

Getting Started: A Campaign Approach to Ending the Practice of Prosecuting Youth as Adults

How do you get started on a campaign? Here are five steps to “get started”:

- 1) Find others: Identify and talk to other people who may be interested in the issue of youth in adult criminal court. Start with your family, your block, your neighborhood, your place of worship or community center. Not sure on how to make that first contact? Check out this organizing guide: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/parents-resource-center/parent-tools.html#familypower>.
- 2) Make a contact list: Include everyone you’ve talked to who is interested, such as name, phone and email. Start an email list. Send out regular updates as you meet new people.
- 3) Host a small gathering: Invite everyone on your contact list. You can consider hosting a “House Party.” For tips, visit: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/parents-resource-center/parent-tools.html#houseparty>. Another idea is to host a “Film Screening” to show Childhood Interrupted, a 15 minute video about youth in the adult criminal justice system. To view a clip and order a free copy, visit: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center/campaign-tools.html#childhood>.
- 4) Gather the facts: What is your state law? What state data is available? Have any reports been issued on this issue? Put together a fact sheet with any information you’ve been able to gather. Share the facts with everyone on your contact list. Ask your contacts for any information they may have. For a sample fact sheet, check out this fact sheet for some national statistics: http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/FS_KeyYouthCrimeFacts.pdf.
- 5) Start a Story Bank: If you have been personally affected, consider sharing your story. Ask others to share their stories. Enlist everyone on your contact list to share their stories and to help with collecting other stories. Stories can be written, taped or filmed. For some ideas on how to start a Story Bank, visit: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/tell-us-your-story.html>.