

## **Utilizing National Youth Justice Awareness Month to Grow Your Campaign Network: A Campaign Approach to Ending the Practice of Prosecuting Youth as Adults**

This October's National Youth Justice Awareness Month is a great opportunity to grow your campaign network. Here are a few recommendations to consider:

### **1) Outreach to new potential supporters**

Use the month of October to focus on outreach to broaden and diversify your base of supporters and allies. Set a goal for how many additional contacts you want to make throughout the month. Contact members of your network and ask them to help spread the word to their contacts to help grow your contact list. Host a "phone bank" night and/or write a short outreach email and ask your network to email it to their contacts.

### **2) Table at events**

Consider "tabling" at upcoming gatherings, conferences and festivals! It is a great way to meet new potential supporters. Look at your calendar and see what you might have coming up. Check out the local newspaper to see what might be happening in your community in the next month. Make a priority list of events. Ask your current network to help you "table" at these events by contacting event organizers and hosting an information table at the event. For your "table" you'll need copies of a one-page informational flyer about your campaign goals & upcoming activities, a sign-up sheet and pens, and a bowl of candy (as that is always a good draw!) You might need to bring your own table & chair. If you have time, make a display board with pictures and other eye-catching information.

### **3) Meet with reporters**

This is a great time to build relationships with the media. Schedule small group meetings with reporters at their offices. Be prepared to talk about your campaign's goals and who is involved in the effort. Encourage reporters to write up piece about your campaign and include contact information about how to get involved. This added visibility may draw in additional support for your campaign.

### **4) Write about your campaign**

Non-profit organizations and weekly newspapers are always looking for content for their newsletters and newspapers. This is a terrific avenue for spreading the word about your campaign. Write a short piece (200-500) words about your campaign that spells out what you are working to change and how others can get involved. Ask allied organizations to put this in their October newsletters. Reach out to weekly newspapers in your area and ask them to run the article. Provide a picture especially if it includes community members. Be sure to include contact information about how to get involved.

### **5) Create a bookstore/library display**

Talk to libraries and local bookstores to see if they'd host a display of books about youth in the justice system and information about your campaign. You might consider offer to discuss youth

justice issues with their readers sometime during October. Leave a stack of cards and a box or bowl for individuals to leave their information or business cards for follow up.

#### **6) Call on Faith Leaders**

Ask your community's faith leaders to talk about this issue with their congregations during the month. Offer to meet with their youth group or to be available to talk to constituents after services. Provide key facts on youth in the justice system for faith leaders to use in their services, prayer sessions, or in newsletters. Be sure to have a sign up sheet or way to gather contact information.

#### **7) Host an open house**

Too busy to organize a big event? Consider hosting an 'open house' at your campaign and asking members of your network to each bring a friend. This is an informal and low-key way to bring new allies to join your campaign efforts.