

# Reunification Camps: Children in Santa Cruz, CA Violently Ripped from Home

*Advocates organize candlelight vigil in Santa Cruz and demonstration at the Watsonville Courthouse. The group aims to shed light on reunification camps.*

SANTA CRUZ, CA, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Family court advocates across the nation are mobilizing to hold a candlelight vigil Thursday, October 27th, at 7:30 p.m., followed by a protest at the Watsonville Courthouse at 8 a.m. on Friday, October 28th. These events are a direct response to the experiences of siblings Maya and Sebastian Laing, of Santa Cruz County, California who were [forcibly removed from their home](#) last week and transported to a reunification camp led by Lynn Steinberg. The video and the abusive nature in which they were

removed has created an international outrage as it has gone viral (reaching over 250,000 people) since Friday morning on a variety of social media platforms.

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Had any other adult treated a child this way, they would be behind bars on felony child abuse charges.”

*Tina Swithin*

Reunification camps are a highly controversial and unproven treatment method in which children are removed from their preferred parent or safe parent, despite their allegations of abuse or mistreatment directed towards the other parent. In these camp environments, which are eerily similar to the equally controversial wilderness camps or conversion therapy camps, children are prevented from contacting their preferred parent and

they are often told that their memories of abuse are not real or, that the parent they deem as “safe,” coached them or “alienated” them. [Despite its history](#) and equally disturbing present-day



#JusticeForMayaAndSebastian  
Thursday, October 27: 7:30 -8:30 p.m.  
**CANDLELIGHT VIGIL**  
Lighthouse Field  
State Beach  
(grassy knoll area by lighthouse)  
For additional information, email  
Savemayaandsebastian@gmail.com  
IG: @maya.and.sebastian  
Candlelight vigil

movement, claims of alienation are seen as a legal strategy used to deflect from abusive behavior. The alienation movement spans decades and the present day movement remains as concerning as its history.

The duration of these reunification programs range from 3-days to 90-days. After the reunification camp ends, children are sent to reside with the parent whom they allege abused them or, they are placed in group homes or institutional settings.

Maya and Sebastian's tragic situation went public after Maya Laing bravely spoke out on her Instagram account and contacted Tina Swithin, founder of One Mom's Battle, via social media.

Swithin [publicized the events on her](#)

[blog](#) and on Instagram and shared video footage provided to her by community members in Santa Cruz who witnessed this horrifying event.

"While I have spent many years hearing tragic stories about reunification therapy and reunification camps, nothing could have prepared me for what I witnessed in that video. Had any other adult treated a child this way, they would be behind bars on felony child abuse charges," Swithin states. The children's current whereabouts are unknown, and we have been informed that there are efforts underway to place them in an unfamiliar home, group setting or worst-case scenario would be an institutional facility.

To demand justice for Maya and Sebastian, Swithin's organization, One Mom's Battle invites community members, media, supporters, and friends of the children to attend the candlelight vigil on Thursday night, and to join them for a demonstration at the courthouse on Friday morning. The organizers demand an investigation into the Laing children's violent removal, and call for accountability and criminal prosecution. Ultimately, the group wishes to see an end to reunification camps.

For more information, please read Swithin's coverage of the events over the past week.

#JusticeForMayaAndSebastian

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#JusticeForMayaAndSebastian  
Friday, October 28th 8am PT  
**PROTEST**  
**Watsonville Courthouse**  
1 Second Street,  
Watsonville  
Santa Cruz County,  
California  
For additional information, email  
Savemayaandsebastian@gmail.com  
IG: @maya.and.sebastian  
Justice for Maya and Sebastian Protest

Tina Swithin  
One Mom's Battle LLC  
[email us here](#)

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