

Helping to make kids the picture of health

By RITA DELFINER

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Photographer Annie Levy believes you can express your deepest thoughts through a picture, and she gives cameras to young people battling challenges of all kinds to help them reflect on their hopes, fears and successes.

Levy won a 2010 Liberty Medal in the Leadership category for putting cameras in the hands of young adults with life threatening illnesses at Montefiore Medical Center in Manhattan.

Now, she has launched a project at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center, giving cameras to troubled teens so that, through photography, they can "speak about the challenges they have faced and overcome."

Levy works with teens in the CARES (Comprehensive Adolescent Rehabilitation and Education Services) program, which the hospital says aims to provide "a therapeutic educational environment for teens whose academic performance has been limited by their mental health and/or substance abuse issues."

Levy says cameras help kids "reflect on important things in life because pictures give you an ease of expression while finding words are sometimes difficult, particularly when you're a teen."

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