



rights4girls

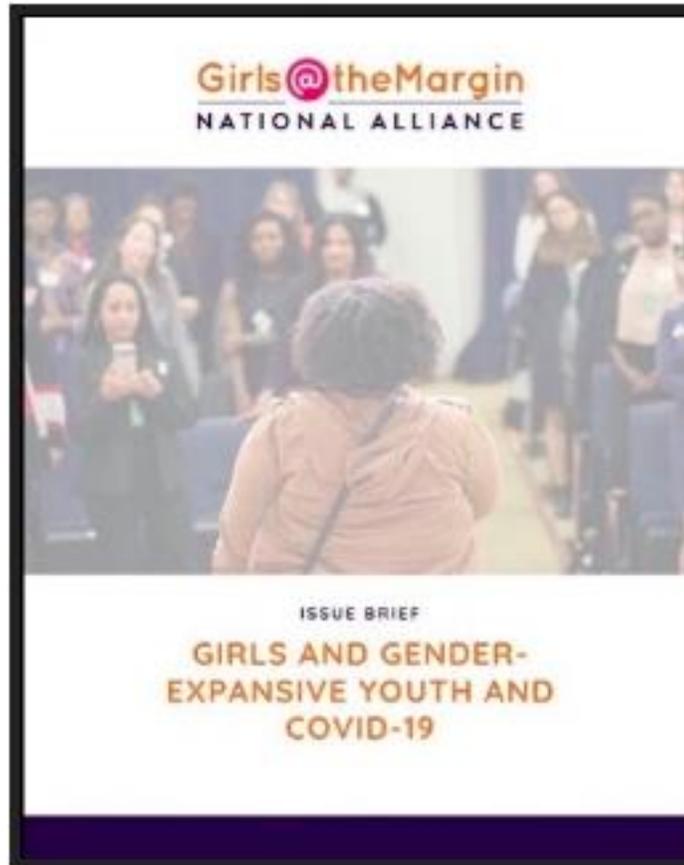
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Dear Friends,

Despite these challenging and ever-changing times, our commitment to ensuring the long-standing and emerging needs of vulnerable girls remains a priority. Learn about our work this past summer below!

Centering Girls During the Pandemic

This summer **we released the issue brief, *Girls and Gender-Expansive Youth and COVID-19*** through our [Girls at the Margin National Alliance](#). Co-authored by Rights4Girls' Cherice Hopkins and National Crittenton's Samantha Lopez on behalf of the Alliance, the brief highlights the numerous and varied challenges faced by girls and gender-expansive young people during the pandemic and provides policy recommendations to meet their specific needs.



[Read Report](#)

Uplifting Girls' Voices in DC

This summer, we continued to **host several virtual youth forums** as co-conveners of the DC Girls' Coalition (DCGC) together with Black Swan Academy. These virtual forums provided an opportunity for girls and gender-fluid youth of color in DC to have their voices heard by lawmakers, advocates, and allies.

In June, DCGC **co-hosted the #DCision 2020 Youth Candidate Forum where over 1,800 people tuned in to watch youth** hear from and pose questions to local candidates running for City Council. DCGC also **co-hosted our second virtual COVID-19 Town Hall** in July, as a follow up to the town hall convened in the spring. **More than 100 people**

tuned in live to hear youth discuss their needs and concerns surrounding the re-opening of DC.

We also partnered with Courtney's House, a survivor-led program serving trafficked youth, to help **prepare young survivors to testify before DC Council on the issues impacting their lives, including helping youth craft and record testimony** offering their insights on necessary changes to the Metropolitan Police Department and Child and Family Services Agency.



Listen to Youth Advisory Board Member Jami, age 12, discuss challenges she's faced during the pandemic

[Watch Now](#)

Rights4Girls In the News

R4G's Yasmin Vafa and Georgetown Law's Rebecca Epstein co-authored the op-ed, [Handcuffs Over Homework—The Criminalization of Black Girls](#), in Bloomberg Law to draw attention to the recent detention of a 15-year-old Michigan teen for not doing her homework and how the case resembles so many others we have seen.



[Read More](#)

R4G was also mentioned in this [recent piece from the Washington Post's Lily](#) highlighting the presence of deep-seated biases and structural racism within progressive nonprofit and feminist spaces.



[Read More](#)

Legislative Updates

Exciting news! In July, the **EARN IT Act** passed unanimously through the **Senate Judiciary Committee**. This bipartisan legislation was developed in response to the growing rise in online child sexual abuse material. Last year, tech companies reported over 45 million online photos

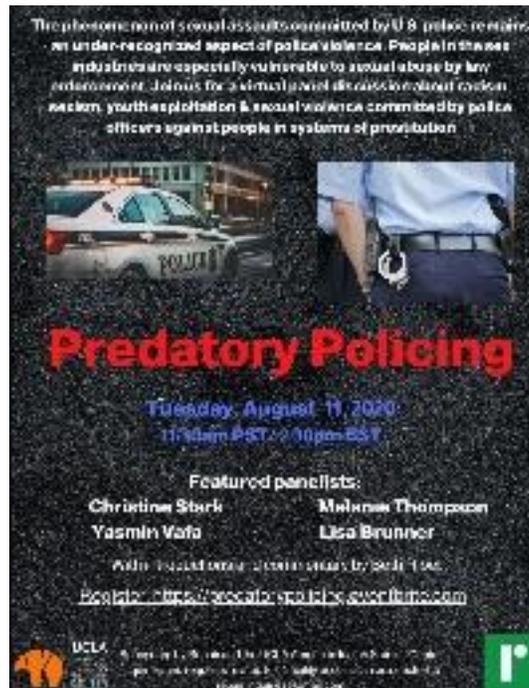
and videos of children being abused — more than double the previous year. The bill, introduced by Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), **aims to encourage the tech industry to be more proactive in the detection and removal of online child sexual abuse material.**

In other positive news, this summer, the **DC Council passed an amendment that would make DC Public Schools responsible for the hiring and contracting of security instead of the Metropolitan Police Department.** R4G joins our partners in the Police-Free Schools campaign to applaud this small but important step towards dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline for girls and children of color.

Presentations and Trainings

Throughout the pandemic, we have maintained our commitment to educating professionals and the community on the intersections of race, gender, and violence. This summer our presentations **reached a virtual audience of over 2,000 people around the globe!**

- In June, we participated in a virtual roundtable on **law enforcement reform and its role in the movement to end sex trafficking** and exploitation.
- In June, we also presented on the need for **a multi-disciplinary response to child sex trafficking** with our partners at My Life My Choice and the Suffolk County Children's Advocacy Center.
- In July, R4G's Rebecca Burney presented on the **history of racialized violence against women and girls of color and the abuse to prison pipeline** at the Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation 2020 Summit.
- In August, we [presented](#) on **collaborative and trauma-informed approaches to identify, respond to, and provide services to trafficking survivors** with our partner, Tina Frundt of Courtney's House.
- Also in August, R4G's Yasmin Vafa **joined survivors and Indigenous advocates in a virtual panel discussion on police violence against women** hosted by the health and disability justice organization, Repair, and the UCLA American Indian Studies Center.



Other Updates

- We are so thrilled to welcome Ayika Tshimanga to the Rights4Girls team. **Ayika joins us as our new Communications Manager** and will oversee our social media and other creative and communications needs.
- This summer, we **launched our new website** with a fresh new look and layout. Check out our new site [here!](#)
- In August, our **Advisory Board member and co-founder of our No Such Thing campaign, Withelma "T" Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, interviewed Cyntoia Brown Long** for the virtual Journey to Justice event where the two inspiring survivor leaders discussed ending child exploitation and the criminalization of girls of color.



R4G welcomes Ayika Tshimanga as our new Comms Manager



Survivor leaders Cyntoia Brown-Long and "T" Ortiz discussed their Journey to Justice

As always, we thank you for your continued support of our work to defend the rights of our most vulnerable girls and young women.

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