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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Our Weekly Roundup of News and Views on Solitary Confinement

by [Aviva Stahl](#) | May 8, 2016

The Guardian continued its coverage of solitary confinement, publishing an article penned by [Chelsea Manning](#) and a video featuring NYC activist [Johnny Perez](#). Also released was [investigation](#) into the use of isolation in Florida where one in five prisoners with mental illness is held in solitary confinement.

A Florida man has spent the last 291 days in solitary confinement at the request of state prosecutors, according to an [article](#) published in a local outlet. Quentin Mills, who is currently locked up at the Duval County Jail, has never been in a fight or threatened to harm himself or anyone else on the inside.

[The New England Journal of Medicine](#) published a perspective piece on solitary confinement. The medical community can respond to President Obama's recent action on solitary confinement by questioning the health-related consequences of isolating more than 400,000 persons in our jails and prisons each year, write the authors.

A federal judge [ruled](#) that a lawsuit could go forward which challenges the use of solitary confinement for children locked up in Tennessee, although he did not issue an injunction immediately barring the practice. In April, District Judge Todd Campbell ordered a 15-year-old boy released from isolation at the Rutherford County Juvenile Detention Center; last week a news station [released a video](#) of another child being held in solitary in the county, at the adult jail.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors [voted](#) to strictly limit to use of solitary confinement in its 16 juvenile facilities. Under the new rules, isolation will only be used as a temporary response to behavior that poses a serious and immediate risk of physical harm to any person.

The director of Rhode Island's Department of Corrections has come out in opposition of legislation recently introduced into the state legislature that would sharply limit the use of solitary confinement in the state's prisons. I don't want to see our staff in a position where they can't take the steps that are necessary because the limitations are enshrined in a statute, [said](#) director A.T. Wall. Meanwhile, the Providence Journal published [an editorial](#) in support of the legislation.

A federal judge has ruled that a [lawsuit can proceed](#) against the FBI, after a cooperating witness alleged that federal agents had him arrested on a bogus murder-for-hire charge and engineered his placement in solitary confinement for 15 months. Joseph Barone said that his FBI handler threatened to prosecute him for activities the FBI normally allowed as part of his cover unless he participated in a high risk scheme to identify organized crime figures by using monitored phone calls.

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 [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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