



The Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ) is a national campaign dedicated to ending the practice of trying, sentencing, and incarcerating children (under age 18) in the adult justice system; and working to improve conditions within the juvenile justice system. C4YJ believes that youthful offenders are better served by the juvenile justice system, where greater emphasis is placed on developmentally-appropriate rehabilitative and educational services.

## ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

- To raise awareness about the negative impact of prosecuting youthful offenders in the adult criminal justice system and of incarcerating youthful offenders in adult jails and prisons;
- To reduce the number of youthful offenders who are tried, sentenced, and incarcerated in the adult system, rather than adjudicated in the juvenile justice system;
- To decrease the harmful impact of trying youthful offenders in adult court; and
- To promote researched-based, developmentally-appropriate rehabilitative programs and services for youthful offenders as an alternative to the adult system.

## ORGANIZATIONAL METHODOLOGIES

Working in conjunction with partners at the national, state and local levels, the Campaign seeks to accomplish these goals through the following methodologies:

- Providing **training, technical assistance and resources to state-based organizing groups** to affect policy change at the state and local levels;
- Supporting **coordinated research efforts** on the issue of juveniles being held in adult correctional facilities and disseminating reports and other information on successful advocacy models and policy reforms;
- Advocating for **rehabilitative justice policies** at the local, state and national levels;
- Coordinating **effective messaging** –through Media and Communications strategies – to inform policy makers, researchers, journalists, advocates, and the general public about this aspect of our juvenile justice system and its impact on the lives of youth and families; and
- Serving as a **national clearinghouse and convener** for advocates, policy makers, researchers, and others working on this critical issue.

## NATIONAL STRATEGIES

A major National focus of C4YJ over the coming year will be to research and publicize the direct impact on youth and their families of youth being tried and/or held as adults in the adult justice system. There has not been an extensive research-based study that highlights the personal stories of youth since the 1970's when the original Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) was passed. For many years, the JJPDA had been extremely effective in keeping large numbers of youth from being incarcerated as adults. However, since many states changed their laws in the 1990s, JJPDA core requirements no longer apply to many youth.

Our national work will include:

**National Report:** In 2007 C4YJ will release a national report highlighting the direct impact on youth and their families of youth being tried and/or held as adults in the adult justice system.

**Media and Messaging:** Build momentum for 2007 report release through journalist briefings, articles, etc; maintain website and publish monthly e-newsletter with policy updates, research, and on-the-ground cases.

**Research and Policy:** Maintain clearinghouse of national and state: research, publications, and experts;

**Constituency Outreach:** Continue to develop partnerships with national organizations; raise the profile of our national resolution on trying and sentencing youth as adults; maintain database of national state and local partners; monthly strategic conference calls in keys topics with national and state partners; provide training on interviewing youth in adult corrections.

**Advisory Group:** C4YJ will develop a national advisory group of research and policy experts, law enforcement and corrections officials, legal advocates, defense bar members and media experts to develop and advocate for campaign issues

**Highlight C4YJ issue at National Conferences:** Conduct panel discussion on youth tried and/or held as adults at appropriate national conferences

**Legislative:** spearheading JJDPA reauthorization

## STATE STRATEGIES

State-level advocacy work is a critical piece of C4YJ's overall approach because juvenile justice policy is primarily made at the state/county level. C4YJ is currently working with five partner states -- **Connecticut, Wisconsin, Virginia, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia**. Within the framework of the overall campaign mission and goals, state and local partners establish their coalitions, identify their constituents, set their goals and implement tactics that they believe will change state policy and practice.

### Campaign 4 Youth Justice

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