

MARYLAND YOUTH JUSTICE COALITION

October 2025 Newsletter

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KIDS

MARYLAND YOUTH
JUSTICE COALITION

Welcome to the October MYJC newsletter! Each month we assemble all the latest need-to-know news about MYJC and what's happening for youth across Maryland. Please share your community events, local news, needs, and actions with us by emailing gail@advancemaryland.org. Feel free also to forward this newsletter to your network and encourage them to sign up to receive their own copy [here](#).

Did you miss our previous newsletters? Find it and all of our newsletters [here](#).

Not yet a member of MYJC? Email gail@advancemaryland.org today to join.

HIGHLIGHTS

Our Youth Informed Committee reported back to the coalition with recommendations on automatic charging, prevention-focused legislation, and incorporating youth voices. Thank you to everyone who joined, and thank you especially to our young voices who provided valuable perspectives. You can find the committee's presentation [here](#).

RECAP

During Youth Justice Action Month (YJAM), MYJC hosted a [listening session](#) for young leaders from Choice Intensive Advocacy teams in central Maryland. These young people—who are currently under the care of DJS—have experiences and insights that are crucial to reimagining justice. Their insights will directly inform MYJC's advocacy agenda for the coming year.



Photo: Collage of photos from MYJC Working Group Listening Session

MYJC members voted to approve priorities for the legislative session. For details, review the recommendations below:

- **Autocharging Workgroup:** Presentation [here](#)
- **Prevention Workgroup:** Presentation [here](#)

MYJC will be shifting to focus on legislative strategy and preparing for session from now through January.

AHEAD

There are only FOUR more meetings left in 2025! Don't miss our upcoming coalition meetings.

Remaining 2025 Meeting Schedule:

November 10, 2025

November 24, 2025

December 8, 2025

December 22, 2025 (maybe)

Our first meeting of 2026 will be held on January 5, 2026 at 4pm.

*To attend coalition meetings, please sign up for our Google Group by contacting gail@advancemaryland.org.

IN THE NEWS

Baltimore ranks #2 in the nation for violence prevention strategy, according to the Community Justice Action Fund's 2024 Violence Prevention Index report. This year's score is 13 points higher than Baltimore's 2023 score of 72. In 2024, Baltimore saw a 23% decrease in homicides and a 34% decline in non-fatal shootings by deepening investments in community violence intervention, focused deterrence, and trauma support resources. Find the full report and city scorecards [here](#).

Baltimore student handcuffed after AI system apparently mistook bag of chips for gun. Baltimore County high schools last year began using a gun detection system using school cameras and AI to detect potential weapons. If it spots something it believes to be suspicious, it sends an alert to the school and law enforcement officials. The AI system mistook a high school student's bag of Doritos for a firearm and called local police to tell them the pupil was armed. Read more from [The Guardian](#).

For lawmakers, a forgotten graveyard inspires push for juvenile justice reform today. State Senator Will Smith joined Midday via WYPR to discuss the rediscovered graveyard at Cheltenham and the need for youth justice reform in the upcoming legislative session. Listen [here](#).

Time to reject the status quo that fails Maryland's foster kids. "It feels like every day, there is a new story documenting failures at the Maryland Department of Human Services. It would be easy to go after [their] leadership, as many have done. And perhaps that is the right approach. But changing leadership alone will not solve the deeply ingrained problems with the system itself." [Read this op-ed](#) by Shanta Trivedi in the Baltimore Sun.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars for February 2 to join us for MYJC Lobby Day! More details to come as the date approaches.

Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
at JOHN JAY COLLEGE

**Kids as Kids:
Challenging the Prosecution of Youth as Adults**

JOSÉ GARZA
District Attorney
Travis County, TX

FRANKIE GUZMAN
Managing Director of Youth
Justice and Equity
NCYL

SHARIFF INGRAM
Speakers Bureau and
Policy Coordinator
YSRP

JOSHUA ROVNER
Senior Research Analyst
The Sentencing Project

**Moderator:
RACHEL MARSHALL**
Executive Director
IIP at John Jay College

29 OCTOBER
1:30 PM ET

REGISTER NOW

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.PROSECUTION.ORG

Kids as Kids: Challenging the Prosecution of Youth as Adults

Wednesday, October 29, 1:30pm

Virtual, Register [here](#)

Join the Institute for Innovation in Prosecution (IIP) for their upcoming webinar. Panelists will discuss considerations for prosecutors in navigating decisions when youth are alleged to have committed serious crimes that are legally eligible for charging in the adult system. Click [here](#) to register.

L.E.A.R.N. Citywide Tour: Victim Witness/External Affairs

Wednesday, October 29, 6–8pm

Leith Walk Elementary/Middle School

1235 Sherwood Ave, Baltimore MD 21239

Join the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office to have your voice heard and ask questions directly to the agencies in attendance and their representatives. Free food/beverages, giveaways, resources & information will be provided.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!
How Maryland Courts Can Work Best for Everyone:
A Conversation About Juvenile Justice

The Maryland Judiciary's Equal Justice Committee (EJC), through its Community Outreach Subcommittee, hosts community forums across the state to increase the community's understanding of the courts while the courts learn the community's perspective and needs.

On Wednesday, October 29, 2025, the Community Outreach Subcommittee will host a virtual forum for Baltimore City on juvenile justice, featuring conversations about resources and restorative justice for youth. The program will offer a holistic perspective on juvenile justice matters along with information about opportunities and alternatives for young people and their families. The program will offer information about the juvenile court, including its goals, procedures, and practices; the work of the Department of Juvenile Services, including its efforts to divert children from the court through provision of community-based services; and the work of other key juvenile justice partners.

WHAT: Baltimore City Community Forum Featuring
A Conversation About Juvenile Justice
Information and resources from community
organizations serving Baltimore's youth

WHEN: Wednesday, October 29, 2025
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Zoom Webinar
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)
Or Scan QR Code.

HOST
Deborah Weiner
WBAL-TV News Anchor

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Green Cadets
- Maryland 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- Re-Engagement Center
- Youth Advocate Program (YAP)

PANELISTS

Judge Charles M. Blomquist
Circuit Court for
Baltimore City

Betty Fox Tolentine
Acting Secretary,
Maryland Department
of Juvenile Services

Delegate Luke H. Clippinger, Esq.
District 46,
Baltimore City

Brianna Rock, MPH, LCSW
Violence Prevention
Supervisor, University
of Maryland Medical
Center

Hosted by the Maryland Judiciary's Equal Justice Committee,
Community Outreach Subcommittee

ejccommunityforums@mdcourts.gov

How Maryland Courts Can Work Best for Everyone: A Conversation Between Court and Community Leaders

Wednesday, October 29, 6–7:30pm

Virtual, Register [here](#)

The Maryland Judiciary's Equal Justice Committee (EJC), through its Community Outreach Subcommittee, is hosting a virtual forum for Baltimore City on youth justice. Click [here](#) to register.

Have an upcoming event you want us to highlight in the November newsletter?

Email gail@advancemaryland.org.

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