

MARYLAND

# Youth Rights & Safety Hub



Welcome to the September [Youth Rights & Safety Hub](#) (YRSH) newsletter! YRSH is non-political and non-partisan. We seek to educate, not advocate. We do this by sharing relevant resources and data debriefs about youth rights and safety issues in our state.

## Spotlight

### **“Frozen Time”: Worse Than You Think**

“In its ‘Third and Fourth Quarter Report’, released in July, the Maryland Office of the Correctional Ombudsman and the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit (OCO/JJMU) raised concerns about ‘Frozen Time’ at the state’s Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). As this is a term the Youth Rights and Safety Team was unfamiliar with, we took a deeper look into the topic, which according to a recent NPR investigation may be called “dead time” in other jurisdictions. Our inquiry found that Maryland does indeed have ‘dead time’ or ‘frozen time’ problems. But they are different from what OCO/JJMU described—and far more troubling.”

[READ THE FULL STORY HERE](#)

### **Mixed Marks Put Maryland Kids at Risk by Nonso Umunna**

“In 2024, Maryland had the highest median income of all fifty states. But if you think that means our children are doing better than kids in most other parts of the country, you are wrong. And that’s troubling news, given what is known about the risk factors associated with child wellbeing and contact with the justice system.”

[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL PIECE](#)

### **September [Views on the News](#)**

On September 5, Mayor Brandon Scott and Governor Wes Moore briefly joined marchers in Baltimore’s Park Heights neighborhood and, at a press conference afterwards, once again explained that the city’s recent success in reducing crime made a threatened federal

intervention unnecessary. Four days later, in a letter to the mayor about images from the march, Fox News correspondent Gary Collins asked, "Why are clear gang colors of blue, which tend to illustrate in communities that a person is affiliated or associated with the Crips, or Crip-related organizations, seen walking with two of the state's most prominent elected officials?

[\*\*Mayor Scott's scathing response on Instagram\*\*](#) reprinted Collins' inquiry and slammed him for making assumptions that Scott argued were both racist and absurd: "Y'all according to Gary from Sinclair(Fox45) any black man in Baltimore with a blue hat and hoodie must be a crip...."

It was great social media entertainment. But it also provides a window into the kind of manipulation that can shape media coverage of Baltimore kids and crime.

Collins' inquiry was an intentional effort to reframe a positive event and cast it as a gang issue. Government press offices exist to answer questions from the media. But a traditional response to this inquiry—a statement, perhaps, about whether Crips were present or not—even a full and complete denial, would open the door to a whole new discourse about gangs in Baltimore.

This is probably exactly what Collins was after, since there have been no high profile youth crime stories to feed his audience's appetite for bad news about the city and its kids.

A press office can always choose to ignore a bad faith inquiry such as this one. But that simply allows the outlet to move forward with their narrative and imply tacit confirmation or some kind of cover up by saying something like, "The mayor's office did not respond to our questions."

On this occasion, Mayor Scott and his team outmaneuvered the reporter—and decorated their success by tying a bow of humor on top. Good for them. And good for Baltimore kids.

## **Speaking of searching for something to feed audiences hungry for bad news...**

Without any recent youth crime anecdotes to hype, during an [\*\*interview on the WYPR program Midday\*\*](#) Baltimore State's Attorney Ivan Bates tried to cast shade on Safe Streets, the city-run community violence interrupter program. His specific complaint was that the organization was not providing his office with data showing how many incidents they had prevented.

It was an absurd complaint—one could just as easily ask, How many crimes has the state's attorney's office prevented by sending folks to prison? (Some, no doubt. But providing precise data would be impossible. How do you count something that doesn't exist?)

The likely cause for Bates' pique was this recent [\*\*article published by the Guardian\*\*](#), which credited Safe Streets for contributing to the city's dramatic drops in crime.

"It just doesn't smell right to me," Bates told Tom Hall about the Guardian's coverage. Just as the Mayor's office pushed back on Fox45, Hall pushed back on Bates' unfounded innuendo: "I think the credibility of Safe Streets—the fact that folks will engage with them and talk to them—is partially premised on the fact that they're not working hand-in-glove with the police department," he explained.

Historic reductions in violence should be celebrated; the policies and programs that contribute to those reductions deserve recognition. Casting doubt on a successful program like Safe Streets undermines our shared goal of safer communities.

For more on how the media can distort perceptions of youth crime, read [Youth Justice: Decoding the News](#), on our [Substack](#) page.

## In The News

- [Moore, Scott walk Park Heights in a message to Trump](#), by Lee O. Sanderlin and Pamela Wood, **Baltimore Banner, September 5, 2025** - Two weeks after practically daring the president to come walk through Baltimore with him, Gov. Wes Moore set out Friday from the middle of Park Heights to do the thing Donald Trump has said he won't: Take a stroll through the city.
- [Baltimore records historic homicide decreases as Trump continues his attacks](#), by Mary Carole McCauley, **Baltimore Sun, September 1, 2025** - The seven homicides recorded in Baltimore last month were the fewest in the month of August on record, helping the city chart its lowest homicide total through the first eight months of a year in over half a century, Mayor Brandon Scott said Monday. But that downward trajectory didn't prevent President Donald Trump from continuing his attacks on what he described Monday in a social media post as "the crime-drenched city of Baltimore."
- [Maryland must reckon with its juvenile justice past to protect today's youth](#), by Marc Schindler, **AFRO, September 2, 2025** - "It's past time to afford the long-deceased youth the dignity they deserve and to stop throwing today's youth into an adult system that fails everyone involved."
- [Moore, Trump and a 'war on children'](#), by Thomas Ferraro, **Maryland Matters, September 2, 2025** - Gov. Wes Moore, in his first state-of-the-state address, promised to make Maryland the first state to end child poverty. The new governor likely never imagined that twice-impeached former President Donald Trump would return to the White House this year and begin what critics call a "War on Children" – widespread federal spending cuts that threaten to push more children into poverty nationwide.

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*This message has been authorized and paid for by the Advance Maryland Education Fund.*