

Journalist/Producer Bill Lichtenstein Wins Casey Medal for Meritorious Journalism



Exposed School Use of Restraints and Seclusion Rooms in Lexington, MA and Nationally

Our friend Bill Lichtenstein has won a Casey Medal for Meritorious Journalism for "[A Terrifying Way to Discipline Children,](#)" an Op Ed piece he wrote for the September 8, 2012 *New York Times*. Lichtenstein, an investigative journalist and filmmaker, exposed the largely unknown use of seclusion rooms and physical restraints in schools across the country. Lichtenstein became aware of such rooms and restraints when his young daughter encountered them in a Lexington, MA public school.

According to the award announcement: “After learning that his 5-year-old daughter had been repeatedly locked in a converted closet in her elementary school, the author exposed the largely unknown use of seclusion rooms and physical restraints as forms of punishment in schools around the U.S. The piece attracted a flood of media attention to the issue, sparked tremendous response from readers, and helped coalesce a national effort to end these practices and promote positive behavior interventions in schools.”

Lichtenstein, along with five other parents, has launched Action to Keep Students Safe, a non-profit initiative to curtail the use of restraints and seclusion rooms in schools and to support parents in advocating for their children. See: KeepStudentsSafe.com .

The Casey Medals celebrate the past year’s best reporting on children, youth and families in the U.S. Lichtenstein’s article received an Honorable Mention.

According to the [Casey Medals press release](#): “Judges sought journalism that packed a punch, stirred the conscience and made an impact; meticulously reported, powerfully delivered stories that shined a spotlight on issues, institutions and communities that rarely receive media attention.

The Casey Medals are administered by the Journalism Center on Children and Families at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland and are funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Journalism Center on Children and Families received entries representing the work of hundreds of reporters, editors, photographers and producers at more than 100 news organizations. Among the winners: *The Washington Post*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *PBS Frontline*, *New York Magazine*, *The Center for Public Integrity*, *The Center for Investigative Reporting*, and *The Des Moines Register*.

–Anita M. Harris

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