

The Sentencing Project

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/no-exit-the-expanding-use-of-life-sentences-in-america/>

Campaign and Advocacy

1705 DeSales St, NW
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20036
202.628.0871
(fax) 202.628.1091
staff@sentencingproject.org

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(fax) 202.628.1091
staff@sentencingproject.org

This figure that has been growing steadily since 1972 and represents a 600% increase over this period. The United States has achieved the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of incarceration in the world by enacting three decades of tough on crime policies that have made little impact on crime but have had profound consequences for American society.

These policies have been wide-ranging and include such features as an increased emphasis on drug enforcement, determinate sentences, and most significantly, a vastly expanded use of imprisonment. Simultaneously, there has been a diminishing of the value placed on the principle of rehabilitation that originally guided the nations correctional philosophy.

This report finds a record 140,610 individuals are now serving life sentences in state and federal prisons, 6,807 of whom were juveniles at the time of the crime. In addition, 29% of persons serving a life sentence (41,095) have no possibility of parole, and 1,755 were juveniles at the time of the crime.

To read the report, download the PDF below.

Increase in number of women incarcerated in the U.S. since 1980

Sentencing Policy

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staff@sentencingproject.org

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