



Sebastian Ferrero
FOUNDATION

NEWS RELEASE

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Parents Continue Quest to Raise Awareness by Addressing Board of Pharmacy

GAINESVILLE, FL – In October 2007, Horst and Luisa Ferrero lost their happy and healthy three-year-old son, Sebastian Ferrero, after a series of medical mistakes at Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida. In August, the pharmacist who misfilled the prescription that led to Sebastian's death was minimally penalized. Deeply disappointed with the lenient nature of the penalty and general lack of investigation into the case, Horst and Luisa Ferrero plan to address the Board of Pharmacy at its next meeting, to be held **tomorrow, October 14, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.** in Gainesville.

The Ferreros hope to raise awareness about the often-critical nature of medical mistakes among children, and to boost the state of Florida's efforts to develop and implement processes to prevent fatal medical mistakes. In particular, the Florida Department of Health, which is responsible for overseeing the investigation and hearing phases of medical mistakes resulting in death, can be a key player in developing new and better processes. Under its auspices, the Board of Pharmacy carried out the initial segment of the overall investigation, determining that the mistake made by Edna Irizarry, – the pharmacist who misfilled Sebastian's prescription for more than 10 times the prescribe dosage – was deserving of only a \$1,000 fine and eight hours of continuing education in avoiding misfilled prescriptions for her contribution to Sebastian's death.

As part of their efforts to boost awareness about the need for increased medical safety standards, Horst and Luisa Ferrero have shared their story with Governor Charlie Crist (following the August Board of Pharmacy hearing). They have asked for his help in encouraging a greater level of investigation, and when warranted, tougher penalties. The Ferreros have also sought to engage area leaders and lawmakers. Florida Senator Steve Oelrich (R-Alachua) shares the concerns of the Ferreros, and has also sent a letter to Gov. Crist. It is the hope of Horst and Luisa to boost awareness among lawmakers and regulatory bodies, and ultimately, to make changes to the system through prevention and safety practices, as well as a strengthened investigation process in follow up to future occurrence of tragic medical mistakes.

For more information about the upcoming presentation by Horst and Luisa Ferrero to the Florida Board of Pharmacy, or to assist in the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation efforts, please contact Debbie Joseph at sebastianferrerofoundation@gmail.com.

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Horst and Luisa Ferrero created the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation in honor of their son Sebastian, a healthy three-year-old boy who died as a result of a series of medical mistakes at Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida. The Foundation's goal is to prevent medical mistakes, to establish patient safety programs, and to fundraise for a full-service children's hospital in Gainesville. Donations to the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation can be made online at www.sebastianferrero.org.