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Teen's suicide settled

John O'Brien (/web/20161019204529/http://wvrecord.com/author/john-o-brien) May 17, 2006, 6:02am

CHARLESTON - A Tucker County outdoors treatment center and the parents of a 14-year-old boy who committed suicide more than five years ago have reached a settlement in a lawsuit brought on by the parents.

Paul and Diana Lewis and the Alldredge Academy in Davis settled for $1.2 million with a stipulation that the academy would admit responsibility for the death.

The Lewis' son, Ryan, told instructors that he had been trying to kill himself and a day later, Feb. 13, 2001, he hanged himself, according to a lawsuit filed through Charleston attorney Jim Lees.

The case was filed in Kanawha Circuit Court.

The Lewises, of Massachusetts, sent their son to participate in a three-month program at the center, which offered therapy through outdoor activities.

After Ryan Lewis' death, Alldredge Academy was shut down by former state Health and Human resources Secretary Paul Nusbaum. Investigators decided the academy did not have instructors qualified enough to handle suicidal children.

The school, also known as Ayne Institute, has since reopened. Its website promises, "Our unique philosophy and flexible program length is the perfect option for the difficult and possibly dangerous situations many families are facing today. Using proven emotional growth techniques, Alldredge supports parents and siblings of adolescents through family workshops."

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