

Rikers Report

“Rikers is a dangerous place for adolescents and a pervasive climate of fear exists” – p. 8

- **43.7%** of the 708 adolescent males in custody as of Oct. 30, 2012 had been subjected to use of force by staff at least once.
- In FY 2013, with a daily adolescent population of only 682, there were **565 reported staff use of force incidents** involving adolescents in RNDC and EMTC, resulting in **1,057 injuries**.
- In FY 2013, there were **845 inmate-on-inmate fights** in RNDC and EMTC alone.
- In one year, adolescents sustained a total of **239 head injuries**.
- In one year, adolescents in RNDC and EMTC sustained a total of **96 suspected fractures**.
- On a typical day, **15% to 25%** of the adolescent population was in punitive segregation.
- In FY 2013, adolescents required **emergency medical services 459 times**.



Cell door, Mental Health Assessment Unit for Infracted Inmates (MHAUI) – Closed as of late 2013

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“There is a pattern and practice of conduct at Rikers that violates the constitutional rights of adolescent inmates” – p. 3

- Force used against adolescents at an **alarming rate**
- Failure to prevent violent **inmate-on-inmate fights**
- Correction officers resort to **“headshots,”** or blows to an inmate’s head or facial area, too frequently
- Force used as **punishment or retribution**
- Force used in response to inmates’ **verbal altercations** with officers
- Correction officers attempt to justify use of force by **yelling “stop resisting”** even when the adolescent has been **completely subdued**
- Use of force particularly common in areas **without video surveillance** cameras
- **Inadequate, and even false reporting** by staff on the use of force
- Powerful **code of silence** prevents staff who witness force from reporting

See Report page 4.

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“In order to address the constitutional deficiencies... the Department should implement... the following measures:”* - p. 51

1. House adolescents at a DOC jail **not on Rikers Island** that will use the “Direct Supervision Management Model”
2. **Increase the number of cameras** in adolescent areas
3. **Revise Use of Force Policy** to clarify prohibited conduct
4. Ensure that staff submit complete, **accurate, and prompt use of force reports** and institute a **zero-tolerance policy** for failing to report
5. Ensure that **use of force incidents are investigated** thoroughly and promptly & hold staff accountable for biased or incomplete reports and investigations
6. Intervene to de-escalate fights, ensure that adolescents are **adequately supervised**, and transfer vulnerable or otherwise at risk inmates to alternative housing units
7. Improve **officer training programs** on use of force, conflict resolution, reporting use of force, and handling of adolescent population
8. Ensure that **staff are held accountable** and disciplined for the use of excessive and unnecessary force
9. Develop **alternative discipline strategies** that do not involve lengthy isolation and **prohibit the placement of adolescents with mental health disorders in solitary confinement**
10. Develop and implement a strategic plan to create an **institutional culture that does not tolerate violence** and **holds staff accountable** for excessive or unnecessary use of force

*Report contains over 70 recommendations in total

See Report pages 51-63