

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | April 23, 2017

An article published on [Newsweek](#) charts recent scientific research into how solitary confinement affects the brain. As Angola 3 member Robert King has said, I can tell you from experience: If you've done time in solitary confinement, you've been damaged. Even if you survive it, it has an impact on you.

[Philly.com](#) published an article examining the city's continuing placement of children in solitary confinement and advocate and legislator attempts to change that. Currently, teens aged 15 to 17 in the state are charged as adult if they're accused of more serious crimes, including aggravated assault, robbery with a deadly weapon, and murder. In 2015, juveniles at PICC the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center (PICC) adult jail were placed in punitive segregation 41 times, for an average of 32 days apiece.

A Massachusetts State Senator has [called for an oversight hearing](#) into the death of a football player who killed himself while in solitary confinement. Aaron Hernandez, 27, was recently found dead in his isolation cell at the Souza-Barankowski Correction Center.

The [American Bar Association](#) released a podcast featuring criminologist and author Keramet Reiter discussing whether it's time to rethink solitary confinement. She describes what the conditions of solitary confinement are actually like. She also shares what kind of reforms she thinks would be necessary for the judicial system and legislators to be able to assess the need for long-term solitary confinement.

The American Civil Liberties of Wisconsin has [filed an amended complaint](#) to the lawsuit it filed in January, asking the court to order the state to stop using solitary confinement in two of its facilities for children. It's really a humiliating and degrading existence, and that's why we're seeking to put an end to it, said Larry Dupuis, Legal Director of the ACLU of Wisconsin.

Al Jazeera English released a [Fault Lines](#) episode about prison conditions and the use of solitary confinement in Alabama. Its prison system has become so dangerously overcrowded that in 2016, for the first time, the US Justice Department launched a federal civil rights investigation into the entire state's prison conditions.

Frontline released series of videos and articles about the Last Days of Solitary, which focuses on how the state of Maine has significantly lessened its reliance on the use of isolation. Some of the issues addressed in the project include [life after solitary](#), the process of [reducing the use of solitary](#), and whether solitary [makes people more likely to reoffend](#).

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. She's written for the New York Times, Wired, BuzzFeed News, Solitary Watch, and other outlets. Find her [@stahlidarity](#) and at [stahlidarity.com](#).

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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