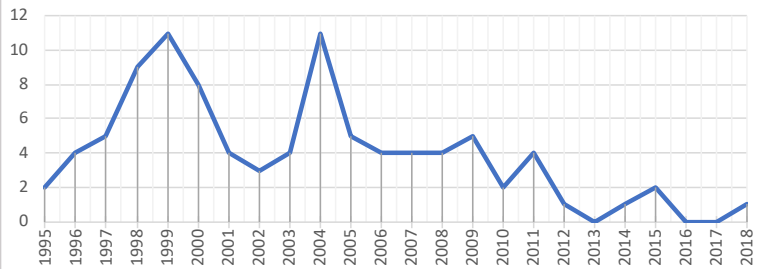




Fact Sheet: Juvenile Life Without Parole in North Carolina

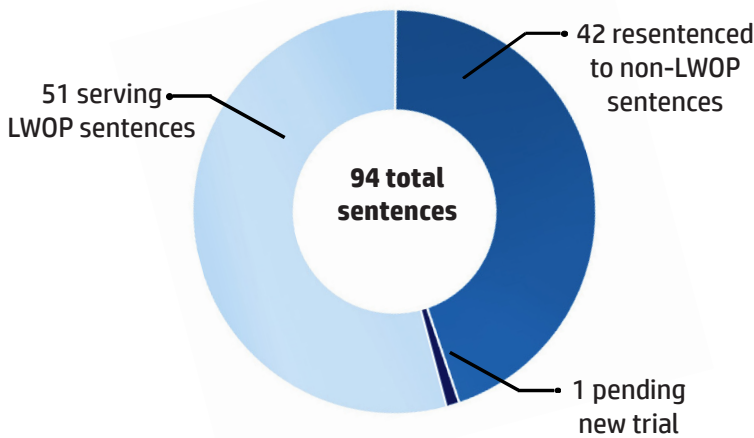
This report examines the cases of 94 people in North Carolina who were sentenced to life without parole (LWOP) for offenses committed between the ages of 13 to 17. Under current North Carolina law, judges are required to hold hearings and make findings regarding juvenile LWOP sentencing for all new cases as well as old ones. However, courts are processing these complex cases inconsistently, and the state may spend millions of dollars litigating the remaining 51 sentences over the coming years...

Number of Juvenile LWOP Sentences in NC, 1995 - 2018



STUDY FINDINGS:

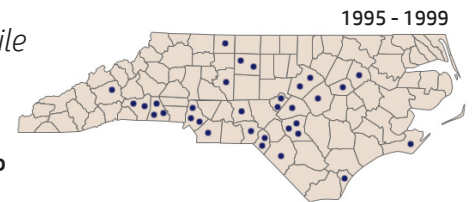
Reversals of Juvenile LWOP Sentences in NC



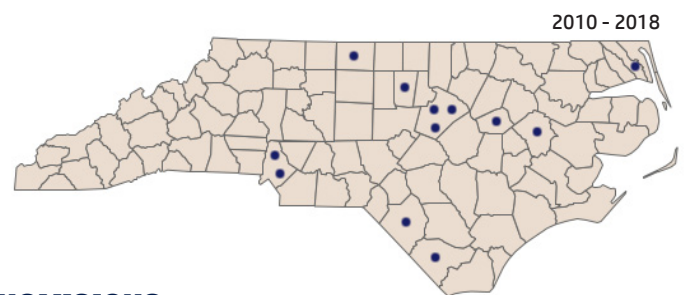
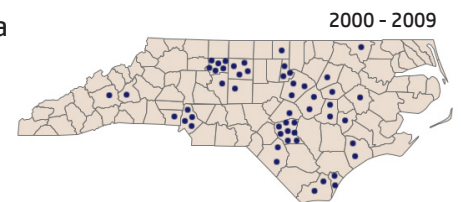
- Of the 94 people sentenced to LWOP as juveniles in North Carolina, only 51 are currently serving those sentences.
- 42 have been re-sentenced to non-LWOP sentences and one is awaiting a new trial.
- Over one third of the juveniles sentenced to LWOP, or 32 individuals, were not the killers or had no intent to kill, but were convicted under a felony murder theory.

- Juvenile LWOP sentences have become exceedingly rare. Since 2011, there have only been five such sentences in the entire state, averaging less than one per year.
- In North Carolina, more than 60 percent of the juvenile LWOP sentences studied were imposed in just 11 counties.

The Decline in Juvenile LWOP Sentencing in NC by County:



- Looking at the LWOP sentences across the years, we find an inertia effect: once a county imposed a juvenile LWOP sentence, it is more likely to continue.

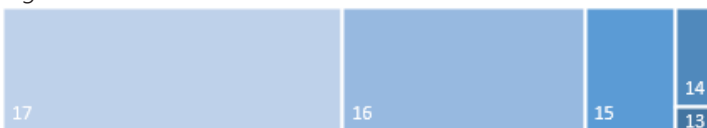


DEMOGRAPHICS:

Gender:



Age:



Race & Ethnicity:



CONCLUSIONS:

The United States treats juveniles who come into conflict with the law in ways that disregard their age, human rights and differences from adults. No other country sentences juveniles to life without parole. Imposition of these sentences is fundamentally unfair, as it varies significantly based on geography, quality of legal representation, child's economic status, and race. Because children's brains are still forming, they lack the ability to assess risks and use good judgment. They are also capable of rehabilitation. Juveniles should be held accountable for their offenses in age-appropriate ways that focus on reintegrating them into society, are applied fairly and consistently, and are more cost-effective for the state.

The JustScience Lab and the research presented in this report was supported by the Charles Koch Foundation. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the funders.