



August 17, 2009

Senator Bill Nelson  
500 Australian Avenue Suite 125  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

**Re: Introduction of a Bill to properly regulate the use of children on Reality TV shows**

Dear Senator Nelson,

I am writing to ask that you introduce legislation to regulate the use of children under 16 on reality TV shows. If such proposed legislation already exists I would ask that you use your influence to speed its adoption along.

According to current studies and from recent news events it has been demonstrated that children on reality TV shows are subjected to undue anxiety. The children participating in these TV shows do so at the will of their parents. As minors they have no ability, nor legal status, to agree or disagree to their involvement; either way they have to deal with both the short and long term consequences. At the very least, children should have third party representation through onsite supervision from the appropriate child protection agency to ensure that they are treated properly. Even animals have on-set representatives to ensure that they are well taken care of.

In the United Kingdom the government is on the cusp of introducing similar legislation. According to the *London Times* Friday last, "*the Department for Children, Schools and Families is putting the*

*finishing touches to proposals aimed at clarifying the rules governing reality shows...which campaigners claim can cause children unnecessary distress.”*

Our - Child AbuseWatch.net - mission is the protection of children from abuse. This has many facets including providing free worldwide access to child abuse prevention information through our three sites. In addition, as advocates, we speak up for the voiceless – children – when necessary.

We have been involved in a campaign to halt the *Jon and Kate plus 8* show on *The Learning Channel* due to what we perceive as emotion abuse and neglect depicted on the show. Our campaign has un-capped a rising concern among parents about the use of children, not only in this show, but in others as well. Despite my writing two letters to John Hendricks, TLC's chairman – to which he did not respond - the new season launched two weeks ago.

If the television industry is incapable or unwilling to govern themselves where the use of minors is concerned, it is time for government to step in to protect these children.

I would ask that you review my request and start the steps necessary to introduce this legislation as soon as possible. I would be happy to speak at any hearing on behalf of such a bill.

The link to the article in the *Times* is listed below for your information.

Sincerely yours,

**EVIN M DALY**

Evin M. Daly  
Founder, Executive Director  
Guardian ad Litem (15<sup>th</sup> JC)

*New laws could mean children disappear from TV (Times)*  
[http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry\\_sectors/media/article6797170.ece](http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/media/article6797170.ece)

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