Better systems, better lives

We’re giving children and youth in Washington’s foster care and juvenile justice systems a real chance at better lives. And you make it all possible.
No one else is doing the work we do

CCYJ was founded in 2006 with a singular mission: work solely to reform the foster care and youth justice systems to improve the lives of generations of children and youth. We identify gaps and cracks, develop innovative approaches to mending problems, and then ensure that policymakers embed those reforms into practices and procedures. The results of our work are put into state law, adopted as standing protocols by the courts and schools, or developed into new treatments and interventions for at-risk, abused or neglected children and their families.

Your support drives our success. Most important, you’re helping us change lives. Thank you!

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We are inspired every day.

We are inspired by the 10,000 children who are in foster care on any given day in Washington. Taken away from their parents by the state because of abuse or neglect, they should find foster care a safe haven, not a risk.

We are inspired by the 30,000 youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system each year. So many of them make poor decisions because of enormously challenging home conditions and need only the right kind of support to turn their lives around.

We are inspired by the LGBTQ youth, the sexually-trafficked children, the gang-involved teens, the at-risk students, the former foster kids who’ve aged out of the system – all with unique needs, all hoping for better lives.

While all of these children and youth inspire us, they also spur us to take action. As CCYJ approaches its 10th anniversary in 2016, we are more determined than ever to make a real and lasting difference for today’s system kids and for all those who may come after them. Permanent change is what systems reform is all about.

We are also inspired by you and by your loyalty, confidence and support.

Thank you for investing in better systems, better lives.
Together, we’re making a lasting difference for kids

CCYJ measures its success over the long-term as the reforms we develop become permanently embedded within government agencies, the courts, law enforcement, social service organizations and other entities. Your support for our work is making an impact. We’re grateful to be able to share a few of our successes in the next four pages.

**Project Respect** is changing the way law enforcement, social service providers and the courts respond to young girls and boys who have been forced into prostitution, treating them as victims and not as criminals and helping them find new pathways to rebuild their lives.

After developing the Washington State Model Protocol to guide authorities in their response to sexually trafficked youth, CCYJ helped task forces in seven counties implement the protocol. We are now working to support those regional task forces and to create new ones. We also continue to gather data to help prevent and respond to youth sexual exploitation and to advocate for policy changes at the local and state level. With your support, our goal is to end the sexual exploitation and trafficking of our youth.

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**I was scared to go home. My case manager accused me of worshipping the devil and forced me to go back home. It was like they didn’t believe me. They wouldn’t take me seriously because I looked different.**

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**The Suburban King County Coordinating Council on Gangs** is now managing the first outreach teams deployed to intervene with gang-involved youth. The teams will connect youth with the services and guidance they need – drug and alcohol treatment, mental health and anger management counseling, job training and placement, education services including GED tutoring, mentoring and more.

Over the past year, we worked to build strong coalitions and a coordinated approach among law enforcement, school districts, the courts, nonprofit organizations and other entities that care about preventing gang involvement and giving gang members a way out of the life. With as many as 5,000 kids and young adults involved in gangs – 1 in every 25 students in suburban King County – we all benefit when gang members and at-risk youth can find safer, more positive paths in life.

**eQuality** will help stem the trauma and victimization of system-involved LGBTQ youth. Over the past year, your donations enabled us to complete a comprehensive research effort that included focus groups and online surveys with LGBTQ young people and to gather insights from more than 300 foster care and juvenile justice professionals.

We developed key recommendations for how Washington’s foster care and juvenile justice systems need to improve their practices in order to better serve LGBTQ youth. We also planned summits with policymakers who have the power and will to implement these changes. Among our recommendations:

- Ensure that LGBTQ youth are placed in accepting foster homes.
- Address harassment and bullying against LGBTQ youth by peers, caregivers and other adults.
- Require that all service providers complete training on how to work with LGBTQ youth.
- Revise non-discrimination policies to explicitly include protections for LGBTQ youth, while making sure professionals understand the policies and are held accountable for implementing them.
- Inform LGBTQ youth about their rights while in system care, ensuring that youth can easily and effectively report mistreatment.
- Connect LGBTQ youth with positive supports and resources in the community.
- Research why LGBTQ youth in the foster care and/or juvenile justice system become homeless.

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“**When I was in juvenile detention, a guard called me names like sissy, fairy boy and f----t and got in front of everyone else and encouraged them to do the same.**”

“**In detention, I was perceived as a butch lesbian. People just assume that you’re like a predator, like you can’t be housed with other girls because you’re going to sleep with them.**”
Roel Williams was a sophomore in high school the first time he ran away and became homeless. He’d had enough of foster care. No matter where he wound up, he always felt safer on his own.

Life got better when a close friend’s family welcomed him into their home. While working as a barista, Roel was accepted into a housing program and finally got his own apartment. But when he lost his job and ran out of money, he was forced to walk away from the apartment. The $3,000 debt he owed his landlord chased him for years.

“It was a huge obstacle,” Roel said. “I figured I’d have to work five jobs to dig myself out of debt – or wind up homeless again.”

Today, that debt is gone – thanks to the advocacy of a pro bono attorney in our Lawyers Fostering Independence program (LFI).

LFI volunteer Mike Burnet from the law firm of Garvey Schubert Barer worked with a willing debt collector who accepted $1,000 – paid by CCYJ’s nonprofit community partner, Year Up – to cover the full obligation. Year Up is also helping Roel develop his career skills.

Roel could hardly believe it when he heard the news that his housing debt was gone – all of it.

“People deserve second chances in life,” he said. “Kids make mistakes. I made mistakes, but this gave me a chance to redeem myself – to show that I’m responsible, that I can make it.”

Roel’s future is looking brighter than ever now. His sights are set on graduating from Year Up, getting his own place and going to college.
Advocate for Youth Award honors our community’s champions for kids

Each year, CCYJ recognizes an individual or organization who upholds the legacy of the late Norm Maleng, a long-time King County Prosecuting Attorney and founding member of the CCYJ Board of Directors. The 2015 Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award would have made Norm very proud. It was presented to another prosecutor, Adam Cornell, a former foster child who is now an impassioned advocate for children and systems reform.

2015: Adam Cornell, for his dedication to youth justice and commitment to improving the child welfare system

2014: Joel Benoliel, for his advocacy, community service and support for foster youth

2013: The Seattle Times and reporter Sara Jean Green, for shedding light on child sex trafficking and other issues related to youth in foster care and the juvenile justice system

2012: Seattle Seahawks Head Coach Pete Carroll, for his work in gang intervention

2011: Jim Mallahan, for his support of a trailblazing program for prostituted girls

2010: Ann Ramsay-Jenkins, for her work to provide college educations to foster youth

2009: Perkins Coie, for its outstanding pro bono legal work

2008: The Maleng family, in honor of the award’s namesake

Save the Date! CCYJ will celebrate its 10th anniversary at the Norm Maleng Advocate for Youth Award Breakfast on March 10, 2016.

Efficient, effective, accountable

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<th>REVENUE</th>
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| YEAR-END REMAINING FUNDS* | 946,125 | 923,349 |

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

You are creating better systems, better lives

We are grateful to the individuals, families, foundations and corporations whose generosity fuels our work. This list reflects gifts made between January 1 and December 31, 2014.

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Thank you.
Countless kids are living better lives because you care.

Your support for the Center for Children & Youth Justice is making life better for kids in Washington’s foster care and juvenile justice systems. You enable us to reform laws and policies so these systems are no longer failing kids, but are providing them with real opportunities for success. Thanks to you, CCYJ initiatives are improving the lives of children and youth – not just for today, but forever – and ensuring a safer and more productive society for us all.

For more information
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