

## Special Populations: Women, Youth, LGBT People, and People with Mental Illness

While all people in prison deserve humane treatment and living conditions, certain populations have particular needs or characteristics that make them more vulnerable within the system of mass incarceration. While we distinguish these categories below for ease of organization, it rapidly becomes obvious that they overlap in a multitude of ways.



Detail from “New Decisions and Second Chances,” 2013. [www.Groundswell.nyc](http://www.Groundswell.nyc) in partnership with East River Academy. Acrylic on Brick Wall, 9 x 26 ft, Queens, NY. By Esteban del Valle, DonChristian Jones, and 12 incarcerated teens.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS  
**Women**

The United States incarcerates almost 1/3 of the 625,000 women and girls confined to jails and prisons worldwide<sup>268</sup>, and women's incarceration has grown faster than men's since the 1970s<sup>269</sup>. This is largely due to the War on Drugs, which sweeps women up as accomplices or accessories to drug crime, even without their direct involvement. According to one perspective, "Although ending the war on drugs would not make a major dent in the overall prison population, it could reduce considerably the number of incarcerated women, especially African-American women."<sup>270</sup>

Women often come to prison with complex issues. According to the superintendent of Massachusetts' women's prison, "Women offenders are more challenging to manage [than men] because of their mental health and medical issues, histories of trauma, and responsibilities as primary caretakers of children."<sup>271</sup>

An estimated one in twenty-five of the roughly 98,000 women incarcerated in state prisons at any given time report that they were pregnant when admitted.<sup>272</sup> Giving birth in prison presents its own set of absurd challenges; for instance,

in 30 states, it is legal to shackle women while they are in labor.<sup>273</sup> Many consider this a form of torture. The federal government only restricted this practice in immigration detention centers in 2014.<sup>274</sup> In Minnesota, which in 2014 passed a fairly progressive law improving the treatment of pregnant incarcerated women<sup>275</sup>, a doula may be present during labor but can only touch her client during childbirth and

the three hours immediately following<sup>276</sup>. And then there is the question of how long mother and baby may remain together. This ranges from a high of almost three years in Washington State to as little as two days in Minnesota (three for a C-section birth).<sup>277</sup> Only about eight prison nurseries, where babies can remain with their mothers, currently operate in the US.<sup>278</sup>

### Exodus Chapter 2: Women's Leadership

**<sup>1</sup> A certain man of the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw how beautiful he was, she hid him for three months. <sup>3</sup> When she could hide him no longer, she got a wicker basket for him and caulked it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child into it and placed it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. <sup>4</sup> And his sister stationed herself at a distance, to learn what would befall him.**

**<sup>5</sup> The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe in the Nile, while her maidens walked along the Nile. She spied the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to fetch it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw that it was a child, a boy crying. She took pity on it and said, "This must be a Hebrew child." <sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a Hebrew nurse to suckle the child for you?" <sup>8</sup> And Pharaoh's daughter answered, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will pay your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it.**

268 <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/incarcerations-front-door-report.pdf>

269 Walmsley, "World Female Imprisonment List," [http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wfil\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wfil_2nd_edition.pdf)

270 Gottschalk, p. 122.

271 Gottschalk, p. 5

272 <http://www.cjinvolvedwomen.org/innovator-massachusetts-correctional-institution-at-framingham>

273 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/15/hard-labor>

274 As of September 2014: [http://colorlines.com/archives/2014/09/minnesota\\_law\\_provides\\_birth\\_doulas\\_for\\_incarcerated\\_women.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2014/09/minnesota_law_provides_birth_doulas_for_incarcerated_women.html)

275 <https://www.aclu.org/blog/immigrants-rights-reproductive-freedom/end-near-shackling-pregnant-women>

276 [http://colorlines.com/archives/2014/09/minnesota\\_law\\_provides\\_birth\\_doulas\\_for\\_incarcerated\\_women.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2014/09/minnesota_law_provides_birth_doulas_for_incarcerated_women.html)

277 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/15/hard-labor>

278 <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/ct-decatur-prison-nursery-met-20150501-story.html#page=1>

## Facts and Figures

1. Women's incarceration has grown faster than men's, thanks largely to the war on drugs:<sup>282</sup>

- From 1974-2001, a woman's chances of being sent to prison increased sixfold; a man's, only threefold.

- From 1970-2012, the proportion of women in federal and state prisons increased from 3% to 7%.

2. Women have higher rates of mental health problems than men do in prisons.<sup>283</sup>

- State prisons: 73% of women compared to 55% of men

- Federal prisons: 75% of women compared to 63% of men

3. Women tend to be primary caretakers for their children before being incarcerated (77% of mothers, in both federal and state prison).<sup>284</sup>

- 42% of mothers in state prisons lived in a single-parent household prior to their incarceration.

- In federal prison, the number was 52%.

## Sample Partner Agencies

- Women+Prison: A Website Installation and Zine Created Entirely from the Work and Life of America's Incarcerated Women (<http://womenandprison.org/>)

- Women's Prison Association: <http://wpaonline.org>

- The Prison Birth Project: [www.theprisonbirthproject.org](http://www.theprisonbirthproject.org)

- Chicago Books to Women in Prison is a volunteer

collective that distributes paperback books free of charge to people incarcerated in women's prisons nationwide: <http://chicagobwp.org/>

- California Coalition for Women Prisoners: <http://womenprisoners.org>

**Bedford Hills Correctional Center, an hour north of Manhattan, operates the nation's oldest prison nursery (it opened in 1901.)<sup>279</sup> It's brightly painted and contains the usual paraphernalia of parenting—bottles, diapers, plastic toys. Mothers get their own rooms (though they double up when the unit gets crowded) with a crib, where they and their babies can stay until the age of 18 months. Entrance requirements are fairly strict—nobody convicted of violent crimes or crimes involving children is admitted—but the argument is that these moms deserve a chance to be parents. In addition to prison chores, mothers get parenting classes and the opportunity to bond with their children. That may really pay off for the family as well as for society. Housing each child costs \$24,000 per year, but mothers who participate in nursery programs are more than three times less likely to return to prison than those who are separated from their kids.<sup>280</sup> Amortize that extra cost over the years of not paying for reincarceration (at \$30,000 per year for Mom<sup>281</sup>) and the investment pays for itself.**

279 <http://www.psmag.com/politics-and-law/the-rise-of-prison-nurseries-even-a-prison-cannot-ignore-biology>

280 <http://abcnews.go.com/US/babies-born-raised-bars-mothers-returning-prison/story?id=22413184&singlePage=true>

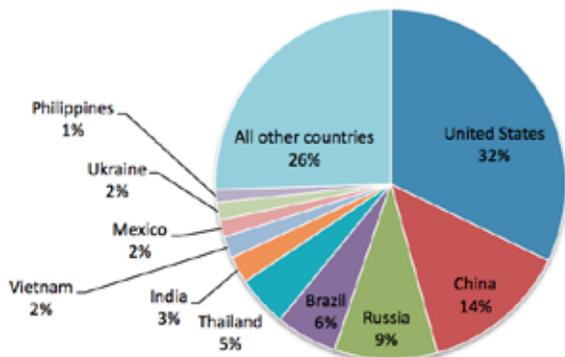
281 <http://abcnews.go.com/US/babies-born-raised-bars-mothers-returning-prison/story?id=22413184&singlePage=true>

282 Gottschalk, p. 122.

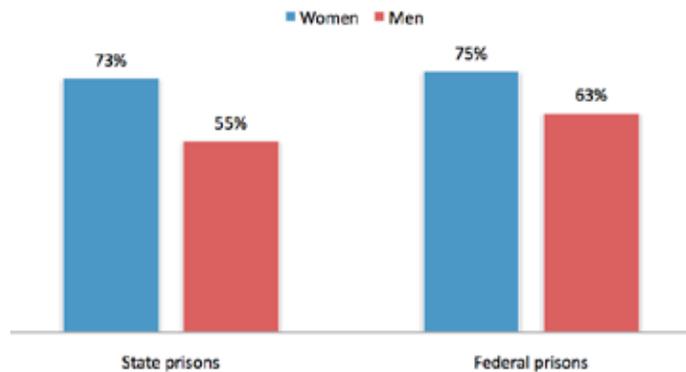
283 <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/mhppji.pdf>

284 BJS 2008 p. 5: <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/pptmc.pdf>

**Global Female Imprisonment List**<sup>285</sup>



**Rates of mental health problems, 2005**<sup>286</sup>



## What's Working: Trauma-Informed Care

Lynn Bissonnette, Superintendent of Massachusetts's women's prison in Framingham, has transformed the prison she runs into a trauma-informed facility. She says, "Whereas in the past we would see negative behavior as simply a management issue, now we are looking more closely at the root causes of negative behavior."<sup>287</sup> This has had implications for staff training, operational procedures, and support systems the prison offers. For instance, the state waived the usual procedure of strip-searching incarcerated women who were working in the solitary confinement unit, because Bissonnette knew many of them had a history of being sexually assaulted and the procedure would do more harm than good. To reduce the caseload of overburdened mental health clinicians, the prison instituted a peer-support system, where women who aren't having a crisis but do need someone to talk to can get appropriate help. This thinking is part of a nascent movement supported by the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care, which "seeks to change the paradigm from one that asks, 'What's wrong with you?' to one that asks, 'What has happened to you?'"<sup>288</sup> It isn't rocket science, but if it becomes a mainstream part of corrections thinking, it could improve conditions for all incarcerated people.

<sup>285</sup> Walmsley, "World Female Imprisonment List," [http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wfil\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wfil_2nd_edition.pdf)

<sup>286</sup> <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/mhppji.pdf>

<sup>287</sup> <http://cjinvolwedwomen.org/massachusetts-correctional-institution-at-framingham/>

<sup>288</sup> <http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/about>

**SPECIAL POPULATIONS**  
**Youth**

The United States confines a much higher proportion of its youth than other developed nations—336 per 100,000 American youths. South Africa comes in a distant second, at 69 per 100,000 youth.<sup>289</sup> Reforms<sup>290</sup> to juvenile justice have slowed the rate of arrest and improved prison conditions for many young people, but youth continue to be processed through the system at the same high rates.<sup>291</sup>

Judges have always been able to transfer a case from juvenile court to the criminal system, but rarely did so before 1970. From the 1970's to the 1990's, however, states adopted a variety of laws that reduced judicial discretion and increased the number of cases that were automatically tried in adult court.<sup>292</sup> State-by-state reporting is spotty, so we have no idea exactly how many children under age 18 are tried in adult courts<sup>293</sup>; one estimate, however, put the number in 2007 at 175,000.<sup>294</sup> Fourteen states have no minimum age for trying children as adults, and children as young as eight have been prosecuted as adults.<sup>295</sup>

What happens when children are tried in adult court? The data are not conclusive, but most studies have shown that adult courts are more likely to incarcerate than juvenile courts, and for longer sentences. For murder and weapons offenses, juveniles transferred to criminal court may even be

sentenced more harshly (for longer time, and with less likelihood of receiving probation instead of incarceration) than adults.<sup>296</sup> Trying juveniles in adult court has, by and large, not reduced juvenile crime, and may even increase recidivism.<sup>297</sup>

Federal law usually prohibits incarcerating children with adults but provides an exception if the child is being tried as an adult. Across the country, about 10,000 children are incarcerated with adults.<sup>298</sup> Forty-eight states allow juveniles awaiting trial in criminal court to be held with adults in jail, and 14 of them mandate it in at least some circumstances.<sup>299</sup>

When children are held in adult jails, they are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted<sup>300</sup> and 36 times more likely to commit suicide<sup>301</sup> than if they were in a juvenile detention facility.

**“Not Feeling Cared For”<sup>302</sup>  
by a 16-year-old young woman in juvenile detention**

**I feel alone  
Like a deer that's just been born  
But its mom died  
Like the only flower  
In a field  
Like a pool of water  
In the middle of the desert**

**I feel deserted  
Like an open piece of candy on the shelf  
That nobody wants to buy  
Like a box of kittens  
And I'm the last one in the litter to be picked  
Like an un-ironed pair of pants  
That nobody wants to wear**

**I feel the need for love  
A squeeze of lemon in my glass of water  
A breeze on a warm summer's eve  
A whisper in my ear that tickles**

289 <http://jjie.org/hub/community-based-alternatives/>  
 290 <http://www.eji.org/node/820>  
 291 <http://www.thenation.com/article/205129/states-are-required-educate-students-behind-bars-heres-what-really-happens>  
 292 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 8-9  
 293 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 12-21  
 294 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 21  
 295 <http://www.eji.org/childrenprison>  
 296 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 24  
 297 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 26  
 298 <http://www.eji.org/childrenprison>  
 299 <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf> p. 22  
 300 [http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/97-02\\_rep\\_riskjuvenilesface\\_jj.pdf](http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/97-02_rep_riskjuvenilesface_jj.pdf); see also extensive reporting at: <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/02/25/a-boy-among-men>  
 301 <http://www.eji.org/node/820>  
 302 Written and published through the Pongo Publishing Teen Writing Project: <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/learn-as-you-go/pongo-teen-writing-project>

Incarcerated juveniles also lose out on education. In a national survey, only half of incarcerated youth reported “good” education programs, and only 45% spent a full day (at least six hours) in classes. The survey also found a third of these children had a learning disability, a rate seven times higher than the national public school rate, and less than half of those received appropriate educational services. Perhaps most enlightening, 70% of those surveyed reported experiencing some kind of trauma in their lives. When students are able to overcome all of these barriers and complete some classes, they often face a rude surprise when they are released: their credits don’t follow them out of prison.<sup>303</sup>

The bottom line is that, in the vast majority of cases, youth and society are both better served by diverting children from prison and meeting their diverse needs in other ways.

### The Cry of a Child<sup>305</sup>

**When Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch was a young man, he lived in the same house as his father, Rabbi Schneur Zalman. Rabbi DovBer and his family lived in the ground floor apartment, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman lived on the second floor.**

**One night, while Rabbi DovBer was deeply engrossed in his studies, his youngest child fell out of his cradle. Rabbi DovBer heard nothing. But Rabbi Schneur Zalman, who was also immersed in study in his room on the second floor, heard the infant’s cries. The Rebbe came downstairs, lifted the infant from the floor, soothed his tears, replaced him in the cradle, and rocked him to sleep. Rabbi DovBer remained oblivious throughout it all.**

**Later, Rabbi Schneur Zalman admonished his son: “No matter how lofty your involvements, you must never fail to hear the cry of a child.”**

It can cost as much as \$148,767 to incarcerate a single child for one year.<sup>304</sup> Surely we could provide housing, food, education, medical care, and counseling for less than that.

### Facts and Figures

Who are the kids we lock up?<sup>306</sup>

- Only 34% of those in juvenile detention are there for violent crimes.
- More than 20% are there for technical violations or offenses such as disobeying parental orders, running away, truancy, or missing curfew. Anecdotally, we know that many of these kids are escaping from violence or abuse at home.



**Photographer Richard Ross takes pictures and records the stories of girls in jail. View some of his work at [http://www.slate.com/blogs/ behold/2015/04/26/richard\\_ross\\_photographs\\_girls\\_in\\_the\\_juvenile\\_justice\\_system\\_in\\_his\\_book.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/ behold/2015/04/26/richard_ross_photographs_girls_in_the_juvenile_justice_system_in_his_book.html)**

<sup>303</sup> <http://www.thenation.com/article/205129/states-are-required-educate-students-behind-bars-heres-what-really-happens>

<sup>304</sup> [http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/03/criminal-kids-juvenile-justice-sentencing-reform-incarceration-116065\\_Page3.html#ixzz3ZHyne6bA](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/03/criminal-kids-juvenile-justice-sentencing-reform-incarceration-116065_Page3.html#ixzz3ZHyne6bA)

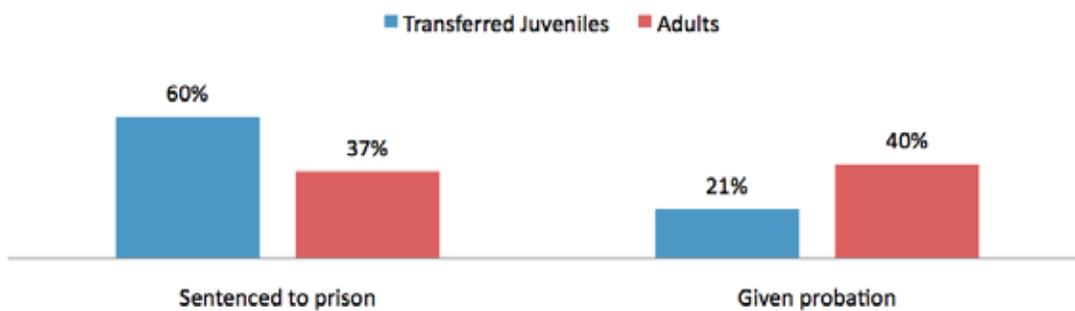
<sup>305</sup> Retold at [http://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/115281/jewish/The-Cry-of-a-Child.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/115281/jewish/The-Cry-of-a-Child.htm)

<sup>306</sup> <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2010/jan/07/the-crisis-of-juvenile-prison-rape-a-new-report/>

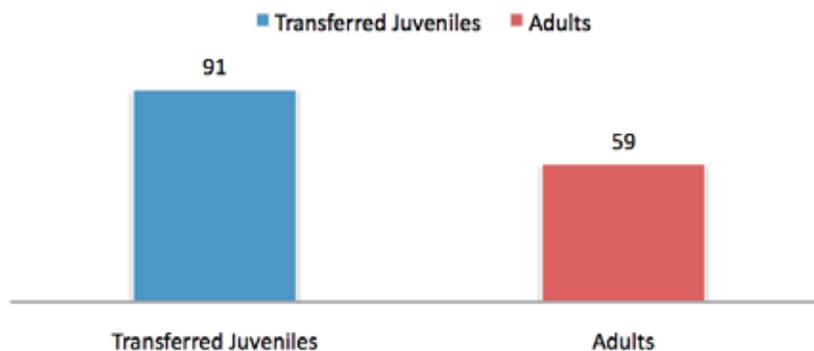
## Sample Partner Organizations

- Equal Justice Initiative: [www.eji.org](http://www.eji.org)
- National Juvenile Justice Network: [www.njjn.org](http://www.njjn.org)
- Southern Poverty Law Center: <http://www.splcenter.org/what-we-do/children-at-risk>
- Project NIA is an advocacy, organizing, popular education, research, and capacity-building center with the long-term goal of ending youth incarceration: [www.project-nia.org](http://www.project-nia.org)
- Center for Juvenile and Criminal Justice (California): <http://www.cjcj.org>
- Pennsylvania Lawyers for Youth assists reintegrating youth with re-enrollment in school when they return home from their juvenile detention placements: <http://www.palawyersforyouth.org>

### Sentencing for Adults and Juveniles Transferred into Adult Criminal Courts<sup>307</sup>



### Mean maximum prison sentence length (in months)<sup>308</sup>



<sup>307</sup> <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf>

<sup>308</sup> <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/232434.pdf>

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

Gays and lesbians in jails and prison face all sorts of harassment and violence; for instance, LGBT people are ten times more likely to be sexually assaulted by another incarcerated person than heterosexual people, and more than twice as likely to be assaulted by correctional staff.<sup>309</sup> Transgender people generally face even more serious conditions though with a few bright spots. The vast majority of state facilities require people to be incarcerated according to their gender-assigned-at-birth.<sup>310</sup> Cook County Jail<sup>311</sup> (Chicago), New York State juvenile detention facilities<sup>312</sup>, and a small handful of others allow transgender people to be housed according to their gender expression.

Incarcerated transgender people are 13 times more likely than other incarcerated people to be sexually assaulted; almost 60 percent reported being raped, compared to 4 percent of

cis-gender incarcerated people.<sup>313</sup> In many jurisdictions, they may be placed in solitary confinement “for their own protection,” which is merely a different form of violence.<sup>314</sup>

Most states deny hormone treatment to transgender inmates. One major exception is California, which provides a full range of treatment. Other states allow access in theory, but place numerous bureaucratic obstacles in the way. Many others deny access to hormones as “unnecessary,” or allow only whatever regimen a person was taking at the time of incarceration. The Justice Department successfully argued that such policies are unconstitutional “because they do not provide for individualized assessment and treatment.”<sup>315</sup>

In two cases to date—one in Massachusetts, the other in California—a judge has ordered a prison system to provide an incarcerated person with sex-reassignment surgery.<sup>316</sup> In California, the judge wrote that this should be done “as promptly as possible” and that failing to was being “deliberately indifferent to her serious medical need.”

### In Her Own Words

**“I’m trying to relax after being degraded on a daily basis for several years. In prison, I was a toy for the boys and a jester for the staff.”**

**“People think I’m upset because I was denied a nail polish or a fingernail file [while in prison], that it was about vanity. But anybody who’s known me my whole life knows this is not a costume I slip in and out of. It’s my identity, and when my outside doesn’t match my soul, I suffer.” – Ashley Diamond, a black transgender woman, released from Georgia state prison in August, 2015<sup>317</sup>**

**The Southern Poverty Law Center has produced a short video containing segments that Ashley recorded in prison and then smuggled out: [https://youtu.be/ho\\_RRiuLjY](https://youtu.be/ho_RRiuLjY)**

### Caring for the Body

**“A kind man benefits himself” (Proverbs 11.17) This is Hillel. When Hillel the Elder left his disciples, they asked him, ‘Rabbi, where are you going?’ He said to them, ‘To perform a commandment.’ They said to him, ‘And what then is this commandment?’ He said to them, ‘To bathe in the (public) bath.’ They said to him, ‘And is this a commandment?!’ He said to them, ‘Yes. If the man who is appointed to take care of the images of kings, which (the gentiles) set up in their theatres and circuses, scours them and rinses them, and [the state] provides his livelihood, and not only that but he occupies an important place among government officials, then we, who are created in the image (*zelem*) and in the likeness (*demut*) (of God) ... all the more so! Shammai did not teach so, he rather said: one should fulfill his duties from this body.’<sup>318</sup> (Leviticus Rabbah 34:3)**

309 <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/13/us/push-to-end-prison-rapes-loses-earlier-momentum.html>

310 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/21/what-care-do-prisons-owe-transgender-inmates>

311 <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/cook-county-jail-transgender-inmates-119516094.html>

312 [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-06-19-transgender\\_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-06-19-transgender_N.htm)

313 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/21/what-care-do-prisons-owe-transgender-inmates>

314 <http://solitarywatch.com/2014/08/07/transgender-women-in-new-york-state-prisons-face-solitary-confinement-and-sexual-assault/>

315 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/21/what-care-do-prisons-owe-transgender-inmates>

316 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/04/21/what-care-do-prisons-owe-transgender-inmates>

317 <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/25/us/ashley-diamond-transgender-inmate-out-of-prison-but-not-fully-free.html>

318 (Shammai’s view appears only in Avot de-Rabbi Nathan b 39 [Schechter ed., p. 66])

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

## People with Mental Illness

Ten times as many people with diagnosed mental illness are in prisons and jails than in state psychiatric hospitals.<sup>319</sup>

Prisons often provide meager mental health care, with slow response times. In one survey, only one in three people in state prison with mental illness, and one in six in jails, had

received mental health treatment since their admission.<sup>320</sup>

In two recent Mississippi cases, it took nine years for two incarcerated people with severe mental illness to be transferred to a psychiatric hospital.<sup>321</sup>

Unsurprisingly, incarceration can exacerbate mental illness.<sup>322</sup>

Many states dedicate special units to incarcerating and treating people with mental illness, but what is designed to be “humane and safe” can often be chilling. Oregon State Penitentiary’s Behavioral Health Unit, for instance, more closely resembles solitary confinement than it does mental

health care.<sup>323</sup> In addition to this, which we might call “passive violence,” people with mental illness suffer active violence at the hands of prison staff. For instance, a new report by Human Rights Watch indicates overuse of pepper spray in prisons, particularly against incarcerated people with

mental health problems.<sup>324</sup> This is particularly troubling given that such uses of force are less effective on people with mental illness and may even exacerbate a psychotic episode.

The lack of sufficient mental health care outside of prisons and jails leads to more people being incarcerated. The lack of sufficient

mental health care inside prisons and jails contributes both to poor conditions of incarceration (for both the mentally ill and their neighbors) and increased recidivism.<sup>325</sup> On both sides of the bars, the need to improve services is dramatic.

### Treating Each According to Her Needs

**Rabbi Pereida had a pupil whom he would teach four hundred times and [only] then he would learn it. On a certain day he was invited to attend to a religious matter, and he taught him, but the pupil did not learn the subject. He said to him, “What is different today?” He said, “From the moment Master was told that there was a religious matter to be attended to, my mind wandered. I said to myself ‘now Master will get up’ or ‘now Master will get up.’” He said, “Give me your attention and I will teach you.” He taught him another four hundred times and he learned it. A divine voice issued forth and asked him, “Would you prefer that four hundred years be added to your life or that you and your generation merit a share in the world to come?” He said, “I wish that I and my generation merit a share in the world to come.” The blessed Holy One said, “Give him both.” (*Talmud Eruvin 54b*)**

319 <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/05/06/counties-examine-police-training-in-encounters-with-mentally-ill>  
 320 <http://webarchive.urban.org/UploadedPDF/2000173-The-Processing-and-Treatment-of-Mentally-Ill-Persons-in-the-Criminal-Justice-System.pdf>  
 321 <http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2015/05/01/long-wait-jail-men-waiting-mental-hospital/26738359/>  
 322 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dustin-demoss/prison-mental-illness\\_b\\_6867988.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dustin-demoss/prison-mental-illness_b_6867988.html)  
 323 [http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2015/05/inmates\\_in\\_oregons\\_behavioral.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2015/05/inmates_in_oregons_behavioral.html)  
 324 <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/05/12/adding-pepper-spray-to-the-prison-arsenal>  
 325 <http://webarchive.urban.org/UploadedPDF/2000173-The-Processing-and-Treatment-of-Mentally-Ill-Persons-in-the-Criminal-Justice-System.pdf> p.12

## Facts and Figures

### Mental Illness in America<sup>326</sup>

1. One in four adults—approximately 61.5 million people—experiences mental illness in a given year.

- The total rate of mental illness is 20-40% higher for women than men in any given year.<sup>327</sup>

2. One in 17 adults—about 13.6 million—live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression, or bipolar disorder.

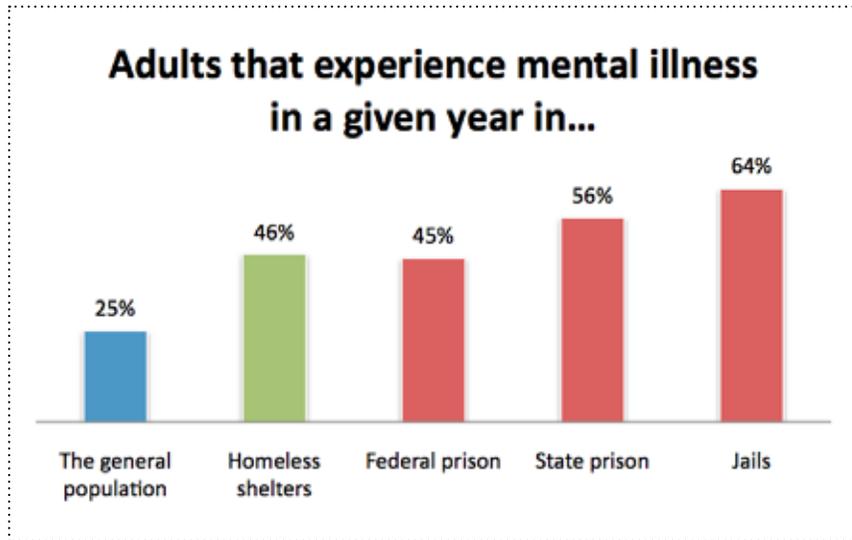
3. Approximately 20% of youth ages 13 to 18 experience severe mental disorders in a given year.

4. About 9.2 million adults have both mental health and addiction disorders.

- Only 7.4% receive treatment for both conditions and more than half get no treatment at all.<sup>328</sup>

5. Approximately 46% of homeless adults staying in shelters live with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

**Compare those numbers to these figures on the prevalence of mental illness among incarcerated Americans:<sup>329</sup>**



- Federal prison: 45%
- State prison: 56%
- Jails: 64%

**More than 40 percent of people with a serious mental illness have been arrested at some point.<sup>330</sup>**

### Cost<sup>331</sup>

- Less than \$100 per day for treating people with mental illness in a community setting.

- More than \$400 per day to treat them while incarcerated.

<sup>326</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dustin-demoss/prison-mental-illness\\_b\\_6867988.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dustin-demoss/prison-mental-illness_b_6867988.html)

<sup>327</sup> <http://ideas.time.com/2013/07/18/its-not-just-sexism-women-do-suffer-more-from-mental-illness/>

<sup>328</sup> <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/05/06/counties-examine-police-training-in-encounters-with-mentally-ill>

<sup>329</sup> <http://webarchive.urban.org/UploadedPDF/2000173-The-Processing-and-Treatment-of-Mentally-Ill-Persons-in-the-Criminal-Justice-System.pdf>

<sup>330</sup> <http://theweek.com/articles/540725/how-local-jail-became-hell-investigation>

<sup>331</sup> <http://chicago.suntimes.com/news-chicago/7/71/618900/psychologist-hired-run-cook-county-jail>