



ENDING LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

VALUE

It benefits all of us to rehabilitate young people who engage in serious crimes. Young people have a special capacity to change, and we're all better off if we provide them this opportunity, and to find ways to help them rejoin and contribute to society.

PROBLEM

Right now our system of justice does not give many young people who engage in serious crimes the opportunity for a second chance. Instead, young people who engage in serious crimes are being sentenced to life without parole, which means that they will spend the next 40, 50, or 60 years in prison with no chance of release. Life without parole for young people is life without the opportunity for rehabilitation, and that is wrong.

SOLUTION

When young people commit serious crimes, they should be held accountable but in a way that reflects their capacity for rehabilitation. Young people are still developing mentally and emotionally. Their punishment needs to be focused on rehabilitation and reintegration into society, giving young people the opportunity to change and grow. We can do better by providing sentencing alternatives that are in the best interest of the both young person and of society. Therefore, legislatures should abolish life without parole for offenses committed before the individual was 18 years of age.

ACTION

Educate your elected officials about alternatives to denying youth the opportunity for rehabilitation and the need to eliminate this sentence.