

Mum's crying shame

Woman tearful as authorities take scarred boy to hospital

Starprobe

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

We believe it is your right to know. The Star has formed an investigative team and if you have any information, e-mail us at starprobe@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Her relatives noticed the scars on the boy's head three years ago and her colleagues at a music school saw bruises on his face all the time.

When they confronted the single mother, she just brushed it off saying her five-year-old son was naughty and was always falling down.

However, the truth came out on Tuesday when Welfare Department officers rescued the boy and took him to the Serdang Hospital.

He had so many injuries that doctors who examined him were taken aback as there was barely a spot on the body that had no scars.

A relative finally alerted the department after being encouraged to do so by a Starprobe team that had been following the case for the past few days.

On Tuesday, at about 11.30am, reporters from *The Star* stationed outside the family home in Puchong alerted the welfare officers that the mother and child were at home. A department team came about an hour later.

The Starprobe team was able to witness the rescue first hand as the officers used the soft approach to convince the mother to allow



Caned and cut: It took welfare officers some time to persuade this boy to get into their car. He later told officers that his mother had beaten him for a long time.

Call 15999 to report child abuse

Anyone who has reason to believe that a child is being abused should contact the Talian Nur helpline at 15999.

Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, who called on all Malaysians to use the 24-hour helpline said: "Please call our helpline and I will make sure our child protectors investigate."

'I love my mother but she beats me'

PETALING JAYA: At the Serdang Hospital, as doctors showed Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil his wounds, the eyes of the boy rescued from abuse lit up after viewing himself in the camera.

He started to smile, and showed his chipped and missing tooth.

Those present were shocked to see that his bottom jaw was almost toothless. A doctor told *The Star* that the boy had shared some information with her.

"He told me 'Saya sayang mak tapi mak pukul, mak pukul rotan besar (I love my mother, but she beats me. She beats me with a big cane).'

approach to convince the mother to allow them to take the child.

After two hours, the tearful mother finally relented but she kept on shouting at her son who was also crying.

It took the officers some time to persuade the boy to get into their car to get to the hospital.

Medical staff confirmed bruises, cane marks, cuts and swellings on the boy which they said were not self-inflicted.

The boy later told the welfare and medical officers that his mother had beaten him and that it had been going on for a long time.

It was learnt that the mother had a "complicated life" and was now divorced from the boy's father who had never helped raise the child.

The mother had enrolled her son at the music school where she teaches and fellow music teachers saw a fresh cut on his lips and a huge bruise on his face.

Concerned for the boy, the teachers con-

fronted the mother who attributed the injuries to the boy falling down because he was naughty and was always jumping about.

When the mother stopped taking the child to the music centre, worried teachers called the boy's aunt who reported the matter to *The Star*.

The aunt also provided photographs of the boy taken three years ago showing him with scald marks on his head.

Although she suspected he was being abused, she did not act until the music teachers alerted her on the new injuries and wounds.

On Monday, the Starprobe team alerted Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil about the case.

To watch the exclusive video of how the boy was rescued and taken to the hospital, visit thestaronline.tv/switchup.