



**For Immediate Release
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**Commission Investigates Status of Youth in Adult Jails and Prisons
*Advocates call on Congress and states to end placement of youth in jails and prisons***

Washington, D.C. – Today, the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission (NPREC) reported on its investigation of the status of youth in adult jails and prisons as part of a nationwide examination of sexual assault in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The commission’s report concluded that youth (under 18) incarcerated with adults are at highest risk for sexual abuse by other inmates.

“The National Prison Rape Elimination Commission’s (NPREC) report sheds a spotlight on the fact that youth (under 18) are at the greatest risk of sexual assault in adult jails and prisons,” said Liz Ryan, President and CEO of the Campaign for Youth Justice. “In light of the Commission’s devastating findings about the extreme risks youth face in adult jails and prisons, we are calling on Congress and the states to take immediate action to remove youth from adult jails and prisons.”

The NPREC report finds that youth (under 18) in adult jails and prisons are at “extreme risk” of sexual victimization and that at a minimum they should be separated from adults. The report also cites concerns that in order to protect youth, correctional administrators might place youth in isolation or in solitary confinement, which could be detrimental to youths’ mental health and recommends instead that correctional administrators consider placing youth in facilities more suited to their needs, such as juvenile detention or juvenile correctional facilities.

African-American youth are 62% of the youth prosecuted in the adult criminal system, and are nine times more likely than white youth to receive an adult prison sentence. One out of every four (24%) incarcerated Latino children is held in an adult prison or jail. A growing number of national organizations recommend that youth (under 18) not be placed in adult facilities, including the NAACP, the National Council of La Raza, and the American Correctional Association.

Although there is no national data system that collects data on youth transferred to the adult system, researchers estimate that as many as 200,000 youth are prosecuted as adults each year. According to recent reports from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Justice, youth who are tried as adults are more likely to reoffend than youth retained in the juvenile justice system.

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The Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ) 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. For more information, visit: www.campaignforyouthjustice.org.