



# Sisters of the Holy Family

To seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the Kingdom of God.

## FACTS

## T A T S

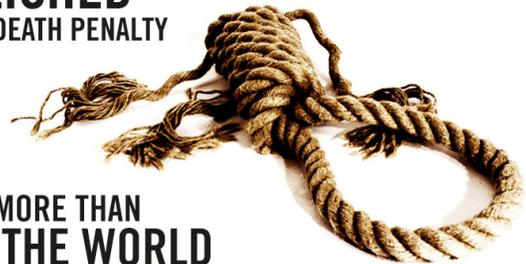
MORE THAN  
**HALF THE WORLD'S  
COUNTRIES**  
HAVE TOTALLY ABOLISHED  
THE DEATH PENALTY



IN 2017  
**GUINEA AND MONGOLIA**  
JOINED THE ABOLITIONIST WORLD

**102 COUNTRIES**

HAVE TOTALLY  
**ABOLISHED**  
THE DEATH PENALTY

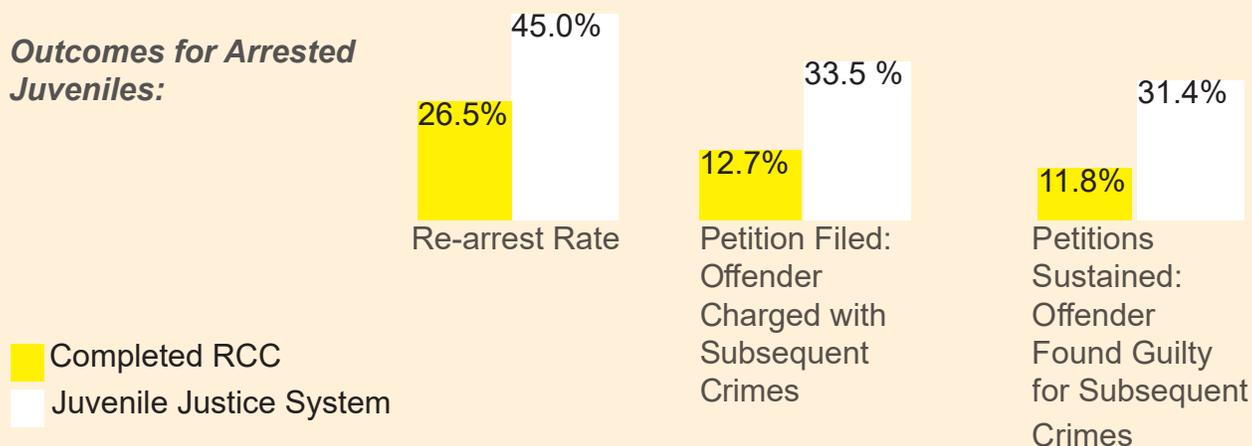


**THAT'S MORE THAN  
HALF THE WORLD**

### Restorative Justice Study: CONFERENCING CUTS JUVENILE CRIME

About 27% of 102 Alameda County, California (Oakland) juvenile offenders who completed restorative community conferencing from 2012 through 2014 were rearrested, compared with 45% of offenders in the regular juvenile justice system. Restorative conferencing allows offenders to meet with community members and victims to create a plan to repair harm done.

#### Outcomes for Arrested Juveniles:



Source: *Scaling Restorative Community Conferencing (RCC) Through a Pay for Success Model: A Feasibility Assessment Report*, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, March 2015 P. 11 <http://tinyurl.com/h7jv542>

# Racial Disparity

The non-partisan U.S. General Accounting Office found “a pattern of evidence indicating racial disparities in the charging, sentencing, and imposition of the death penalty.”

The study concluded that a defendant was several times more likely to be sentenced to death if the murder victim was white. This has been confirmed by the findings of many other studies that, holding all other factors constant, the single most reliable predictor of whether someone will be sentenced to death is the race of the victim.

From initial charging decisions to plea bargaining to jury sentencing, African-Americans are treated more harshly when they are defendants, and their lives are accorded less value when they are victims. All-white or virtually all-white juries are still commonplace in many localities.

More than 75% of the murder victims in cases resulting in an execution were white, even though nationally only about 50% of murder victims were white.



# Geographic Disparity

Since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976, 82% of all executions have taken place in the South. The Northeast accounts for less than 1% of executions.

# Do you live in a death penalty state?

## DEATH PENALTY STATES (31)

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado<sup>^</sup>
- Florida
- Georgia
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon<sup>^</sup>
- Pennsylvania<sup>^</sup>
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington<sup>^</sup>
- Wyoming
- U.S. Gov't
- U.S. Military

## NON-DEATH PENALTY STATES (19)

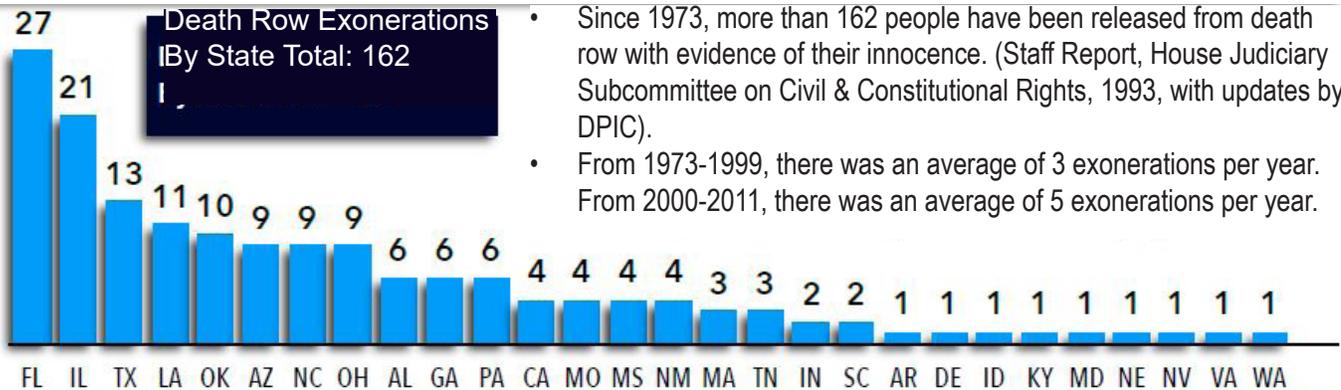
- Alaska
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- New Mexico\*
- New York
- North Dakota
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- District of Columbia

\* 2 prisoners remain on death row in New Mexico.

<sup>^</sup> Governors have imposed moratoriums on the death penalty in four states: Colorado, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

# INNOCENCE

The death penalty, both in the U.S. and around the world, is discriminatory and is used disproportionately against the poor, minorities and members of racial, ethnic and religious communities. Since humans are fallible, the risk of executing the innocent can never be eliminated.



- Since 1973, more than 162 people have been released from death row with evidence of their innocence. (Staff Report, House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil & Constitutional Rights, 1993, with updates by DPIC).
- From 1973-1999, there was an average of 3 exonerations per year. From 2000-2011, there was an average of 5 exonerations per year.

*Death is irrevocable; life*

*imprisonment is not. - Justice Thurgood Marshall*

Factors leading to wrongful convictions include:

- Inadequate legal representation
- Police and prosecutorial misconduct
- Perjured testimony and mistaken eyewitness testimony
- Racial prejudice
- Jailhouse “snitch” testimony
- Suppression and/or misinterpretation of mitigating evidence
- Community/political pressure to solve a case

The death penalty diverts resources from genuine crime control measures. Spending money on the death penalty system means:

- Reducing the resources available for crime prevention, mental health treatment, education and rehabilitation, meaningful victims’ services, and drug treatment programs.
- Diverting it from existing components of the criminal justice system, such as prosecutions of drug crimes, domestic violence, and child abuse.
- Emergency services, creating jobs, and police and crime prevention were the three highest rated priorities for use of fiscal resources.
- Schools/libraries, public health, and roads/transportation also ranked higher than the death penalty.

This issue's sources:

[deathpenaltyinfo.org](http://deathpenaltyinfo.org)  
[amnestyusa.org](http://amnestyusa.org)

[ncronline.org](http://ncronline.org)  
[deathpenalty.procon.org](http://deathpenalty.procon.org)

[nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)  
[sisterhelen.org](http://sisterhelen.org)

[tinyurl.com/h7jv542](http://tinyurl.com/h7jv542)  
[library.cqpress.com](http://library.cqpress.com)

# Restorative Justice: We all have a piece of the puzzle

A new approach—one that validates those victimized by crime, transforms those responsible for crime, and encourages communities to play a role in creating a safe and just society. Restorative justice is a values-based philosophy rooted in dignity, trust, compassion, and respect.

It grows through a variety of restorative practices, like conversations, circles and conferencing.

Ultimately, the goals are to strengthen relationships, promote accountability and healing, and encourage skill building.

