

Day 2 Keynote: James Dold

Human Rights for Kids | Founder & CEO



James' recommended resources:

- [Changing the Criminal Justice System One Child at a Time](#)
- [Imperfect victims: Child trafficking survivors deserving of protection, not incarceration](#)
- [The Childhood-Trauma-to-Prison Pipeline](#)
- [Crimes Against Humanity: The Mass Incarceration of Children As Adults.](#)

Speaker Biography

James Dold is the Founder & CEO of Human Rights for Kids (HRFK) a D.C.-based non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the human rights of children in the United States. As one of the foremost child rights experts in the country, HRFK has been recognized for its groundbreaking research on abused and neglected children in the criminal justice system. HRFK was the first organization to identify everyone currently incarcerated in U.S. prisons for crimes committed as children and subsequently link ACEs exposure to their justice system-involvement. Notably, HRFK's research has revealed that approximately 30% of all

children prosecuted as adults in the United States were victims of human trafficking prior to their incarceration.

Since its inception, HRFK has successfully advocated for the introduction of more than 100 child rights bills across the U.S., including 30 new laws that reformed the way the justice system treats children. In 2023, HRFK was the sponsor organization of SB 545 – the Safe Act – which made California the first state in the country to prohibit prosecuting children as adults in cases where the crime was committed against a person who had previously abused or trafficked them. The organization has also filed numerous Amicus Briefs in state and federal courts, and has been cited in both majority and dissenting opinions in the U.S. Supreme Court. HRFK also coordinates and provides legal support to incarcerated survivors of child trafficking who are serving lengthy prison sentences.

Prior to launching HRFK, James served as Advocacy Director and Chief Strategy Officer at the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth where he developed and implemented the advocacy strategy that led to the quadrupling of states that ban life without parole sentences for children in the U.S. Hundreds of people who were told as children that they would die in prison have been released due to his efforts. James also served as Senior Policy Counsel at Polaris Project where he led successful state legislative campaigns resulting in the passage of 40 new anti-human trafficking laws across the country.

James received dual baccalaureates in Criminal Justice and Psychology from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and graduated Cum Laude from the University of Maryland School of Law. He is licensed to practice law in the state of Maryland and is a member of the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States. He was a 2023 Roddenberry Fellow, a 2023 ECPAT-USA Freedom Award winner, a 2021 Paul H. Chapman Award Winner, and a 2021 Echoing Green finalist. Most importantly, James is a devoted husband and loving father to his two children.