

# CAMPAIGN FOR YOUTH JUSTICE

BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

## November 2010 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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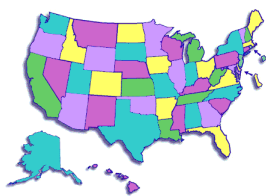
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### ACROSS THE COUNTRY



#### Youth Justice 5K Run/Walk Month a Success!

October was National Youth Justice 5K Run/Walk month! During the month, there were 5K Run/Walks hosted in four states and a youth justice picnic held at Anacostia Park in Washington,

D.C. The purpose of National Youth Justice 5K Run/Walk month is to raise awareness about youth prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system. These events were all a success with many participants advocating and raising awareness on important youth justice issues across the country.

Tracy McClard, a mother who had a son in the prison system and founder of Families and Friends Organizing for Reform of Juvenile Justice in Missouri (FORJ-MO) initiated the run three years ago and hosted the 5K Run/Walk in Missouri again this year. She enthusiastically reports, "My event was great! I sent pictures from the race to [a local news station] and they did a story about it on the evening news." McClard reported that there were many new faces this year. She also used the event to gain signatures and support for the Family Justice Act petition which seeks to increase family engagement through a grant program which will provide funds to qualifying non-profit organizations in various states. For more information about the Family Justice Act, please visit: <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/component/content/article/4-info/59-the-family-justice-act.html>.

In Wisconsin, the 5K Run/Walk was hosted by Vicky Gunderson. This was Gunderson's first time hosting the event in memory of her son Kirk who committed suicide while in a county jail. The run/walk was very successful. Gunderson tells CFYJ, "We had [approximately] 80 people in attendance with 66 runners and walkers. Some were from Kirk's high school class which was very special. It's all about awareness." Gunderson's 5K featured live music and local news coverage. She also invited Mario Street, an adult who was previously incarcerated when he was 17 years old, to tell his story to those in attendance through his music.

CFYJ would like to thank all of the 5K Run/Walk organizers for their hard work and dedication to raising awareness of youth justice issues: Ernest Johnson in Louisiana; Tracy McClard in Missouri; Sadric Bonner and RuthAnn Foster in North Carolina; and Vicky Gunderson in Wisconsin.

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### **New Virginia "Jail Removal" Law Featured Nationally**

The new Virginia "Jail Removal" law was featured prominently at two national convenings in October.

On October 6, Liane Rozelle, Executive Director of Families and Allies of Virginia's Youth (FAVY), discussed how the Virginia law passed at the National convening of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in Kansas City, Missouri. In a lively and engaging discussion, Liane demonstrated how the law was supported and unanimously passed and ultimately signed into law at a bill signing ceremony with Governor Bob McDonnell. Liane produced a new report illustrating the "lessons learned" from this effort. The Campaign for Youth Justice's Research and Policy Director, Neelum Arya, cited the new Virginia law as a positive example of how states and local jurisdictions can initiate efforts to remove youth from adult jails.

Andy Block of the University of Virginia Law School and formerly of JustChildren, spoke about the effort to a packed plenary session at the National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC) Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. on October 15. During his presentation, Andy recognized the efforts of the late Robert Shepherd, a national leader in juvenile justice and former member of the Campaign for Youth Justice's Advisory Council, to protect children in the justice system. Bob's wife attended the bill signing ceremony with Governor McDonnell. Andy recognized Liane Rozelle of FAVY; Kate Duvall of JustChildren; Melissa Cortez Goemann, formerly of the University of Richmond and Co-Chair of the Virginia Juvenile Justice Coalition; and the Campaign for Youth Justice for supporting this important policy change.

Congratulations again to all the Virginia allies for their tremendous efforts!

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## North Carolina Forums

From Mandy Ableidinger at NC Action for Children

Action for Children North Carolina worked with local allied groups to organize and hold five community forums on the issue of raising the age of juvenile court jurisdiction over the past month. Panelists of local and statewide leaders and experts in juvenile justice issues hosted conversations with 30-40 attendees at each forum, in Charlotte, Durham, Asheville, Winston-Salem and Wilmington. Allies in Greensboro hosted a 5K Run/Walk for juvenile justice reform. Forums were covered by local and statewide news outlets.

A public hearing was also held in Asheville by the legislative task force currently studying raising the age in North Carolina. Out of the 100 attendees, more than 20 spoke, mostly in favor of raising the age. The event garnered a positive article in the Asheville paper, which also printed an op-ed on the issue by our local allied organization.

Another task force public hearing is scheduled in the eastern part of the state in early December, and another community forum will be hosted by an allied organization in Fayetteville. Action for Children's goal is to keep Raise the Age in the media through the start of the legislative session in January.

For more information on the 'Raise the Age' Campaign, please visit: <http://www.ncchild.org>.



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## Youth Justice Sunday to Protest Baltimore Youth Jail

The Baltimore Algebra Project, Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle, and numerous other Baltimore organizations sponsored "Youth Justice Sunday" on Sunday, October 31, 2010 at Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School to protest the proposed construction of a \$104 million jail for youth charged as adults in Baltimore. Read more about the protest at:

[http://education.change.org/blog/view/educate\\_dont\\_incarcerate\\_protesters\\_chant\\_at\\_proposed\\_youth\\_jail](http://education.change.org/blog/view/educate_dont_incarcerate_protesters_chant_at_proposed_youth_jail)

To take action, contact Maryland Governor O'Malley at:

[http://www.change.org/campaign4youthjustice/petitions/view/stop\\_baltimore\\_youth\\_jail\\_invest\\_in\\_alternatives](http://www.change.org/campaign4youthjustice/petitions/view/stop_baltimore_youth_jail_invest_in_alternatives)

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## "Lame Duck" Push on JJDP A Reauthorization in 2010

With Congress in a "Lame Duck" session until at least December 3 (and possibly longer), the window for reauthorizing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) in the 111th Congress is nearly closed. In order to reauthorize the JJDP A this year, we need your help to encourage the U.S. Senate to include S. 678, the JJDP A reauthorization legislation, on legislation moving through the full Senate.

The JJDP A was first enacted in 1974 and provides federal funding to states that comply with a set of best practices aimed at avoiding the detention and incarceration of young people in juvenile and adult facilities. However, this law is three years overdue for reauthorization! The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved a JJDP A reauthorization bill (S. 678) but it is awaiting action on the Senate floor. No bill has been introduced in the House.

Please weigh in with your State's two Senators as soon as possible - even if you have contacted your Senators before - and urge them to move juvenile justice reform before the end of the year!

Here's how you can help:

1) Contact your congressional delegation one last time this year by sending an email:

Senate:

[http://www.change.org/petitions/view/tell\\_the\\_senate\\_pass\\_juvenile\\_justice\\_reform\\_now](http://www.change.org/petitions/view/tell_the_senate_pass_juvenile_justice_reform_now).

House:

[http://www.change.org/petitions/view/tell\\_the\\_house\\_pass\\_juvenile\\_justice\\_reform\\_now](http://www.change.org/petitions/view/tell_the_house_pass_juvenile_justice_reform_now).

2) Host a Holiday Visit for Your Congressional Delegation

Organizations and individuals can organize events for Members of Congress and their staff to visit youth participating in juvenile justice programs, community-based alternatives to detention or incarceration programs or housed at adult jails. The purpose of these visits is to raise policymakers' awareness of youth in these programs who spend their holidays in programs and facilities and to encourage them to help protect these youth by becoming leaders in reforming the juvenile justice system, reducing the prosecution of youth in adult criminal court and ending the placement of youth in adult jails and prisons.

To download a "Holiday Toolkit" visit: [http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/Holiday\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/Holiday_Toolkit.pdf).

3) Spread the Word!

Share this action alert with your networks and include a link to the Children's Defense Fund's video on the JJDP A: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsJxJONWEyM>.

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## RESEARCH AND POLICY

### New Law Review Article Explaining the Potential of Using *Graham v. Florida* to Challenge Juvenile Transfer Laws

Neelum Arya, Research and Policy Director at the Campaign for Youth Justice, recently wrote a law review article entitled 'Using *Graham v. Florida* to Challenge Juvenile Transfer Laws.' The article suggests that the recent Supreme Court opinion in

*Graham v. Florida* (abolishing life without parole sentences for juveniles (JLWOP) convicted of non-homicide crimes), may be used to challenge juvenile transfer laws as well as establishes that juveniles charged with non-homicide offenses have a constitutional right to rehabilitation.

Part I provides a description and analysis of the Graham opinion and reviews the Court's Eighth Amendment jurisprudence through to their recent ruling declaring JLWOP sentences for non-homicide crimes unconstitutional. In Part II, Arya argues that youth have a right to rehabilitation found under the state's police power. In addition, Graham discusses three types of difficulties that adult decision makers in the criminal justice system have with respect to youth that may be useful to challenge transfer laws. First, judges and experts have problems evaluating the culpability and maturity of youth. Second, adult perceptions of youth are biased by the severity and manner in which the crimes were conducted. Third, counsel has difficulty representing youth in the adult system. Arya suggests these factors apply to all youth prosecuted in the adult criminal system, regardless of offense charged or sentence imposed. Finally, in Part III, Arya encourages lawyers to revisit these prior challenges in both individual cases and as part of impact litigation strategies to declare all transfer statutes, or portions of them, unconstitutional.

The full text of the article is available at:

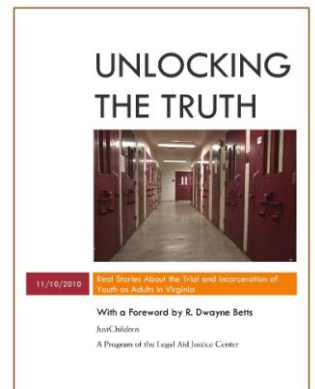
[http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/Downloads/NationalReportsArticles/ARYA\\_Graham\\_Article.pdf](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/Downloads/NationalReportsArticles/ARYA_Graham_Article.pdf).

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**New Virginia Report Released: *Unlocking the Truth; Real Stories about the Trial and Incarceration of Youth as Adults in Virginia***

In 2010, JustChildren conducted a listening tour across the Commonwealth of Virginia to gather stories about the trial and incarceration of youth as adults. While touring, JustChildren gathered stories from youth, families, community members, and attorneys regarding the trial and incarceration of youth as adults.

JustChildren released "Unlocking the Truth; Real Stories about the Trial and Incarceration of Youth as Adults in Virginia" in November and key findings show that youth tried and incarcerated as adults in Virginia are put at a significant disadvantage upon their return home due to a lack of services and opportunities thereby increasing the odds of recidivism. The stories collected also show that young people throughout the Commonwealth are not safe when incarcerated with adults.



Furthermore, the report demonstrated that the trial decisions in the Commonwealth are unjust - judicial oversight regarding the transfer of youth into the adult criminal justice system is lacking and prosecutors have virtually unlimited authority over certification decisions resulting in unequal bargaining power and discriminatory outcomes. In sum, JustChildren's report finds that Virginia's system of trying youth as adults is unfair, unsafe, and ineffective.

For a full copy of the report, please visit:

<http://dontthrowawaythekey.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/final-unlocking-the-truth-report1.pdf>.

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**New Arizona Report Released: *Improving Public Safety by Keeping Youth Out of the Adult Criminal Justice System***

The Children's Action Alliance released a new report entitled, 'Improving Public Safety by Keeping Youth Out of the Adult

Criminal Justice System,' which provides recent data and policy recommendations concerning youth tried as adults in Arizona. The report shows that keeping youth in the juvenile justice system rather than the adult criminal justice system will keep Arizona youth and communities safer. With enhancements to the decision-making process, Arizona can reduce recidivism, save unnecessary expenses, and lead to more youth becoming law abiding, productive citizens.

"The evidence is strong and clear," said Dana Wolfe Naimark, President and CEO of Children's Action Alliance. "Prosecuting youth as if they were adults makes it less likely that they will be rehabilitated and become productive members of society. That means we're not getting the results we expect from our policies and our tax dollars."

The Children's Action Alliance recommends that Arizona lawmakers follow four major recommendations to avoid unintended, undesirable, and unjust consequences in cases where youth being prosecuted as adults:

- 1) Modify the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to ensure youth get the services they need by: raising the minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction from age 8 to 10; and extending juvenile court jurisdiction beyond age 18;
- 2) Make changes to the transfer laws to prevent youth from ending up in the adult system inappropriately by: permitting reverse remand hearings for youth who are subject to discretionary prosecution in the adult court; refining the definition of a chronic felony offender to include only youth who had at least one offense that involved display of a deadly weapon or serious personal injury; and limiting prosecutorial discretion to cases involving personal injury crimes and to youth aged 15 and older;
- 3) Change the custodial interrogation procedures to be age and developmentally appropriate by: requiring electronic recording of custodial interrogations of youth; and requiring attorney presence during custodial interrogations of youth; and
- 4) Develop more suitable sanctions for youth who are sentenced in adult court by: providing for judicial discretion in sentencing youth convicted in the adult criminal court; allowing youth tried as adults to be held in juvenile facilities instead of adult jails or prisons; and allowing for the periodic review of life sentences imposed on youth offenders.

For a full copy of the report, please visit:

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/JJ%20Report%20Arizona%2011-18-10.pdf>.

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## NATIONAL MOMENTUM

### National Resolution Sign On Update

Roger Ghatt

The Campaign for Youth Justice continues to promote its national resolution to reduce the number of youth sent to adult criminal court and to remove young offenders from adult jails and prisons.

Thanks to the support of our friends and allies we have recently added eleven more groups. There are now more than 160 organizations signed on to the National Resolution to end the prosecution of youth as adults. Over fifty national organizations as well as organizations from thirty-six states ranging from Vermont to California to Hawaii have shown their commitment to keeping young people out of the adult criminal justice system. The Campaign would like to build on this tremendous support by getting your organization to sign today!

If your organization has not signed on to the Resolution, please consider doing so today. To sign-on to the Resolution, contact the Campaign at [jjstate@cfyj.org](mailto:jjstate@cfyj.org).

The text of the National Resolution and list of current signatories is available at:

<http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/national%20resolution%20plus%20supporters%2009%2028%2010.pdf>

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## MEDIA WRAP



### Radio Show

U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy of Long Island, New York was featured on the Juvenile Justice Matters radio show this month to discuss her Family Justice Act legislation. Rep. McCarthy, who is the chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities, has been working on this bill in an attempt to engage families in juvenile justice programs. From numerous hearings in the past it has become clear that there is a direct correlation between families being more involved in the lives of juvenile offenders and the success of rehabilitation. While Rep. McCarthy does not believe the bill will be passed during the current lame duck session of Congress, she hopes to work on it during the new session in January. During the show the Congresswoman made clear that many juvenile offenders suffer severe sentences for minor charges. "I believe I am tough on crime," Rep. McCarthy said. "[But] there's punishment and then there's something that goes beyond punishment."

To listen to this and many other archived shows visit, [www.blogtalkradio.com/jjmatters](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/jjmatters).

For a transcription of this episode of Juvenile Justice Matters, please visit:

[http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/JJM\\_Transcript-Rep.CarolynMcCarthy.pdf](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/JJM_Transcript-Rep.CarolynMcCarthy.pdf).

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### Social Media: Navigating New Technology



My fellowship at the Campaign for Youth Justice revolves around Facebook, Twitter, and the CFYJ website. You might think this isn't that much responsibility for an entire fellowship. At first, I thought so too. I was doubtful that these tools my generation uses for social recreation would translate into a constructive, productive fellowship. All I can say is: I was completely wrong.

Facebook and Twitter are the two main social networking sites of this generation. The principle under which they were founded was staying close and connected to friends. In less than ten years time, these websites have evolved beyond simply keeping in touch. They have been used as a way to market and promote various aspects of our society: music groups, entertainment, entrepreneurs, clothing lines, and of course, non-profits. The Campaign for Youth Justice is no exception, and makes full use of Facebook and Twitter to promote its relevant and meaningful cause.

This is where I come in. The Campaign has numerous articles, fact sheets, case profiles, and information in general that it needs to disseminate. This helps to promote its cause and garner support. I would suggest with any advocacy organization that you find the appropriate tools to make your life easier. Social media can get out of hand sometimes. People post advertisements, send spam messages and sometimes even use profane language. Our Facebook and Twitter pages must be monitored at all times, which can be tedious. In order to make any social media campaign successful, you must act as a sounding board and interact with your fans. I use a free software program, Hootsuite to organize my postings.

I find that posting latest news articles on an issue is effective and asking questions like, "what do you think of this new policy?" or "how do you feel about what was said?"

One of my favorite ways to reach out to people is using case profiles. People are always engaged in other people's stories and it presents the issue of juvenile incarceration on a personal level. I choose to tease the story and then link to our website for the remaining text.

Finally, research and facts are great points to tweet and post. When I post facts from our fact and research sheets, I not only learn more about the important cause we are fighting, I educate our supporters and strengthen their resolve to fight for change.

If you are new to social media, don't be scared. There are hundreds of thousands of folks in the same situation. Just remember that everything you post is viral and you want to be careful on the words you choose to post. A good rule of thumb is to write something you are ok with seeing on the front page of The New York Times.

I have found that using Facebook and Twitter offers me a multifaceted and interactive fellowship. Every day, I get to interact with people who are genuinely interested and passionate about the work we do here. Knowing that I can add to their interest and garner support for the Campaign for Youth Justice is immensely rewarding.

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## GET ORGANIZED

### Open Letter to the National Parent Caucus and our Families

Grace Bauer

*Grace Bauer, a field organizer, 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.*



Where does the time go? It seems hard to believe but another year has just about come and gone! We have certainly had a very busy year and much work has been accomplished! Take a moment and feel good about the things you have accomplished and know that our movement has grown significantly this past year! Family voice has been more evident at the national level than ever before and that voice will create positive changes for our children.

I get very emotional when the holidays approach because I know that many of you will hurt for your children that are locked up and on special days there will always be that absence around our tables and in our hearts for those that remain imprisoned and for some, lost to us in death. My son has spent six of the last 10 years behind bars and though I am holding out hope that this year will be different, I remember how hard those six were for us as his family. No matter how great your joy is for others in your life, a heart wrenching emptiness accompanies you in your every waking moment and then haunts you when you try to close your eyes. On special days it seems harder and the void seems even greater. To all of you who know and understand the pain, we send our strongest thoughts and care.

I have no words to take away the sorrow and hurt that millions of families will be feeling in the coming weeks but I refuse to only acknowledge that part of our lives. We, as families, have made progress this year and this progress should be celebrated. I know that our progress will not fill the void in your hearts but I hope that you will feel a sense of achievement and know that we are making a difference for our children. The National Parent Caucus now reaches families in over 30 states and 180 people participate through our monthly calls, emails, requesting materials to educate themselves and their communities, writing letters and making phone calls.

Representatives of the National Parent Caucus have been in one meeting with the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention leaders and another will take place on December 6th to talk about plans to involve more families in more intensive ways. The Family Justice Act is moving along. The 5K Race for Youth Justice, that Tracy McClard started three years ago, spread to four other states this year and it is expected to triple in 2011. Many families from throughout the country have stepped up to spread the message and be the voice for our children in their states, including Vicky Gunderson, Ernest Johnson, Grace Warren, Tracey Huggins-Clark, Rita Pearson, Anne Williams and so many more. We have Sadric Bonner, Geraldine Alshamy and Ruth Foster fighting to "Raise the Age" in North Carolina. Our sincere appreciation goes out to all of you for all that you do!

I would like to encourage all of you to reach out to other families in similar situations and let them know they are not alone. Do not let the sorrow and hurt you feel keep you silenced, use those feelings to keep making noise and bringing attention to the obstacles and hardships our children face. Please remember that you are making a difference!

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## DWAYNE'S COLUMN



*An advocate for juvenile justice and prison reform, Dwayne Betts is a national spokesperson for the Campaign for Youth Justice. He was sentenced to nine years in prison for carjacking when he was sixteen years old. Today, Betts is a father, husband, advocate, educator, and accomplished author.*

My first Christmas in prison, we were fed capons, that castrated domestic cock fattened for eating. The kitchen was filled with more than a dozen pair of arms on tables, faces buried in the food that brought steam rising from steel trays. Even confined, the holidays became something to wait for with expectation and hunger. And maybe that's what ruined the holidays for me, after nine holiday seasons confined the winter marked more absence and loss. Waiting as if one good meal a year could satisfy all the nights when we ate meat that we couldn't name. Waiting as if one good meal could make the memories of families we'd left somehow more real. Men, women, and children in prison find themselves lost in memories of their families when the weather turns cold. I did. Now, even after five years of freedom, after holidays where turkey and stuffing, where sweet potato pie and fried chicken could be smelled in every room of a house filled with the loud voices of people who love me, and whom I love, I'm still lost in what wasn't there.

Not looking forward to the holidays became a habit that freedom alone has not broken. There should be a better way to think of this season. A way that removes the self-pitying and redundant "what ifs." Still prison changed something about the holidays. Something about staring into the faces of my family that reminds me of time gone. Cousins, nieces and nephews all suddenly so big. Relationships changed. In prison, the holidays were the one time of the year that I consciously thought of others. The day that I imagined how my absence would be felt as aunts, uncles and cousins gathered at my grandmother's house.

In a way it's different now. I say my experience after prison has been different from many others. It's been the kind of experience that many men who went into prison as juveniles will begin having and, in certain instances, have had. Fourteen years ago, as I prepared to spend my first Christmas in prison, the holidays were about me. I would be the one opening gifts, waking up early in the morning to eat rice crispy treats, awaiting snow and snow ball fights. Now, I am the father, masquerading as Santa Claus, preparing turkey and doing grocery shopping. In a way, the shift allows me to enjoy the holidays a bit more. Yet, it's still a little startling, finding myself in the kitchen taking a part of grown folks' conversations.

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## VOICES



**Raymond Padilla's life was changed at age 16. This is his story...**

*"In elementary school, Ray was sent to live with his grandfather and his wife with five children in a one room house. His mother was hospitalized and unable to care for him due to injuries suffered from being hit by a drunk driver. Ray recalls, "This time of my life all I remember is the hand-me-downs and hearing 'you're not my son' over and over again."*

*A few years later, although Ray was able to live with his mother, she had become abusive and suffered from panic attacks due to the stress of living out of cars and in abandoned houses. Soon Ray turned to gangs and street life, and by age 12 he had left his mother to live on his own with drug dealers. His trouble with the law began with minor incidents of stealing and selling drugs. However, these became more violent and eventually landed Ray in prison at age 16 for [an incident] he committed with a 38-year-old, 3-time felon who was given probation while Ray received a maximum sentence. While Ray does not blame his incarceration on anyone and believes he should have been punished for his actions, he says that what he has experienced has been excessive for a crime committed as a juvenile.*

*"I have lost the last 19 years of life...not being productive in society and [this] conviction will deny me of many job opportunities [when I am released]... Being here so long I've become seriously accustomed to prison life, and living under day-to-day threat of violence... [Experiencing these evils of the world as a youth we] begin to accept violence as a reality of life... Prisoners like me have more time spent behind gates and under guns than in the free world, which has really taken a toll on us... I have lost everything while here, a place where any weakness is an invitation for violence or victimization by others."*

*Despite these painful experiences, Ray has spent his time in prison becoming involved in outreach programs to help keep at-risk youth out of the system. "What I have been doing is coming together with other inmates with similar histories in an attempt to reach out to the youth and get them to seriously understand the consequences of this life. I seriously think we can help a few avoid the prison system. For many of us here this has become a personal investment, because we have children and family members that we don't want as cellmates or mentally damaged like we are. Hopefully we can use our incarceration to help others [because] we have seen, heard, and personally been involved in things that no person, let alone our children, should experience... At this point I am hopeful to help others avoid this situation, and that I can find a way to release [these feelings] in a positive way."*

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## ON THE CALENDAR

**Thursday, December 2, 2010**

Please join CFYJ for our 2010 Holiday Party and Book Drive event from

4:00-7:00 pm.

Busboys and Poets @ 5th & K



1025 5th Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 789-2227

Please RSVP by November 24 by [clicking here](#).

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## TAKE ACTION, SPREAD THE WORD

### Consider Organizing a Holiday Project for Incarcerated Youth

The holiday season provides us with a unique opportunity to reach out and make meaningful connections with youth who are detained or incarcerated in adult jails, prisons and juvenile correctional facilities across the country. Spending the holidays away from family can be hard, but being locked up too far from home to receive visits is especially painful for both the children and their families. It means so much to these youth when someone remembers them, even with the simplest gift, card or event. It gives these youth hope to know that someone cares, someone thinks about them, and someone is working for them throughout the year.

Consider organizing a holiday project to reach out to incarcerated youth. For example, hold an arts and crafts day to write cards to the incarcerated youths in your state. It will be a fun way to get the kids and community involved and informed about your cause. Besides making a difference to these most affected populations, holiday outreach is an amazing opportunity to connect with, inform, and empower community groups. If you are working as part of an organization, this outreach will enhance your organization's visibility in the community and strengthen its partnerships in the field.

For tips and ideas, check out the "Holiday Toolkit" at:

[http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/Holiday\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/Holiday_Toolkit.pdf)

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## HOW YOU CAN HELP



### CFYJ 2010 Holiday Part and Book Drive Event

Please join the Campaign for Youth Justice for a night of fun at our annual Holiday Party and Book Drive on Thursday, December 2, 2010 at Busboys and Poets from 4:00-7:00 pm. Refreshments will be provided.

You can help ensure that no child goes without a gift this holiday season by making a small financial contribution that will go towards buying books for incarcerated youth housed at DC's adult jail.

We hope to raise enough money so that each child will receive two books in hopes that everyone feels special and remembered during the holidays.

If you are unable to attend, please still considering making a suggested donation of \$25 to this worthy cause.

Thursday, December 2, 2010  
4:00-7:00 pm  
Busboys and Poets @ 5th & K  
1025 5th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 789-2227

Please RSVP by November 24 by [clicking here](#).  
[Click Here to Donate!](#)

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### CFYJ Requests Testimony on Issue of Prosecuting Youth as Adults

CFYJ gathers personal stories and testimony from youth prosecuted under age 18 in the adult criminal justice system as well as their parents and families. These stories help people, especially policymakers, understand the experiences of those who have been directly affected by the prosecution of youth as adults. If you or someone you know has testified before a state or county committee on the issue of prosecuting youth as adults please share your testimony with CFYJ! Likewise, if you or someone you know would like to share their story, please do so! Stories can be shared online through our toolkits or by calling CFYJ at 202.558.3580.

To read existing stories and testimony, visit CFYJ's "Real Life" website at <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/about-real-life.html>.

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## CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES AT A GLANCE

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

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."]*

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."

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](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>.

[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](mailto:lryan@cfyj.org)].

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