

Growing Your Campaign Network: A Campaign Approach to Ending the Practice of Prosecuting Youth as Adults

To build your campaign, you will need a strong network of volunteers across your state to manage, support and expand your efforts. It is crucial that your campaign network thrives and grows. Here are a few key steps:

1) Articulate and Advertise Campaign Roles

To draw in volunteers to work with your campaign, you will need to clearly articulate the campaign “roles” that you are looking for volunteers to fulfill. Some roles might be: Outreach Coordinator, Media Assistant, Social Media Coordinator, Direct Action Organizer and Phonebank Captain. Your descriptions of each role should include the number of hours per week you’d like your volunteers to support the campaign, the qualities you are looking for in a volunteer and some background on your campaign goals. Consider advertising your campaign “roles” on your website, facebook, Idealist (www.idealists.org) and any list-serves in your area. You might put together an outreach flyer inviting volunteers to join your campaign. Think about hosting an initial volunteer orientation session to provide basic information on the campaign, answer questions, and invite volunteers to sign up for various roles. Once you have a core group of volunteers, work with these volunteers to host regular volunteer orientation sessions (e.g. once a week or every other week) so that new volunteers can continually join the campaign.

2) Empower Your Volunteers

Your campaign volunteers will need to feel that they are making a real contribution to the effort. If not, they won’t stick around long. Be sure to create space to hear their ideas and feedback. Give them choices in how they might contribute to the campaign, and be flexible in creating new opportunities for them to contribute. Volunteers want to feel a sense of purpose and accomplishment, sentiments that are crucial to your campaign. Here’s a great “tip sheet” online, “What Do Your Volunteers Want: 10 Ways to Make Your Volunteers Happy” at:

<http://nonprofit.about.com/od/volunteers/tp/whatvolunteerswant.htm>.

3) Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Regular, in-person conversations and meetings with volunteers will keep your volunteers coming back. People want to feel “connected” to the cause through the people they work with. Be sure to build in time and space to engage volunteers in discussion about why they want to support this cause, what makes them want to contribute, and what ways can the campaign create new opportunities to expand the base of volunteers.

4) Provide Training & Support

Volunteers may not have all the tools and skills to carry out all of the tasks needed in the campaign. Build in regular training sessions on key tasks. Be sure that every volunteer has a 'go to' person on the campaign with whom they consult and provide feedback on how it's going. Volunteers will need more support at the beginning of their time with the campaign and when roles change. Volunteers who have been around longer can be tasked with recruiting and managing other volunteers.

5) Recognize & Thank Your Volunteers!

It is very important to recognize and thank your campaign volunteers for their contributions. Praise them at a campaign meeting and in your newsletter. When you've accomplished a major campaign goal or benchmark, consider hosting a volunteer recognition event.