

CAMPAIGN FOR  
**YOUTH JUSTICE**

BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

**Thousands to Participate in National Youth Justice Awareness  
Month Activities throughout the Country**

*Events Across the Country are designed to Raise Awareness around the Issue of Youth Being Tried, Sentenced and Incarcerated in the Adult Criminal Justice System; New Report to Highlight Where States Stand on Prosecuting Youth in the Adult Criminal Justice System*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WASHINGTON (OCTOBER 1, 2013)** – During the month of October, thousands of people are participating in National Youth Justice Awareness Month (YJAM) activities throughout the country. National Youth Justice Awareness Month was created six years ago by a Missouri parent, Tracy McClard, whose 16-year-old son was tried and prosecuted as an adult, and ultimately took his own life while incarcerated in an adult prison. McClard serves as the National Chairperson for YJAM.

Events are taking place throughout the country ranging from service days, 5K walks/runs, film screenings, art shows, poetry slams and conferences. Local non-profits, volunteers and family members directly affected by the social injustice of having the youth in their lives charged, prosecuted and sentenced in the adult criminal justice system have organized the events.

“Many parents or family members think they’re alone when a young loved one is placed into the adult justice system,” said McClard. “The support that we receive, not only from the non-profit community but also from other parents that are part of the Campaign for Youth Justices’ Join the Movement campaign, have helped many families navigate the murky waters of the adult justice system and have given us a voice to advocate for our children.”

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The Campaign for Youth Justice sponsored and provided technical assistance, including financial support and informational materials, to the YJAM events.

“We are excited to take part in this national movement to draw awareness to the issues that youth and their families face while in the adult justice system,” said Liz Ryan, Executive Director of the Campaign for Youth Justice. “Every year, an estimated 250,000 youth are tried, sentenced, or incarcerated as adults. Youth sentenced as adults receive an adult criminal record, are denied employment and educational opportunities, and can be barred from receiving student financial aid.

As part of National Youth Justice Awareness Month, CFYJ will release a new report on October 10, *State Trends - Legislative Victories from 2011-2013: Removing Youth from the Adult Criminal Justice System*. The report takes a look at states that have, and are taking steps to remove children from the adult criminal justice system.

*The Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ) 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.*

***For more information about Y-JAM [www.campaignforyouthjustice.org](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org) or Follow us on Twitter @ [JusticeForYouth](https://twitter.com/JusticeForYouth) and Like us on Facebook at: [Campaign for Youth Justice](https://www.facebook.com/CampaignforYouthJustice) #YJAM #YOUTHJUSICE***

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