

STEP

8.

**Getting the Support You Need:
Dedicating Resources
to Your Campaign**

—
TIME TO COMPLETE: ONGOING



PHOTO CREDIT
LISA PILNIK

Successful campaigns to close youth prisons require passion and persistence, but they also require day-to-day resources, ranging from space to hold meetings to funding for dedicated campaign staff salaries. Your campaign will need to fundraise for some things and rely on volunteered time and donated goods and services (e.g., in-kind donations) for others. Dedicated resources you will need include:

- Staff:** At least 1-2 paid staff (e.g., a Campaign Director and Campaign Organizer) who can devote all of their working time to the day-to-day running of the campaign
- Infrastructure:** Office space, desks, cell phones, laptops, internet access (Wi-Fi for offices, data plans or hot spots for cell phones or laptops)
- Communications Tools:** Website, e-mail, list management services
- Campaign Materials:** Signs for a rally; tee shirts and buttons; reports, including graphic design and printing
- Food:** For campaign meetings and events
- Other:** Transportation to bring campaign volunteers to an event, stipends for youth participants, advertising

In-kind donations

All of these items will need to be paid for by someone, but the more time, goods, and services you can get donated, the better. Here are some suggestions:

- Look into fellowships that can cover some or all of the salary and benefits for staff.
- Ask local restaurants or coffee shops to donate meeting space and food.
- Ask local service providers, e.g., graphic designers, photographers, printers, web designers to donate their services or offer a discount. Also consider students in these fields, who may need to build a portfolio.
- Ask law firms to provide pro bono support to write fact sheets and policy reports. If you don't have existing relationships, ask your local or state bar association for a referral.
- See if your local high school requires students to complete public service hours, and if you have tasks that could qualify.

Tip: **Invest in Training.** If your campaign has the resources, consider sending one or more members to a training on campaign organizing, strategy, and effectiveness, given by Wellstone Action, Midwest Academy, or another respected social justice training organization.

Build a budget

Before you can raise the funds you need for your campaign, you'll need to determine how much you need and what you'll need it for. Start by developing a list of items you'll need during the pre-launch phase of your campaign and the launch event itself. Then determine what you'll likely be able to generate in-kind donations for. Estimate (or guesstimate) and add up all of the costs for the remaining items, and that's your initial fundraising goal. Then determine the additional costs for everything you'll need for the remainder of the campaign (excluding those you can get donated) and that's your ultimate goal.

Raising funds for your campaign

There will inevitably be some needs you cannot meet through in-kind donations, and having financial resources will allow you flexibility to meet needs and grasp opportunities as they arise. You'll want to form a fundraising committee of supporters who have time and interest in helping you solicit donations, host fundraising events, and/or write grant applications.

Tip: Foundations can be a source of major support for your campaign, and they are often able to contribute at a level that you may not reach with individual donations (e.g., enough to fund one or more full-time staff over a year or more.) But it can take time to build relationships with foundations and to apply for and receive funding. Many foundations only make grants once per year or quarterly, although some do fund on a rolling basis. You should start researching and connecting with local community foundations, statewide foundations that fund justice issues, corporate foundations, or funder associations as soon as possible, and certainly invite them to participate in any launch activities or direct actions you are planning.

Tip: There are many different ways to generate financial support for your campaign. You can:

- Hold a fundraising event or encourage individuals to donate at campaign events and trainings.
- Ask community groups to sponsor an event or action with financial support or to give a donation.
- Ask a local business to sponsor an event with financial support or to give a donation.
- Apply to a local foundation for a grant to underwrite campaign activities or for general campaign support.