



We can't reform a punishment system. We must imagine and invest in care and healing.

upEND believes that children can be safer than they are today and are best supported and cared for in their families and communities. Current “child welfare” interventions are based on an historical ideology of surveillance, separation, and punishment in order to control families and communities. This history includes chattel slavery, genocide of Indigenous peoples, and erasure of culture and peoples through separation and assimilation. Today, this history plays out in forcibly separating families in response to poverty, immigration, incarceration, and other societal failures. Because of this, upEND believes that “child welfare” systems are better described as family policing systems.

upEND advocates for dismantling these harmful systems and shifting power and resources to innovations, organizers, and community-based supports that truly help children and families. upEND focuses on promoting solutions that address the core economic, social, and structural reasons that cause children to be considered unsafe. This includes advocating for investments that address poverty, food insecurity, lack of affordable and safe housing, and a lack of accessible health care, child care, and meaningful prevention services. This also includes imagining and promoting non-punitive ways of addressing harm and promoting healing so that children are safer and families thrive. Ultimately, upEND works to make the current system of foster care obsolete.

Our Goals

Stop the harm and dismantle the family policing system

upEND is pushing the field to grapple with the concept of abolition—now it is time to take pragmatic steps forward. Together, we can end policies that cause harm, actively shrink the carceral components of the family policing system, and provide direct material supports to youth and families.

Imagine new ways of supporting and serving children, families, and communities

As we work to dismantle the existing carceral system, we can to eliminate the root causes that create conditions for harm to occur by creating robust supports for families and communities.

To truly achieve these goals, we cannot operate at half measures and must instead fully work to upEND the system. We also must not recreate the current power structures or merely change the names of existing agencies. *This is a call for radical change.*

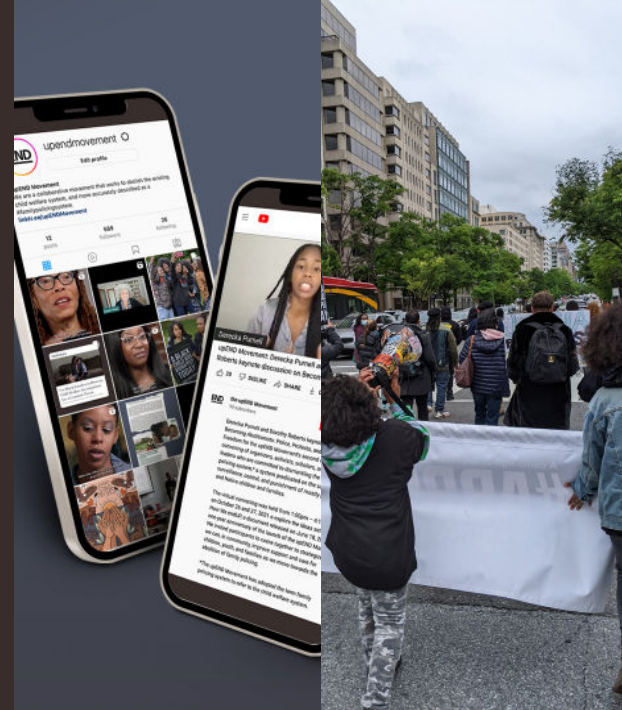
Our Strategy

Through research, storytelling, and the support of grassroots advocacy, we build public interest in the abolition of family policing and engage powerful voices in changing policy and narrative. We use digital spaces and on-the-ground partnerships to reach influential advocates in this work. upEND also co-designs policies, practices, supports, and research that support families in thriving and remaining together.



This work isn't about modest reform.

It is about ending the current family policing system and creating new, community-based ways of keeping children safe and protected in their homes and communities. This requires a blend of four key components which will ultimately lead to real, lasting change for Black, Indigenous, and Latine children and families.



CHANGE THE CONVERSATION

We create and share resources that counter harmful popular narratives and equip community leaders to influence policy and bring about change.



FOSTER NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We develop partnerships and support on-the-ground efforts to build a network of grassroots advocates and allies, led primarily by impacted youth and families.



RESEARCH

We support and disseminate research that identifies the harms that result from family policing intervention and advances innovative and non-punitive means of care that truly prioritize the safety and support of children, families, and communities.



SUPPORT PRAGMATIC AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Our framework for change, *How We endUP*, provides seven actionable steps toward eliminating the family policing system, and creating the conditions that truly support child, family, and community well-being. We also advocate for learning from, supporting, and sustaining the efforts of others who are actively innovating and imagining.

Core Strategies