



THE FIGHT  
FOR

# JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM

A CAMPAIGN TO CREATE A MORE JUST MOUNTAIN STATE

We are increasingly criminalizing common youth behavior and unnecessarily separating families. Community-based alternatives that keep kids at home are cheaper and more effective, and provide them with the resources and tools they need to succeed.

---

## Meeting Children's Needs

West Virginia is facing a crisis of mental health and trauma in our youth, and children with disabilities are not being appropriately served. More resources are necessary to meet these needs, and young people shouldn't be punished for our deficiencies.

## The Cost of Our Broken System

Warehousing children in cells and out-of-home placement is exceedingly expensive. If we meet our goals, West Virginia would save \$24.3 million every year, which could be reinvested in community-based alternatives to help our young people achieve their potential.

## School-to-Prison Pipeline

Youth in West Virginia are too often faced with adult consequences for misbehavior. With schools relying more on law enforcement and less on teachers and administrators to handle school misconduct, far too many students are forced to enter the juvenile justice system. System-involved youth are less likely to graduate and more likely to wind up in the adult justice system than similarly-situated peers.

## Marginalized Youth

Youth of color in West Virginia face additional challenges. Black students are more than twice as likely to be suspended or expelled as white students, and Black and Hispanic youth are more than three times as likely to be arrested and locked up as their white peers. LGBTQ+ youth often face discrimination from peers as well as teachers and administrators, and are more than twice as likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system than their peers.

---

## OUR GOALS



Reduce juveniles in detention by **75%**

Reduce juveniles in residential placement by **65%**

Reduce out-of-home placement for status offences by **65%**

Reduce referrals to court from school by **50%**

**Eliminate disparate minority contact in schools and communities**