

UNFIT ADOLESCENT

MY NAME IS TASHA AND I AM AN ADOLESCENT OFFENDER. LET US EXAMINE THE WORD ADOLESCENT SHALL WE? AN ADOLESCENT IS ONE UNDERGOING ADOLESCENCE; A PERIOD OF IMMATURITY, A PERSON WHO HAS UNDERGONE PUBERTY BUT NOT REACHED MATURITY: A TEENAGER. AN ADOLESCENT CANNOT: PURCHASE ALCOHOL, CONSENT TO SEX, RENT A HOTEL ROOM, PURCHASE CIGARETTES, SIGN A LEGALLY BINDING CONTRACT, VOTE, OR GAMBLE; AT 15 I COULDN'T EVEN OBTAIN A CALIFORNIA ID OR DRIVERS LICENSE, HOWEVER, I COULD BE TRIED AND SENTENCED AS AN ADULT. THESE FACTS DO NOT ABSOLVE ME OF GUILT FOR MY CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR, HOWEVER, MY CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR DID NOT PERSIST INTO ADULTHOOD, BUT MY LIFE SENTENCE HAS.

TRAVEL BACK WITH ME TO WHEN YOU WERE 15, (NOW I REALIZE THIS MAY BE A LONGER JOURNEY FOR SOME OF US) NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW, (AND IF YOU WERE LIKE ME, YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW IT ALL) AS WE MATURE WE REALIZE WE HARDLY KNEW ANYTHING AT ALL. I WOULD NOW LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU WHAT ARE CALLED MITIGATING FACTORS. A MITIGATING FACTOR IS SOMETHING THAT CONTRIBUTES TO A RESULT TO MAKE LESS HARSH.

MITIGATING FACTORS INCLUDE: EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE IN THE HOME, SUFFERING ANY FORM OF ABUSE, MENTAL ILLNESS, INADEQUATE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, ABJECT POVERTY; JUST TO NAME A FEW. A SINGLE EXPOSURE TO FIREARM VIOLENCE DOUBLES A CHILDS CHANCES OF LATER ENGAGING IN CRIME, FURTHER, CHILDREN