

Stop Solitary for Kids Spring 2017 Newsletter

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STOP SOLITARY FOR KIDS NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017



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Stop Solitary for Kids Celebrates One Year



Over the past year, we have worked with juvenile justice agencies and local facilities in eight states to help end solitary confinement safely and share strategies that work. We gave legislative testimony in several states and reached millions of people about the urgent need to stop solitary. With your support, we look forward to another year.

Stop Solitary for Kids Partner Organizations:

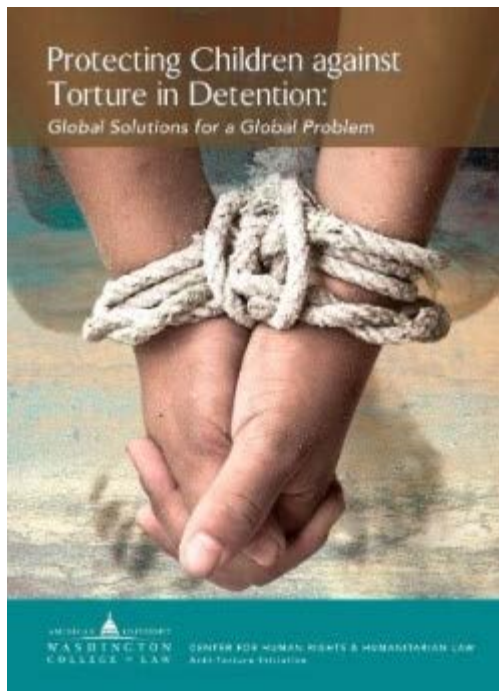
Center for Children's Law and Policy
Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators
Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University
Justice Policy Institute

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STOP SOLITARY FOR KIDS IN THE FIELD

See our website for the latest developments on youth solitary

New Resource: Solitary Confinement in International Law



The Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at the American University Washington College of Law released a new publication entitled *Protecting Children Against Torture in Detention: Global Solutions for a Global Problem*, in March 2016. The report contains a chapter written about **Stop Solitary for Kids**.

Op-ed: Personal Accounts of Youth Solitary



"Life in the Hole: Solitary Confinement is a Cauldron Meant to Destroy"

Dwayne Betts and Marcus Bullock were 15 and 16-year olds when they were sent to an adult jail in Fairfax County, Virginia. Like Kalief Browder (above) they were subjected to the horrors of solitary confinement as children. In their **opinion piece** in *The Hill*, Dwayne and Marcus remind us of the human toll of solitary confinement.

Marcus Bullock, is on the board of directors of the Justice Policy Institute and is the chief executive officer and founder of **FlickShop**, which helps inmates to stay in touch with families and friends.

Dwayne Betts, is a poet, memoirist, and teacher and a 2010 Soros Justice Fellow. He is the author of

“Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survival, and Coming of Age in Prison.”



Correctional Leader Agrees: Stop Using Room Confinement

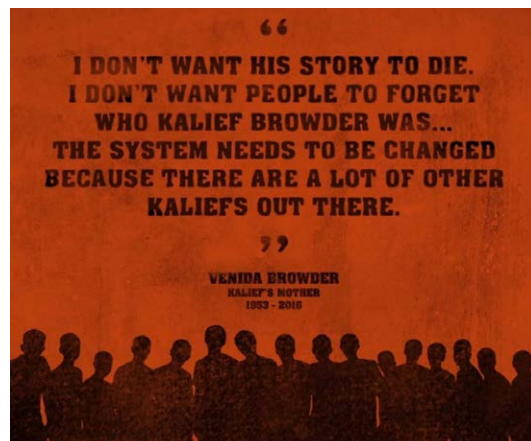
Michael Dempsey is the Director of the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA) and a partner in Stop Solitary for Kids. In an **opinion piece** in the Juvenile Justice Information Exchange, he calls on facilities to stop using solitary confinement.

Room Confinement Assessment Tool Field Tested

The Stop Solitary for Kids campaign is now field testing a new tool called the Room Confinement Assessment Tool (RCAT), designed to help superintendents and administrators identify and target drivers of isolation within their facilities. The campaign is currently field-testing the RCAT with the assistance the Bridgeport and Hartford (CT) Detention Centers, Sedgwick (KS) County Detention Center, the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, the Delaware Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

MEDIA & NATIONAL NEWS

Kalief Browder's Voice Helps Reform NY Justice System



"**TIME: The Kalief Browder Story**," aired in March and April on Spike TV. Kalief's powerful story made an impact on viewers across the country and policymakers in New York. Read more about Kalief and the series [here](#). In the wake of the series, two major justice reforms occurred. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed **legislation** to raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to 18. New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio also **pledged** to close Rikers Island, as recommended by a **report** by an independent city commission. Read more about New York City [here](#) and New York State [here](#).

Bipartisan Federal Legislation to End Solitary for Youth



There are now three pieces of federal legislation proposed to ban solitary confinement for youth in federal custody: the **MERCY Act**, the **REDEEM Act**, and **Kalief's Law**. Both the MERCY Act and the REDEEM Act have broad bipartisan and bicameral support. The bills prohibit solitary confinement for youth in federal custody except in emergency situations not to exceed 3 hours and require data collection and oversight. [Click here](#) to read more about the bills on our website.

STATE DEVELOPMENTS

Visit our website for a complete list of state activity

Litigation in Four States to Stop Solitary for Kids

Officials and facilities in four states are now facing federal class action lawsuits for keeping youth in solitary confinement: **New York**, **Wisconsin**, **Washington**, and **Tennessee**. Attorneys in these cases argue that solitary confinement violates children's constitutional and educational rights. In January 2017, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a **statement of interest** in the New York case and injunctions were granted in the **Tennessee** and **New York** cases.

Philadelphia & North Carolina Put Kids in Solitary in Jails

Philadelphia County regularly puts kids as young as fifteen in solitary confinement inside adult jails despite **assurances** from city officials that the practice would stop. According to a **recent article in Philly.com**, dozens of youth are put in solitary confinement for an average of 32 days at a time.

In North Carolina, hundreds of 16 and 17-year olds are held in solitary confinement in adult county jails, according to reporting by the **Charlotte Observer** and **the ACLU of North Carolina**. North Carolina is now the only state that automatically charges youth as adults at age 16. Though **state legislation** to raise the age of jurisdiction passed in the NC House, **about 90%** of the kids in solitary in Charlotte are African American. **Read more.**

Calls to Reform South Carolina's Use of Isolation

In April 2017, South Carolina's Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Organization issued a call to action for state lawmakers in **Effective Solutions to South Carolina's Juvenile Justice Crisis: Safety, Rehabilitation, and Fiscal Responsibility**. On average 16.8 % of all children housed at DJJ's Broad River Road Complex were in solitary. Read more about South Carolina and the report's recommendations on our website **here**.

Washington, DC Law Limits Solitary for Youth

On April 7, 2017, the **Comprehensive Youth Justice Amendment Act of 2016** became law, making **several improvements** in the D.C. juvenile justice system, including placing limitations on solitary confinement. Read more in the **Washington Informer** or on **our website**.

Colorado Prepares for Major Changes

A new report, "**Bound and Broken: How NYC's Culture of Violence is Hurting Colorado's Kids and What to Do About It**" says that staff use isolation, pain-compliance techniques, and other abusive devices like **the Wrap** at high rates in Colorado's Division of Youth Corrections (DYC). The agency says that it is in the process of making internal changes to these practices. Law makers passed **HB 1329** in May 2017, which will overhaul the agency in favor of more rehabilitative, therapeutic, and age-appropriate policies and practices. Read more about Colorado **here**.



The frame from a 2016 video shows staff restraining a youth in the Wrap at the Colorado DYC Lookout mountain Youth Services Center.

Photo Courtesy ACLU

Stop Solitary for Kids is a national initiative to end solitary confinement for youth in juvenile justice and adult facilities. We help advocates, facilities and system stakeholders by providing public education, legislative information, resources, and technical assistance.

To find our more visit us at stopsolitaryforkids.org or email JLutz@cclp.org.

[Contact Us](#)

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The Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators
The Justice Policy Institute



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