

CAMPAIGN FOR
YOUTH JUSTICE

BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

LET'S GET KIDS OUT OF ADULT JAILS, COURTS, AND PRISONS

Our children are worth far more than the biggest mistake they have ever made. We cannot simply abandon them to the adult criminal justice system. The practice of transferring youth into adult courts and prisons is:

OVER-USED

- Every year in this country, as many as **200,000** youth are put into the adult criminal justice system.
- In 22 states, children as young as **SEVEN** can be prosecuted as adults.
- Each year **100,000** youth are held in adult jails and prisons.
- Most youth who enter the adult system are there for nonviolent offenses.

DISCRIMINATORY

- African-American youth make up **32%** of those arrested while they only represent **16%** of the overall youth population.
- African American youth are **NINE** times more likely, and Latino youth are **FOUR** times more likely to receive an adult prison sentence for the same crime as white youth.

HARMFUL

- Even though only 1% of all jail inmates were under 18 in 2005 and 2006, they accounted for **21%** and **13%** of the victims of inmate-on-inmate sexual violence in jails respectively.
- Many children behind bars are placed in isolation where they are locked down **23** hours a day in their cells, for extended periods of time.
- Youth housed in adult jails are **36** times more likely to commit suicide than are youth housed in juvenile detention facilities.

NOT POPULAR

- In a 2011 national poll, **69%** of Americans opposed placement of youth in adult jails and prisons.
- **89%** favored rehabilitation and treatment approaches for youth, such as counseling, education, treatment, restitution, and community services.

A FAILED POLICY

- Research tells us that youth who are prosecuted in the adult system are **34%** more likely to recidivate and with more violent offenses.
- Each year the U.S. incurs an estimated **\$8-\$21 billion** in long-term costs for the confinement of youth.

CHANGING

- In the past **8** years, **23** states have enacted **40** individual pieces of legislation to remove youth from adult jails and prisons, limit the prosecution of youth in adult court, or revise sentencing laws.

To learn more, or get involved in changing things in your state, contact:

Brian Evans, State Campaign Coordinator, Campaign for Youth Justice, 202-558-3580 ext. 1606

bevans@cfyj.org