

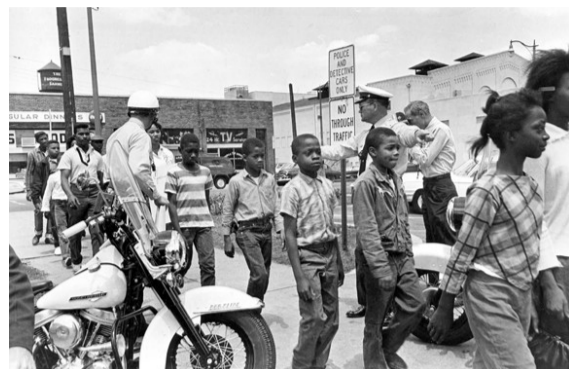
# The Birmingham Children's Crusade

Thousands of young people marched through downtown Birmingham, Alabama to protest segregation during this pivotal moment of the Civil Rights Movement.

## The Birmingham Campaign Begins

- The Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) target Birmingham as the key city to ending segregation throughout the south. Civil Rights leaders use non-violent protest tactics to provoke civic and business leaders to desegregate.
- The first phase of the campaign led to many arrests.

Apr. 3, 1963



April 16, 1963

## MLK Arrested

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. pens his now famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

Apr. 29, 1963

## A Shift in Tactic

- MLK convenes emergency meeting of AMHR-SCLC Central Committee to discuss Birmingham campaign's impending collapse if they did not change their protest tactics.
- James Bevel and Ike Reynolds mention 150 adolescent volunteers who were eager to contribute towards the campaign.

May 2, 1963

## The Children's Crusade Begins

- Over 1,000 young people from ages 7-18 gather at the 6th Street Baptist Church to march peacefully to downtown Birmingham
- Hundreds are arrested and carried to detention centers.



May 3, 1963

## Violent Opposition

- Hundreds more young people gather for another march
- Commissioner of Public Safety Bull Connor directs police and fire departments to use force to halt the demonstrations
- Children were sprayed with fire hoses, beaten with batons, and threatened with police dogs

May 12, 1963

## The President Takes Action

President John F. Kennedy sends U.S. troops to military bases near Birmingham and declares that the federal government will "do whatever must be done" to preserve order in the city.

May 12, 1963

## National Attention

- Shocking images of the violence against young African-Americans circulate in newspapers nationwide
- President Kennedy goes on national television to oppose segregation and announces plans to introduce civil rights legislation

