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FJP Releases Groundbreaking Guidelines on Youth Interrogation *Proposed National Standards and Model Act will Align U.S. with Established International Safeguards*

Today, Fair and Just Prosecution released “[Youth Interrogation: Key Principles and Policy Recommendations](#),” a national set of standards and model policy on youth interrogation to guide policymakers, law enforcement and prosecutors in remedying decades of concerns that have led to troubling and coercive tactics, unreliable statements and wrongful convictions of children.

Protections for children during interrogation are long overdue and critical to prevent miscarriages of justice. [More than 36 percent](#) of people exonerated for crimes that allegedly took place when they were children had falsely confessed, a number that jumps to [86 percent](#) for crimes said to have occurred before the age of 14.

“For too long, our nation has stood by as children have been threatened and deceived during interrogations – deeply concerning practices that have resulted in wrongful convictions, stealing decades away from innocent people and undermining public safety and the integrity of the criminal legal system,” said **Miriam Krinsky, Executive Director of [Fair and Just Prosecution](#)**. “Coercive interrogation practices must be reformed across the board, but they are especially problematic with young people. We must treat children as children, and policymakers, police and prosecutors need to take a stand to end these cruel and dangerous practices.”

Among the expansive recommendations included in FJP’s [white paper](#) are:

- Prohibiting the knowing use of deception by law enforcement during the interrogation process;
- Requiring *both* a parent or legal guardian and an attorney to be present for the entire *Miranda* process and interrogation of a young person;
- Presumptively prohibiting the evidentiary and trial use of statements by children younger than 14, who should be deemed too young to comprehend and voluntarily waive their rights;
- Creating conditions that protect the young person, including requiring video and audio recording of these interrogations, limiting the length of questioning and crafting youth-friendly *Miranda* warnings; and
- Requiring steps to ensure the reliability of confessions before their use in court.

“The United States is an international outlier in its failure to protect children during interrogations,” said **Norman L. Reimer, Global CEO of [Fair Trials](#)**. “America is the sole

democratic country that allows children to be questioned by police without counsel and that permits police to use deception during interrogations. It's long past time for the U.S. to catch up with the world and ensure that the rights of all children are safeguarded.”

Fair and Just Prosecution and Fair Trials will also be hosting a webinar on this critical issue on Wednesday, March 9 at 3 PM ET featuring Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx and other experts. Registration information will be shared soon. If you want more information on this event, please contact FJP Communications Director Alyssa Kress at akress@fairandjustprosecution.org.

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Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP's work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).