

## MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM

**THE PROBLEM** | Thousands of children and youth in Massachusetts come into contact with the juvenile justice system each year. Overwhelmingly, these are children from neighborhoods with high levels of poverty and they are, disproportionately, children of color and children from our child welfare systems. Many have experienced mental illness, learning disabilities, and/or school failure.

**ISSUES** | The Coalition focuses on many issues to improve the juvenile justice system. The coalition advocates for juvenile justice policies ranging from diverting youth with low level offenses from going deeper into the juvenile justice system to improving both public safety and better outcome for youth who do enter the system. These issues include:

- the unnecessary court processing of large numbers of kids for low-level offenses;
- the glaring racial disparities throughout the system;
- the overuse of out of home confinement and the lack of appropriate community-based services;
- removing barriers to successful re-entry; and
- the failure of many agencies to collect basic statistical data to enable the Commonwealth to assess the fairness and effectiveness of the system.

Building on last year's successes, the coalition will be advocating for omnibus legislation in the 2017-2018 legislative session that would exclude very young children from juvenile justice involvement; allow for the diversion of youth from formal court processing; decriminalize low level offenses for children; allow for the expungement of certain juvenile records; create a parent-child testimonial privilege; prohibit indiscriminate shackling of children in juvenile court; prohibit the use of solitary confinement as punishment; and addressing racial and ethnic disparities by requiring greater transparency in the system.

**CfJJ** | CfJJ is the convener of the Massachusetts Coalition for Juvenile Justice Reform. As the only independent, statewide organization working exclusively to improve the juvenile justice system in the Commonwealth, CfJJ advocates for smart policies that prevent crime, help youth develop into responsible citizens, and use scarce resources wisely through advocacy, research, and public education. Our advocacy platform is based on our research and policy recommendations published in our most recent research reports:

[Missed Opportunities: Preventing Youth in the Child Welfare System from Entering the Juvenile Justice System](https://www.cfjj.org/missed-opp) (<https://www.cfjj.org/missed-opp>)

[Unlocking Potential: Addressing the overuse of juvenile detention in Massachusetts](https://www.cfjj.org/unlocking-potential)  
(<https://www.cfjj.org/unlocking-potential>)

[Arrested Futures: The Criminalization of School Discipline in Massachusetts's Three Largest School Districts](https://www.cfjj.org/arrested-futures) | in partnership with the ACLU and the ACLU-MA (<https://www.cfjj.org/arrested-futures>)

## Campaign Endorsement Form

The Massachusetts Coalition for Juvenile Justice Reform, is a statewide coalition convened by Citizens for Juvenile Justice. Please join us and the other organizational members of this coalition to advocate for a fair and effective juvenile justice system. For more information on our current campaigns, please visit <https://www.cfjj.org/making-the-jj-system-fair-and-effective>.

### Campaign goals:

- Advocating for an evidence-driven juvenile justice system designed to prevent recidivism and deeper involvement in the system
- Reducing racial and ethnic disparities
- Improving data collection and reporting
- Promoting community alternatives to court and incarceration when appropriate
- Promoting developmentally appropriate interventions
- Reducing the reliance on the juvenile justice system for school discipline

### Yes! My organization endorses and supports the Campaign:

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  cell  ofc

### By endorsing the Coalition, my organization will (please choose):

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> be listed as a supporter on fact sheets and testimony                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up to receive updates from CfJJ through "JJ News"                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> be added to the Coalition email list  | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter to the editor or op-ed in my local paper about these issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> submit written or oral testimony at public hearings  | <input type="checkbox"/> Connect CfJJ to other organizations to join the coalition                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invite CfJJ to present the campaign or conduct an advocacy training for our members or staff |   |