

# **Cradle to Prison Pipeline<sup>®</sup> Campaign**

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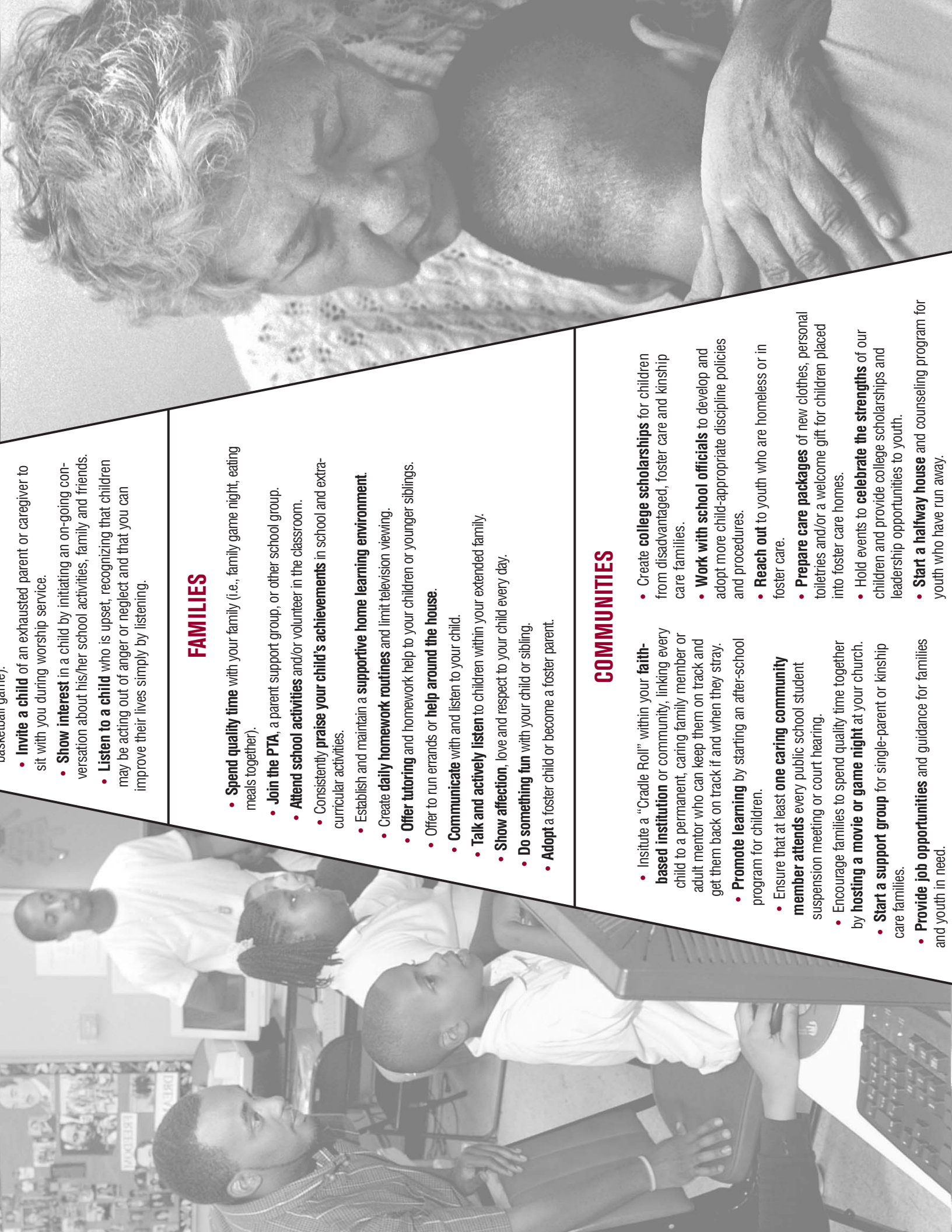
**A Call to Action:  
A Role for Everyone**





## INDIVIDUALS

- **Mentor** a child.
- **Volunteer** at an after-school program for youth.
- **Vote** in every election and advocate for children.
- **Educate** elected officials about the Pipeline.
- **Host a house party** to educate others about the Pipeline and what they can do to dismantle it.
- **Volunteer** with children who are homeless or in foster care.
- **Organize** a forum on incarcerated youth and the funding disparities between prisons and education in our nation.
- **Volunteer your talents** or professional services to help a single-parent, kinship care or foster care family by babysitting, inviting them to events with their children, or providing transportation.
- **Invite youth to events** at the next educational level (i.e., taking a high school student to a college basketball game).



- **Invite a child** of an exhausted parent or caregiver to sit with you during worship service.
- **Show interest** in a child by initiating an on-going conversation about his/her school activities, family and friends.
- **Listen to a child** who is upset, recognizing that children may be acting out of anger or neglect and that you can improve their lives simply by listening.

## FAMILIES

- **Spend quality time** with your family (i.e., family game night, eating meals together).
- **Join the PTA**, a parent support group, or other school group.
- **Attend school activities** and/or volunteer in the classroom.
- Consistently **praise your child's achievements** in school and extra-curricular activities.
- Establish and maintain a **supportive home learning environment**.
- Create **daily homework routines** and limit television viewing.
- **Offer tutoring** and homework help to your children or younger siblings.
- Offer to run errands or **help around the house**.
- **Communicate** with and listen to your child.
- **Talk and actively listen** to children within your extended family.
- **Show affection**, love and respect to your child every day.
- **Do something fun** with your child or sibling.
- **Adopt** a foster child or become a foster parent.

## COMMUNITIES

- Institute a "Cradle Roll" within your **faith-based institution** or community, linking every child to a permanent, caring family member or adult mentor who can keep them on track and get them back on track if and when they stray.
- **Promote learning** by starting an after-school program for children.
- Ensure that at least **one caring community member attends** every public school student suspension meeting or court hearing.
- Encourage families to spend quality time together by **hosting a movie or game night** at your church.
- **Start a support group** for single-parent or kinship care families.
- **Provide job opportunities** and guidance for families and youth in need.
- Create **college scholarships** for children from disadvantaged, foster care and kinship care families.
- **Work with school officials** to develop and adopt more child-appropriate discipline policies and procedures.
- **Reach out** to youth who are homeless or in foster care.
- **Prepare care packages** of new clothes, personal toiletries and/or a welcome gift for children placed into foster care homes.
- Hold events to **celebrate the strengths** of our children and provide college scholarships and leadership opportunities to youth.
- **Start a halfway house** and counseling program for youth who have run away.

- Create a **summer job** opportunity for a youth.

- Create and distribute a **community resource manual** so that parents know where to turn for help for their families.

## ORGANIZATIONS

- **Invest** in prevention and early intervention.
- **Host a health fair** to ensure all children who are eligible for Medicaid or your State Children's Health Insurance Program are enrolled.
- **Provide free tax filing assistance** to low-income working families.
- **Educate families** about how they can apply for Food Stamps, Head Start, federal nutrition programs and other similar benefits.
- Create and distribute a **calendar of free family-friendly** community events.
- **Start a parent education program** to familiarize parents about conflict resolution in the home and how to advocate for their children.
- **Encourage alternatives to incarceration** such as restitution, community service, electronic monitoring, drug rehabilitation treatment or placement in a "staff secure" (but not locked) community corrections facility.
- Work to ensure that counseling, social services, education, and health and **mental health services** are provided to at-risk youth.
- **Fund reinvestment** in urban communities, such as parks, schools and roads.
- **Write annual child and gun violence reports** to track the killing of children and call for effective gun control measures and nonviolent conflict resolution training.
- **Host a Cradle to Prison Pipeline Summit** to connect and educate others about the Pipeline and ways to dismantle it.

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Bring other **elected officials and leaders together** to gain first-hand awareness of the status of your local children; demonstrate what is working and what is not.
- **Ensure children in foster care and detention** receive quality treatment to address their mental, behavioral and emotional needs.
- **Promote high quality children's television programming** and access to other quality electronic media.
- Provide high quality **early childhood development programs** for all.
- Ensure all children and pregnant women **access to affordable, seamless, comprehensive health coverage** and services.
- **Establish policies** that emphasize prevention and rehabilitation to keep children out of or rescue them from the Pipeline.
- **Expand "second chance" programs** for high school dropouts, ex-offenders and at-risk youth to secure GEDs, job training and employment.
- **Reduce repeat offender rates** by focusing on treatment- and family-oriented approaches.
- Make sure every child can **read at grade level by 4th grade** and graduate from high school able to succeed in post-secondary education and/or work.
- **Organize state and local leadership councils** or committees to create strategic plans to address the learning and developmental needs of children.
- **Invest money in community-based rehabilitation centers** and treatment programs to serve as an alternative to juvenile detention and prison.
- **Stop the criminalization** of children at increasingly younger ages.
- **Create partnerships** with local businesses, schools and/or churches to create quality exit programs for those leaving the juvenile justice system as a way to start them on the "Pipeline to Success."

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**To read the Cradle to Prison Pipeline<sup>SM</sup> Report, please visit our website at [www.childrendefense.org/cradletoprison](http://www.childrendefense.org/cradletoprison)**

**Tens of thousands of youth are being funneled down  
life paths that often lead to arrest,  
conviction, incarceration and even death.**

**The urgent challenge for each of us and for our nation  
is to prevent this waste of our children's lives  
and our nation's capabilities.**

**Here are some actions you can take.**



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