**JC/DC ACTION ALERT: Children in Adult Prisons**

[SB 618](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=22246483) has passed out of committee and will soon be voted on by the Missouri Senate.

Currently Missouri law incarcerates children who have been charged as adults in adult prisons. While they have been charged with serious offences, these children have not yet been convicted of a crime. SB 618 would house children, 16 and younger, in a separate facility until the trial process is complete.

*Dear Senator,*

*Children who commit serious crimes should be held accountable for their actions. However, incarcerating children charged, but not convicted, in adult facilities is a sentence in itself. Children are not the same as adults and until they are found guilty should be afforded extra protections. When children are incarcerated in adult prisons they face a sustainably increased danger of sexual assault and have higher risks of suicide. These facilities do not afford children the opportunities of education and rehabilitation services available in the juvenile detention system. Instead of working to rehabilitate these children when their mental development is at its’ capacity to learn we are teaching them to be hardened criminals.*

*The Missouri Model has long been the national model with regard to state juvenile justice systems. This allowance to house charged but not convicted children with adults is a flaw we need to recognize and correct. Please vote yes on SB 618 to keep kids 16 and younger out of adult prisons.*

*Sincerely,*

*You name and PTA*

Not sure how to contact your state legislators? [Click here](http://www.senate.mo.gov/LegisLookup/Default.aspx) and insert your street address or 9-digit zip code.

**Dorothy Gardner**

Missouri PTA

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