

**A Formula for Change:
Advocacy in the Courts,
the Legislature and the Streets**

Re-Visioning Justice in America

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Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, April 17-19, 2015

Institutional Inequities

Youth were packed into cottages in the Cheltenham (Maryland) facility. There were not enough bathrooms , so many young men had to go to the bathroom in the cells where the staff poured bleach—you talk about a filthy, overcrowded, violent environment for children.

Gregory Perkins, Baltimore Interdenominational Alliance

Look at this way—either you're going to be raped at Tallulah [youth prison] or else you're going to be fighting every day.

Grover Arbuthnot, New Orleans youth

While African Americans and Latinos make up less than two-thirds of New York city's youth population , they comprise 95 percent of the young people at Spofford prison.

Mishi Faruqee, New York City advocate

Policy Accomplishments

- No More Youth Jails/Justice 4 Youth campaign stopped the funding for mass expansion of youth prison in New York City's capital budget in the early 2000s
- Pressure the state legislature to redirect funds away from prisons and to higher education
- Created a “firewall” between the Office of Youth Services and Department of Corrections
- Juvenile Justice Act of 2003 (Louisiana)
 - Created a Children's Cabinet Research Council
 - Closed Tallulah youth prison
- Expand educational services to incarcerated youth (Maryland)
- Bolstered the Independent Monitor's office to investigate abuses (Maryland)

How did these changes occur? (Ingredients in the Formula)



Build Broad-Based Coalitions

- Maryland Juvenile Justice Coalition (MJJC)
- Prison Moratorium Project
- Justice 4 Youth
- Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana (JJPL)
- Maryland Campaign to Close Cheltenham
- Organize meetings/schedules
- Identifies critical policies/experts
- Bridge different sectors
Intergenerational
- Youth advocates
- Legal advocates
- Juvenile justice officials
- Children's advocates
- Street workers
- Faith-Based advocates
- Prison advocates
- Education advocates
- Mental health professionals

Mobilize Different Affected Groups



- Organize Affected Groups
- Organize family and friends of affected groups
- Groups should have *input* in policy development
- Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC) played a leading role in the state's juvenile justice reform movement
 - The group had 450 members

Ombudsmen & Monitoring

Movement coalitions have taken on an “ombudsmen”

- Call for investigations
- Publicize investigations/inform lawmakers
- Bring in experts
- Invite national/well-known groups
- Routine monitoring of policy role
- Leverage existing statutes

(Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act)



Constituent Lobbying & Legislative Testimonies



- Involve affected groups (e.g. parents, advocates, & youth) in constituent lobbying & testimonies
- Work hand-in-hand w/legislative allies & movement insiders
- Integrate data into lobbying activities
- Example: Oct. 2004-April 2005, advocates held monthly meetings w/Maryland lawmakers & participated in 2 lobbying sessions

Community-Based Crime Reduction/ Anti-Violence Intervention Strategies

- Linked policy reforms w/grassroots strategies that combat crime and divert youth from jail (Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood/Maryland)
(Community Conferencing Mediation)
- Developed comprehensive aftercare programs (Youth Empowerment Project/Louisiana)
- Political education courses for at-risk and formerly incarcerated youth (Each One, Teach One/New York)

