



VILLAGE OF BOYS TOWN

Proclamation

When children violate the law, justice can be served without sacrificing opportunities for rehabilitation, restoration and redemption. No child is beyond hope, and they all deserve age-appropriate interventions and supports. That was proven more than a century ago by the advocacy of Father Edward J. Flanagan, who fought against the same unjust and brutal systems that failed America's youth then. He believed – and it remains true today – that it was inherently unfair for children to be charged, convicted, and punished by the same rules that applied to adults.

WHEREAS, every child deserves rehabilitation in a system that is responsive to their physical, psychological, and emotional needs and have the right to care, protection and a safe, stable living environment; and

WHEREAS, youth are developmentally different from adults and these differences have been documented through adolescent brain research, therefore, these differences should be from a developmental approach; and

WHEREAS, youth who are placed under the commitment of the juvenile court system are able to access age-appropriate rehabilitative services, education, and remain closer to their families, all of which apply to successful reductions in re-offending and improve positive youth development; and

WHEREAS, most laws allowing the prosecuting of youth as adults were enacted prior to research evidence by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention demonstrating that youth prosecuted in adult court actually decreases public safety as, on average, they are 34 percent more likely to commit future crimes than youth retained in the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, youth of color, youth with disabilities, and youth with mental health issues are disproportionately represented at point of entry and all stages within the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, the best system utilizes a developmental approach with basic hallmarks such as accountability without criminalization, individualized response to need and services, a commitment to fairness, and family engagement; and

WHEREAS, Youth Justice Action Month (YJAM) is a national campaign to end the prosecution of youth in the adult court system; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Boys Town is committed to setting the national standard and adhering to national hallmarks in juvenile justice by using a system that rehabilitates children while also providing them the developmental care they need to secure a bright, productive future.

NOW, THEREFORE, let this be the moment we treat children like the individuals they are and give them a second chance; and

LET IT BE PROCLAIMED by Charles Ewoldt and Porter Wimpy, members of the Nebraska Youth Justice Fellowship Program, on behalf of the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska, that October is

"YOUTH JUSTICE ACTION MONTH"

In the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska, and we hereby urge all citizens and policymakers to take due note of this observance.

Duly adopted this 7th day of October 2025.


Charles Ewoldt on behalf of the Village of Boys Town
Porter Wimpy on behalf of the Village of Boys Town