

# JUVENILE JUSTICE



## THE JJDP A

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) is based on a broad consensus that children, youth and families involved with the courts should be guarded by federal standards of care and protection, while also upholding the interest of community safety and prevention of victimization. The JJDP A sets forth federal standards to ensure a minimum level of safety and equitable treatment for youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system, set forth by the Act's four core protections: deinstitutionalization of status offenders, adult jail removal, sight and sound separation, and reducing racial and ethnic disparities.



### APPROPRIATIONS

**Emergency Response:** States need funds and flexibility to support emergency responses to COVID-19 and ensure that the young people who are in the system or at risk of becoming involved in the system have access to basic needs, such as food, safe and secure housing, personal protective equipment, and technology to continue their educational pursuits and interactions with family.

We ask Congress to pass H. 6800, the HEROES Act, which provides \$75 million in rapid response grants through Title II of the JJDP A. These funds will provide essential services to young people and allow for increased testing in facilities.

**FY2021:** We are asking Congress to fund the JJDP A at the fully authorized level for Fiscal Year 2021 by appropriating \$176 million in funding for Title II and Title V.

*Title II* of the JJDP A supports innovative state efforts to

comply with federal standards for the care of youth in the justice system. It has been cut by over 30% since 2002. We are asking Congress for \$80 million in funding to help states comply with the JJDP A and promote delinquency prevention.

*Title V* is designed to address the unmet needs of at-risk or delinquent youth at the local level. Funding has been cut by more than 70% since 2002 and has been set aside for non-JJDP A funds. We are asking Congress for \$96,053,401 in *Title V* funding, with 11% being allocated to support the Tribal Youth Program and the remainder to support the *Title V* PROMISE Grant.

The Juvenile Justice Accountability Block Grant (HR 464) was unanimously passed by the House of Representatives in the 115th and 116th Congress. We ask the Senate to pass HR 464 with \$30 million in funding.



### ELIMINATE THE VCO

The Valid Court Order (VCO) exception enables states to detain children for status offense behaviors such as running away from home or skipping school.

Research shows that young people who are placed in detention centers are more likely to come back into contact with the court system. Institutionalization's many harms begin with removing youth from their families and communities, which prohibits them from developing the strong social network and support system necessary to transition successfully from adolescence to adulthood.

Detention poses other dangers including both physical and sexual abuse and now, the transmission of COVID-19.

We call on Congress to phase out the use of the VCO. Now more than ever, it is dangerous and places our young people in peril when they are detained for typical adolescent behavior.