

Tips for Facilitators

First of all, thank you for taking on this important job! We hope that these suggestions will be helpful to you as you host and facilitate your own forum.

1. Get organized. Make copies of sign in sheets and action steps. You can also make copies of individual fact sheets or any of our other materials – or simply refer people to the website for more info.
2. Scope out the venue ahead of time. See what options you have for darkening the room and showing the documentary on a screen or wall, and make sure you have the equipment to show the film. Are there parking restrictions that you should note in the invitation? If you are showing a PowerPoint presentation (please contact the Alliance for a copy of the one our staff is using), make sure you have the equipment to present it.
3. It's good to get some housekeeping done right after people arrive. Let people know where the restrooms and refreshments are. Give a general idea of when the session will end. Establish some ground rules for your discussion like: disagreement is fine, so long as it's respectful; let's not interrupt each other, etc.
4. The point of this session is to talk about how race affects the juvenile justice system and what we can do about it– not to critique the video or to enter into a broad discussion about every manifestation of racism in America. Steer the conversation back to the core issues.
5. Make sure everyone is heard. Remember the kid who always jumped in with an answer without raising his or her hand? That kid grew up and may well be at your forum. Say something like: "Great. I'll get back to you in a moment, but let's hear from some other folks."
6. Reminders are helpful. Please tell people a few times to sign in and remind them they can also sign up with their email to continue this conversation online.
7. Keep in touch. After the forum collect the sign in sheets and send them to the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance, 2470 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605. Please also give us a call or email us to let us know how it went by emailing mallory@ctjja.org.

