

Criminal Justice Statistics

Nearly 7 million men, women, and youth are under correctional supervision in America--incarceration, probation, or parole (2003). Studies show that the high price tag of incarceration (\$146 billion annually) is not leading to a solution to crime.

Today there are nearly 7 million men and women under correctional supervision—incarceration, probation or parole—in the United States, compared with 6.6 million in 2002 and 3.2 million in 1990. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, August 2004)

The cost of criminal justice is staggering: According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, the total bill for criminal justice (to arrest, convict, and incarcerate) in 2001 was more than \$167 billion.

Taxpayers spend an average of \$20,000 per year to incarcerate one person whether he or she has committed murder or written bad checks.

We are spending more money to incarcerate fewer violent offenders: In 1980, about half the people entering state prisons were violent offenders; in 1995, less than a third of state prisoners had been convicted of a violent crime. In that same period, spending on state and federal prison increased five times.

The risk of imprisonment does not deter crime: The first study on the impact of incarceration on crime in the 1990s conducted by The Sentencing Project revealed that, while incarceration rose continuously at record levels from 1984 to 1998, crime rates fluctuated over the 14-year period, indicating no strong relationship between imprisonment and crime. (Diminishing Returns: Crime and Incarceration in the 1990s, The Sentencing Project, Sept. 2000)

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world:

1 in every 20 people in America will serve time in a prison during his or her lifetime.

The incarceration rate has more than tripled since 1980.

Number of people incarcerated (2003): nearly 2.1 million

Our prison populations continue to grow: From year-end 1990 to mid-year 1999, the prison population grew by almost 712,000 inmates.

Since 1995, the number of male state and federal prisoners has grown 24 percent, and the number of female prisoners has increased 36 percent.

The U.S. corrections system welcomes back an astounding 50 percent of its past residents within three years of their release.

The chance of being victimized by an ex-prisoner is higher than ever: Nearly 700,000 inmates will be released from the country's correctional facilities in 2005, and nearly 70 percent of these ex-prisoners will commit another crime leading to re-arrest within three years.

Of the 272,111 persons released from prisons in 15 states in 1994, an estimated 67.5 percent were re-arrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years, and 52 percent were sent back to prison.

The 272,111 offenders discharged in 1994 accounted for nearly 4.8 million arrest charges over their recorded careers.

Forgotten Victims—The Children of Prisoners... A child with an incarcerated parent is five times more likely to be jailed than a child who grows up with parents who are not incarcerated, according to the Women's Prison Association.

2 million children in the United States have one or both parents in prison.

Some 10 million young people in the United States have had a mother or father—or both—spend time behind bars at some point in their lives (U.S. News & World Report, April 2002).

Percentage of children with parents in prison:

2.8 percent of all children under age 18

1 in 40 children have an incarcerated father

1 in 359 children have an incarcerated mother

One-third of the two million men in state and federal prisons have fathered two or more children (Bureau of Justice Statistics, April 2001).

In 1999, a majority of the children with imprisoned parents (58 percent) were younger than 10 years old.

Three-quarters of state prisoners who were parents had a prior conviction, and a majority (56 percent) had previously been incarcerated.

A majority of both fathers (57 percent) and mothers (54 percent) reported never having had a personal visit with their children since their admission to state prison. ("Incarcerated Parents and their Children," Christopher J. Mulnoma, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999)

There is a better solution... Faith-based prison programs are proving to reduce the re-arrest rates (recidivism rates) of those who participate.

Assessing the Impact of Religious Programs and Prison Industry on Recidivism, a study that followed inmates from a faith-based Brazilian prison, *Humaita*, and inmates from a vocation-based Brazilian prison, *Braganca*, for three years after their release demonstrates that faith-based rehabilitation programs get significantly better results compared to other programs.

Inmates involved in the faith-based *Humaita* program had a 16 percent rate of re-arrest (recidivism), while those involved in the vocation-based *Braganca* program had a 36 percent rate. Brazil's national average is 60 to 70 percent.

Humaita came under the leadership of Prison Fellowship in 1989 and is the model for four similar faith-based prisons staffed by Prison Fellowship in the United States. These InnerChange Freedom Initiative prison programs currently operate in Texas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and Arkansas and the program is scheduled to launch in Missouri in early 2007.

In a University of Pennsylvania study released in 2003, InnerChange Freedom Initiative graduates were 50 percent less likely to be re-arrested. The two-year post-release re-arrest rate among InnerChange Freedom Initiative program graduates in Texas was 17.3 percent compared with 35 percent of the matched comparison group.

In all, 3,033 prisoners have taken part in the InnerChange Freedom Initiative since its 1997 inception. Of those who have completed the entire in-prison and post-prison program, tracking reveals that return-to-custody rates continue to be less than half the national rates for the same length of time after release.

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