

For immediate release 17 May 2007

SUMMATION OF INQUEST INTO DEATH IN CUSTODY OF 14 YEAR OLD ADAM RICKWOOD

Before HM Coroner for County Durham Andrew Tweddle
Sitting at Chester-le-street Magistrates Court, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-street,
Co. Durham DH3 3UA

The inquest into the death of 14 year old Adam Rickwood in Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in August 2004 is expected to conclude on Monday 21 May with the coroner summing up the inquest evidence to the jury and directing them as to their possible verdicts.

Adam is the youngest child to die in penal custody in modern times. He was found hanging in his room in Hassockfield Secure Training Centre (STC) in County Durham on 9 August 2004 whilst on remand. The inquest has heard evidence about how Adam had been identified as a vulnerable child with a history of self harm and suicide attempts. On the day of his death he had been forcibly restrained by staff for refusing to go to his room. A painful restraint technique called 'nose distraction' was used against him. Hours later he was found hanging.

Adam's case reignites concerns over the treatment of children by the criminal justice system. His case has attracted substantial parliamentary and public disquiet and led for calls for a radical overhaul of the way the state treats child offenders.

The family are represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members Richard Hermer from Doughty Street chambers and Mark Scott from Bhatt Murphy solicitors.

A detailed press briefing is available on INQUEST's website.

A press briefing will be held at the conclusion of the inquest.

Further information	www.inquest.org.uk
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