

CCHR Congratulates Media on National Award for Exposing Behavioral Child Abuse

During Mental Health Month, watchdog says media plays vital role in protecting children in behavioral-psych facilities, as news report receives national award

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EINPresswire.com/ -- [Citizens Commission on Human Rights International](#),

a global mental health industry watchdog based in Los Angeles congratulated "10 Investigates" news in Columbus, Ohio for its National Headliner Award given for exposing abuses at a now-closed "troubled teen" behavioral facility in Columbus.[1] CCHR, which has been investigating abuse and fraud in for-profit psychiatric facilities for over three decades, said media exposure can literally help save patient lives and change conditions and urged more of this during Mental Health Month.

"10 Investigates" did more than a dozen stories that uncovered and exposed the facility, part of a chain of for-profit behavioral facilities owned by a private company that profited up to \$32 million.[2] The facility closed in the wake of hundreds of police runs to it and parents reporting improper restraints and mistreatment.[3]

Chief investigative reporter Bennett Haerberle and photojournalist Chris Kettler's reporting earned second place in the Health Science category.

California, Oregon, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington recently stopped sending children under state care, including foster kids, to other states and facilities owned by the company or similar chains.[4]



During Mental Health Month, a watchdog says media plays vital role in protecting children in behavioral-psych facilities, as news report receives National Headliner Award for exposing a "troubled teen" treatment facility

CCHR says the [abuse of troubled teens and foster care children](#) remains an urgent issue, often needing media as their voice. The National Juvenile Justice Network notes that “profiting off of youth incarceration has become widespread, with almost half of the youth facilities in the country privately operated. Kids are often shipped across state lines to receive ‘therapeutic services,’ yet in reality suffer bullying, restraint, and abuse.”[5]

CCHR has worked since the early 1990s to bring to light abuses in this sector, helping obtain Federal inquiries, including one in April 1992, when U.S. Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, Chairwoman of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, delivered a scathing rebuke on the mental health industry’s “unethical and disturbing practices.... Clearly, this BUSINESS of treating minds—particularly this BIG BUSINESS of treating young minds has not policed itself and has no incentive to put a stop to the kinds of fraudulent and unethical practices that are going on.”

Since the early nineties, some seven privately-owned psychiatric hospital companies have paid out over \$3 billion in settlements and fines in relation to fraud and abuse. In 2019, for-profit psychiatric facilities paid \$152 million in criminal or civil fines or settlements.[6] But CCHR says this needs to be seen in terms of how many patients’ lives—including children and youths—have been harmed because of this.

In 2015, CCHR expanded its campaign for safeguards in for-profit behavioral/psychiatric facilities, sending letters every year alerting federal and state agencies and legislators.

Media has always played an integral role in governments responding to abuses. The 1999 60 Minutes program exposed the now defunct Charter Behavioral Health facilities had had created dangerous conditions for patients. Federal investigations of its practices soon followed.[7] In Australia, CCHR worked with 60 Minutes on exposing a lethal psychiatric practice called deep sleep treatment, which prompted legislative action and eventually a ban on the treatment in 1983. NBC News exposed abuses at a behavioral center, National Deaf Academy in Florida, which closed in 2016, in the wake of government investigations into and lawsuits over patient abuses.[8] ProPublica has also published numerous investigative reports on profit-making psychiatric hospitals.[9]

The deaths of children by restraints in psychiatric-behavioral facilities features in one of the chapters and sections of CCHR’s museum housed at its headquarters on Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, titled Psychiatry: An Industry of Death. Details of shocking restraint deaths of young children shows the need for far greater legislative protections.

The museum is free and situated at 6616 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90028 and is open Mon-Sat, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Ideal for tours during Mental Health Month, they can be booked by calling the Museum Manager at (800) 869-2247. For those not living in Los Angeles, there is a [virtual tour](#) of the museum online that includes all 14 films in the multi-award-winning documentary.

Read full article here: <https://www.cchrint.org/2022/05/02/mental-health-month-cchr-congratulates-media-on-its-national-award/>

[1] "10 Investigates earns National Headliner Award," 10BNS, Columbus, Ohio, 27 Apr. 2022, <https://www.10tv.com/article/news/investigations/10-investigates/10-investigates-earns-national-headliner-award-sequel-pomegranate/530-3f20beac-3abc-4145-b6bb-4098a9d7e841>

[2] Bennett Haeberle, "More states sever ties with for-profit Sequel Youth and Family Services after reports of abuse," 10 WBNS News, 17 Dec. 2020, <https://www.10tv.com/article/news/investigations/10-investigates/more-states-sever-ties-with-sequel-youth-and-family-services-after-reports-of-abuse/530-b6f995b7-13c3-40a5-8893-5326af948a19>

[3] <https://www.cchrint.org/2021/11/01/mental-health-abuse-reforms-aim-to-protect-against-behavioral-abuse-of-children/> citing: Bennett Haeberle, "Sequel Pomegranate closes as advocates, Paris Hilton call for change in 'troubled teen industry,'" WBNS 10, 21 Oct 2021, <https://www.10tv.com/article/news/investigations/10-investigates/sequel-pomegranate-closes-advocates-paris-hilton-call-change-troubled-teen-industry/530-540a17cc-22fb-42e7-9227-0d529507b04c>

[4] Curtis Gilbert, "Washington becomes latest state to ditch Sequel," APM Reports, 9 Dec. 2020, <https://www.apmreports.org/story/2020/12/09/washington-becomes-the-latest-state-to-ditch-sequel>

[5] <https://www.cchrint.org/2020/11/24/half-a-million-americans-want-two-behavioral-hospital-chains-closed-over-teen-abuse/> citing <https://www.change.org/p/gretchen-whitmer-justice-for-cornelius-shut-sequel-down>

[6] <https://www.cchrint.org/2020/01/13/for-profit-psychiatric-hospitals-a-year-of-police-raids-staff-arrests/>

[7] <https://dfarq.homeip.net/charter-hospital-charter-behavioral-health/>

[8] Aliza Nadi, "'Mom, Please Help': FBI Probing Alleged Abuse of Deaf, Autistic Kids," NBC, 14 Sept. 2014, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/investigations/mom-please-help-fbi-probing-alleged-abuse-deaf-autistic-kids-n193846>; <https://www.cchrint.org/2018/01/22/psychiatric-hospital-rife-with-sexual-assault-allegations-finally-shuts-down/> citing: Aliza Nadi, "National Deaf Academy, Hit With Abuse Allegations, Is Closing," NBC News, 25 Jan. 2016, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/national-deaf-academy-hit-abuse-allegations-closing-n497516>.

[9] Christina Jewett and Robin Fields "Psychiatric Care's Peril and Profits," ProPublica, 22 Nov. 2008, <https://www.propublica.org/article/psychiatric-cares-peril-and-profits-psychiatric-solutions->

inc; <https://www.cchrint.org/2019/08/13/multi-million-dollar-fines-insufficient-to-curb-fraud-patient-sexual-other-abuses/> citing: "Yet Another Scandal Rocks Utah Home for Vulnerable Children: Police raided the home after an employee reported sex among residents and misconduct by staff," ProPublica, 21 Mar. 2016, <https://www.propublica.org/article/yet-another-scandal-rocks-utah-home-for-vulnerable-children>

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