



CAMPAIGN FOR YOUTH JUSTICE

BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

May 2011 Newsletter

The Campaign for Youth Justice 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.

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North Carolina Urgent Action Alert

Support HB 632 to "Raise the Age" for Youth in North Carolina

As the campaign to change North Carolina's policy of automatically prosecuting all 16- and 17-year-olds as adults is being considered in the last three weeks of the legislative session, we would appreciate your sharing the action alert below with your North Carolina contacts:http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/NC_Raise_the_age_flyer_May_2011.pdf

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Maryland Update

Halt Construction of Juvenile Jail

The Just Kids Partnership to end the automatic prosecution of youth in adult courts has been working with a large group of youth-serving organizations and community members for over a year to stop the construction of a new youth jail to incarcerate Baltimore youth as they await adult trial. The alliance of organizations has demanded that the State reconsider its plan to build the new pre-trial detention center for Baltimore youth charged as adults and find more effective ways to serve at-risk youth. Advocates emphasized to Maryland's Governor that the state has the opportunity to play a leadership role in the national trend, outlined in the recent CFYJ State Trends Report, to use practices that effectively address youth crime.

Last week, as chronicled by the *Baltimore Sun* and other news outlets, a study completed by the independent, non-partisan National Council on Crime and Delinquency showed that the building planned by the Governor was much too large for the need, even if no policy changes were made to reduce the number of youth detained pre-trial in the adult jail. In addition, the Council demonstrated that small policy or practice changes made by the courts and legislature would significantly reduce the number of youth that would need to be detained at all. Just Kids continues to push for the Governor's administration to stop construction of this jail, make the policy changes outlined in the Council's study to reduce the need for a jail, and to spend the money currently earmarked for the jail on more community-based programs.

If you are a Maryland resident, please ask the Governor to take the recommended steps to divert young people from incarceration and into the opportunities that promote their future success.

To Take Action, click on the link: http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6884/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=6931

For the full NCCD Report, follow the link:
http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/NCCD_Report_May_2011.pdf

To read more about efforts to halt construction of the jail, click on the link:
<http://www.justkidsmaryland.org/>

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California Action Alert

Help End Juvenile Life without Parole

The California Fair Sentencing for Youth organization is taking action to end the sentencing of youth to life in prison without the possibility of parole. They already have 900 signatures but need to get to 1000! Your help in this matter is essential!

The United States is the only country in the world that sentences youth to life in prison without any possibility of parole. We have an opportunity to change this immoral practice. Please join other people of faith in supporting SB9.

Take 60 seconds: Please join Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and others and put your name on the "People of Faith Support Fair Sentencing for Youth" petition.

Go here to add your name: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Peopleoffaith> Sign on and pass it on!

To learn more from California Fair Sentencing for Youth, visit: www.fairsentencingforyouth.org

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Oregon Update

Oregon "Safe Kids, Safer Communities" Bill Headed to Governor's Desk

On March 28, 2011, the Oregon House voted unanimously in favor of HB 2707, the "Safe Kids, Safer Communities" bill, to keep youth out of adult jails. The Oregon Senate subsequently approved the bill by a vote of 24-1, and currently the bill is on its way to the governor's desk for signature.

Congratulations to David Rogers and Shannon Wight of the Partnership for Safety and Justice for their tremendous work in moving this legislation forward!

For additional information on the "Safe Kids, Safer Communities" bill, read the Partnership for Safety & Justice's issue brief at:

http://www.safetyandjustice.org/files/Safe%20Kids%20Safer%20Communitites%20FINAL_0.pdf

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Delaware Update

Delaware Event a Huge Success!

On Tuesday, April 26, Susan and Justin Ryan of Wilmington, Delaware hosted a reception for R. Dwayne Betts, poet, author and CFYJ spokesperson. Over 80 people attended the evening reception where Judge Chandlee Kuhn of the Delaware Family Court gave opening remarks and Dwayne Betts addressed the group, telling his personal story and why he thought it was crucial that our society address the issues of youth being prosecuted in adult court and "mass incarceration" in the U.S. Dwayne's remarks were very well received.



Dwayne Betts in Delaware

A big thank you to Susan and Justin Ryan for hosting the affair and to Judge Chandlee Kuhn for hosting Dwayne's visit to the First State. Thanks to Dwayne for making time in his schedule to visit youth in Delaware's juvenile and adult correctional facilities!

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Ohio Update

HB 86 Passes in Ohio House

On May 4, 2011, the Ohio House of Representatives passed HB 86 by an overwhelming majority. The bill focuses mainly on adult corrections but also includes several provisions on youth including youth in adult court. It is now in the Ohio Senate.

The reforms in HB 86 will restore individualized sentencing including some laws that require mandatory transfers to adult court, mandatory applications of juvenile-adult blended sentencing, and mandatory term of years and commitment to a correctional facility for offenses where a gun was present, with judicial discretion. The law also prioritizes RECLAIM funding for research-supported, outcome-based, community alternative programs and raises the age at which a child is eligible for a serious youth offender disposition from 10 to 14 years of age.

Congratulations to the Ohio Juvenile Justice Reform initiative and coalition of advocates, judges and citizens who worked tirelessly to pass this bill!

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State Trends: Legislative Victories from 2005 to 2010 Removing Youth from the Adult Criminal Justice System

To read more about legislative changes toward removing youth from the adult criminal justice system in individual states, visit <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center/state-legislative-options.html>

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FEDERAL UPDATE



Congressional Briefing: Children in Adult Jails & Prisons

On Tuesday, June 14, 2011, from 10:00 am - 11:00 am, the National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition (NJJDPC) will host a congressional briefing on children in adult jails and prisons. As the U.S. Department of Justice considers final regulations to implement the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), the briefing will focus on the importance of removing children from adult jails and prisons and will feature a panel of experts who have been directly impacted to discuss why it is crucial for the U.S. Department of Justice to adopt a complete ban on placing youth in adult jails and prisons.

What: Congressional Briefing on Children in Adult Jails and Prisons

When: June 14, 2011 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

**Where: U.S. Capitol Visitors Center, Senate Visitor Center Room 212-10,
1st Street SE and East Capitol Street NE, Washington, D.C.**

For additional background information, visit:

"Jailing Juveniles: The Dangers of Incarcerating Youth in Adult Jails in America"

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/key-research/national-reports.html#jailingjuveniles>

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/federal-law/60.html>

If you are interested in attending the briefing, please RSVP to Justin Baker at: jjcampaign@cfyj.org.

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Members of Congress Urge Obama Administration to Appoint an OJJDP Administrator

On May 13th, 19 House Members sent a letter to the Obama administration urging the President to appoint a permanent Administrator for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and requesting a meeting to discuss the appointment. Signatories on the letter were: Representatives Chris Murphy, Todd Russell Platts, Gwen Moore, Yvette D. Clarke, John Conyers, Jr., Fortney "Pete" Stark, André Carson, Danny K. Davis, Chris Van Hollen, Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., Adam Schiff, Sheila Jackson Lee, Marcia Fudge, Raul Grijalva, Alcee Hastings, James P. Moran, Donna Edwards, Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, and Carolyn McCarthy. CFYJ would like to thank everyone who called their Member of Congress and asked them to sign this important letter.

For the full letter and list of signatories, click the link:

http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/ojjdp_2.pdf

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Support the Reauthorization of the JJDPA

The long-overdue reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act is a top priority of stakeholders and advocates throughout the juvenile justice field.

As part of our continuing involvement with the Act 4 JJ campaign, we'd like to ask all of our supporters to sign on to the Act 4 JJ [Statement of Principles](#). The Statement of Principles is intended as a guiding document for Congress as they consider JJDPA reauthorization. There are four Principles which signatories would like Congress to consider: keeping children and youth out of the justice system, ensuring equity and competence, ensuring age- and development-appropriate responses, and strengthening the partnership between the federal government and state and local governments. Adherence to these four Principles will greatly improve the juvenile system at all stages.

Act 4 JJ is now accepting both organizational and individual sign-ons. Please join with us by sending a strong message to Congress about the priorities they need to address with reauthorization of JJDPA.

For more information on how to get involved, click the link:

http://act4juvenilejustice.com/get_involved.html

To sign on, contact: info@juvjustice.org

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NATIONAL MOMENTUM

Annual American Jail Association Training Conference Focuses on Jail Removal

On Monday, May 16th the Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ) presented at the Annual American Jail Association Training Conference in Cincinnati, OH. Panelists at the event were CFYJ President and CEO Liz Ryan; Sheriff Gabriel Morgan, Sr., of Newport News, VA; Liane Rozzell, Executive Director of Families & Allies of Virginia's Youth; and Vicky Gunderson, a parent advocate from Onalaska, WI. The presentation was intended to encourage those who work in and operate our nation's jails to address jail removal, to elevate their voices on juvenile justice in their states, and to bolster support for reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA).

The presentation to roughly two dozen stakeholders highlighted the dangers of incarcerating youth in adult jails and demonstrated several ways in which the system can be changed. While recounting the tragic story of her son, Kirk, who committed suicide in an adult county jail, Vicky Gunderson emphasized that we should never give up on our youth:

http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/Downloads/NationalReportsArticles/CFYJ-Jailing_Juveniles_Report_2007-11-15.pdf.

Liane Rozzell, Executive Director of Families and Allies of Virginia's Youth (FAVY), discussed her role as a parent advocate in the jail removal campaign in Virginia, where a new law was passed in 2010. She discussed the details of the strategies advocates used in Virginia, including the ways in which they

engaged legislators: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center/state-legislative-options.html>

Sheriff Gabriel Morgan explained the ways in which jail removal benefits jail staff and operators and incarcerated youth from his perspective, as a practitioner in the criminal justice system. He encouraged jail staff to let their legislators know that they would support jail removal legislation. Liz Ryan summarized jail removal efforts at the state and federal levels and highlighted the fact that the American Jail Association has a policy statement against placing youth in jails:

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/natlres/AJA%20-%20Juveniles%20in%20Jails.pdf>

A question-and-answer session following the presentation included topics such as ways of supporting and implementing jail removal legislation, the obstacles to changing the system, and the need for people working in jails to partner with other groups to change state and local policies.

In response to the presentation, several participants commented, "You can count on me to support jail removal legislation in my state."

A copy of the presentation can be found at:

http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/JJ_Reauthorization_JJDPA.pptx

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CJJ Conference Highlights Youth in Adult Criminal Court

On Monday, May 23, 2011, Liz Ryan and Neelum Arya of the Campaign for Youth Justice conducted a workshop on the prosecution of youth in adult criminal court and strategies for reform at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice's (CJJ) national conference, "Fair & Equal Justice: Alternative Sentences and Sanctions for Youth" in Washington, D.C.

Neelum presented the findings of the report she recently authored, *State Trends: Legislative Changes from 2005 to 2010 Removing Youth from the Adult Criminal Justice System*, which provides state policymakers, the media, the public, and advocates with the latest information about youth in the adult justice system. The report is available online at: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/key-research/national-reports.html#statetrends>.

Workshop participants from over a dozen states around the country discussed the challenges and barriers to policy reform to reduce the prosecution of youth in adult criminal court. They brainstormed ways they could overcome these challenges and initiate policy reforms, and ways the Campaign for Youth Justice and the Coalition for Juvenile Justice could assist them in their efforts to change their state policies.

Thanks to CJJ for inviting CFYJ to take part in this terrific event!

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MEDIA WRAP

One Year Since Graham v. Florida

This month on Juvenile Justice Matters:

This month we flashed back to our show from last year and focused on the one year anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Graham v. Florida. This ruling established a categorical ban on sentencing youth who have committed non-homicide offenses to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Many youth are trying to get resentenced with a chance of parole. Our guests were Marsha Levick, Deputy Director and Chief Counsel for the Juvenile Law Center and Bryan Gowdy, the attorney for Terrence Graham, the defendant in the case.



You won't want to miss this incredible program at: www.blogtalkradio.com/jjmatters

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Sharing our Mother's Day stories:

Every year, mothers that are affected by the criminal justice system share their stories about missing time with their incarcerated child. This year we had three powerful opinion pieces that were placed in various media outlets.

National Parent Caucus Co-Director Grace Bauer shared her story with The Huffington Post: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/grace-bauer/prison-reform-necessary_b_861051.html

Grace Warren of Illinois and Co-Director of the National Parent Caucus as well was highlighted in the Chicago Reader: <http://www.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2011/05/06/a-prison-visit-on-mothers-day>

Lillian Tillman's story was featured on Youth Today's blog: http://youthtoday.org/view_blog.cfm?blog_id=484

Thanks to these three moms for sharing their story. Their experiences are very real and heartbreaking. We encourage you to read these powerful stories.

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GET ORGANIZED

Organizing Ourselves: Cooperation is the Key to Success

By Grace Bauer

Grace Bauer, a field organizer and Co-Director of the National Parent Caucus, joined the Campaign for Youth Justice in 2008. She has worked to unite the parents and allies of children to change laws and practices that result in children being prosecuted and confined as adults.

The Big Picture



Being an advocate for policy change in Washington, D.C. has allowed me to see things from a much bigger window than I had working as an advocate in my home state of Louisiana. In my Louisiana work, I was completely caught up in the day-to-day struggle of trying to change laws and policies that were harmful to our kids. Every year, we decided what our work would be and systematically began to tear down one law or policy at a time, while working equally hard to build up one family at a time. When you work deep in the trenches and focus in on the details of individual cases and lives, you really don't have the time to look at the whole picture of how we treat children as a nation. In some ways, this perspective can blind us to a very real problem.

To read the rest of Grace's article, click on the link: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/navigate-the-system/parents-resource-center/graces-page.html#lastest>

To "Get Organized" and "Take Action," sign the petition to appoint an OJJDP Administrator: <http://www.change.org/petitions/make-juvenile-justice-a-priority-appoint-an-ojjdp-administrator>

Or if you would like to make this call and have questions about who to call or what to say, give us a call (202) 558 - 3580 or email us at jointhemovement@cfyj.org and we will be happy to help you.

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VOICES

Jonas was prosecuted as an adult at age 14. He is serving a life sentence in Georgia.

This is his story...



Prison reminds me of the ghetto from which I came. It breeds violence, hate, greed, jealousy, envy, suicide, homicide, genocide, mental health [problems], and drug [addictions]. Education is treated as a privilege to prisoners instead of a human right. Health care programs are not available to prisoners, period.... I have seen inmates lose their arms, legs, and eyes because medical staff refused to respond in a proper manner or give inmates the wrong medication....

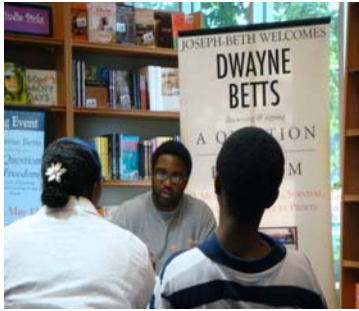
To read the rest of Jonas' story, click on the link: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/e-newsletter.html>

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DWAYNE'S COLUMN

Author, Father and Formerly Incarcerated Youth Dwayne Betts on Father's Day

It could have been in the inside of just about any prison in America, but it wasn't. I was in Maryland, barely four hours from where I grew up, and so all the faces that stared at me may very well have belonged to men that fathered, but weren't fathers to my peers, our little brothers and sisters. There might have been fifty people in the room, all the faces blank. Seventy-five percent of the men in the room had children, and over half of them had more than one child. We have long known that prison has



Dwayne Betts

become a gathering ground for black fathers. In prison we, all of us, were aware of the absurd gift of bars, all of the black men - uncles, fathers, cousins, brothers and mentors who hadn't been present before - were suddenly in abundance. Of course my presence, and the presence of so many other adolescent boys, meant that we had become a members of a different type of this wretched fraternity. We were the youth who were incarcerated with adults. We were jam-packed with fathers, but separated from our families.

This is what I think about come June. This is what I thought of as I stared the group of men in the face wondering what the barely thirty years I'd lived on the planet could say to them about life outside of prison.

Becoming a father in the shadow of a prison is a hard lesson. There are a thousand organizations working to end mass incarceration, fighting to end the unnecessary layers of discrimination people face when leaving prison and struggling to help families build and maintain familial connections. Yet, it all seems a wash around June 19th because it seems so removed from the frustration I feel when I ask a group of middle school students who lives with their father and only a few hands go up. In the summer time, all the work to end mass incarceration, to raise the age and keep juveniles out of prison with adults, all seem a frustratingly inefficient way to help the men in that Maryland prison become fathers in the fullest sense of the word.

And still, most mornings I wake my son up and work with my wife to get him ready for school. I do the small domestic things: washing dishes, washing and folding clothes, grocery shopping that remind me of a picture of fatherhood I didn't know growing up. This is my fourth Father's Day, and as my son gets older I realize that one day he'll ask me about prison, but he won't ask me because I haven't been around. He'll ask, I hope, because the decades of absence will start to look like a historical abnormality as prison rates decline and young boys finally have to only go home to see their fathers.

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ON THE CALENDAR

Mark Your Calendars for some Upcoming Events!

Congressional Briefing on Children in Adult Jails and Prisons Tuesday, June 14, 2011, from 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Please join us at a Congressional briefing on children in adult jails and prisons on Tuesday, June 14, 2011, from 10:00 am - 11:00 am at U.S. Capitol Visitors Center, Senate Visitor Center Room 212-10, 1st Street, SE and East Capitol Street, NE, Washington, D.C. As the U.S. Department of Justice considers final regulations to implement the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), the briefing will focus on the importance of removing children from adult jails and prisons and will feature a panel of experts who have been directly impacted to discuss why it is crucial for the U.S. Department of Justice to adopt a complete ban on placing youth in adult jails and prisons.



Please RSVP by June 10th to Justin Baker at (202) 558-3580 ext. 25 or jicampaign@cfyj.org

Sunday, June 19 is Father's Day!

Please consider utilizing the Father's Day holiday to connect with fathers and their incarcerated children, engage more fathers in your advocacy efforts, and raise awareness about the issue of prosecuting youth as adults. Please let us know if you are planning any activities and how we can support your efforts!

If you would like to publish a Father's Day story, please contact Eric Solomon at the Campaign for Youth Justice by email at: esolomon@cfyj.org or by phone at: (202) 558-3580.

Juvenile Justice Networking Event on Thursday, June 30th

Please join us for a Juvenile Justice Happy Hour on Thursday, June 30th from 4 - 6 pm at the Washington Plaza Hotel! This event will also be a networking opportunity for new summer fellows, interns, and students working with juvenile justice advocates and organizations, agencies, and universities. Refreshments and soft drinks will be served, and there will be a cash bar!

Please RSVP by June 20th to (202) 558-3580 or organizer@cfyj.org

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TAKE ACTION, SPREAD THE WORD

Father's Day for Parents of Incarcerated Youth: Write a Father's Day Op-ed

Every June, we celebrate Father's Day and give out ties and handmade cards. Unfortunately, there are many fathers who do not get to spend the day with their children because their kids are incarcerated. To take action, write an op-ed (a letter to a newspaper or local publication about an issue of concern to its readers) to your local newspaper about a deserving father in your community or have a father in your community write about his experience of having a child incarcerated.

Here is a sample op-ed. Be sure to tailor yours for your example of a Father. Remember it is your letter, and it is most important that it focus on your personal story.

Dear Editor,

(insert name) is a great example of what it means to be a father. He (provide examples) for his children and even (more examples).

(Insert personal story. Consider an anecdote and reasons why this father deserves to be recognized)

This Father's Day, it is important to recognize that many children will be far away from their fathers in adult jails and prisons. These children would be better served in the juvenile justice system. Youth in adult jails and prisons are at serious risk of physical and emotional harm and even suicide. They often sleep in excess of 15 hours each day and are often placed in isolation for up to 23 ½ hours per day. Typically, they do not receive adequate nutrition and exercise and lack educational programming.

In [insert state], youth can be tried, sentenced or incarcerated as adults as young as [insert age]. Youth tried as adults face the same punishments as adults. They can be placed in adult jails pre- and post-trial, sentenced to serve time in adult prisons, or be placed on adult probation with few to no rehabilitative services. Youth are also subject to the same sentencing guidelines as adults and may receive mandatory minimum sentences or life without parole.

Research shows that prosecuting youth as adults increases violence and risk of re-offending. According to a November 2007 report by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Task Force, youth who are prosecuted as adults are, on average, 34 percent more likely to commit crimes than youth retained in the juvenile justice system.

On this special day, we ask our state's officials to support efforts to help our youth and keep our communities safe by keeping our youth out of adult jails and prisons.

Sincerely,

[insert your name and address]

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HOW YOU CAN HELP



How You Can Help

Join us for National Youth Justice Month: October 2011!

Throughout the month of October 2011, we will be supporting our allies around the country in hosting and promoting a 5K Run/Walk or other event such as a Trivia Night, Film Screening, Story Telling hosted by a speaker, Poetry Slam, Picnic, or Sports Tournament (3x3/2x2 basketball, volleyball, soccer, ultimate frisbee, or dodgeball) that will engage community members and raise awareness in the media about the status of children in the justice system, particularly the harmful impact of prosecuting children in the adult criminal justice system. We have found that this event is an easy and effective way to get media attention and educate our allies on this crucial social justice issue. It can conveniently be used to highlight any local issues pertaining to kids in the justice system.

Tracy McClard, a mother whose son died in an adult prison a few days after his 17th birthday, began holding this race in her hometown of Jackson, MO three years ago. Her race was created to bring awareness to the fact that we sentence children as adults and that this practice does not lead to improved public safety. Every year her race has grown to include more people. The following year, the race spread to four other states and was a huge success in Louisiana, Wisconsin and D.C. This year, 10 states have already signed on to host a race or event! Tracy's dream is to see the race spread throughout all 50 states.

If you are interested in working in partnership with us, please let us know. Starting in June, we will host a bi-weekly call for sponsoring organizations/individuals to provide support to get your race or event up and running and help make your event successful! We have families in our network in many states that are looking to partner with others to handle the responsibilities of the race/event. If you already have an event in October, and would like to list it as part of the National Youth Justice Month, that would be great!

To sign up, contact: Leah Robertson at: (202) 558 - 3580 ext. 15 and/or by email at: Lrobertson@cfyj.org

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CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES AT A GLANCE

Setting "Benchmarks" to Launch Your Campaign: A Campaign Approach to Ending the Practice of Prosecuting Youth as Adults

By Liz Ryan

We are asked regularly why we take a campaign approach to ending the practice of prosecuting youth in adult courts and thought we'd start a series of conversations in our newsletter to discuss all the various aspects of a "campaign."

A number of you have said that you'll be launching your campaign in early 2012 potentially as part of the new legislative session in your state. As part of your campaign strategy, you will need to set up "benchmarks" to help you get ready to launch your campaign. Here are a few key steps:

1) Start at the End

To figure out what your "benchmarks" are, skip forward to when you want to launch your campaign in 2012. Envision what you want to have happen on that date. Do you want an "event" where you announce your campaign name, legislative champions and policy agenda? Do you want to have a specific number of organizations and individuals in support of your campaign? Will you want media to cover the event? As you think about the launch date, you'll want to start making a list of all the pieces you want in place by then and factor those in to your plan. You will want to establish some goals for your launch date based on your vision for the day.

2) Create a Calendar

After you've set the launch date, you'll want to create a calendar working backwards from the launch date you've set. Post activities and deadlines on the calendar that will help you get to the launch date in an organized and manageable capacity. Be sure to include regular check ins with your "team." Give yourself some wiggle room on the calendar in case things don't go according to "plan" and you need more time. Ensure that you have factored in holidays and other non-campaign activities that you have going on. Ask others to look at the draft calendar so that all the steps are included. Consider printing a large calendar and having it posted in a place where everyone working with you can see it.

3) Divvy up Launch Day Responsibilities

As you've set your launch date, you will want to divvy up launch day responsibilities such as Organizing & Coalition Outreach, Media, Event Logistics, and Policy & Legislative Platform. You might even consider establishing small working groups or committees for each area and encouraging campaign volunteers and allies to join. Share the calendar with each working group, and invite them to add and edit the calendar. Put all working group meetings or conference calls on the calendar.

4) Set Benchmarks

Now that you have set a launch date, created a calendar, and engaged your team to work on various aspects of the effort, you are now ready to set some "benchmarks." A "benchmark" is "a standard of excellence, achievement, or reference, by which something can be measured." Again, you will want to

start at the end of your calendar and work backwards. Look at each two-week period and ask yourselves, "What do we want to have accomplished by this date?" And then ask yourself, "How will we know when we have made that accomplishment?" The answers to these questions are your "benchmarks." Be sure to put them on the calendar. Engage your entire team in this process and consider planning a "campaign strategy session" six months (or more) before you want to launch your campaign.

5) Flexibility is Key!

As you work to launch your campaign, having a flexible approach is key! Setting benchmarks will help you ensure that you are making progress towards your campaign launch goals, but you must factor "the unexpected" into your plan. You will want to build in flexibility to change a benchmark, revise your end goals, or consider alternative activities if what you're doing is working according to plan. Build in a "check in" each month on your calendar to assess your progress on meeting your benchmarks and adjust your plans accordingly.

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.

For previous articles, visit the campaign resource center at:

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center.html>.

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