

Paris Hilton's Accounts of Being Forced to Take Meds in "Troubled Teen" Programs Pave Way for Medical Malpractice Suits

Wednesday, the celebrity rallied an army of mass tort attorneys in a war against a multi-billion-dollar industry of underregulated residential youth programs.

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, U.S., October 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Global celebrity, entrepreneur, and advocate Paris Hilton joined renowned Levin Papantonio Rafferty (LPR) Attorney [Mike Papantonio](#) and [Oregon State Senator Sara Gelser](#) for a candid and driven discussion about egregious abuse within hundreds of facilities in the so-called "troubled-teen" industry. The session marked the opening of the Mass Torts Made Perfect (MTMP) seminar in Las Vegas yesterday, and drew an audience of nearly 2,000 mass tort attorneys from across the U.S.



Attorneys who learned that youth treatment centers where Paris Hilton resided as a teen administered medications to her without consent say these actions could amount to medical malpractice.

The audience viewed a segment of Hilton's 2020 documentary, "This Is Paris," where she

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MIKE PAPANTONIO, ATTORNEY,
LEVIN PAPANTONIO RAFFERTY

recounted being taken from her bed in the middle of the night by two strangers, thinking she was being kidnapped. Instead, the arrival of these "transporters" flagged the start of months of abuse in multiple behavioral modification programs, where teen residents were isolated from family, abused, and ordered not to share what was happening under threat of punishment in solitary confinement.

"No child should be taken from their bed like that...and

treated like a criminal," Hilton said.

For Papantonio, one aspect of Hilton's narrative surfaced as an avenue for legal recourse against these institutions.

"One thing I'm really looking at, the strip searches, the cavity searches, the being put in solitary confinement naked, the showers where the counselors are all watching what's going on...at the top of that hierarchy is somebody with a medical license," Papantonio said.

According to Papantonio, this structure paves the way for cases of medical malpractice.

Sen. Gelser agreed that at residential youth facilities like Provo Canyon School in Utah, where Hilton spent 11 months, someone with a medical degree sits at the top of the organizational pyramid. "[At] Many of these places, there is nobody with any medical credential whatsoever. But they sell that. They sell that. They sell that."

Gelser said she introduced a bill last session that she thought was "really simple."

"It said you cannot advertise that you provide treatment if you're a facility unless you are licensed by the state health authority, and you can't advertise that you provide treatment as an individual unless you're a licensed healthcare professional," Gelser explained. "I couldn't run the bill because the Department of Justice told me it was unconstitutional and that we had to go through the licensing boards.

"But the one wilderness program that's left in Oregon went bananas over this, saying it would completely shut them down. And I said, 'Why? Just tell the truth about what you're doing. But that isn't what they do.'"

Hilton said before she entered into the "troubled teen" system, she never had taken any medication, aside from a Tylenol or Advil. "But when I got there, every single morning and every single afternoon and night, they would have us all line up and give us a cup full of all these pills. I had no idea what anything was. I didn't even talk to a proper doctor there, so I don't even know how they came up with it. And I just immediately would feel so dizzy, and everybody around me was just like zombies and falling asleep everywhere, and then you would get punished for falling asleep. And I just started not remembering things."

One day, Hilton began hiding the pills she was given under her tongue, and then put it into a Kleenex and put it in the trash.

"One of the kids found it and told on me because they reward the children for telling on each other, and from that moment, they locked me in solitary confinement," Hilton explained.

"Everybody sees the connection here, right?" Papantonio asked the room of attorneys. "If there's any medication being given to these kids, I don't care if there's a doctor on the facility. If

there's any medication being given this kid, you have a lead. The lead goes all the way back to malpractice. Somebody, somebody in the pecking order, made the decision it was okay to give these kids medication."

Hilton added another layer to the issue of medical malpractice.

"When you talk to a therapist, it's supposed to be someone that you can trust who is going to keep confidential, and that's not the case at all. Anything you would tell them, they would then say in the group in front of all the other kids, humiliate you, and even to this day, I've had so many calls, emails, people reaching out to me, that the people who work at these places are talking about me all the time, which again is a violation of HIPAA," Hilton said.

Hilton entered the "troubled teen" industry system as a teen when she was sneaking out of the house, going to clubs, and getting bad grades.

"I had undiagnosed ADHD at the time, which no one was talking about. So they couldn't understand why I couldn't focus in school, but nobody knew the reason why," Hilton said. "And I was punished for that. And I didn't deserve to be there. None of these kids deserve to be in these places."

Papantonio said his sights are set on bringing the "troubled teen" industry down.

"It won't be business as usual," Papantonio said. "The medical malpractice of this hasn't even been touched. I've developed novel legal attacks on some of the biggest projects of the country all the way from tobacco, to opioids, to human trafficking...each one, we've always gone in with an unusual, novel approach," Papantonio said.

"Once we unlock that methodology, we're all going to be able to use it in every state," Papantonio added.

In September 2023, LPR Attorney [Caleb Cunningham](#) filed lawsuits against Alabama state officials, alleging they discriminate against children with disabilities by placing them in residential centers where they were segregated and abused (Cases 2:23-cv-00557, 2:23-cv-00556, 2:23-cv-00554, 2:23-cv-00555, 2:23-cv-00553, and 2:23-cv-00558).

"We are excited to have Paris Hilton help us shine a light on this industry and these abuses," Cunningham said. "We are also joined by Unsilenced, a national advocacy group of survivors of this industry. Together we can hit these companies where it hurts."

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