



Director's Message

January 8, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

A reporter for [Street Roots](#), a weekly publication based in Portland, recently contacted us about our policies and practices regarding isolation in our facilities. The reporter, Emily Green, was interested in how we use isolation, under what circumstances youth are placed there, the mental health characteristics of youth in isolation, and other isolation-related data. In addition to responding to these inquiries, we also accommodated her request to visit the intervention unit at MacLaren YCF.

Earlier this week, staff accompanied Emily and a Street Roots photographer on an extensive tour of MacLaren to show them the range of programs and services we offer youth. Stops on the tour included Lord High School, the newly renovated Moody Building (with its welding and woodworking programs), New Start Station treatment mall, Kincaid Cottage (where Emily was allowed to interview a consenting youth who had previously spent time in isolation), Project POOCH, the intervention unit, and Grover Cottage (currently being renovated as a prototypical living unit under the [10-Year Strategic Plan](#)).

Emily's inquiries are related to proposed legislation in the 2015 Session addressing the use of isolation. This legislation has not yet been formally introduced, but we are monitoring it closely and intend to be active participants in any legislative discussions about it. The use of isolation in juvenile correctional facilities is an emerging issue among youth advocates and is generating media attention throughout the nation. Therefore, we can expect to see more interest in this issue in the months ahead and will keep you posted on significant developments related to this topic.

Additionally, OYA has been engaged in conversations at the national level with the [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention](#) and the [Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators](#) to improve policies and practices regarding isolation. We strive to adhere to best practices in all of our operations and the use of isolation is no exception.

Emily's story is scheduled for publication tomorrow, but won't be available on the Street Roots website (www.streetroots.org) until the week following its appearance in the print edition.

We are grateful to the staff at MacLaren for their professionalism and assistance during Emily's visit, and we thank all staff throughout OYA for their dedication to serving at-risk youth.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Fariborz Pakseresht in black ink.

Fariborz Pakseresht
Director

Handwritten signature of Joe O'Leary in black ink.

Joe O'Leary
Deputy Director