

STATSHOT:  
PENNSYLVANIA CRIME  
AND JUSTICE POLL

# JUVENILE SENTENCING ATTITUDES OF PENNSYLVANIANS

## MOST PENNSYLVANIANS AGREE THAT REHABILITATION SHOULD DRIVE JUVENILE SENTENCING

### SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH:

- 71% of Pennsylvanians believe that rehabilitation should drive juvenile sentencing
- 41% of Pennsylvanians believe the most important purpose in sentencing adults is giving them the punishment they deserve
- The belief that rehabilitation should drive adult sentencing diminishes with age

The majority of Pennsylvanians agree that the most important purpose in sentencing juveniles is rehabilitation. Approximately 71% of Pennsylvanians believe training, education and counseling should drive juvenile sentencing, rather than incapacitation (3.3%), deterrence (10.2%) or retribution (13.6%). Conversely, only about 29% of Pennsylvanians believe training, education and counseling should drive adult sentencing. Instead, roughly 41% of Pennsylvanians believe the most important purpose in sentencing adults is giving them the punishment they deserve.

sentencing adults, while 25% believe punishment should be the main purpose. The opposite is true of older Pennsylvanians. Around 25% of Pennsylvanians ages 65-74 believe rehabilitation should drive adult sentencing, while 45% believe the main purpose of adult sentencing is the distribution of punishment. Whereas Pennsylvanians 25-32 years of age are equally divided on the issue, 33% believe the main purpose of adult sentencing is punishment and 33% believe the main purpose is rehabilitation.

A clear age trend exists among the beliefs of Pennsylvanians with regard to what should drive adult sentencing. About 47% of Pennsylvanians ages 18-24 believe rehabilitation should be the main purpose in

## THE RESEARCH

The Penn State Crime and Justice Poll is a survey of 600 randomly-selected Pennsylvanians designed to assess attitudes and beliefs about crime and the criminal justice system. Topics include:

- Attitudes toward police
- Prison policy
- Community corrections
- Capital punishment
- Militarization of police
- Police visibility
- The PA sex offender registry
- Juvenile justice
- Parole policy
- and other topics

The Pennsylvania Crime and Justice Poll was developed by the Criminal Justice faculty of the School of Public Affairs at Penn State Harrisburg and sponsored by the Penn State Justice and Safety Institute. Data were collected by The Center for Survey Research at Penn State Harrisburg.

You can get more information on the PA Crime and Justice Poll and the Criminal Justice Program online at: <http://harrisburg.psu.edu/public-affairs/criminal-justice>

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