



Mother sues McDonald's for son's fall from chair

The Straits Times, 30 March 2005, Page 6

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Mother sues McDonald's for son's fall from chair

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By

Boy, now four, has developmental problems; baby chair faulty, mum claims

THE mother of a young boy who suffers developmental problems, allegedly as a result of a fall in a McDonald's restaurant, is suing the fast food giant.

The boy's mother is suing McDonald's for negligence and wants the restaurant to pay damages for her son's medical expenses and psychological trauma she suffered.

The boy, who cannot be named to protect his identity, was just 11 months old when he was alleged to have fallen from

a baby chair at a McDonald's outlet in Kallang on Oct 21, 2001 and suffered a brain haemorrhage.

His 36-year-old mother, who was seven months pregnant at that time, claims her son fell backwards from his chair and hit his head on the ground.

The housewife, who now has three sons aged between three and seven, alleges the chair had no safety strap.

After the fall, she said that her son vomited, his eyes rolled and he looked pale. He also developed a fever later.

He was subsequently wardened in KK Women's and Children's Hospital for 10 days and had to undergo an operation to ease the swelling and fluid retention in his head and remove blood clots.

Now, his mother says, the four-year-old is accident-prone

and clumsy. Doctors have recently diagnosed that his speech development lags behind his peers. They also say he displays "delayed fine motor skills", which means the muscles in his hands are too weak to perform simple tasks like holding a pencil or buttoning his shirt.

In addition, doctors say he has a higher chance of suffering fits.

When the boy's mother raised the matter with McDonald's in early 2002, she claims the restaurant questioned whether the incident had happened on its premises.

She says that she and her husband ran with the boy to seek medical help immediately after his fall and did not inform any McDonald's staff.

But she said she went back to the same McDonald's outlet and took photographs of its ba-

by chairs soon after the incident. Among the chairs, one had a broken plastic buckle, while another had no buckle at all and had its strap tied into a knot, the mother claims.

When queried about the alleged incident, McDonald's general manager, Mr Kenneth Chan, said: "The safety of our customers and employees is always McDonald's top priority. We had undertaken a thorough investigation after the alleged incident was raised with us.

"As the matter is now being pursued in the courts, we are unable to comment further."

Mr Din Savliwala, managing partner of law firm Bogaars & Din, who is acting for McDonald's, declined to comment yesterday.

The three-day hearing starts today.



McDonald's suit settled

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McDonald's suit settled

THE mother who sued McDonald's for negligence after her son allegedly fell from a baby chair at an outlet has settled the case out of court yesterday.

She and the fast-food giant reached an agreement during closed-door discussions less than two hours after the start of a scheduled three-day district court hearing.

"Both parties signed an out-of-court settlement and the terms are confidential," said the woman, who cannot be named to protect her son's identity. The 36-year-old has also been prohibited by the court from speaking further to any media.

The woman had claimed her son, 11 months old then, fell backwards from a baby chair at a **McDonald's** outlet in Kallang on Oct 21, 2001. According to her, he hit his head on the ground and suffered a brain haemorrhage because the chair had no safety strap.

The boy had to be warded in hospital and underwent an operation to ease the swelling and fluid retention in his head and remove blood clots, the woman said. She claimed that he now suffered developmental problems.

She had wanted the restaurant to pay damages for his medical costs and the psychological trauma she suffered.