

Killer Nanny Freed To Come Home For Therapy

From: JULIET HERD in London

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AUSTRALIAN nanny Louise Sullivan last night escaped a jail term for the involuntary manslaughter of a baby in her care and is to be allowed to return to Australia for psychiatric treatment.

Justice Stephen Mitchell gave her a 15-month prison sentence suspended for two years for the death of six-month-old Caroline Jongen last April. A spokeswoman for Sullivan's family said the nanny was "extremely distressed" and would be returning to Sydney as soon as possible where she was expected to receive psychiatric care.

Caroline's parents Marcel, 42, and Muriel Jongen, 39, sat impassively in court as Justice Mitchell outlined his reasons for suspending Sullivan's sentence.

"Nothing can put the clock back or restore that baby to her mother and father, or end the pain of the parents or their anguish," he told the court. "I can only hope – having braved this hearing – they will understand I have decided to allow her to return to Australia."

Justice Mitchell said a custodial sentence was justified for the offence of manslaughter and he had given a suspended sentence reluctantly due to "exceptional circumstances".

"In your case it is the deficiency in your mental capacity and late diagnosis of hyperthyroidism," he said. "I'm also sure that your mental state at the moment is fragile and in need of treatment urgently."

Sullivan's lawyers had warned the judge that their client was at risk of a psychiatric and psychological breakdown once she absorbed the full impact of the death of the baby.

The court heard that Sullivan was born without a thyroid, a condition that left her with a below-average IQ of 81. Psychiatric evidence showed she had rigid thought patterns and was unable to react flexibly in an emergency.

Sullivan appeared to be in a dazed state as the decision was handed down. She was reassured by her mother, who leaned towards the dock and patted her hand.

As Muriel Jongen walked out of the court, she turned and stared at Sullivan, without speaking. The day before the hearing was halted for more than an hour when she broke down and was led screaming from the court.

After the ruling, Sullivan's lawyer, solicitor Karen Todner, issued a statement saying Sullivan regretted the death of baby Caroline.

It read: "This tragedy has caused enormous distress to all concerned. Louise Sullivan bitterly regrets that her actions led to Caroline's death.

"We are pleased that the judge was able to show compassion to a girl who has never deliberately sought to harm a child she knew and loved."

From: Meryl Dorey (shotinfo@ozemail.com.au):

It's happened again—just like it did in New York with the other nanny who was charged with murder for a baby who died from "shaken bay syndrome". Why are these nannies getting off without prison sentences if it was, indeed, murder? Is it because these babies died from the vaccines they were given and this is the biggest cover up/witch hunt yet? Only the courts and the parents know how soon after vaccination these babies died. And I don't think the courts will be sharing this information with us.