



The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance fights for:

Sean, 16, arrested for breach of peace, locked in adult prison and denied his psychiatric medicines. Sean talked about suicide while confined to a cell 23-hours-a-day.

Jerome, 16, arrested with one marijuana cigarette. Like many youth of color, Jerome got the harshest treatment possible. He served enough time to lose a semester in school.

Zach, 10, struggling with depression and learning disabilities (neither diagnosed) and a target for bullies. He was running away from school and a threatened beating when he tripped over a pipe and dislodged it. His principal had him arrested for vandalism.

Through advocacy and community organizing, we're creating a better future for kids like Sean, Jerome and Zach. We're proving that meeting children's needs saves taxpayer dollars, increases public safety and helps vulnerable young people become an asset to their communities.



Major initiative: Raising the Age

The Raise the Age campaign ended Connecticut's practice of treating non-violent minors as adult criminals. Connecticut was one of only three states to treat 16-year-olds accused of minor crimes as adults. Experts have long known that youths in the juvenile system are less likely to reoffend than kids in the adult system. We made sure that Connecticut legislators and the public knew it, too. We're working nationally to see that Connecticut's landmark change inspires reform in other states.



Major initiative: Racial bias

The federal government and Human Rights Watch identify Connecticut's juvenile justice system as one of the worst in racial disparity. Partnering with state agencies, we support pilot programs to end this inequity. Building on their success, we champion reforms throughout Connecticut for children of color while creating a model with national implications.

Major initiative: The School to Prison Pipeline

Advocates have long said trouble at school leads to involvement in the juvenile justice system. Now this anecdotal evidence is supported by research. Similarly, data show a high proportion of prisoners in Connecticut have mental illness. We have already narrowed the school-to-prison pipeline by our successful advocacy to end Connecticut's practice of locking up truants. We continue to work to see that educational and mental health issues are addressed early so children can be where they belong – in school, not in prison.



The missing ingredient: you

We are making a difference. But there is so much work left to be done, so many opportunities to create better futures for at-risk youth. You can find out more at our website www.ctjja.org. Or call us at (203) 579-2727.

