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## Reform Solitary Confinement by Addressing the Impact On Staff

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Recently, much attention has been focused on [the horrific conditions on Rikers Island](#). Nearly every day, a new journalistic account emerges detailing the filthy housing conditions, the lack of hot meals, and the lack of medical and mental health care. So many staff routinely call in sick that some have suggested that the jail is being run by the gangs whose members are incarcerated there.

But based on research from my new book with Professor Earl Smith, *Way Down in the Hole*, conducted in a state prison system, it's clear that similar issues are not unusual in solitary confinement units. That's because poor working conditions for the staff are an issue across the board in solitary confinement units, significantly impacting their ability to deliver necessary services to those behind bars.