



# Community News & Notes

## Fair Treatment Needed To Strengthen Communities

(NAPSA)—An important campaign aims to ensure that the justice system is truly impartial and fair, especially when it applies to America's youth.

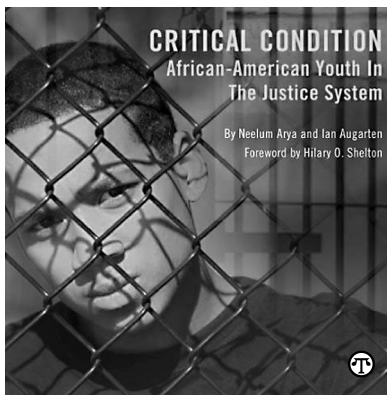
According to new findings released by the Campaign for Youth Justice, there are historic discrepancies within the justice system's treatment of African-American and white youth. "Critical Condition: African-American Youth in the Justice System" explains how African-American youth are faced with unfair criminal justice policies that lie at the root of why so many black youth are incarcerated.

Researchers estimate that as many as 200,000 youth are prosecuted as adults each year. Evidence suggests that African-American youth are disproportionately affected by these laws.

"It is well documented that African-American youth are treated more harshly by the justice system than white youth, for the same offenses, at all stages in the justice system," said NAACP Washington Bureau director Hilary O. Shelton.

Report findings include:

- While black youth constitute only 17 percent of the national youth population, 43 percent of all youths detained in juvenile detention centers are African-American.
- Of all youth who are prosecuted in the adult system, 62 percent are African-American.
- Black youth are nine times more likely than white youth to receive an adult prison sentence.
- Black children were seven-and-a-half times more likely than white children to have a parent in prison.
- Recent estimates are that



**If current trends continue, one in three black males can expect to spend time in prison during his lifetime.**

20 percent of all black children have a father with an incarceration history.

- If these trends continue, one in three black males born today can expect to spend time in prison during his lifetime.

Critical Condition also makes extensive use of questionnaires answered anonymously by a cross section of the youth community. These surveys highlight racial disparities in the justice system. Overall, African-American youth do not engage in more delinquent behavior than white youth. While white youth are significantly more likely to use and sell drugs, black youth make up 60 percent of the young people detained for drug trafficking. Many black youth end up in adult court for drug offenses, and 87 percent of those charged with drug offenses in adult court are African-American.

To download a copy of this report or to learn more, visit [www.campaignforyouthjustice.org](http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org).