

Breaking the Bias

WOMEN AND INCARCERATION

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DID YOU KNOW?

- 10th** Texas' ranking in the rate of women's incarceration
- 26** Percent of women in Texas prisons who are Black, despite Black women comprising only 6% of Texas' overall population
- 52** Percent of women in Texas prisons in poverty (making only \$10,000 per year prior to their arrest)
- 3x** Likelihood of Black girls to be expelled from their schools compared to their peers – a first stop in the school-to-prison pipeline

As the spotlight continues to shine on discrimination and oppression in the criminal legal system, we must take a closer look at how women are impacted by systems of oppression, and we must change the cycle of harm for women and the generations to come. This International Women's Day, let's acknowledge and amplify the unique experiences of women trapped in Texas' criminal legal system.

WHAT UNIQUE CHALLENGES AND STIGMAS DO WOMEN FACE?

SET UP TO FAIL

Women are more likely to experience social vulnerability – from pay inequity to trauma to lack of adequate healthcare – than their cisgender male counterparts, putting them at risk of criminal legal system involvement.

THE ADULTIFICATION OF BLACK GIRLS

Black girls are particularly vulnerable from a young age because of the intersection of gender and racial bias, with one groundbreaking study revealing that adults presume that Black girls are less deserving of nurturing, protection, and love than their white counterparts.

HARMFUL CONDITIONS OF CONFINEMENT

While no prison is humane or safe, women often face deadly conditions during their incarceration. With insufficient sanitary products and inadequate healthcare and nutrition, the women who survive prison are left in worse shape than when they entered.

GENERATIONAL HARM

Because women are more likely to be the primary caretaker of their family, their incarceration has significant ripple effects. They may lose parental rights even during a brief stay in prison – and regardless of their fitness for parenthood – perpetuating the chronic crises in Texas' foster care system.

Hear from Her: stories from system-impacted women

"The [vast majority] of the women I knew in TDCJ had experienced some form of trauma, whether it was domestic violence, sexual assault as a child or adult or both. For these women the very environment and culture in prison is traumatic, daily. The guards scream at you. The dorms are deafeningly loud. There are ways you can respond to this trauma, but it never really goes away."

-Laurie Pherigo, formerly incarcerated in Texas

To read more firsthand stories from the women of the Texas Women's Justice Coalition, visit the "women's profiles" section of the TJCE website at <https://TexasCJE.org/womens-profiles>

HOW WE CAN #BreakTheBias TOGETHER

This International Women's Day, we can all do our part to rewrite the narrative and create a more just and equitable world for women!



BE AN ADVOCATE FOR THE WOMEN AND GIRLS IN YOUR OWN LIFE!

Acknowledge and stand up against gender bias when it arises in your own family, workplace, and community. Uplift women and girls in your community who've been impacted by the criminal legal system. Be a voice for change when women's justice is on the line.

Although none of us can change the entire system on our own, we can each have a meaningful impact on the people in our lives!

BE AN ADVOCATE FOR TEXAS WOMEN!

Get out and vote for leaders at the local, state, and federal level who support women's justice!

And get ready to join us during Texas's 2023 Legislative Session (January through May) and raise your voice for women in the criminal legal system.

Visit the TCJE Supporter Hub to learn more: <https://TexasCJE.org/supporter-hub>

Make sure to follow along with TCJE and the Texas Women's Justice Coalition to stay in the loop: @TexasCJE on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok.



LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED!

Learn about and join the Texas Women's Justice Coalition, a group of formerly incarcerated women, advocates, and service providers working to create change for incarcerated and returning women in our local areas: <https://TexasCJE.org/texas-womens-justice-coalition>

Learn about and join the Statewide Leadership Council, a group of formerly incarcerated and system-impacted Texans working to transform the (in)justice system in Texas: <https://TexasCJE.org/statewide-leadership-council>

"My passion is allowing other people who have walked the same path as me to come out and feel empowered."



Maggie Luna, formerly incarcerated in Texas and coordinator of the Statewide Leadership Council

How will you #BreakTheBias this International Women's Day? Share your goals on social media, and be sure to use #IWD2022 and tag us @TexasCJE!