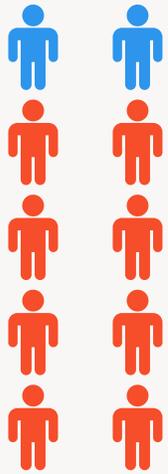
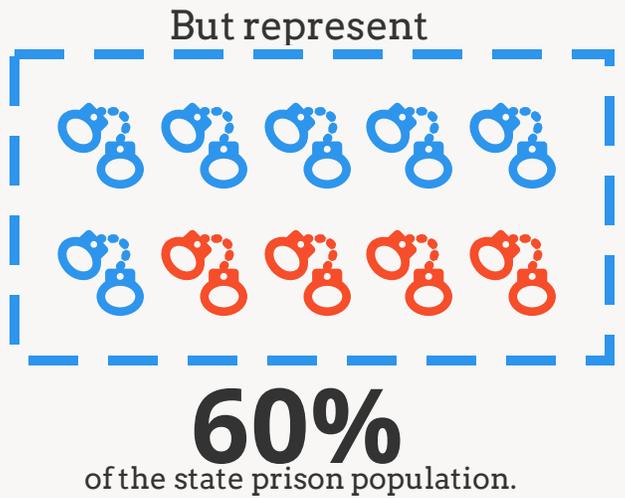


Mass Incarceration: The New Jim Crow

State and Local Policy Failures of
Richmond, Virginia's Criminal Justice System



African-Americans
account for
20%
of Virginia's population



Crime rates have decreased significantly in recent years, but arrest and incarceration rates have not.

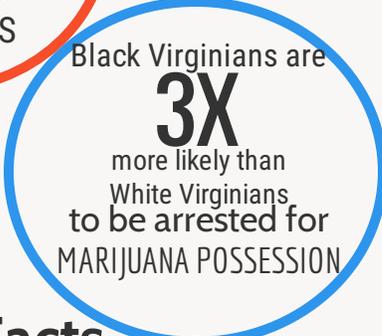
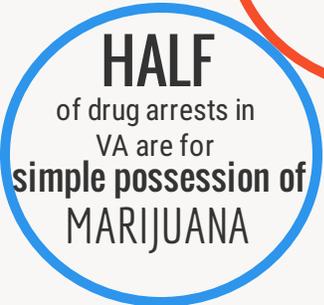
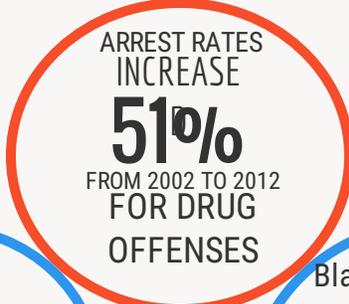
WHY?

Police funding is often tied to performance measures, like arrest quotas. Officers cannot meet their quotas on serious offenses alone, so they focus on low-level, non-violent drug offenses.

Strict drug laws and enforcement has driven up the use of illicit drugs.

School-to-prison pipeline policies that use punitive measures on children push them out of public schools and into the criminal justice system. Without an education, children are being setup for failure later in life.

Racial biases mean that blacks are more likely to be stopped by police. Attorneys, judges, and juries might also fall prey to implicit bias, resulting in higher conviction rates for people of color.



- Require cultural competency training of law enforcement and data collection on traffic stops.
- Make treatment for mental health and substance use disorders the first step, not incarceration.
- Fully utilize mental health/substance abuse dockets. By identifying and treating underlying health issues, there is potential for avoiding felony convictions.
- Invest in schools and train teachers properly on handling discipline problems to prevent involvement of law enforcement.
- Increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour.
- Eliminate mandatory minimum sentences and incarceration by law for low-level offenses.
- Reform the bond system to allow the release of non-dangerous individuals, instead of releasing based on ability to pay.
- Update sanctions for technical violations of parole and probation to no longer include automatic incarceration.
- Fair housing laws and subsidized housing, allowing partial or full rent to be paid through maintaining sobriety and other treatment.

City of Richmond Quick Facts

Richmond City Justice Center (RCJC) opened in 2014 as a "new" jail with alternatives to incarceration.

RCJC serves ~1,200 residents on any given day.

FY2015:
78% of new intakes were black
96% of those were for non-violent offenses

Richmond City Council recently passed RES. 2016-R035, which requires the establishment of alternatives to mass incarceration within the city.

The City of Richmond and RCJC already have some alternative programs, including Recovery for Everyday Addictive Lifestyles (REAL). RCJC residents are provided with substance abuse and mental health treatment, job skills training, and other support.

In 2015, 849 people were enrolled in REAL, but only 51 graduated.

Policy Solutions