



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE LAUNCHES *CHANGING MINDS* CAMPAIGN TO HELP CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE

WASHINGTON – The White House and the Department of Justice (DOJ) today launched a national campaign to raise awareness, teach skills and inspire public action to address children’s exposure to violence. The campaign, called *Changing Minds*, is a collaboration led by DOJ’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Futures Without Violence and the Ad Council, created pro bono by the advertising agency Wunderman.

“An alarming percentage of America’s children experience violence in their homes and communities, either directly as victims or indirectly as witnesses, and this exposure to trauma leaves deep wounds that can take years to heal,” said Assistant to the President, Cabinet Secretary and Chair of the White House My Brother’s Keeper Task Force Broderick Johnson. “*Changing Minds* will help advance the goals of My Brother’s Keeper and demonstrate that we can all play a role in reversing the effects of violence and give our young people a fair shot at a bright future.”

The new campaign is part of DOJ’s Defending Childhood Initiative, launched in 2010 by then-Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. Defending Childhood funds grants, research and public education aimed at preventing children’s exposure to violence, mitigating its impact and expanding knowledge about and awareness of the issue. The National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence found that 58 percent of children and youth in the United States were exposed to violence in the previous year. Almost one-half of children reported experiencing more than one type of direct or witnessed victimization. Exposure to violence is associated with a host of negative consequences, from poor performance in school and substance abuse to depression, chronic disease and future criminality. Research indicates that proper intervention, including support from caring adults, can help counter those effects.

Changing Minds features short films, digital assets and print content intended to reach adults who interact with children and youth in grades K–12. It will engage teachers, coaches, counselors, doctors, nurses, law enforcement officers and other frontline professionals and caregivers, guiding them on ways they can help kids recover from trauma.

“The path of future health and success is determined at an early age,” said Assistant Attorney General of DOJ’s Office of Justice Programs Karol V. Mason. “The resources made available through *Changing Minds* show us the steps we can take to make sure that violence does not dictate the terms of a young person’s life.”

More information about *Changing Minds* can be found at ChangingMindsNOW.org.

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The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.