

Bid to see N.B. teen's prison treatment quashed

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Ashley Smith died in a women's prison in Kitchener, Ont., in 2007. An inquest into her death opens on May 16 in Toronto. CBC

An Ontario court judge will not order the commissioner of Canada's prison system to show up in court and hand over videotapes of officials duct-taping and forcibly injecting drugs into teenage inmate Ashley Smith.

Ontario's deputy chief coroner ruled previously that the videos are not relevant to an upcoming inquest into Smith's death from self-strangulation in an Ontario prison four years ago.

The videos contain images of the New Brunswick-born Smith being injected with anti-psychotic drugs while she was in Quebec's Joliette prison.

The family and advocacy groups are challenging the ruling, and a judicial review of the coroner's decision is slated for May 2 in Toronto.

As part of preparation for the May 2 court challenge, the family tried to summons the head of Canada's prison system in a bid to put the videos on the public record.

But on Wednesday, Ontario Divisional Court Justice Thomas Lederer quashed the summons, meaning the family and public may never get a glimpse of the treatment Smith received 90 days before her death in the Grand Valley Institution in Kitchener, Ont., in 2007.

The troubled teen, a native of Moncton, had been transferred between federal prisons 17 times in the final 11 months of her life without access to mental health services.

The Fifth Estate obtained exclusive prison footage of her final months in the Kitchener prison. The footage is part of a documentary called [Behind the Wall](#), which can be watched online on *The Fifth Estate* website.

Smith was 19 years old when she choked herself to death on a piece of cloth. Guards looked on, ordered by Corrections Canada managers not to intervene until she had stopped breathing.

Prison officials originally declared the death a suicide.

However, the Smith family and one of Corrections Canada's own psychologists, Dr. Margo Rivera, say it was an accident. They argue that Smith's self-strangulation behaviour was a desperate bid for attention to provoke guards to intervene and give her some stimulation in her isolation cell.

Smith was originally jailed in New Brunswick at age 15, caught for throwing a crabapple at a postal carrier. However, her bad behaviour inside juvenile detention escalated and led to her lengthy incarceration. She was often in restraints and in isolation until her ultimate transfer to the adult federal prison system.

The inquest into her death is scheduled to begin in Toronto on May 16.