

CAMPAIGN FOR
YOUTH JUSTICE



BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

March 2008 Newsletter

The Campaign for Youth Justice is a national organization dedicated to ending the practice of trying, sentencing, and incarcerating youth under the age of 18 in the adult criminal justice system.

In This Issue

FROM THE HILL

ACROSS THE COUNTRY

RESEARCH AND POLICY

VOICES

ON THE CALENDAR

CFYJ WELCOMES NEW STAFF

CFYJ GIVES THE E-NEWSLETTER A
NEW LOOK

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Quick Links

[READ MORE](#)

[MAKE A DONATION](#)

[DID YOU KNOW?](#)

[ADVOCACY RESOURCES](#)

FROM THE HILL



Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) Update

The House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee are continuing to work on legislation to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A). Along with other juvenile justice advocates, CFYJ is working with Congress to help craft the legislation and is hopeful that bills will contain language on the Campaign's top priorities focusing on the core protections for children: keeping youth out of adult jails, expanding sight and sound separation, strengthening language on reducing racial disparities, improving conditions of confinement, and expanding the deinstitutionalization of status offenders.

WPTZ TV in Vermont recently interviewed Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) about JJDP A reauthorization. In this interview, Senator Leahy said: "[JJDP A] should be reauthorized. One of the things I learned when I was a prosecutor is if you ignore problems of juveniles you'll have much, much greater problems later on." Senator Leahy also said "We ought to be doing more, and it's not simply a case of...lock them up. Let's get them alternatives; let's work with them; let's make sure they don't become criminals."

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Act 4 Juvenile Justice (Act4JJ) campaign's field calls earlier this month on JJDP A reauthorization.

Action Item: We encourage you to reach out to your congressional delegation and express your support for JJDP A reauthorization and the priorities listed above.

For more information on both the JJDP A and Act4JJ, visit: www.act4jj.org.

Youth PROMISE Act Update

The bipartisan Youth PROMISE Act continues to build momentum in the House of Representatives. The "Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education Act" (Youth PROMISE Act), H.R. 3846, was introduced earlier this year by Representative Robert "Bobby" Scott (D-VA). In the past month, Rep. Scott has held two events focusing on the value of prevention and intervention strategies as effective tools to reduce crime. The first was a media roundtable in late February, which served to educate national media outlets on the issue. The second was a bipartisan forum with national experts on prevention and intervention strategies. The forum was co-hosted by Congressmen John Larson (D-CT), Fred Upton (R-MI), and Michael Castle (R-DE).

The Youth PROMISE Act serves as a positive alternative to legislation in both chambers of Congress which emphasize punishment and incarceration rather than prevention and early intervention. These bills, S. 456 authored by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), approved last year by the U.S. Senate, and H.R. 3547, the "Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression Act" sponsored by Representative Schiff (D-CA), will lead to increases in racial and ethnic disparities, increased incarceration, and more severe sanctions, such as life without parole, for youth of color in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Action Item: The Youth PROMISE Act, H.R. 3846, now has the bipartisan support of over 70 Members in the House of Representatives. To show your support for the bill, call your Representative and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 3846.

For a list of current co-sponsors and for additional information on the Youth PROMISE Act, visit: http://www.house.gov/scott/hotissues_youthpromiseact.shtml.

ACROSS THE COUNTRY

National Conference on Juvenile Justice Highlights State Juvenile Justice Reform Efforts

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) held the 35th Annual National Conference on Juvenile Justice this month in St. Louis, Missouri. NCJFCJ worked with CFYJ to bring to the conference a panel of judges involved in state-wide reform efforts to reduce the number of youth prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system. An audience of judges, lawyers, and other juvenile justice professionals heard Judge Barbara Quinn, Chief Court Administrator of the State of Connecticut, and Judge Fred Morrison, chair of the Youthful Offenders Subcommittee of North Carolina's Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, offer their insights on state juvenile justice reform movements.

Judge Quinn's presentation highlighted the recent successful effort in Connecticut to return 16- and 17-year-olds to juvenile court jurisdiction. The first step was the establishment of the Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Team which occurred in 2003 through the passage of bill P.A. 03-257. The team reviewed all matters, including funding, necessary to implement an increase in the age of juvenile jurisdiction. In 2005, the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance established the Raise the Age CT campaign which generated momentum for the movement. The campaign developed support among public sector advocates, state agency personnel, State Advisory Group (SAG) representatives, parent advocacy groups, grassroots organizers, and key legislators. Judge Quinn credited the collaborative nature of the Raise the Age CT campaign as being a vital piece to passing legislation that supported reform in Connecticut. In 2006, the Connecticut legislature established the Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Committee (JJPIC). The

committee analyzed what steps and changes in the juvenile justice system were necessary in order to extend jurisdiction to include 16- and 17-year-olds. JJPIC released its findings in January of 2007 in which it recommended increasing the age of juvenile jurisdiction effective January 1, 2010 and encouraged that adequate funding be provided to ensure quality programming for youth in the juvenile system. Finally, the Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy and Operations Coordinating Counsel (JJPOCC) was established to oversee the change in jurisdiction. Judge Quinn emphasized the value of collaboration between Connecticut policymakers, advocates, stakeholders, and constituents in the success of reform in Connecticut.

Judge Morrison discussed his leadership in efforts currently underway in North Carolina to raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction. Like Connecticut, prior to its successful reform, North Carolina currently prosecutes all 16- and 17-year-olds as adults. The judge heads the Youthful Offender Subcommittee which was established by a 2005 General Assembly mandate. The subcommittee, through the analysis of research and information from national and state agencies, made five key recommendations to the General Assembly which included extending juvenile court jurisdiction to 16- and 17-year-olds. North Carolina's reform effort, supported by legislators, advocates, and families, has gained the attention of Governor Easley who has commissioned a study to determine the resources needed to implement the change.

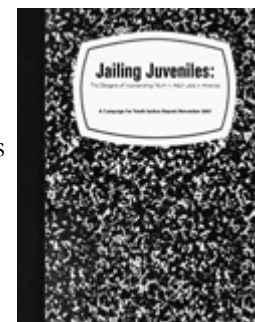
Radio Tour Clips Now Available!

As mentioned in the February Newsletter, the Campaign recently launched a national "radio tour." Executive Director, Liz Ryan, and formerly incarcerated youth, Dwayne Betts, discussed the issue of prosecuting youth as adults, sending youth to adult jails and prisons, and upcoming federal legislation. Audio clips of these dynamic radio interviews are available through the news section of the Campaign's website at: <http://campaignforyouthjustice.org/news.html>.

RESEARCH AND POLICY

New ABA Policy Recommendation Encourages Appropriate Treatment of Youthful Offenders

A new resolution passed by the American Bar Association (ABA) urges federal, state, and local governments to recognize the age and maturity of youthful offenders as mitigation in sentencing and policymaking. The resolution is accompanied by a report outlining the historical perspective and rationale for acknowledging that youth who commit "adult crimes" are nonetheless not adults. Much of this reasoning was affirmed by the United States Supreme Court in *Roper v. Simmons*, the case which abolished the juvenile death penalty. The ABA asks that sentencing policy recognize the developmental differences between youth and adults and allow for generally less punitive sentences which are open to subsequent modification, and that include eligibility for parole at a reasonable time.



Third Way's "Impending Crime Wave" Report Reminiscent of Superpredator Myth

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to jkudrna@campaign4youthjustice.org, by

jkudrna@campaign4youthjustice.org

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Campaign for Youth Justice | 1012 14th Street NW, Suite 610 | Washington | DC | 20005

Email Marketing by

