



center for
CHILDREN & YOUTH
JUSTICE | *Better systems. Better lives.®*

Better systems, better lives

Reforming our state's child welfare
and juvenile justice systems

A report to our community
MAY 2014

Dear supporters and friends,

It's all about the kids.

It's about the abused babies, the children of mentally ill parents, the good kids in bad circumstances who just want a fair shot at happiness.

When people are first introduced to CCYJ's mission of reforming our state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems, many struggle to understand what "systemic reform" is all about. Big government agencies, entrenched bureaucracy, complex laws and regulations – it can be overwhelming.

But then we remind them: It's all about the kids.

CCYJ's work is centered on ensuring that every abused or neglected child who enters foster care finds love, stability and support. It's focused on truly rehabilitating youth who stray from the law and giving them every opportunity to learn, to thrive and to succeed as adults. And it's aimed at preventing children and youth from ever entering these systems to begin with.

Then, when it comes to CCYJ's success in effecting the permanent, meaningful change that will ensure that these systems work better for generations of kids, we remind ourselves of something else.

It's all about you.

Thanks to your support, we are bringing together government and business, parents and kids, law enforcement and children's advocates, the courts and communities to work toward a common goal: better systems and better lives. Your investment in this work allows us to do more, to do it better and to involve even more partners in innovative solutions for vulnerable children and youth.

The achievements outlined in this report are a reflection of your confidence and support. Thank you for standing with us.

Very truly yours,



Justice Bobbe J. Bridge (ret.)
Founding President & CEO



Kristen Howell
2013 Board Chair



Effecting lasting change with 'upstream work'

There's a story about two people picnicking by a river when they suddenly spot a baby bobbing along the current. No sooner does one friend jump in to pull the baby from the water than another child comes floating by... then another... and another. One friend calls to the other, "You stay here and save these babies. I'm heading upstream to stop whoever's tossing babies into the river."

The Center for Children & Youth Justice works upstream.

In Washington today, thousands of kids are being tossed into the turbulent waters of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. In many cases, they manage to navigate the current despite enormous challenges and emerge in better shape than when they went in. But in far too many instances, they are set adrift without the support and tools they need to survive.

CCYJ's work on systemic reform is aimed at preventing kids from getting tossed into the river in the first place, or if they do, to ensure that they arrive on shore as stable and healthy adults. This report updates you on how your support is helping us save lives "upstream".

Our mission

To advance justice for and enhance the lives of children and youth through juvenile justice, child welfare, and related systems reform.

Our vision

Through the work of CCYJ, more children and youth will be diverted from entering Washington's juvenile justice system. Those children and youth who are involved in the juvenile justice, child welfare and related systems will maximize their potential to become more successful and productive members of their communities. They will have the support of integrated systems staffed by highly-skilled practitioners, utilizing evidence-based practices, in an environment of fair and unbiased decision making.

Honoring our community's most influential advocates for children and youth

The late Norm Maleng was a founding member of CCYJ's Board of Directors and served as King County Prosecuting Attorney for 28 years. A dedicated advocate for children and youth both on and off the job, Norm and his legacy live on in CCYJ's Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award. The highest honor bestowed by CCYJ, the award is presented each year at CCYJ's fundraising breakfast.

Recipients of the Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award

2014: Joel Benoliel

2013: The Seattle Times & reporter Sara Jean Green

2012: Seattle Seahawks Coach Pete Carroll

2011: Jim Mallahan

2010: Ann Ramsay-Jenkins

2009: Perkins Coie

2008: The Maleng Family

On March 6th, CCYJ raised over \$300,000 at the 7th Annual Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award Breakfast.



l to r: Founding President/CEO Justice Bobbe J. Bridge, (ret.), Judge Patricia Clark, (ret.), Joel Benoliel, Judge J.D. Doerty, (ret.), Judge Jimmie Edwards



Keynote speaker Judge Jimmie Edwards



Frank Blethen, Sponsor, and Mark Maleng, Event Co-Chair

Mark your calendars!

Don't miss the **2015 Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award Breakfast** on **Tuesday, March 17** – with co-chairs Davina Inslee and Joel Benoliel.

Volunteer attorneys guide former foster youth to stability

Their childhoods were marked by impermanence. Transferred from family to family and school to school, often separated from their siblings, ill prepared for life on their own. When foster kids emerge from the system as young adults, their struggles for stability continue.

That's why CCYJ initiated Lawyers Fostering Independence, which pairs pro bono attorneys with former foster youth who face civil legal challenges that can threaten their ability to build a secure and independent adult life.

Last year, volunteer lawyers guided these young adults through issues affecting their employment, housing, finances and personal safety. We also implemented new training to help attorneys better understand and address the unique needs of young people who have been through traumatic events. And, in partnership with Friends of Youth, we opened a drop-in clinic in Redmond that expands LFI services to the Eastside.



CCYJ gives foster alumni hope for brighter futures

Alison's credit was ruined before she started elementary school.

A toddler when the state removed her from her parents, Alison went to live with an aunt. A few years later she was placed in a foster home – and then another and another and another.

When she aged out of the system at 18 and applied for a job, Alison found herself wrongly accused of identity theft. CCYJ connected Alison to a volunteer LFI attorney who discovered that her aunt, the aunt's boyfriend and a cousin used Alison's Social Security number to secure a \$210,000 mortgage, on which they defaulted, and to incur a \$35,000 shopping debt spanning 13 years and several states.

Alison's LFI attorney worked on her case for 18 months, ultimately restoring her rightful identity and rehabilitating her credit. Today, Alison has a good job and lives on her own.

Leading the state and nation in protecting young victims of prostitution

Youth forced into prostitution are now being guided toward help instead of juvenile detention thanks to CCYJ's Project Respect. In 2013, nearly 300 professionals across the state underwent training in the Project Respect protocol that puts Washington at the national forefront of treating prostituted youth as the victims they are.

In October 2013, CCYJ's Justice Bobbe Bridge was an expert witness at a congressional hearing focusing on innovative efforts to protect young foster youth victimized by prostitution.

The innovative thinking reflected in CCYJ's Project Respect protocol has completely changed the way investigating officers handle prostitution cases. We now take a victim-centered approach that diverts children away from the juvenile justice system and into the hands of people who can help them. Law enforcement is often reluctant to buy into new ideas, but our vice unit has jumped on board with Project Respect and the results don't lie. This is replicable and lasting reform, and we are changing futures one case at a time.

Officer Clark S. Bourgault
Bellingham Police Department

New legislation encourages mental health treatment for youth

Because two out of three youth who enter the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health disorder, CCYJ is advancing policy changes that make treatment more timely and more accessible. This advocacy is part of our Models for Change juvenile justice reform initiative.

A new law championed by CCYJ now offers police the option to divert youth to a mental health facility instead of to juvenile detention when they commit a non-violent illegal act in the midst of a mental health crisis.

A second new CCYJ-promoted law prohibits comments made by youth during mental health screenings and assessments from being used to prove charges against them. This broadly-supported law encourages kids to participate honestly, making it more likely that they will get the mental health treatment they need and get it sooner.

The Shirley Bridge Girls+Justice Initiative

Girls are different from boys, especially in the juvenile justice system.

Girls are more traumatized by the past experiences they bring with them into the system – such as a high rate of sexual abuse – less prone to violence than boys, and far more responsive to relationships than to impersonal authority.

But today's juvenile justice system is set up to deal with boys with a traditional, authoritative risk-and-reward philosophy. The system fails to address the unique needs of girls and, sadly, often retriggers the trauma that may have brought them into the system in the first place.

That's why CCYJ's Shirley Bridge Girls+Justice Initiative is leading the way to initiate reforms that divert girls from the system wherever possible and give them a better chance of success within it.

CCYJ manages the Washington Girls Coalition, bringing together professionals from education, the courts, advocacy groups and more to identify new ways to address juvenile justice issues affecting girls. In 2013, the coalition published a training manual and organized a conference for 130 participants, "Beyond Pink: Training on Trauma Informed Care for Juvenile Justice Professionals".

Today, with the support of a second grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, we are preparing to pilot our state's first-ever Girls Court to build a more relationship-guided juvenile justice system for girls.

In a Girls Court, teen offenders would volunteer to participate, and court personnel would undergo Girls + Justice training. Girls would meet frequently with a trained probation officer, attend assigned classes or groups, and be held accountable for meeting certain milestones – all toward the goal of taking time now to reduce further system-involvement down the road.



Models for Change culminates with a myriad of lasting reforms

After eight years, over \$10 million in grants, 15 partners and more than 100 projects, CCYJ's Models for Change initiative has succeeded in creating better systems and better lives. Today, new avenues exist to keep kids out of the juvenile justice system, while those who do enter the system find more effective options to address their needs.

Funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, CCYJ directed the statewide initiative that culminates in 2014. Here are just a few ways that Models for Change is making a remarkable impact:

- Reform begins and ends with data – what do we know now, how can we impact it, did it work? We are now able to identify where racial and ethnic disparities exist in the court system, track juvenile offender recidivism, link court and school data, and examine the prevalence of juvenile offenders in the child welfare system.
- With the goal of keeping kids out of court and in school, Models for Change spurred several truancy intervention reforms. Among them: Community Truancy Boards in Spokane to replace juvenile court hearings, connecting youth to the services they need to succeed in school and in life. In King County's PathNet, youth who have dropped out or are likely to drop out now move across school districts to programs that best meet their educational needs and also access pathways to community colleges or trade schools. In Clark County, mental health screenings became part of the court's intake process so that truant youth with mental health issues that contribute to truant behavior can be resolved.
- Low-income youth have more effective representation thanks to the creation of a special counsel on juvenile defense and expanded training for juvenile defenders. CCYJ also successfully promoted a court rule change that would protect kids from unknowingly waiving their right to legal counsel.

Too often, the gaps between social service and justice systems result in young people losing their way and losing their faith in the promise of their own future. CCYJ bridges those gaps and stitches the various agencies together so they can empower young people to navigate their way toward productivity and happiness. We have complete confidence in CCYJ's ability to create systemic change that will directly affect the future of generations of kids and are proud to support their work to create the kind of community that believes in our youth."

Greg & Erin Coomer, CCYJ donors

Efficient, effective, accountable

An investment in CCYJ reaps returns in better systems, better lives

Revenues	2013	2012
Contributions, grants & contracts	\$1,620,732	\$1,397,709
Interest & other income	\$2,977	\$35,127
Prior year remaining funds*	\$840,365	\$959,483
Total revenues	\$2,464,074	\$2,392,319
Expenses	2013	2012
Programs	\$1,079,638	\$1,196,935
Administration	\$249,167	\$172,608
Fundraising	\$215,920	\$182,411
Total funds used	\$1,540,725	\$1,551,954
Year-end remaining funds*	\$923,349	\$840,365

* These figures represent carryover funds from multi-year grants.

The above financial summary is an excerpt from CCYJ's audited financial statements, which are audited by Clark Nuber, P.S.

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We are grateful to the individuals, families, foundations and businesses whose investments in our work are changing lives each and every day. This list reflects gifts made between January 1 and December 31, 2013.

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With the relentless work of CCYJ, we will finally stop cheating our children and our community. We will take to heart our obligation to fully protect and nurture our children. We will build a foster care system that truly protects and nurtures children and a juvenile justice system that advocates not only treatment and rehabilitation but second chances.

Frank Blethen
Publisher, Seattle Times

The Center for Children & Youth Justice

Founded in 2006 by Washington State Supreme Court Justice Bobbe J. Bridge (ret.), the Center for Children & Youth Justice is the only nonprofit organization in our state dedicated solely to reforming our juvenile justice and child welfare systems. In partnership with parents, advocates, service providers and policymakers, we develop and advance innovative approaches to lasting, permanent changes that support kids, stabilize families and strengthen communities.

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