

State of the State: At Risk Youth in Louisiana

2nd Annual La Child Well-Being Summit- Baton Rouge, LA April 2015

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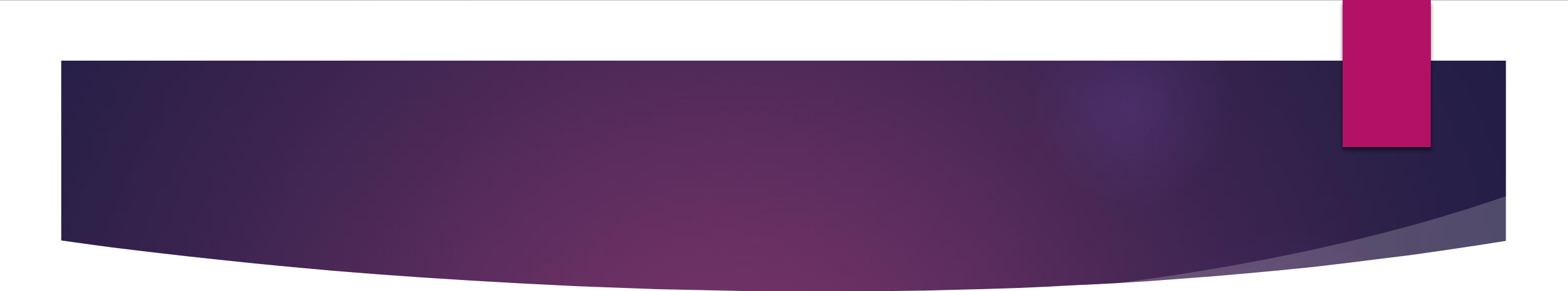
DIRECTOR- INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & JUSTICE

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LSU Health

NEW ORLEANS

Institute for Public Health and Justice



“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”

Albert Einstein

Objectives

- ▶ Learn about several top issues facing youth in Louisiana
- ▶ Examine how these youth are truly “opportunity” youth
- ▶ Critically examine roles in moving reform forward for youth in care

Meet Jack...

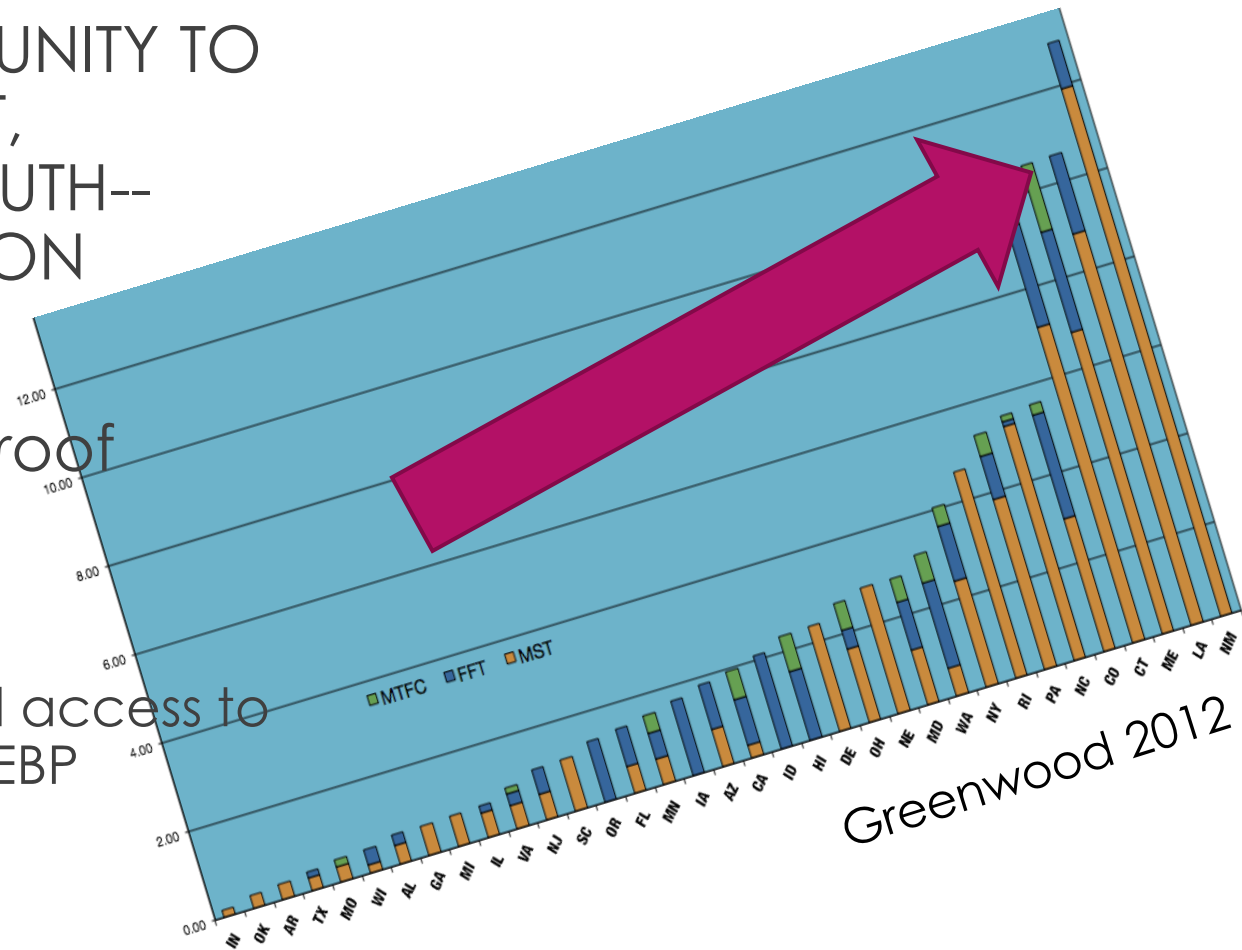
- ▶ How will he do in Louisiana in 2015?





State of the State--- OPPORTUNITY YOUTH & SYSTEM OPPORTUNITIES!!!

- ▶ AS A SYSTEM, WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE WAY WE **THINK** ABOUT, **BEHAVIOR** TOWARDS, AND **HELP** YOUTH-- DEVELOP IN A WHOLE NEW DIRECTION
- ▶ And we are good at it...we have proof
 - ▶ Get tough on crime...we did
 - ▶ Get youth out of institutions...we did
 - ▶ Build a community of caring adults and access to quality services...we are working on it (EBP expansion)



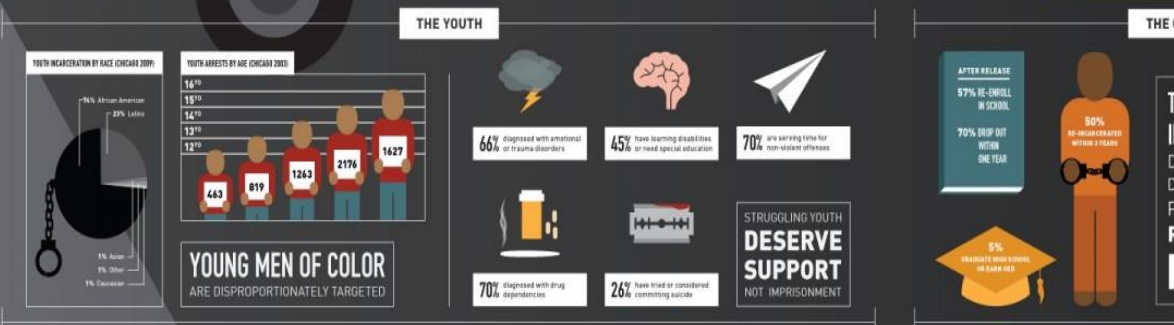
Where do we stand?



School to Prison Pipeline

MINOR INFRACTIONS

BREAKING DOWN THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE



ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING PUSHED INTO PRISON?

THE PIPELINE TO PRISON: THE U.S. HAS THE HIGHEST INCARCERATION RATE IN THE WORLD, AND ITS PRISONS AND JAILS ARE OVERWHELMINGLY FILLED WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LATINOS. THE PATHS TO PRISON FOR YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND LATINO MEN ARE MANY, BUT THE STARTING POINTS ARE OFTEN THE SCHOOL AND FOSTER CARE SYSTEMS.

FROM SCHOOL TO PRISON

STUDENTS OF COLOR FACE HARSHER DISCIPLINE AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PUSHED OUT OF SCHOOL THAN WHITES.

- 40%** OF STUDENTS **EXPELLED** FROM U.S. SCHOOLS EACH YEAR ARE BLACK.
- 70%** OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN "IN-SCHOOL" **ARRESTS** OR REFERRED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE BLACK OR LATINO.
- 3.5 X** BLACK STUDENTS ARE THREE AND A HALF TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE **SUSPENDED** THAN WHITES.
- 2 X** BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO **NOT GRADUATE** HIGH SCHOOL AS WHITES.

FROM FOSTER CARE TO PRISON

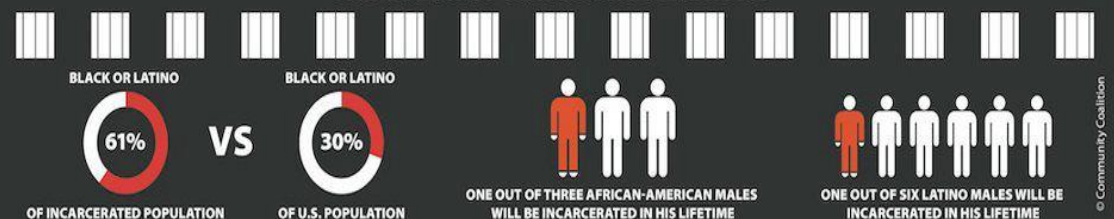
YOUTH OF COLOR ARE MORE LIKELY THAN WHITES TO BE PLACED IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, A BREEDING GROUND FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

- 50%** OF CHILDREN IN THE **FOSTER CARE SYSTEM** ARE BLACK OR LATINO.
- 30%** OF FOSTER CARE YOUTH ENTERING THE **JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM** ARE PLACEMENT-RELATED BEHAVIORAL CASES (e.g. RUNNING AWAY FROM A GROUP HOME).
- 25%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING FOSTER CARE WILL BE **INCARCERATED** WITHIN A FEW YEARS AFTER TURNING 18.
- 50%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING FOSTER CARE WILL BE **UNEMPLOYED** WITHIN A FEW YEARS AFTER TURNING 18.

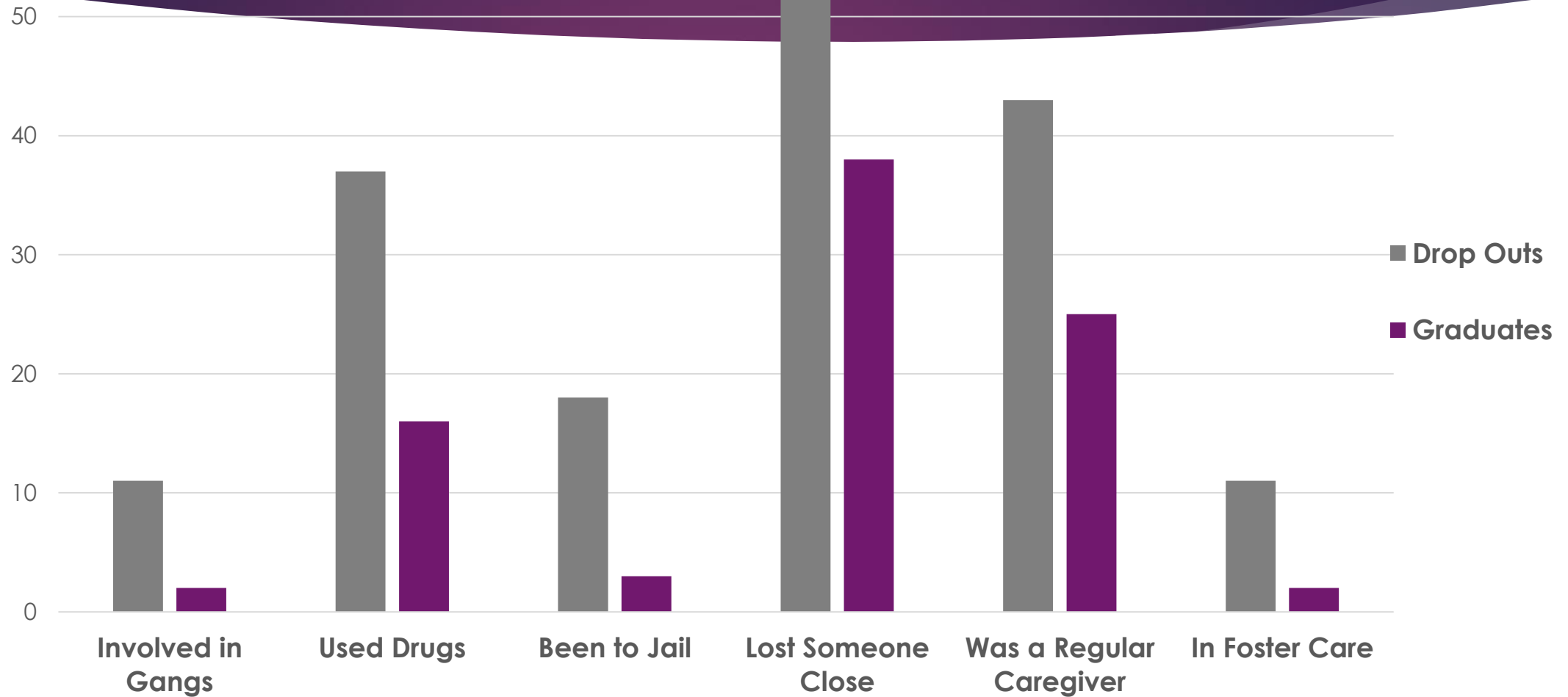
68% OF ALL MALES IN STATE AND FEDERAL **PRISON** DO NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL **DIPLOMA.**

70% OF INMATES IN CALIFORNIA **STATE PRISON** ARE FORMER **FOSTER CARE** YOUTH.

THE COLOR OF MASS INCARCERATION



60 Characteristics of Students Who Dropout



Child Welfare

Child abuse and neglect increased odds of future delinquency and adult criminality overall by **29%** (Juvenile arrest alone by **59%**)

Maltreated children are **younger at 1st arrest**, commit almost **twice as many offences**, and are **arrested more frequently**

Child Welfare

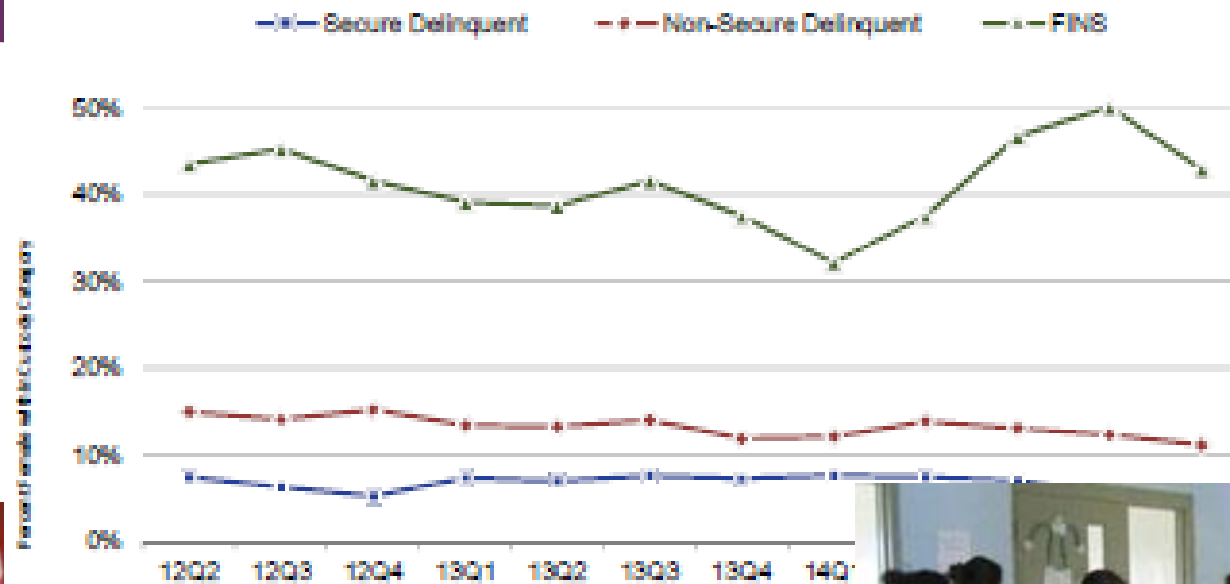


- ▶ Conservative estimates suggest $1/2$ of all serious adolescent offenders and criminal adults have abuse / neglect histories often with prior care rendered by Dept of Social Services
- ▶ Child welfare studies suggest that $1/2$ to $2/3$ entering foster care have behavior problems warranting mental health services

Status Offenders

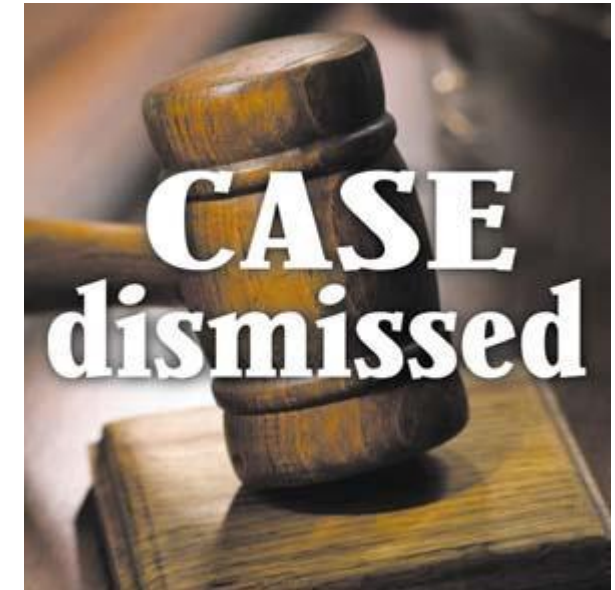


CUSTODY TYPE BY % FEMALE





Juvenile Diversion



Detention



Secure and Non-secure Placement



EXAMPLE:
 One in every
 155 citizens in
 Washington are
 in jail or prison.



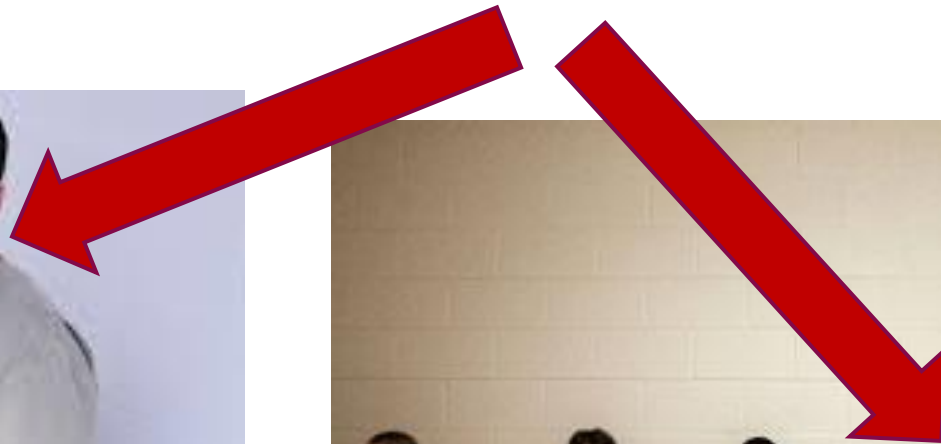
Among the 50 states, Louisiana is ranked first in incarceration rate, with **ONE IN EVERY 55 CITIZENS** in jail or prison, according to 2007 statistics. That number has increased 272 percent since 1982, when one in every 205 people was in jail or prison.



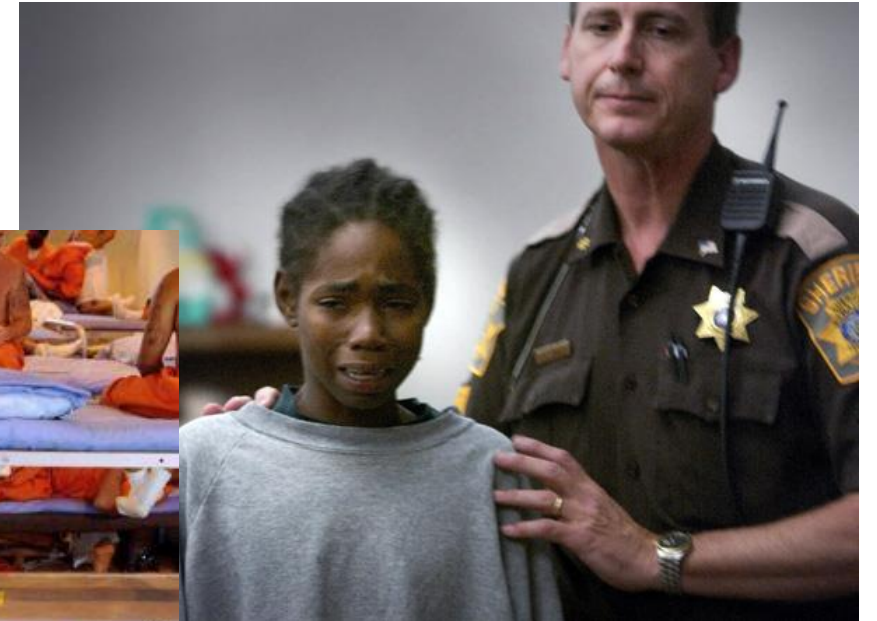
Note: Alaska is not to scale
 Source: The Pew Center on the States

Age of Developmental Consideration

What's the difference? Same crime, same age...17



Age of Developmental Consideration



Louisiana vs. U.S.

- ▶ **highest incarceration rate** and the rising costs (847 per 100,000)
- ▶ **17x as many people with mental illness in jail/prison than there are beds** in the two remaining psychiatric hospitals
- ▶ youth who have been sent through the adult criminal justice system are **more likely to recidivate** than similar youth in the juvenile justice system
- ▶ adult facilities are not equipped to deal with youth and place the **youth in situations that are dangerous to them or in isolation** which can exacerbate or cause mental health problems
- ▶ Louisiana is **only 1 of 9 states left** in the U.S. that automatically transfers seventeen-year-olds to the criminal justice system to be tried as an adult

LESS GUILTY BY REASON OF ADOLESCENCE...

Cognitive Development

- ▶ Atkins v. Virginia (2002)- death penalty mentally retarded
- ▶ Roper v. Simmons (2005)- death penalty adolescents
- ▶ Graham v. Florida (2010)- life w/out parole non-homicide
- ▶ Miller v. Alabama (2012)- mandatory life w/out parole unconstitutional

- ▶ Youth may do terrible things, but they are **less culpable** than adults.
- ▶ Court cites **research on adolescence and brain development**.

(photo- Chris Simmons)



Training Requirements for Stakeholders



VS.



Challenges for the Future

- ▶ KEEP KIDS **CONNECTED** TO SCHOOL, ADULTS, COMMUNITIES
- ▶ **DECREASE TRAUMA EXPOSURE**, INCREASE RESILIENCY OPPORTUNITIES....**SUPPORT SUPPORT SUPPORT**
- ▶ HOW WILL THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION AND BAYOU HEALTH **PRIORITIZE EBPs IN COMMUNITIES >>> SKILLS SKILLS SKILLS**
- ▶ **TAKE CARE OF YOU!!!** Vicarious Trauma
- ▶ THESE ARE OUR KIDS... **ARE WE INTERVENING TOO LATE?**

THANK YOU

- ▶ Don't hesitate to contact me and/or sign up for our weekly newsfeed.
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