



# JJC NEWS

JULY 2023

FOR THE UNSEEN. FOR THE UNHEARD.

## HIGHLIGHTS

At JJC, we are excited to share the essential work we have accomplished in the past month! We could not achieve this without your continued support, advocacy, and passion for a better future for our youth.

### **Packed with Policy**

This past month, our Executive Director, TaKasha Smith, participated in the end-of-budget policy wrap-up with Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) partners. Our team did research to support or deter several policy initiatives. One of these initiatives is a new DYS policy that would send youth 18 or over to adult prisons who weren't boundover. This is detrimental to many of our youth's lives. In no circumstance should DYS have the authority to bindover a kid that the judges didn't because they turn 18 and have incidents. This is contradictory to the purpose of having a juvenile justice system that should be rehabilitative. Our juvenile prisons already do not model rehabilitative methods and this policy is one step closer to making sure it stays that way.

### **Communities Coming Together**

We are thrilled to announce that JJC will be hosting our first monthly coalition meeting in September via Zoom. Our Community Outreach Coordinator, Alleana Moss, has been planning and looking forward to finding ways to keep our committed volunteers involved with JJC regularly. This will be an intentional time every month when we get together to build community, visions, and action plans that will move our mission forward together. To join our meetings or learn more please refer to the "Get Involved" section.

We are looking for ways to expand and build community and educational resources on all fronts, including through the media. TaKasha wrote a chapter on juvenile justice for a community guide to incarceration that is being published by a group working close to Angola prison.

A supportive community means creating a space for the community within your organization, but also being a part of others' spaces to show support. We have continued to participate in the Police Policy Reform Table and bring expertise to the impacted family/community initiatives. This has included legislative meetings, event planning, and strategic planning on upcoming legislation. Our team has also been working on the prevention side of youth incarceration regularly. TaKasha met with the Columbus City Schools Board of Education and other partners to follow up on school safety issues that arose in the Spring as well as help to plan CCS use of grant dollars allotted for restorative justice.

### **A Passion for Partnerships**

The JJC Bookclub and Restorative Justice Circles Program in the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center (CCJDC) is a continued success. To be able to meet the kids directly and offer an intentional, genuine program that validates their experiences and encourages them to reflect on their decisions is invaluable to them- and us. We've had our second and third sessions with amazing volunteers from the Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center (OCVJC), and can already see how having people who care about you can make all the difference. Our Operations Director, Erika Sawdey, is participating in the National Diversity Equity Intersectionality Community of Practice, bringing attention to juvenile justice issues while Alleana has continued to work with the Center for Disability Empowerment (CDE) on a cross-project that will allow us to gain a partner in our police reform work and get their youth group involved in justice issues.

## WHAT'S NEXT

- Sign up to be a volunteer for our next CCJDC Book Club and RJ Program!
- Our first monthly Coalition Meeting will begin in September and will be the last Wednesday of every month. Email [alleana@jjcoho.org](mailto:alleana@jjcoho.org) to join!



### —DID YOU KNOW?

The "Superpredator Era" was a myth created in the 1990s to scare people about juvenile crime even though crime was decreasing. This myth was a major contributor to the profiling of urban, black youth.

✉ [INFO@JJCOHIO.ORG](mailto:INFO@JJCOHIO.ORG)

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 juvenilejusticecoalition

### GET INVOLVED!

- ✓ Attend our first monthly coalition meeting starting in September! It will be the last Wednesday of every month from 6pm-7pm.
- ✓ Volunteer to go into the Cuyahoga County JDC with us! email [alleana@jjcoho.org](mailto:alleana@jjcoho.org) for more information.
- ✓ Share our campaigns and posts on social media!
- ✓ Share your thoughts in our Community Forum! New question posted weekly. <https://tinyurl.com/VolunForum>
- ✓ Join our volunteer list for more information about upcoming opportunities! <https://www.jjcoho.org/jointhemovement>