

Dad who saved son's life by armed, three-hour hospital standoff is freed from prison

Fr. Mark Hodges

HOUSTON, TX, **December 29, 2015** ([LifeSiteNews](#)) -- George Pickering the Third suffered a massive stroke last January. Doctors diagnosed the 27-year old as "brain dead," and the hospital ordered his life support progressively shut off in a fatal procedure they call "terminal wean."

But George's dad, George Sr., felt in his gut that his son could make it, despite the terminal prognosis. His son just needed more time.

Nevertheless, doctors told the family that George had no hope of recovery. Both George's mother and his brother agreed to take George off life support. Hospital staff even notified an organ donation organization that George's organs would be imminently available.

"They were moving too fast. The hospital, the nurses, the doctors," George Sr. told [KPRC](#). "I knew if I had three or four hours that night that I would know whether George was brain-dead."

That's when George Pickering the Second did something dangerous, and illegal, which saved the life of his son.

George Sr. took a gun into Tomball Regional Medical Center, barricaded himself in with his son and began a three-hour standoff with staff and police, seeking to give George Jr. more time on life support.

Even after he was disarmed, the father remained barricaded in, and even threatened staff and officers, to buy George time on life support.

Then, after three hours, George Jr. surprised everybody --except his dad-- by squeezing his father's hand, on command, three times.

"The SWAT team had their own doctors and when they entered into the critical care room, they saw that my client's son was not brain dead because he was making eye contact (and) was following their commands," the family's lawyer Phoebe Smith [told RT](#). "They were completely amazed."

After feeling his son show signs of life, and hospital staff and officers acknowledging the signs of life, George Sr. surrendered peacefully.



Father and son relating their story on CNN

George Jr. recovered completely. "When you see him now, he is a picture of health," Smith said. "I don't think he would have survived but for the fact that his father slowed the process down."

Advertisement

"Almost every day we see our rights to make medical decisions for our loved ones eroding," Bobby

Schindler of [the Life and Hope Network](#), told LifeSiteNews. Schindler is the brother of Terri Schiavo, who died after her life support was removed in 2005, even though she showed slight signs of responding to her mother, doctors testified that Terri was in a "minimally conscious state," and the judge deciding whether to remove life support admitted that Terri responded to her mother, though not consistently.

"Sadly, it resorted to a father having to use the threat of violence to afford time for his son to have that chance to improve," Schindler commented. "While violence is never the answer and cannot be tolerated, one can understand the unconditional love parents have for their children and wanting nothing more than to give them the chance to recover."

Arrested, charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and convicted, the father gladly served nearly a year in jail for his crime.



Father and son outside the hospital

"There was a law broken, but it was broken for all the right reasons," the younger George [explained](#) to the Daily Mail. "And I'm here now because of it. It was love, it was love."

This Christmas, newly freed dad and son reunited to celebrate the life of the Christ Child, and, the life of George the Third. "The important thing is I'm alive and well, my father is home and we're together again."