

Justice Helen Symes
Sydney District Court
Downing Centre
143-147 Liverpool St.
SYDNEY NSW 2000

REDACTED

7th October 2012

On the 4th July 2012 our son David Rentoul wrote to remind you that he had been a sexual abuse victim of convicted pedophile Barrie Tiffin Stewart. He decried your decision to impose a suspended rather than a custodial sentence. He also told you of the devastating long term effect of the abuse on his health and on his marriage.

I am writing to tell you that our son died on the 20th August 2012, shortly before his 45th birthday. His immune system, compromised by prolonged periods of ill-health and post traumatic stress, could not contain a massive infection and consequent organ failure and septic shock. There is no doubt that the sexual abuse inflicted on David by Barrie Stewart contributed to his ill health and ultimately to his death. We did not learn of David's abuse until four years ago when he was subpoenaed to give evidence in court. As a consequence his health deteriorated dramatically. I doubt you could appreciate the ineffable sadness and grief suffered by parents when a child dies unexpectedly and prematurely.

Barrie Stewart is a convicted pedophile who pleaded guilty to the sexual abuse of our son. There was strong evidence that he had abused many other young boys who, as a consequence, suffered long-lasting physical and mental damage. It is inconceivable that you allowed Barrie Stewart to walk away from his trial with impunity.

The news that you had imposed a suspended rather than a custodial sentence was devastating to David, to us, and to the other abuse victims and their families. The distress and anxiety we and our other children have experienced since we became aware of the abuse, and of David's subsequent illness, has been acute.

It is obvious from your decision that you lack any understanding of the long-term, horrendous impact of sexual abuse on victims and their families. The sympathy that you extended to Barrie Stewart rather than to our son is

unforgivable. We hope that knowledge of the circumstances of our son's death may cause you to re-assess your attitude towards predators and their victims. The failure in your duty as a judge to punish a convicted pedophile is indefensible. Even more regrettable was the denial of justice to our beloved son.

We would appreciate the courtesy of a response; a courtesy that you failed to extend to our son before he died.

(Dr). John Rentoul and Sandy Rentoul.