now.

The papers were very objective this morning and reported my strike ending and me moving on to organizing my journey. I was going to take the day off but with a little food I am ready to get going.

Many people have wanted me to see pictures of the children they have limited or no access to. I am thinking of setting up a picture gallery where I will post pictures of kids with short messages

from their parent(s). Kids could look in the gallery and see themselves and their parents message. When I wasn't seeing my dad I would have loved to see something like that to know he hadn't forgotten me. I always had the horrible fear that I would never see him again. Is there someone out there who would like to help with this particular project?

WWF Royal Rumble is on tomorrow. Yay! This is my favourite pay-per-view. And I get to eat while I'm watching it. You are all invited to come over and watch with me. Bring snacks.

I'm going to put a ---- line in between when I end an entry and when I start a new one later in a day.

I have had 606 emails in the last week. I was not able to answer all of them. If anyone has not received an answer and would like one, please email me again and I will reply. I think I have worked out a filing system so I can keep good track of future emails. I'm also getting a secretary to help me so I'm not overwhelmed like I was before. Please welcome my new secretary, "Dad". lol

Dad's not working out too well. He's slacking off already. He doesn't have my emails sorted yet. It's tough to find good help. lol

We already have a volunteer working on the picture gallery I mentioned above. A lot of people have already offered their help. Thanks everyone. We will become well organized by next week. I hope some school classes everywhere will take this on as a project to plan and promote. I am already anxious to get going on my journey but of course I can't leave until about April because of the weather.

The Global News reporter called me tonight. He knew from my dad I was upset with his TV report putting access and child support together. I don't have to agree with him but I admire him for calling and talking about it.

I would like to put a map of Canada and the USA on my site showing my proposed route. If anyone out there could design it, that would be great. I would outline my route with a green line. When I start my journey the line could change to blue as I go along.

01/21/01 - Day 21: My hunger strike is over and today's entry will be the last one in my Hunger Strike Journal. I will start posting in 'Journey' tomorrow. I'll put suggestions and requests in there and tell you how things are going with organizing my walk/bike/rollerblade journey to Ottawa and Washington D.C.

I am feeling very good today. I had Sugar Pops for breakfast and a glass of milk. I had chicken noodle soup for lunch. Steak for supper!!! First one in three weeks. It's just a small one but I can already taste it.

I am overwhelmed by the response from people offering their help. I think this journey is going to be a big success. We are going to send a message to everyone about the cruelty of separating kids from their parents. We are going to let everyone know that kids need a voice in their parents' divorce proceedings. We are going to ask every person responsible for making these access decisions to declare that "access is the right of the child".

I have already started training for my journey by doing a few situps and pushups. and Abbi and I went for a short run last night. Later this week I will meet with a friend of my dad's who is a personal trainer and she will show me how to get in shape for my journey.

Please don't wait for my ideas to be posted here to offer your help. Many people will have very good ideas which I would like to act upon. Just email me.

I did situps and pushups and went for a run again tonight. I am determined to be in shape for my 'journey'. I spent the day answering a lot of emails that have piled up and I still have a lot to go.

I have learned that my mother is working hard to sabotage my journey just like she did my hunger strike. This saddens me a lot. I have seen some of the emails she has sent out. I don't think that people realize she is not like other mothers. She will viciously attack anyone who does not agree with her, including her own son. That's something that no one will understand, including me. I am so much happier at my dad's house I can't put it into words.

I would like to end my hunger strike journal on a positive note. The strike was an experience I will never forget. I stood outside that courthouse and each day I felt better about myself. I used to be afraid to criticize anything because I was never allowed to. The judges in that courthouse had made some terrible decisions about my life and I was afraid of them. But the more I stood there, the stronger I got. After a while I wasn't afraid of them anymore. Now I never will be.

My dad encouraged me to write my feelings in my journal. That was hard. He would ask me to describe how I felt at different times in the day when certain things happened and how I felt about the whole day. Kids from divorce don't talk about how we feel because we don't want to let people know how unhappy we are. We are afraid we will be laughed at or even punished. But the supportive emails I got from people, especially kids, helped me write my feelings down. Pretty soon I realized that talking about my feelings helped to get rid of a lot of my unhappiness.

Things aren't over yet of course but like Churchill said, "It is the end of the beginning" (Dad's quote). I want to say to every kid out there who is not happy with the access arrangement with their mother or father, "ACCESS IS THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD". Your parents know that and so does the court. So make sure you yell it out every time you have a chance. If you yell long enough and loud enough, they will have to listen. Be strong and you'll be happy. Clayton.

The Hunger Strike Journal will no longer be updated. Please watch my journey.

This web site went online at 4:00 p.m. MST, January 8, 2001



Clayton's Personal Mail

E - MAIL

I have email addresses to help you direct your email to the right people. I have help here and I thank everyone for taking their time to help me. So here are my email addresses:

contributions@legalkids.com - This is for anyone that can donate their time or expertise and help give us kids a voice.

donations@legalkids.com - In order to help with this fight we need donations, we can't do it without your help.

requests@legalkids.com - If you have any questions that you would like us to answer we'll try to help in the best way we can.



Back