

CITIZENS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS' EXPOSES CONCERN ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

After new abuses at the infamous St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital, citizens air concerns about violations of children's rights in the mental health system.

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 4, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In observance of the 30th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) held a pop up exhibit on mental health rights with a frank community round table discussion on the state of the rights of children in the mental health system. This was the first in a series of round tables held at the Church of Scientology in Washington, DC, to assess community needs towards creating tailored educational [materials](#) to assist parents and children to protect their rights.

Isabelle Vladoiu, legal and human rights scholar, discussed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child including Article 12, which states that children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.



Human Rights scholar Isabelle Vladoiu spoke on the state of children's rights in the mental health system in the District of Columbia and how these relate to their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on its 30th anniversary.

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Beth Akiyama, Citizens Commission on Human Rights

Children have been involuntarily subjected to treatments, such as electric shock treatments that cause brain damage or made to take behavioral drugs that cause side effects like tardive dyskinesia (permanent uncontrolled jerking movements), deepening depression, aggression and even suicide.

“Contrary to Victorian values, children actually should be seen and should be heard. Members of the community and parents should be heard. Children should not be forced, coerced or manipulated into treatments that will affect their body and their mind for years to come,” said

round table moderator, Beth Akiyama of the National Office of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights.

The round table was held on the heels of an expose revealing the excessive use of restraints and seclusion at [St. Elizabeths Mental Hospital](#) in Washington, DC. Recent media reports exposed that per the hospital's own internal audit the use of restraints went from four times in 2013 to 782 times in 2018. Putting patients in seclusion increased from 49 hours in 2012 to 391 hours in 2018. St. Elizabeths Mental Hospital was placed under Department of Justice oversight after an investigation in 2007 revealed patient assaults and civil rights violations. After years of oversight, this oversight ended in 2014 due to improvements in patient care, however the revelation of these new abuses seriously calls into question the facility's ability to operate safely under its own governance.

Round table attendees were asked what issues they have found in their own communities. Concerns raised about children's rights in the mental health system included not only mental hospitals, but also the foster care system and even mental health systems in schools. Other points included the role of the media in promoting psychiatric drugs on TV that create demand for them in young people. Specially trained Crisis Intervention Officers in the District of Columbia were applauded as a great help in successfully handling stressful situations in the community. One resident noted that in the poorest and most dangerous part of the city some children are born on drugs into families with generations of illegal and prescription drug use.

Information from the round table will be used to develop further discussions on these topics and others. Common issues will be isolated to create guides for how to best handle these issues or make recommendations for legislation.

Concurrent with the round table was an informative pop-up exhibit exposing the history of abuses in the mental health system. This exhibit has been displayed internationally for over a decade to raise awareness of the potential for abuse in the mental health system so citizens can protect themselves.

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights is a nonprofit charitable mental health watchdog group co-founded in 1969 by the Church of Scientology and professor of psychiatry Dr. Thomas



A native of Southeast DC explains the complex situations facing inner city Black communities, such as mental health issues caused by prescription and street drug use that is passed on from grandmother to mother to child.



Washington's diplomatic corps member touring the CCHR Mental Health Pop Up Exhibit to find out what areas of abuse exist in the mental health facilities, so they can avoid in setting up optimum mental health facilities in African countries.

Szasz. It is dedicated to eradicating psychiatric abuse and ensuring patient protection. With headquarters in Los Angeles, California, CCHR International guides a global human rights advocacy network of some 180 chapters across 34 nations. CCHR Commissioners include physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers, legislators, government officials, educators and civil rights representatives. Free information kits and resources are available at <https://www.cchr.org> and <https://www.cchrint.org>

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A member of Washington, DC's, vibrant Ethiopian community explains rights issues, as a youth participant listens.



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