

5 Reasons to End Direct File

Allowing Prosecutors to Charge Youth as Adults is Biased and Harmful

Prosecutors in California can charge juveniles as a young as 14 in adult criminal court without review or approval from a judge.

This is called **DIRECT FILE**.

Prop 57 would end direct file and give this power back to judges.

1 Prosecutors ignore important factors.

Prosecutors typically have 48 hours to decide to charge a juvenile as an adult. They don't consider the context of a young person's life or their circumstances:

Research shows that living in **poor-quality housing**, attending under-resourced schools, and being surrounded by **omnipresent police** all **affect adolescent development and behavior**.

These factors are a result of years of disinvestment in communities of color due to discriminatory and racist policies.

Growing up in these neighborhoods puts children at risk for behavior considered to be "deviant" and antisocial.

Poverty creates stress

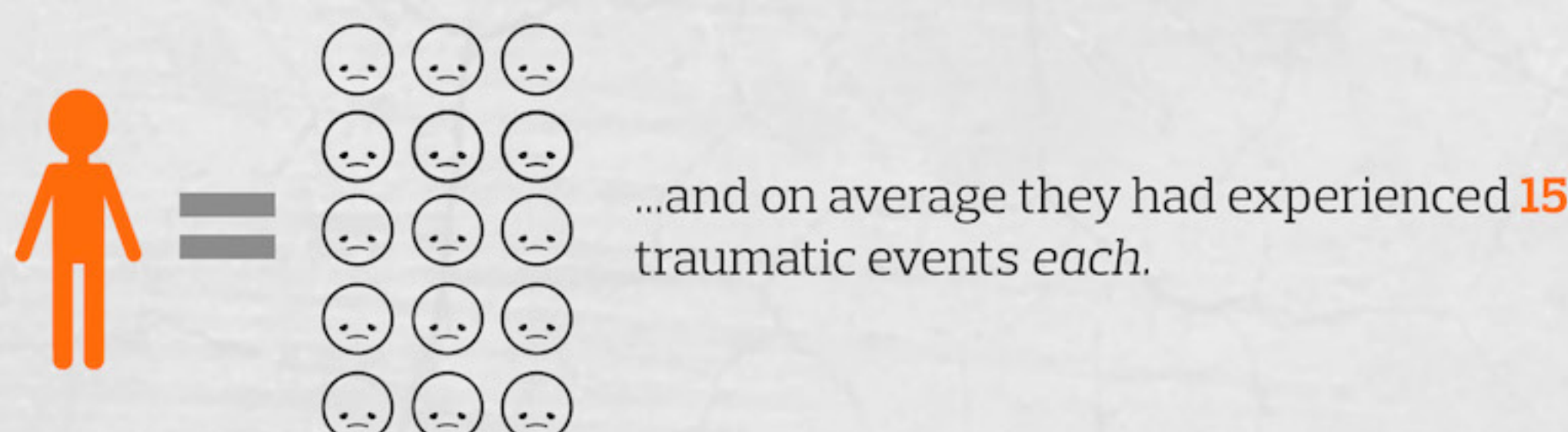
The cycle of poverty increases the risk of behavioral issues among youth.

1 in 3 families of system-involved youth have had to choose between paying court fees and paying for basic necessities like food.



Most youth in the system need trauma-informed care, not incarceration

A study of detained juveniles found that most of them (**93%**) had experienced at least **1** traumatic event...



Research shows a strong link between childhood trauma and disruptive behavior, behavior, psychosis, and mood disorders.

Youth do not make decisions like adults.

Our brains don't fully develop until the age of **25**. Charging youth as adults ignores the science of adolescent development.



2 Direct file pushes youth of color into adult court.



4 out of 5 youth charged as adults got there via direct file in California in 2014.



3 Youth of color experience harsher sentencing outcomes.



Data for 2014 in California

4 This practice excludes families.



In a national survey of family members of system-involved youth, **91%** of respondents said that courts should involve families more. More than **80%** said that a judge never asked them what should happen to their child.

5 It doesn't even deter crime.



Youth charged as adults are almost **2x as likely** to recidivate.

VOTE YES ON PROPOSITION 57!

Give the decision-making power to try a youth as an adult back to a juvenile court judge.

Paid for by Human Impact Partners.

The information on this infographic was adapted from the research brief *Juvenile Injustice: Direct File is Harmful* by Human Impact Partners and The California Alliance for Youth and Community Justices.

Visit www.humanimpact.org to read the full research brief

¹This is just one component of Proposition 57. For more information: [https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_57,_Parole_for_Non-Violent_Criminals_and_Juvenile_Court_Trial_Requirements_\(2016\)](https://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_57,_Parole_for_Non-Violent_Criminals_and_Juvenile_Court_Trial_Requirements_(2016))