

Campaign Checklist



Youth First is a national advocacy campaign to end the incarceration of youth by dismantling the youth prison model, closing youth prisons and redirecting resources towards effective community-based programs, services and opportunities for youth.

nokidsinprison.org



1. Campaign Mission and Strategic Focus

☐ We are working to adopt a racial justice lens that advocates for our state to eliminate racial disparities and to build racial equity and opportunities in communities of color.

☐ We are pushing for our state to fund and capacitate community-driven solutions to reducing crime and promoting healing — particularly solutions that build on the strengths and expertise of families and communities (i.e. restorative justice, credible messenger mentoring, family support).

☐ We are working to stop the expansion of system-driven responses that rely solely on increased supervision or surveillance (i.e. intensive probation, electronic monitoring, etc.).

☐ We are advocating for the full reinvestment of the cost savings from closing youth prisons into the neighborhoods/ zip codes most impacted by youth incarceration.

☐ We are working to stop the construction of new youth prisons.

☐ We are pushing state leaders to repurpose closed youth prisons to benefit communities.

☐ We are seeking to build alliances with other advocacy and organizing campaigns (especially efforts to end adult mass incarceration and immigrant detention) to ensure that states do not use any decommissioned youth prisons to lock up other groups of people.

2. Independent Governance

☐ Our Campaign is an independent entity that does not receive any government funding or contracts through the anchor organization and/or fiscal sponsor.

☐ Our Campaign has a governance structure (e.g. a Steering Committee) that is diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, geography (i.e. statewide constituencies); includes youth and families who are directly impacted; and organizations and individuals from the two most impacted communities in our state.

☐ Our Campaign governance team is public and available online on our website & facebook page.

☐ Two (or more) directly impacted youth are represented on our Governance Team.

☐ Our Campaign has a statement of principles that governs how we operate.

3. Campaign Plan

☐ We have a Campaign Plan that identifies our long-term and short-term goals, targets, strategies, tactics and a timeline.

☐ We update our Campaign Plan through a group process at least 2 times per year.

4. Dedicated Campaign Staff

☐ We have a full-time Campaign Director.

☐ We have a Youth Coordinator.

☐ We have Campaign Organizer(s) on staff.

☐ We have paid Youth Leaders on Staff.

5. Coalition-Building

☐ We hold regular Campaign steering committee meetings or calls (e.g. 2 times per month).

☐ Our Campaign provides opportunities for coalition members to engage in the Campaign on a monthly basis through meetings, events, action alerts, etc.

☐ We hold regular Campaign coalition meetings (e.g. monthly or quarterly).

6. Youth-Adult Partnership Approach

☐ Youth leaders are engaged in carrying out the Campaign's goals and strategies rather than working on separate stand-alone projects.

☐ We provide stipends to youth to participate in campaign meetings and activities.

☐ We provide ongoing leadership training for youth.

☐ We provide limited resources on an emergency basis to the youth in our campaign on an as-needed basis.

☐ We offer support to youth to address their personal needs and to meet their professional goals.

☐ We have a staff whose role is to support the youth leaders.

7. Community Organizing Approach

☐ Our Campaign has held visioning sessions with youth, families and community members most impacted by youth incarceration to help shape our vision for youth justice reform.

☐ We have worked with communities to write up the visioning sessions and to promote the feedback from these sessions as part of our core campaign work.

☐ Our Campaign has an organizing plan that includes an intentional focus on engaging impacted communities, particularly young people and families involved in youth justice system.

☐ We attend town hall meetings, briefings and other gatherings where youth justice issues are being discussed.

8. Cultural Organizing Approach

☐ We believe in using art as a tool to amplify youth voices, challenge stereotypes, and imagine a world without youth prisons.

☐ Our campaign plan includes strategies on the use of arts and culture to move our advocacy goals forward.

☐ We regularly incorporate arts & culture in our organizing plan.

☐ We see arts as a tool not only to make “good looking” campaigns, but to strategically build momentum for our campaigns

☐ We have a core campaign partner with expertise on arts & culture who can work with youth in our campaigns and communities to create posters, t-shirts, banners, videos, audio PSAs and more for our campaigns.

☐ We have relationships with artists and/or arts institutions in our community.

9. Communications and Social Media

- ☐ We have an independent Campaign brand name & tagline.
- ☐ We have a Campaign logo.
- ☐ We maintain regular communications to our Campaign email list (e.g. 2 times per month).
- ☐ We have a Campaign website.
- ☐ We have a designated point person on our team who handles calls from the media & conducts outreach to media regularly.
- ☐ We carry out a least 2 media activities per month (e.g. press release, oped, event).
- ☐ We have campaign talking points to ensure everyone is on message.
- ☐ Our Campaign posts daily on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

10. Dedicated Campaign Resources

- ☐ We have secured grant funding for the core functions of our campaign (e.g. Campaign Director, organizers, youth leader stipends).
- ☐ We have fundraising materials (e.g. postcard) that we share with prospective grassroots donors.
- ☐ We are actively working to garner resources for our core functions and also to support the members of our governance team.
- ☐ We plan regular fundraising activities to support our campaign throughout the year at all campaign events and other opportunities such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, National Week of Action Against Incarcerating Youth, and Youth Justice Awareness Month.
- ☐ We have a fundraising proposal that has been created with, vetted and approved by our governance team.



