

Effectively Engaging the Community in Juvenile Record Clearance

August 22, 2018

Speakers

Serena Holthe, Senior Staff Attorney and Pro Bono Counsel, National Juvenile Defender Center

José Loya, Strategic Communications Manager, National Juvenile Defender Center

Victor Dempsey, Community Organizer, Community Defense Practice, The Legal Aid Society

Clean Slate

CLEARINGHOUSE

A project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor
and the U.S. Department of Justice

Clearinghouse

- Online clearinghouse of each state's adult and juvenile record clearance policies, resources, guides, and legal service providers

Audience

- Legal service providers, reentry and workforce service providers, people with criminal records, policymakers

Goals

- Provide accessible, up-to-date information on record clearance policies across the country
- Increase capacity of legal service providers and create a community of practice for record clearance

cleanslateclearinghouse.org



THE CHALLENGES

JUVENILE RECORD MYTHS

- My juvenile record disappears when I turn 18.
- I will never have to answer questions about my juvenile record on applications.
- My juvenile record will not show up on a background check.

CHALLENGES

- We offer record clearance services, but very few people take advantage of them.
 - People don't understand the importance of juvenile record clearance.
 - Few attend our clinics or other events.
- The record clearance process and eligibility requirements are too confusing.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

BUILD RAPPORT

- Meet people where they are.
- Listen to and learn from the community.
- Build relationships and make connections.
- Be present and available in the community, not just on event days.



POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Why?
- Partner with organizations that already serve your target population.
- Find an organization that the community trusts and one that has a similar mission to your organization.
- Youth voice: Youth are some of the best people to ensure the community understands the benefits of juvenile record clearance and legal services available.

IDEAS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

- Organizations serving youth: YMCA, YWCA, youth & young adult shelters, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, GLSEN, etc.
- Churches
- Local law schools
- Workforce development or job skills/training organizations
- Local legal aid and defender offices
- Community colleges



LANGUAGE

- Use simple and positive language.
 - For both marketing and educational materials
- Communicate the importance of record clearance.
 - Does expungement remove my record from public access?
 - Does expungement give me the opportunity to act as if the offense never occurred?

LOGISTICS

- Location should be easily accessible for your target audience
- Location should be a place where the community feels safe
- Time of event may need to be in “off hours”
– evenings or weekends



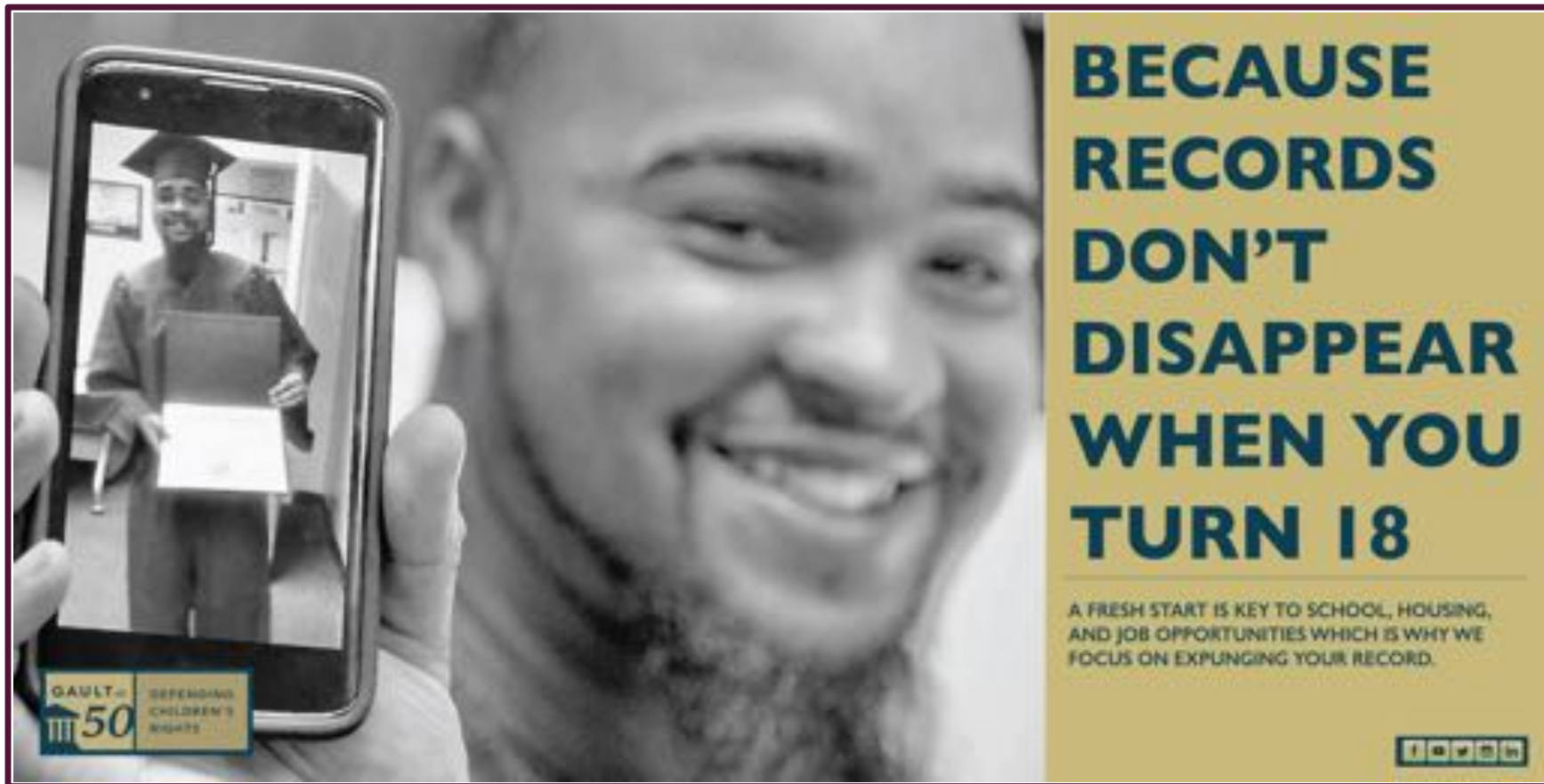
OFFER COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

- Provide full representation.
- Complete as much paperwork as possible while sitting with the client.
- File petitions on behalf of clients.
- Assist with gathering required accompanying documentation.
- Raise funds to help with paying any filing fees.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- “Do you have a juvenile record? Do you know it doesn’t just disappear when you turn 18? Plan for your future!”
- Use simple and positive language.
- Avoid including eligibility requirements.
- Tag partner organizations.
- Provide date(s), time(s), and contact information.


SOCIAL MEDIA



**BECAUSE
RECORDS
DON'T
DISAPPEAR
WHEN YOU
TURN 18**

A FRESH START IS KEY TO SCHOOL, HOUSING,
AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES WHICH IS WHY WE
FOCUS ON EXPUNGING YOUR RECORD.

GAULT 50 DEFENDING
CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS



SOCIAL MEDIA



QUESTIONS?

Victor Dempsey

The Legal Aid Society

(646) 661-0231

VDempsey@legal-
aid.org

Serena Holthe

National Juvenile
Defender Center

202-452-0010 x 113

sholthe@njdc.info

José Loya

National Juvenile
Defender Center

202-452-0010 x 103

jloya@njdc.info

Learn More About Record Clearance

Email: cleanslate@csgjusticecenter.org

Sign up to receive newsletters and other announcements at
cleanslateclearinghouse.org

This presentation was developed by members of the Council of State Governments Justice Center staff. The statements made reflect the views of the authors, and should not be considered the official position of the Justice Center, the members of the Council of State Governments, or the funding agency supporting the work.