

Goal Setting: A Campaign Approach to Ending the Practice of Prosecuting Youth as Adults

As part of your campaign strategy, you will need to set goals for your campaign. Here are a few key steps:

1) Think Big and Bold!

Consider what it is that you really want your campaign to accomplish. You are focusing on how to make significant reductions in the prosecution of youth in adult court, so what 'goal' would have the most impact? Don't limit your thinking at this stage in the process. Consider the biggest and boldest goals as your long-term goals, and then consider medium and short term goals that will help you get there.

2) What is a "Win"?

In addition to setting big and bold goals to accomplish in the long-term, you will need to consider what a "win" is at every stage of your campaign. If your campaign was able to get a new law passed to substantially limit the types of cases automatically prosecuted in adult court, you could consider that a "win."

3) Use the **SMART** Goal "test"

One way to think about setting your goals for your campaign is to use the SMART Goal "test" with the goal you establish. SMART stands for:

S: Specific

M: Measurable

A: Achievable

R: Results-oriented

T: Time-specific

As you consider setting your campaign goals, you will need to ask whether the goals you set are specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time-specific.

4) Take a Look Around

See what other campaigns have accomplished and what goals they set. Did they accomplish what they set out to do? How long did it take? What were the long-term, medium-term and short-term goals that they set? What do they consider a "win" at each stage of their campaign? And would they change the goals they set upon reflection? For contacts in states working to reduce the prosecution of youth in adult criminal court, visit: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/parents-resource-center/find-your-state-contacts.html>.

5) Organize a Brainstorming Session

One of the best ways to figure out how to set goals that will work for your campaign is to organize a brainstorming session with your group. Bring the tools and information you have learned about to your session. Set an objective for the session, such as establishing mutually agreed upon goals for your campaign. To inspire your group, consider sharing information from other successful campaigns or inviting a campaign organizer from a nearby state to talk about his/her experiences. Be sure to involve everyone in your group in the preparation for the session and the follow up activities afterward.

Please share your feedback, comments and ideas on this article! We'd also like to know what questions you have about campaigns and what topics you'd like to see in future articles.

Please contact Liz Ryan at: lryan@cfyj.org. For previous articles, visit the campaign resource center at: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center.html>.