Correctional facilities routinely hold children in total isolation for weeks or months at a time, causing irreparable damage. This panel will bring together survivors of juvenile solitary confinement, legal experts, advocates, and an investigative reporter to discuss the experience of solitary and its consequences on children, and the need for this institution to end permanently across the United States.

PANELISTS

MARSHA LEVICK co-founded Juvenile Law Center in 1975. Throughout her legal career, Marsha has been an advocate for children’s and women’s rights and is a nationally recognized expert in juvenile law. Marsha oversees Juvenile Law Center’s litigation and appellate docket, and has successfully litigated challenges to unlawful and harmful laws, policies and practices on behalf of children in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

JOHNNY PEREZ is the Safe Reentry advocate at the Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project (MHP), a nonprofit law firm providing pro bono legal services to underserved population in NYC. Drawing on the wisdom of thirteen years of direct involvement with the criminal justice system, Johnny also works to change unjust policies and practices in the criminal justice system.

ROMEEKA WILLIAMS is a youth outreach coordinator with the Youth Art & Self-Empowerment Project, an organization that provides workshops and support for youth in the Philadelphia Prison System’s adult jails, and advocates on behalf of treating kids as kids in the criminal justice system. Romeeka, who was arrested and charged as an adult when she was 17, is a leader and voice for youth locked-up in adult jails.

SAMANTHA MELAMED is a reporter on the features desk at the Philadelphia Inquirer, Daily News and Philly.com. In her spare time at work, she has been covering issues around juvenile justice and incarceration, including resentencing for people who were unconstitutionally sentenced as juveniles to life without parole and practices affecting children charged in the adult system.

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

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