



STOP SOLITARY

Ending the Solitary Confinement of Youth
in Juvenile Detention and Correctional Facilities

Campaign Dos and Don'ts

DO: Lead with core value statements about harm to youth and importance of rehabilitation.

DO: Stress that science and common sense show that children grow and change and are particularly receptive to treatment that promotes rehabilitation.

DO: Offer concrete examples of how alternatives are better, including providing age-appropriate education, treatment, programming—and discipline.

DO: Take an “and” approach to banning solitary confinement of children. Acknowledge public safety concerns AND link reforms to decreased recidivism and importance of rehabilitation.

DO: Give examples of other states (especially conservative states) that have successfully limited certain forms of isolation or placed limits on the duration of isolation permitted in juvenile facilities—e.g., Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, Nevada, Oklahoma, and West Virginia.

DON'T: Lead with statistics that lack context or grounding in core values.

DON'T: Say we should ban solitary confinement of children without making the point that there are better, more humane alternatives that promote youth rehabilitation—in the juvenile system.

DON'T: Say that we need to balance the need for public safety against the need for fairness. This is not a zero-sum equation. In this case, more fairness = more safety.

DON'T: Expect that audiences will take your word for it without evidence to back up your point.

DON'T: Concede that some youth should be held in solitary confinement because of their conduct while in custody, or the conduct with which they are charged or convicted. Responding to management challenges with conditions that inhibit growth or development makes communities less safe and stacks the deck against youth who will be released.