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Former student claims abuse in teen boot camps

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SALT LAKE CITY, Utah -- A 24-year-old man from Washington state is the latest to sue a Utah-based organization for troubled children, claiming he was physically and emotionally tormented during its teen boot camp programs in Mexico.

Attorneys for Carl Brown Austin of Spokane filed the lawsuit Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City against World Wide Association of Specialty Programs and Schools.

Austin spent nearly two years at the program called Casa by the Sea, starting at age 13. He alleged he was a "virtual prisoner" in programs that meted out primitive punishment for hours on end.

An attorney for the St. George-based organization did not immediately return a call seeking comment Thursday.

One of the people named in the suit said that Casa by the Sea was "a well-run program" and that "safety and security were paramount."

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