

# NO KIDS IN PRISON

## Magazine Open Call Guidelines

**Youth First Justice Collaborative (YFJC) is taking a major step in amplifying the voices of those affected by incarceration as a youth!**

Announcing the Open Call for submissions for the first ever #NoKidsInPrison Magazine. A platform where the raw visionary spirit of directly impacted youth artists, writers, organizers and adults who have been impacted by incarceration as youth will reshape the national narrative around justice. A visually beautiful, impeccably designed, abolitionist publication calling for the end of youth incarceration. This magazine boldly calls for the end to youth incarceration. This is not about reform, collaborating with police or prosecuting quality of life offenses. This is an abolitionist publication that values community based solutions, truth telling, visionary leadership and the brilliance of young people and grassroots movements for social change. This is more than just a publication – it's an archive, a rally cry, a manifesto and a love letter to young people and the communities who support them.

**EXTENDED Final Submission Deadline: Friday November 7, 2025  
at 11:59pm**

[Submit your work here](#)

### We are looking for:

- Original visual art made by directly and systems impacted people.
- Original writing articulating the experience, imagination and perspective of current and formerly directly-impacted and systems impacted youth writers, artists, designers, activists and organizers.
- Reflections on visionary leadership of formal campaigns, innovative non profit programming, and community based initiatives that work to end youth incarceration.

We want your original visual art, writing or a combination of the 2.

- Original photos
- Murals
- Drawings
- Collage
- Comics
- Illustrations
- Poetry
- Letters
- Lyrics
- Essays or memoir
- Transcribed interviews
- Monologue

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Submissions must be your original creative work. No plagiarised or AI created artwork. Any work created with the help of AI will not be accepted. We need your brilliance and vision!

## **We want the #NoKidsInPrison Magazine to:**

- Highlight the unique strengths and perspectives of youth
- Chronicle the impact of youth incarceration on families, schools, and neighborhoods
- Increase awareness of the harmful effects of incarceration on youth
- Challenge harmful stereotypes that contribute to youth incarceration
- Address the root causes of oppressive systems
- Detail the impact of creative programs on directly impacted and systems impacted youth
- Document successful community driven solutions
- Transform public perception and shifts media narratives around youth justice
- Advance a more nuanced, youth-centered narrative around youth crime and punishment

## **Eligibility**

We welcome submissions from anyone across the United States who joins in calling for the end of youth incarceration and wants to reflect on the interlocking systems of oppression that make youth incarceration possible.

We would especially like to see artwork and creative writing made by currently and formerly incarcerated and systems-impacted youth and young adults, people who are now adults that were incarcerated as youth and members of the Youth First Justice Collaborative Partner States.

We welcome submissions by families, loved ones, allies and the larger community committed to ending youth incarceration. For example:

- A parent, sibling or loved one
- A teacher with intimate knowledge of the school to prison pipeline
- A community member who is against a new jail being built in their neighborhood.
  
- An artist or staff of youth justice organizations with first hand knowledge of successful alternatives to incarceration programs and initiatives.

## **Selection Process**

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Submissions will be selected on the following criteria:

- Does it center formerly or currently incarcerated or systems impacted youth?
- Does it center abolition and the need to end youth incarceration?
- Does it center alternatives to incarceration?
- Does it center the interlocking systems that uphold youth incarceration?

Submissions accepted for publication will receive a \$50 honorarium, a copy of the magazine and the exposure of a magazine that will be distributed to communities across at least 15 states.

## **Submission Formatting & Guidelines**

Submissions will be accepted through the [#NoKidsInPrison Submission Form here](#). Please follow the formatting guidelines exactly. Submissions that do not follow the formatting guidelines will not be considered.

### **Guidelines for written submissions:**

- Written submissions should be submitted in a google doc saved
  - NoKidsinPrisonMagazine2025. FirstNameLast Name.Title
- A maximum of 3 written submissions per person
- Poems should not exceed 3 pages
- Essays, memoirs, monologues etc should not exceed 1,000 words or 2 single spaced pages

### **Formatting for written submissions:**

- Arial, size 12 font, Single spaced
- Title at top of page with your full name directly below title
- Poetry should include line breaks as you would like it to appear when printed.

### **Guidelines for visual art submissions:**

- Visual art submissions should be saved as a jpeg, png or tiff file
  - NoKidsinPrisonMagazine2025. FirstNameLast Name.Title
- A maximum of 4 visual submission per person
- Visual art should be at least 300 dpi
- The magazine dimensions are 8.5x11 inches with a 2 page spread measuring 11x17 in

Please make sure all sharing settings are set to “Anyone with the Link.”

Young creative voices deserve to be heard in their truest, purest form. The quality will reflect the integrity of artwork and stories without altering or censoring the work. Contributing artists and writers will be fairly compensated for their work and anthologized in up to 4,000 copies of a free, regionally-distributed publication.

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## Important Dates

- **Open Call Begins:** August 27, 2025
- **Submission Deadline:** October 26, 2025 at 11:59pm [#NoKidsInPrison Submission Form](#)
- **Virtual Info Session:** [Click here to watch the video](#)
- **Virtual Visual Art Workshop:** Saturday October 18, 2025 9:30- 10:30amPST/ 11:30- 12:30pm CST/12:30-1:30pm EST: An interactive workshop to help artists generate ideas for their submissions. [Click here to register](#)
- **Virtual Writing Workshop:** Saturday October 18, 2025 11am-12:30pm PST/ 1-2:30 CST / 2-3:30pm EST: An interactive writing workshop to help writers generate ideas for their submissions. [Click here to register](#)
- **Notification of Acceptance:** November 3, 2025- January 15, 2026
- **Accepted Submissions Final Edits & Artist Approval Appointments:** January 15- January 31, 2026 (scheduled individually)
- **Publication Date:** April 2026

## **Submission Support:**

We value artists and documentarians at all levels of experience. Writing and submission support will be offered at various stages of the process. If a submission idea is strong we'll provide feedback and support to get all accepted submissions ready for a national audience. Please find additional resources below

[How to Properly Save & Submit Your Work](#)

[Glossary](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Visual Art Ideas and Prompts](#)

[Writing Ideas and Prompts](#)

For more information, questions or support, please contact Karla Robinson, Editor in Chief, at [magazine@youthfirstjusticecollaborative.org](mailto:magazine@youthfirstjusticecollaborative.org). The Editorial Team would love to support you in preparing your submission.

## **Terms & Conditions:**

Youth First Justice Collaborative is a fiscally sponsored project of New Venture Fund. Accepted submissions will retain rights to their submissions but will be expected to sign the Accepted Submission Agreement that grants Youth First Justice Collaborative & New Venture Fund the rights to reprint their submission in perpetuity while following the credit format and Publicity and Credit procedures outlined in the Accepted Submission Agreement.