

# TAKE ACTION

## *What Can Be Done for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System?*

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Girls are the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population. For girls, physical and sexual abuse is an overwhelming predictor for juvenile justice involvement. And, once in the system, girls often fail to receive the services they need, and instead are re-traumatized and derailed from educational achievement. You can help by raising this issue with national, state, and local leaders and encouraging them to adopt policies and practices that better respond to the needs of system-involved girls.

Here are some ways you can **take action**:

- 1) **Advocate for more federal resources** to address the needs of girls in the justice system. The Obama Administration's budget proposes \$2 million for grants that focus on girls in the juvenile justice system, providing a powerful incentive to states to implement some best practices.  
To contact your Representative, visit <http://tinyurl.com/akfdlr>  
To contact your Senators, visit <http://tinyurl.com/colbyqx>
- 2) **Engage others in your community** and ask the U.S. Department of Justice's National Girls Institute (NGI) to provide technical assistance to your jurisdiction.  
For information on the NGI, visit their website at <http://www.nationalgirlsinsttute.org>.
- 3) **Contact your members of Congress** to urge that they update the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) to eliminate the loopholes in the law that allow status offenders to be detained in juvenile detention facilities as girls are disproportionately detained for status offenses.  
To contact your Senators, visit <http://tinyurl.com/bkkjfl>
- 4) **Urge your Governor to implement the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)** to ensure that girls are not placed in adult jails and prisons.  
To contact your Governor, visit <http://tinyurl.com/aky55d9>
- 5) **Share the Family Comes First Report and other key resources** with decision-makers in your community.  
See the Family Comes First Report at <http://tinyurl.com/amk9xke> and the Girls & Juvenile Justice Resource List at [www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/cfyj\\_grl\\_2013%20final.pdf](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/cfyj_grl_2013%20final.pdf).
- 6) **Visit a facility** where girls are housed; host a roundtable discussion with formerly incarcerated girls, their families, and key system stakeholders; or plan a holiday event for incarcerated girls. These events can help you, and policy makers in your community, see firsthand what girls are up against, what states' need to improve their systems, and how you can best support those efforts.  
See CFYJ's Site Visit Toolkit at <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/advocacy-resource-center/campaign-tools.html>
- 7) **Mark your calendars: October 23, 2013 is Girls Justice Day!** October is National Youth Justice Awareness Month and October 23 will be Girls Justice Day. Use this opportunity to build awareness in your community about girls in the justice system and to create support for change.