

# Access to Higher Education for those with Criminal Records

## What do college students think?

### The Prevalence of Criminal Records

Almost 1 in every 3 Americans has a criminal record (The Sentencing Project 2015).



### Attending College Can Help People Stop Committing Crime

Increased educational attainment is associated with a reduction in criminal offending (Chappell 2004; Vacca 2004; Davis et al. 2013; Ellison et al. 2017).



### Exclusion from Higher Education

Those with criminal records are much more likely to be rejected (Rosenthal et al. 2015; Custer 2016; Stewart and Uggen 2019).



### Most Colleges Ask about Criminal History

80% of private and 59% of public four-year colleges ask about criminal records (Stewart and Uggen 2019).



### Faculty and Administrators Cite Campus Safety as a Concern

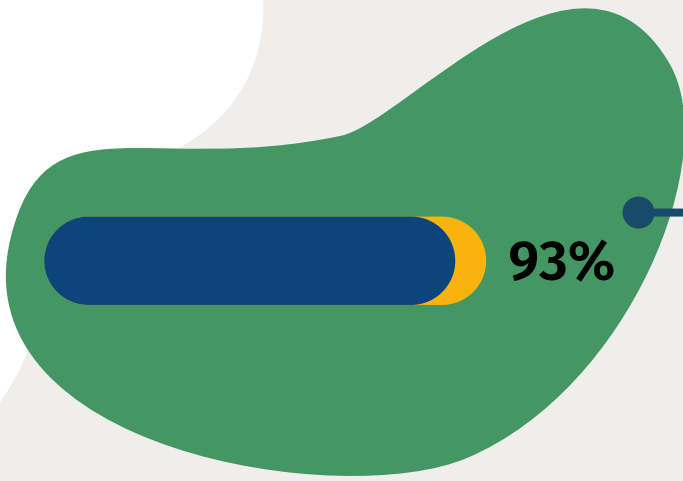
However, there is little to no evidence that these polices keep students safer (Hughes et al. 2014; Custer 2016).



But what do students think about this issue? Do they support their justice-involved classmates? Are they concerned about campus safety?

# A Survey of 164 College Students Found...

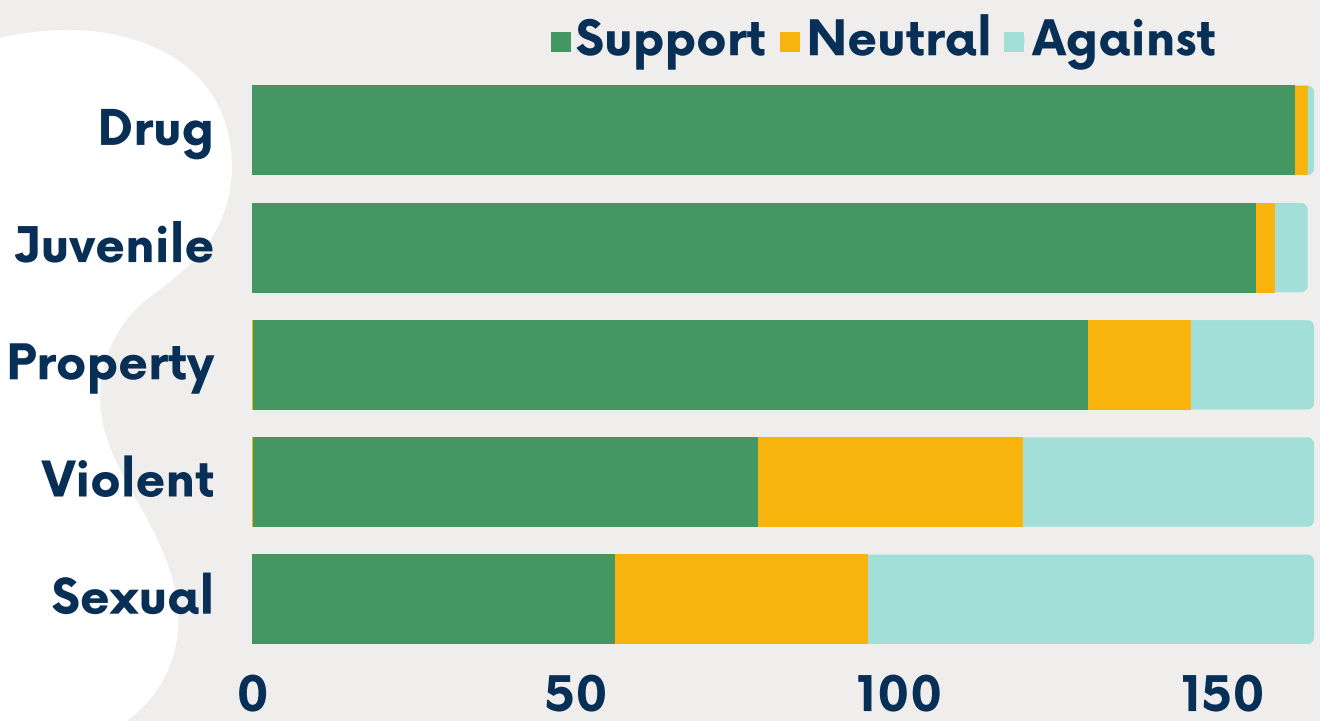
## High Support for the Justice-Involved



93% of students surveyed supported those with criminal records having access to college.

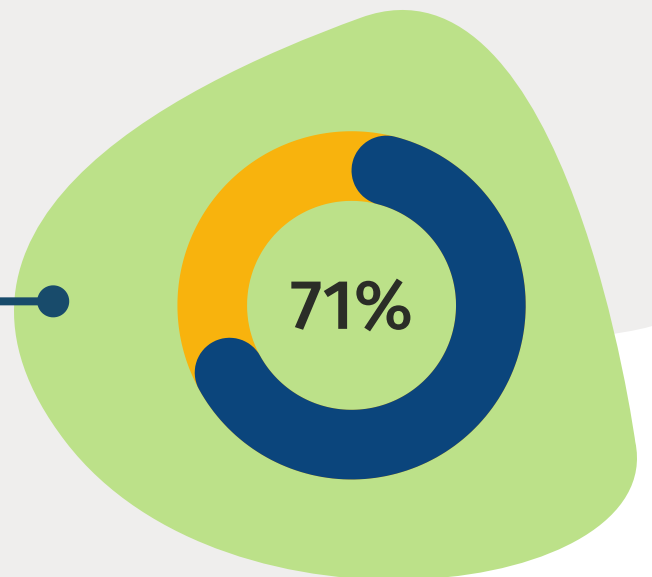
## Support Depended Upon Conviction Type

Student level of support was greatest for those with drug convictions and least for those with sexual convictions.



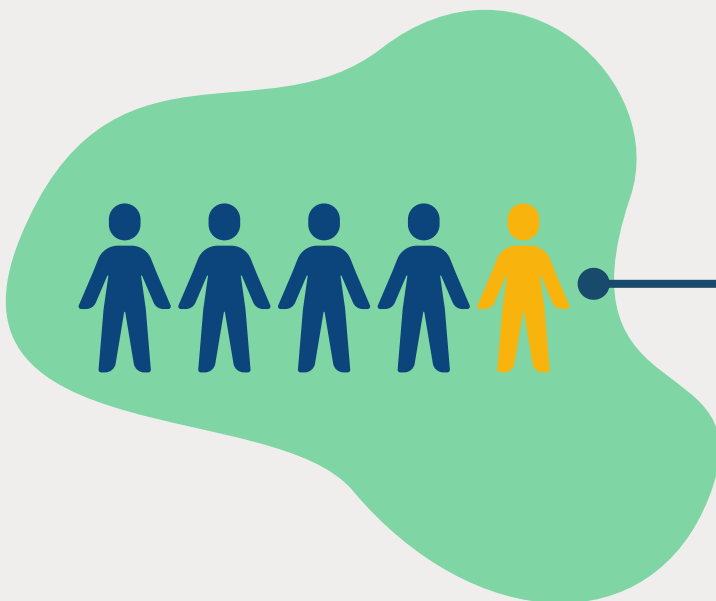
## Students Were Not Concerned About Campus Safety

71% of students surveyed thought that those with criminal records would not impact campus safety.



## Students Were Generally Comfortable with Their Justice-Involved Peers

Only 20% (or one in five) of students were uncomfortable being in class with an individual who has a criminal record.



## Students Thought Some Criminal Records Should Be Considered... But Colleges Should Help Those with Records Gain Access

About 60% of students surveyed thought that criminal records should be used in the admissions process and most were concerned about felony records.

However, 92% of students were in support of helping those with criminal records gain access to higher education.