Dear Friend,

We hope you are having a wonderful summer. Here at Rights4Girls, we have had a busy and exciting few months.

In May we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the landmark Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA), the first piece of federal legislation focused specifically on the distinct needs of domestic human trafficking victims. To mark this important victory, the House held a press conference and the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing to urge for full and effective implementation of the law. We continue to be at the forefront of efforts to ensure that the law is properly implemented and that survivors and providers receive the support and funding we fought for in this legislation.
On June 14, Rights4Girls’ work on behalf of marginalized girls was featured at the White House United State of Women Summit. The groundbreaking summit brought together over 5,000 leaders working to elevate the lives of women and girls across the globe. We were honored to share the stage with incredible figures like First Lady Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Vice President Joe Biden, and President Barack Obama, as well as to be recognized for our work to facilitate the Girls at the Margin National Alliance.

The Girls at the Margin National Alliance (G@TM) is a coalition of more than 200 local, state, and national girl-serving organizations working across systems and disciplines to center the lives of our most marginalized young women and girls. G@TM was co-founded by Rights4Girls and the National Crittenton Foundation in 2011 and over the last year, we have worked to develop a comprehensive policy platform that centers the needs of marginalized girls.
On June 22, Rights4Girls hosted a Congressional briefing to highlight the recent success of our national No Such Thing campaign in erasing the concept of “child prostitute” in both language and law. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX), Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA), and The California Endowment’s Leticia Alejandrez all delivered powerful remarks on the importance of our #NoSuchThing campaign in changing the narrative and in inspiring anti-trafficking initiatives around the country. In addition, T Ortiz Walker Pettigrew spoke of the importance of language and announced our recent letter to leading media outlets urging them to follow the Associated Press’ lead and eliminate the term “child prostitute” in their reporting.

On July 27, Rights4Girls hosted a reception at the DNC to raise awareness around domestic child sex trafficking and the needs of girls of color. We were thrilled to honor several key champions for girls of color including co-founder of the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, Editor-at-Large at Elle.com Melissa Harris-Perry, and CEO of the DNC Rev. Leah Daughtry. R4GatDNC also welcomed inspiring speeches by Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and Judge Lori Dumas about the impact of our #NoSuchThing campaign in addressing child sex trafficking in Philadelphia and the need to end the sexual abuse to prison pipeline for our girls of color.
Growing Our Team.

Rights4Girls is excited to announce that we have expanded our team! Meet our new Advisory Board members:

Taina Bien-Aime, Executive Director, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women & Founding Board Member, Equality Now
Jeannette Pai-Espinosa, President, The National Crittenton Foundation
The Honorable John J. Romero, Jr., Presiding Judge, Children’s Court Division, Second Judicial District Court & Member of the New Mexico Tribal-State Judicial Consortium
Liz Ryan, President & CEO, Youth First
Withelma "T" Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, Speaker, Policy Consultant, Survivor Advocate, & 2014 TIME Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People
Lora Snyder, Campaign Director, Oceana

We are also very proud to introduce two new members of the R4G staff: Our new legal research counsel Cherice Hopkins and our development counsel Lynn English. Both Cherice and Lynn have a longstanding commitment to issues of racial and gender justice and we’re so excited to bring their passion and expertise to our work to protect vulnerable girls. Finally, we’re excited to announce that beginning in October, our Equal Justice Works fellow Maheen Kaleem will be our new Staff Attorney—continuing her work and advocacy to protect girls at the intersection of sex trafficking and juvenile justice.

More Updates:

- In May, R4G facilitated another National Judicial Institute on Domestic Child Sex Trafficking, with our partners the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ). Together with our expert faculty, we trained judges from all over the country on how to identify child trafficking victims in their courtrooms and effective strategies to address domestic child sex trafficking in their communities. Our next institute will be in Washington, DC this September. Register here;

- In July, R4G Executive Director Yasmin Vafa led a plenary panel at The Girls’ Justice Conference at New York University on justice reform for girls and ending the abuse to prison pipeline. We also led a workshop on addressing sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of girls;

- In July, R4G organized a Girls in Juvenile Justice panel at the National Juvenile Justice Network Annual Forum in Memphis, Tennessee together with Children’s Defense Fund organizer Natalie Collier with a particular focus on the needs of justice-involved girls in the South;

- In August, the Movement for Black Lives released its national policy platform, which specifically referenced our Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline report and advocacy, as well as our work to end the arrest, detention, and prosecution of child sex trafficking victims for prostitution. We look forward to working with our allies in the racial justice community to raise up the specific needs of Black women and girls in these important conversations around racial equity.
As always, thank you for your continued support.

Yasmin Vafa  
Executive Director  
Rights4Girls

Donate to Rights4Girls

Rights4Girls is a human rights organization focused on gender-based violence against vulnerable young women and girls in the U.S. We advocate for the dignity and personhood of young women and girls - so that every girl may possess the right to be safe and live a life free of violence and exploitation. Based in Washington, D.C., Rights4Girls works to make the lives of U.S. young women and girls a human rights priority.

www.rights4girls.org