

#MercyForChrista Toolkit

***Christa's execution is scheduled for
September 30th
WE NEED YOUR HELP!***

Share the toolkit here:

bit.ly/45UBB6w

Sign and share her petition here:

<http://bit.ly/4cjoSh4>

Follow Us & Share on Instagram:

[@MercyForChrista](https://www.instagram.com/MercyForChrista)

[@DeathPenaltyWW](https://www.instagram.com/DeathPenaltyWW)

and TikTok:

[@deathpenaltyww](https://www.tiktok.com/@deathpenaltyww)

Learn more about Christa's story [here](#).

Sign & share the petition [here](#).

BACKGROUND:

Christa Pike is a survivor of rapes and childhood sexual abuse at the hands of multiple men. As a child, the State knew about the abuse and did not protect her. Special Master appointed by the Tennessee Supreme Court recently found that Christa suffers from PTSD and bipolar disorder because of her rapes and childhood sexual abuse. Today, the State of Tennessee concedes that Christa has a history of sexual assault and PTSD and acknowledges the terrible things she has suffered.

Yet Tennessee still plans on executing her on Sept. 30, 2026, for a crime she committed as a teenager suffering from extreme mental health issues that were undiagnosed and untreated at the time. The jury who sentenced her to death never learned her story or the context of her troubled life. Her abuse and mental illness do not excuse her actions, but her history does help to explain why they were a tragic and predictable outcome of a childhood marked by unspeakable violence and abuse, compounded by the failures of the State, police, school system and caregivers to protect a vulnerable girl.

By 1995, Christa was just 18 years old when she and two other teenagers committed a horrific crime. Her life was spiraling out of control, and to try to gain stability, she joined Job Corps in Knoxville, Tennessee with the goal of becoming a nurse. Almost immediately, Christa began a relationship with Tadaryl Shipp. Tadaryl was abusive and controlling, hitting and kicking her, and showing the razor he carried in his mouth to intimidate her, creating a relationship dynamic where Christa felt beholden to do anything to please him.

Christa feared that Colleen Slemmer's interest in Tadaryl threatened their relationship. Triggered by the prospect of abandonment after a lifetime of neglect, Christa, together with Shadolla Peterson and Tadaryl, walked into the woods to scare Colleen Slemmer. The situation quickly turned violent and spun out of control, and Christa and Tadaryl took Colleen's life.

At trial, the jury never heard the mitigating evidence of Christa's traumatic childhood, the multiple rapes and sexual assaults she experienced, her mental illness, or the abuse she suffered from Tadaryl. In 1995 there was little understanding of how brain development impacts decision making in young people. Now, the criminal legal system is making changes based on these scientific findings. Today, there is next to no chance Christa would be sentenced to death—she was the person sentenced to death in Tennessee for a crime committed at age 18, on March 30, 1996.

Christa is scheduled to be executed on September 30th despite the compelling mitigating circumstances of her torturous childhood, her young age (18), and her undiagnosed and untreated mental illness. Her codefendant and abuser Tadaryl Shipp was given life in prison with the possibility of parole for the same crime.

Time is running out, and we need your help.

Help save Christa's life by sharing her story and advocating that her death sentence be replaced by life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Please use this toolkit to post about Christa on social media so we can help prevent her execution! If you have questions please email deathpenaltyworldwide@cornell.edu

TAKE ACTION to achieve #MercyforChrista

- **Share Christa's story on *any* of your social media platforms using the suggested images, text, and hashtags below**
- **Sign & share the petition**
- **Listen & share the "Unrestorable" podcast**
- **Share our Instagram stories/images (@MercyForChrista, and @DeathPenaltyWW)**

HASHTAGS TO USE (use 2 hashtags per Tweet, unlimited hashtags for Instagram & Threads):

ALWAYS USE #MercyForChrista

Instagram hashtags: #MercyForChrista, #Mercy4CSAvictims #CSAvictim
#Justice4CSAvictims #ProtectSurvivors #HerWholeTruth #DeathRow #BreakTheCycle
#BelieveWomen #MentalHealthAwareness #StopChildhoodSexualViolence
#CSASurvivor

PARTNERS/ALLIES TO TAG ON INSTAGRAM:

- Mercy for Christa @MercyForChrista
- Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide @DeathPenaltyWW
- Reprieve @Reprievehq
- Death Penalty Information Center @deathpenaltyinformationcenter
- Survived and Punished @survivepunish
- National Black Women's Justice Institute @NBWJI
- The Sentencing Project @TheSentencingProject
- World Coalition Against the Death Penalty @worldcoalition
- Amnesty International USA @amnestyusa
- Human Rights Watch @humanrightswatch
- The Marshall Project @MarshallProj
- The Vera Institute @verainstitute
- The Equal Justice Initiative @eji_org
- The Promise of Justice Initiative @JusticesPromise
- Together Against the Death Penalty@ECPM_asso

TWEETS/IG CAPTIONS/CONTENT FOR THREADS:

1. #MercyForChrista! She was a mentally ill and traumatized teenager and survivor of #CSA when she committed her crime. She deserves mercy, not execution. Change her sentence to life in prison.
2. #ChristaPike's case is an example of how courts ignore gender-based violence. The jury never heard why, as a survivor of #CSA, she was more susceptible to the

influence of her violent and abusive boyfriend and co-defendant, who got a lesser sentence. #BelieveWomen #SameCrimeDifferentSentence

3. THREAD

(THREAD )

a. #ChristaPike was raped repeatedly as a child. First in Preschool by her grandmother's boyfriend, then later by a neighbor, her mother's boyfriends, and a stranger. With no caring adults in her life, she was left to fend for herself.

<http://bit.ly/4cjoSh4>

b. By the time she was 17, Christa had been raped and sexually abused by multiple different men. She sought help from the police multiple times, but her attackers faced almost no repercussions.

c. In an attempt to gain stability, she joined Job Corps in Tennessee. Little did she know she was headed to an environment where violence was the norm.

d. After joining Job Corps, Christa entered into a relationship with Tadaryl Shipp. He was physically and emotionally abusive.

e. Because of her trauma history, Christa would do almost anything to keep Tadaryl from leaving her. A lifetime of violence at the hands of men had conditioned her to see him as her protector despite the fact that he abused her.

f. Together with another teenager, Tadaryl and Christa killed Colleen Slemmer. Now an adult with several mental health diagnoses and a fully developed brain, Christa feels deep remorse for her crime.

g. Her abuser and co-defendant Tadaryl was given a life sentence, while Christa is scheduled to be executed on Sep 30. Help stop this injustice! Tell TN that executing victims of child rape is unacceptable

h. Sign the petition to Gov. Lee here: <http://bit.ly/4cjoSh4>

4. As a victim of repeated childhood sexual abuse & #domesticviolence, gender-based violence has pervaded #ChristaPike's life. Sentencing her to death without hearing her life story is another act of gendered violence - we need to secure #Mercy4Christa.

5.  Join the over 7,000 signatories & sign the petition to help get #Mercy4Christa now! <https://bit.ly/30s3hRx>

6. #ChristaPike was a teenage survivor of repeated child rape whose life was marked by sexual abuse, violence, and neglect. Her trial lawyer never explained the impact of this abuse to the jury that convicted her of capital murder. This is not justice.
#Mercy4Christa

See graphics on next pages: 

***After a life marked
by violence,
Christa faces
execution by the
unqualified
executioners of the
state of Tennessee
on September
30th.***

#Mercy4Christa



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide

#Mercy4Christa

***DO NOT LET
TENNESSEE
EXECUTE A
CHILD RAPE
SURVIVOR.***

**LEARN MORE @ MERCYFORCHRISTA.ORG
SIGN THE PETITION TODAY.**



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide

***For almost 30
years Christa was
held in solitary
confinement
in a cell “the size
of a parking
space.”***

#Mercy4Christa



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide

A black and white photograph of a young woman, Christa, with long dark hair, resting her head on her hand and looking directly at the camera with a somber expression.

#Mercy4Christa

HELP US SAVE CHRISTA!

**Visit mercyforchrista.org/petition to sign the petition
urging Governor Bill Lee to grant Christa clemency
and commute her sentence to life in prison.**



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide



[#Mercy4Christa](#)

**GOVERNOR BILL LEE,
YOU CANNOT ABANDON A
SURVIVOR OF REPEATED
CHILDHOOD SEXUAL
ABUSE!**

♡ 225 💬 36 ↻ 5 🚩 25

govbilllee Any time a child has to come into TN's care, there should be a safe home ready to take them in.



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide

SHE WAS ONLY

18

***"Can I please hug my
mom? Before I go.
Please let me just
hug my mom."***

#Mercy4Christa



Cornell Law School
Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide