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Former Hephzibah students attract support

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A group of protestors sent a message today.

They're not going away and they're gaining more support.

You may have seen them in front of the Kosciusko County Courthouse, today.

Fox 28's Traci Capellman has been following the allegations against Hephzibah House for several months now and has the latest.

Warsaw has seen some of these protestors before, a group of former students from Hephzibah House. It's a religious boarding school for troubled teen girls.

But today, they were joined by alot of new faces. A group of students from Grace College, and community members were showing their support by handing out fliers.

We introduced you to these former students back in June. They were there at the school at different times, but have similar allegations. They say they were severely beaten, strip searched, in some cases starved, and isolated from their families.

The former students and protestors would like to see a change in Indiana law holding residential care facilities for children more accountable. And a local task force of concerned community members has formed to offer their support.

These students are also seeing support from former students of other schools across the country. Students like Suzanne Pucket who came from Ohio and Tony Connelly who came from Kentucky. They went to different boarding schools for at-risk kids, schools they say used similar tactics.

Tony Connelly who was supporting the protestors says, "I really just hope the truth comes out. I want the public to be aware of what is actually truthfully happening inside these programs because I believe if the public really knew what happened inside these programs because I believe if the public really knew what happened instead of believing the lies told by these organizations, they wouldn't stand for it."

Likewise, Susanne Puckett says, "Alot of these places try to silence their victims voices and we're here to let them know, we're not gonna be silenced anymore."

In another new development, the former Hephzibah students tell Fox 28 they have requested their medical records from the school. While the school hasn't complied, yet, they are trying to see if there is a link between health issues many of them have experienced. "Girls that have had reproductive problems, female problems, children with birth defects, difficulty conceiving. So, we're just finding compared to the general population, we have a much higher precentage of problems."

We placed calls to both Hephzibah House and their attorney, but they haven't returned our phone calls.

Fox 28 will continue to bring you the very latest.

To follow Fox 28's coverage of this story as it has developed, [click here](#).



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