



# ARRESTING TRAUMA



This report focuses on the traumatic impact the prison pipeline has had on the lives of women, girls and gender non-conforming individuals in Contra Costa County.

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## Who Are We?

The Safe Return Project (SRP) was founded by and for formerly incarcerated individuals. It began as a fiscally sponsored project of Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Communities and developed groundbreaking research on the disproportionate impacts of criminalization on communities in Richmond and Contra Costa County. SRP trains formerly incarcerated individuals to lead participatory action research that empowers them to share their experiences from incarceration and apply them by participating in research initiatives that influence policy change and continue to repair the massive generational harm done by racial bias and the exploitation of mass incarceration.

At the time of this publication, SRP combines research and policy with community organizing. The organization regularly commits to community outreach and empowers formerly incarcerated community members with leadership programs that transform them into community leaders advocating for their peers. We also offer trainings to create positive change in our communities by stopping violence and promoting community safety.

SRP maintains a strong network of allied community support organizations, law enforcement agencies, the District Attorney's Office, training consultants and academic partners to empower our community of formerly incarcerated community members.

Together we are creating a safe return home for our community members as well as ending decades-long policies and practices that have harmed communities of color.

## Our Vision

We envision a place where community members involved in the criminal legal system have strong relationships with their family and community, real opportunities for sustainable employment and a stable place to live along with access to information and services that ensure that they have the necessities for building successful lives.

We understand that breaking the cycle of incarceration and crime will take positive leadership by formerly incarcerated residents contributing to the larger community. We are taking action to dispel the myths that state people who have been incarcerated cannot transform their lives or be positive forces in their own communities.

People coming back home already face many unique challenges, such as having been out of the workforce and having a resume gap when seeking employment, as well as the added obstacle of discrimination based on having a record. Once people have served their time, they should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they are rehabilitated. The playing field must be leveled so that once people have served their time, they face the same challenges and opportunities as other community members.

# Introduction

In 2016, SRP started investigating the impact of incarceration and criminalization on women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. The goal of the research project was to assess social conditions that this population faces in their communities that led to incarceration and how the criminalization of women and girls correlates with trauma. This includes the presence of trauma in communities, the trauma of being criminalized and how disenfranchisement and the lack of gender-specific resources add to this cycle of criminalization. Keeping this in mind, it is critical to highlight the gaps where our systems fail communities and recommend improved conditions for those incarcerated and coming back home.

Our investigation has led to this extensive report that will discuss how ignoring the major public health problem that trauma poses has led to a significant rise in the arrests, incarceration and proliferation of trauma on women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.

After distributing surveys and conducting focus groups among other gatherings with women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals, we found that most of them have been impacted by one form of abuse or another before adulthood. These individuals described growing up as a time when they first experienced verbal and physical abuse, normalizing the acceptance of this behavior well into their adulthood, where they then found themselves in verbally and physically abusive relationships. In some cases, these relationships led them into drug abuse to self-medicate and deal with mental anguish. According to one focus group member (anonymous):

“The trauma for me happened so young for me, how it impacted me in my life. I was angry. So I carry so much anger in the streets of Richmond and I done went around fighting everybody and I went around not caring so I went to jail for a lot of assaults. I was drunk all the time. I got drunk in the streets. I got high. I started doing alcohol at 10, drinking at 10, snorting cocaine at 12, so I got into drugs really young right so I was out here thinking I was cool toting guns, selling dope and the trauma made me angry. So my anger I took out on everybody around me so I have no friends; still till this day and I’m 37 and so I have no friends, I didn’t build friends because I didn’t need no friends I needed enemies. I didn’t need nobody around me. I didn’t want nobody fucking with me. So the trauma made me hate human beings because that person that hurt me was human. The trauma made me hate men. I’m a lesbian, see, and it change my sexuality. My trauma in and out of jail. I’ve been in and out of jail, in and out of jail due to my anger, frustration, and trying to cope with alcohol because me trying to numb myself from pain I have drunk so much...”

In the presentation “Dream Beyond Bars: A New Vision for Responding to Harm” by Ceres Policy Research , it lays out how California is leading the country in decarceration and how this prompts an urgent response to provide support services for formerly incarcerated individuals. Also, given the gender equity gap in all areas of our world, it is true that this gap exists in incarceration as well.

At the same time, California leads the country with the highest decarceration rates. Arrests are down by fifty-three percent (197,000 to 91,500 per year), sustained charges are down by fifty-eight percent (90,400 to 38,000 a year) and incarceration in secure facilities is down by eighty-two percent (CYA/DJJ down from 10,000 beds to 600+ beds). Furthermore, county facilities are down from 10,000 to around 3,000 youth.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Irvine, A., 2020. *Dream Beyond Bars: A New Vision for Responding to Harm*.



We are calling for a multi-agency public health response for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals that includes trauma-informed care, diversion programs and gender-based resources and services.



(Photo source: Safe Return Project, LA County Jail)

# Current Challenges: Impact of Criminalization on Women, Girls and Gender Nonconforming Individuals

The Report *Caught in the Net: The Impact of Drug Policies on Women and Families* by the ACLU, Break the Chains and the Brennan Center discusses how many women are being put into jail for drug-related offenses.

Between just 1986 and 1999, the rate of increase for non-drug offenses was 129% and the rate of increases for drug offenses was 888%.

During that period, the rate of increase for all women of color was 400% while the rate for Black women increased to 800%.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, incarceration is traumatizing. There is no trauma-informed or gender-affirming care. Incarcerated women and gender nonconforming individuals report a multitude of traumatic experiences, from a lack of feminine hygiene products, familial separation and even sexual abuse by guards.

In 2012, the Vera Institute and the Department of Justice finalized the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, which mandate that prisons, jails and youth facilities provide a way for inmates to report sexual abuse to an outside, independent entity.

Under PREA, all incarcerated people must be provided information about their rights and how to get help if they are assaulted. In 2012, the Department of Justice conducted a survey and found that two-thirds of incarcerated women were women of color, and that the majority of that population came from low-income communities. Also, at least seven percent of incarcerated women reported being sexually abused, with the perpetrators typically getting off scot-free. In fact, even in cases where the abuse by guards was substantiated, nearly half of the perpetrators faced no legal action. Worse still, according to a 2014 Department of Justice study, fifteen percent of abusers that were staff were allowed to keep their jobs.<sup>3</sup>

Other recent studies have shown a substantial increase in incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals across the United States, almost eight times higher than in the 1980s. This increase is a result of more expansive law enforcement efforts, stiffer drug sentencing laws and post-conviction barriers to reentry that uniquely affect women and girls.

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<sup>2</sup> Lapidus, L., Luthra, N., Verma, A., Small, D., Allard, P., Livingston, K., . . . T. (n.d.). *Caught in the Net: The Impact of Drug Policies on Women and Families* (pp. 1-80, Rep.).  
doi:<https://www.aclu.org/caught-net-impact-drug-policies-women-and-families>

<sup>3</sup> *Caught in the Net: The Impact of Drug Policies on Women and Families*. ACLU, Brennan Center for Justice: Break the Chains. April 2005.



“... [at] both the federal and state level, women are more likely than men to be incarcerated for a nonviolent offense. And the disparities are worse when we look at [nonviolent drug offenses](#).<sup>4</sup> One reason for this is that women are more likely to be ensnared by [overly broad conspiracy laws](#),<sup>5</sup> which demand that anyone caught in proximity to a drug crime, regardless of their actual involvement in that crime, gets charged with the same lengthy mandatory minimum prison sentence. That means women get penalized for crimes largely committed by their romantic partners.”<sup>6</sup>

Research also shows that women spend a lot of time in pretrial jails. The *Caught in the Net* Report by the ACLU, Break the Chains and Brennan Justice Center states that:

“Due to factors like gender-based income inequality and childcare duties, women have a harder time paying cash bail than their male counterparts. And when they cannot make bail, they’re thrown in jail for months or years at a time.”<sup>7</sup>

According to a report by The Sentencing Project on the statistics regarding women and girls:

“The number of women serving life sentences is rising more quickly than it is for men, according to our recent publication, *Women and Girls Serving Life Sentences*. Nationwide one of every 15 women in prison — nearly 7,000 women — is serving a life or virtual life sentence. The circumstances that lead women to commit violent crimes are often complicated by a history of sexual and/or physical trauma.”<sup>8</sup>

Studies from The Sentencing Project also show:

“Girls of color are much more likely to be incarcerated than white girls. The placement rate for all girls is 47 per 100,000 girls (those between ages 12 and 17). For white girls, the rate is 32 per 100,000. Native girls (134 per 100,000) are more than four times as likely as white girls to be incarcerated; African American girls (110 per 100,000) are three-and-a-half times as likely, and Latina girls (44 per 100,000) are 38% more likely. Though 85% of incarcerated youth are boys, girls make up a much higher proportion of those incarcerated for the lowest level offenses.

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<sup>4</sup> N. (n.d.). *Fact Sheet on Justice Involved Women in 2016* (pp. 1-9, Issue brief). National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women.

<sup>5</sup> Glawe, J. (2015, September 30). How drug trafficking conspiracy laws put regular people in prison for life. Retrieved April 01, 2021, from <https://www.vice.com/en/article/vdxzkj/how-drug-trafficking-conspiracy-laws-put-regular-people-in-prison-for-life-930>

<sup>6</sup> Lapidus, L., Luthra, N., Verma, A., Small, D., Allard, P., Levingston, K., . . . T. (n.d.). *Caught in the Net: The Impact of Drug Policies on Women and Families* (pp. 1-80, Rep.).

<sup>7</sup> Lapidus, L., Luthra, N., Verma, A., Small, D., Allard, P., Levingston, K., . . . T. (n.d.). *Caught in the Net: The Impact of Drug Policies on Women and Families* (pp. 1-80, Rep.).

<sup>8</sup> T. (2020). *Fact Sheet: Incarcerated Women and Girls* (pp. 1-6, Issue brief). Washington DC: The Sentencing Project.

Thirty-eight percent of youth incarcerated for status offenses (such as truancy and curfew violations) are girls. More than half of youth incarcerated for running away are girls.”<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, when one person is incarcerated, it impacts the entire home, family, friends and community. One family member reflects on incarceration’s impact:

“Personally have not been incarcerated and truly thanking God for that. I know that it is only by His grace. Incarceration has had a great impact on my family. I have had family members in and out of jail. It’s like a trickle down effect. Like a generational curse. Although, I don’t believe we are cursed, for Christ became a curse for us. But it is a generational thing that goes from parents being incarcerated to children following in their footsteps. Dealing with my brothers being incarcerated when they were a youth, a teenager and young adult was not easy and having to go visit was heartbreaking. It can be, not to say a burden, but overwhelming when your loved ones goes to jail. They’re going to jail in the physical sense, however, you are experiencing incarceration without being locked up.”

Another focus group member talks about an older brother:

“Seeing him leave and seeing my older brother leave it just hurt a lot because you have no one really...They don’t provide things for them in jail, you have to send them money to get them what they need because the jail is not doing much for them...”

Long-standing practices of targeting and profiling still need to be addressed. More specifically, police officers in Contra Costa County still use the methods of targeting and profiling:

“My whole family is harassed by Richmond PD for as long as I could know...Every time I would get pulled over with my brother’s friends... and once I give them my last name, and they would start harassing me...They profile me because of my name my family, the people I associate with and where I am from.”

Unfair sentencing also contributes to the proliferation of incarceration and trauma. One focus group participant described ongoing harassment from police officers due to being associated with other family members who had been incarcerated:

“I didn’t start catching cases until I was 18 and the first case I got was for possession of drugs and they tried instantly to label me a trafficker, selling drugs, illegal sale of controlled substance, and I fought that case for three years. Usually when people have their first case they let it slide but I had to fight that case for three years, just because of family association.”

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<sup>9</sup> T. (2020). *Fact Sheet: Incarcerated Women and Girls* (pp. 1-6, Issue brief). Washington DC: The Sentencing Project.



Incarcerating people while they are experiencing their trauma robs them of the opportunities to heal and become productive members of their community. Through leadership development, personal healing and political education, SRP witnesses first-hand the tremendous growth and transformation of formerly incarcerated women and girls who have helped to address this trauma and organize for a community that values care over incarceration.

### **California at a Glance**

The U.S. has one of the top incarceration rates for women in the world. Nearly half of incarcerated women are currently held in jails, Out of the 114,000 that are in jails, 101,000 are held in jail for local authorities, 13,000 are held for other agencies, 61,000 have not been convicted, 40,000 have been convicted, 4,500 are held for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), 6,800 are held for state prison, 1,100 are held for the Marshal and 70 are held for Fed BOP. Changing this statistic will require knowing where the 231,000 incarcerated women fall within our decentralized and overlapping systems of mass incarceration.<sup>10</sup>

While society and the justice system subject all girls to stricter codes of conduct than are expected of their male peers, Black girls in particular shoulder an [added burden of adultification](#) — being perceived as older, more culpable and more responsible than their peers, which leads to greater contact with and harsher consequences within the juvenile justice system. [Almost two million women and girls are released from prisons and jails every year](#), but few post-release programs are available to them, partly because so many women are confined to jails, which are not meant for long-term incarceration. It is perhaps then no surprise that formerly incarcerated [women are also more likely to be homeless](#) than formerly incarcerated men, making reentry and compliance with probation or parole even more difficult.

It is even more important now for California as well as Contra Costa County to be prepared in creating a coordinated, multi-agency effort to ensure a safe return home for formerly incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals with trauma-informed and gender affirming care and services.

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<sup>10</sup> T. (2020). *Fact Sheet: Incarcerated Women and Girls* (pp. 1-6, Issue brief). Washington DC: The Sentencing Project.

## Report Goals

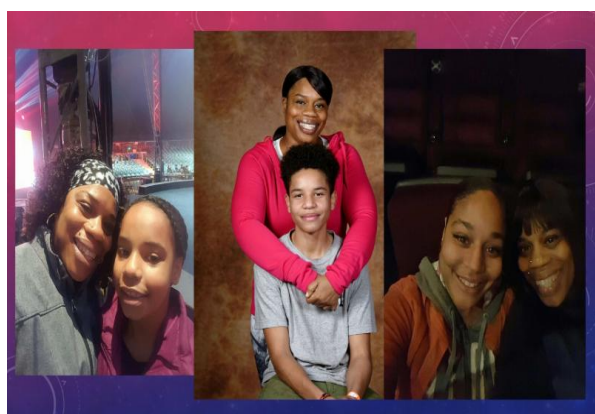
The overarching goal of the Safe Return Project is to conduct rigorous, community-based research to fill gaps in information needed to understand and support the reintegration of residents involved in the criminal legal system.

Our goal is to explicitly interrupt the arresting of trauma that has incarcerated over thousands of women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.

Agencies and community-based organizations were the first to recognize the need for more information in order to drive a comprehensive justice reinvestment strategy that addresses the specific needs for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals pre- and post-incarceration. SRP leaders realized that little information existed that systematically documented the needs, assets and interests of these particular populations.

In 2016, SRP started investigating the impact of incarceration and criminalization on women and girls. The goal of the project is to assess social conditions that this population faces that lead to incarceration and how the criminalization of women and girls correlates with trauma. This includes trauma in the communities that they come from, the trauma of being criminalized and the trauma related to disenfranchisement and the lack of gender-specific resources.

We believe that investing in the healing and leadership development of formerly incarcerated individuals aids in a transformation from incarceration to community leader. Kimberly Gamboa is a longtime Safe Return community member and leader. She has participated in countless programs, activities and events. She is somebody that is always in touch with her community and able to communicate what the Safe Return Project is doing but also meaningfully participates in the policy and advocacy process. She brings tremendous wisdom and insight from very painful and traumatizing experiences. We believe in Kimberly and urge Contra Costa County to set up a model that is focused on healing through trauma-informed and gender-affirming care.



“The bond I have with my children will last a lifetime and remain unchanged and unbroken by time and distance. The purest love is unconditional and true. Understanding of any situation and forgiving of many mistakes. My family has been reunited and I have had so many opportunities as a member of Safe Return Project but the thing that I value the most is having the chance to use my experience to help other women who are often misunderstood and underserved out of the system of incarceration. Women come from so many different backgrounds and cultures the need is not always the same but what

I do know is that a community that cares deeply for the welfare of its mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives has all it needs to thrive.” - Kimberly Gamboa

# Research Methods

SRP holds regular meetings with formerly incarcerated community members. We provide political education, training and activities that help foster community. We also include our members in our Participatory Action Research (PAR) project, and through a series of conversations and discussions of our lived experiences through incarceration, landed on the lack of gender equity and the disproportionate and unfair impact of incarceration onto specifically women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. Our PAR group became a sounding board for establishing survey questions and focus groups and identifying community-based organizations to interview.

**Focus Groups:** Safe Return researchers conducted eight focus groups, with many taking place virtually during the COVID-19 social distancing order. Researchers were able to get an in-depth account of the impacts facing women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals in Contra Costa County. The focus group questions were developed by the PAR Group and are as follows.

## Focus Group Questions:

1. How has race impacted your life?
2. How has your incarceration impacted you emotionally?
3. How has pain/trauma impacted your life?
4. What community resources exist to support you to improve quality of life? If any.
5. What are some of the problems in the community that you feel are barriers to your success?

**Community Surveys:** Our surveys represent the intersection of five PAR projects, including an East Contra Costa survey addressing the conditions of reentry (132 questions and 42 respondents who identified as female), a survey addressing youth impacted by criminalization and over-policing (120 questions and 32 respondents who identified as female and/or gender nonconforming), as well as a survey addressing trauma and incarceration for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals (68 questions and 100 respondents, with 98 possible responses). We identified thirty-eight organizations and conducted site visits for sixteen of these locations. As a result of our research, we found that only two organizations are serving formerly incarcerated women and girls. One of the organizations, Girls in Motion, is located within a juvenile hall facility and only has one girls housing unit. Within that unit, juvenile hall staff have developed the “Girls in Motion Program.” Through this program, the court has the option to order female offenders into a treatment program. SRP also identified three organizations that were providing services for all women and girls and, out of the thirty-eight organizations, thirty-three are serving all genders while only two explicitly serve gender nonconforming communities.

Survey topics included the following information:

- Demographic Information
- Geographic Information
- Housing
- Parental Information
- Early Age Trauma
- Responses to Trauma
- Arrests Resulting from Trauma
- Trauma Occurring during Incarceration Post Incarceration
- Services pertaining to Probation and Parole
- Housing and Employment Status



**Survey Limitations:** Survey respondents did not answer every single question. Our staff respects an individual's privacy and decision not to answer a question. Therefore, our answers have a "No Response" designation to indicate when an answer was not provided.

**Arrest Data:** SRP collected arrest data from five different Contra Costa law enforcement agencies. The arrest record was provided for the years 2009 to 2019. The following five California cities were included: Richmond, Antioch, El Cerrito, Pittsburg and San Pablo. Our research also included reviewing statewide and national impact literature that provided an overview of some of the narratives and conditions related to our research findings.



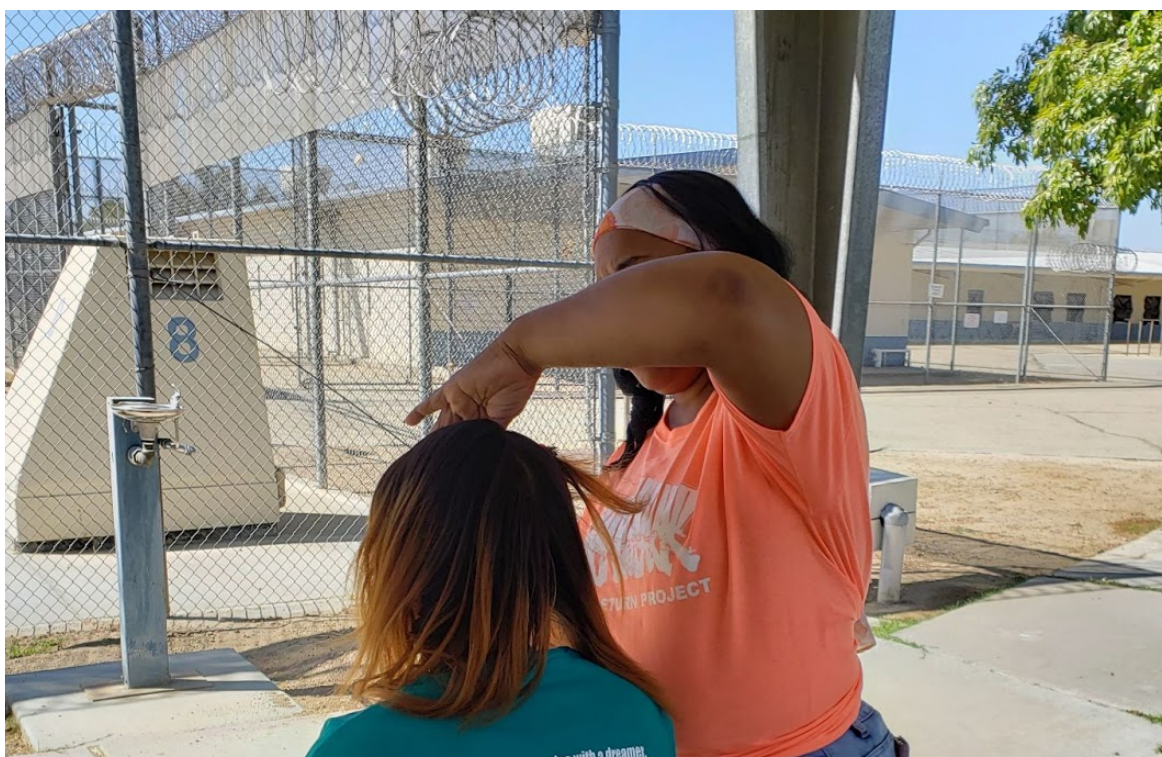
(Photo source: LA County Jail)



## Findings

The top five topics that the focus group participants highlighted were the following: Housing, Rehabilitation, Conditions of Jails/Prisons, Pre-existing Trauma and Adequate Time with Children while Incarcerated. In Contra Costa County, we want to establish models that center women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals and provide healing justice as folks re-enter society. Our framework needs to be trauma-informed as well as trauma-centered; it also needs to acknowledge these folks' experiences before incarceration, including the violence and failure of the foster care system, the housing system, the juvenile system and in reentry.

Incarceration does not address trauma. Instead, it focuses on creating rigid rules that create automatic habits. We need a framework that inspires practice—the way work is done—and programs. This framework also needs to be led and created by those directly impacted. Through this collaborative work, our aim is to provide organizing and leadership skills to women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals impacted by incarceration so that they can self-advocate for better infrastructure, resources and policies that divert our communities away from criminalization. While our challenges have historically been seen as criminal justice issues, we are advocating that they must instead be addressed through a public health lens grounded in healing and resilience. Our work will serve as a model to be replicated across California to end the mass incarceration of women, girls, and gender nonconforming individuals, reinvest in healing and prioritize the leadership and guidance of those who have been incarcerated in the movement for justice reform.



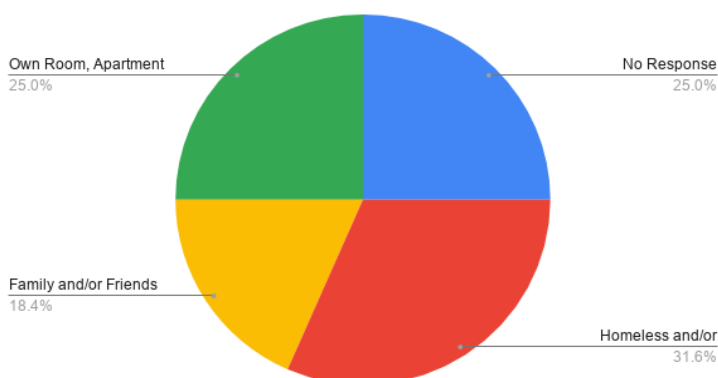
# Topic 1: Housing

Housing is found to be crucially important for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. Given much of the domestic abuse experienced before adulthood, ensuring safety, space and personhood is essential for post-incarceration success. While conducting our survey, we found housing insecurity to be a main driving force for riskier decisions and choices to obtain secure housing.

Women and gender nonconforming individuals experience sexual and gender harassment in everyday life. From running everyday errands, to the workplace and even at home, there is gender discrimination in every part of our lives. In turn, our policies reflect this sentiment and neglect the consideration of women and gender non-conforming individuals.

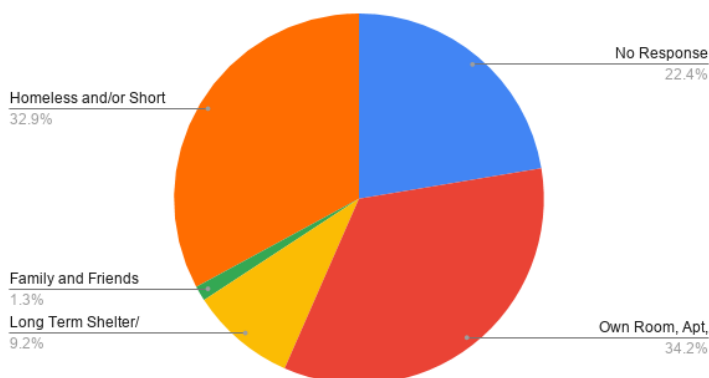
Housing insecurity for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals increases their likelihood to be sexually assaulted, raped, abused and harassed than women who have secure housing.

Describe your Living Situation one Month after Release



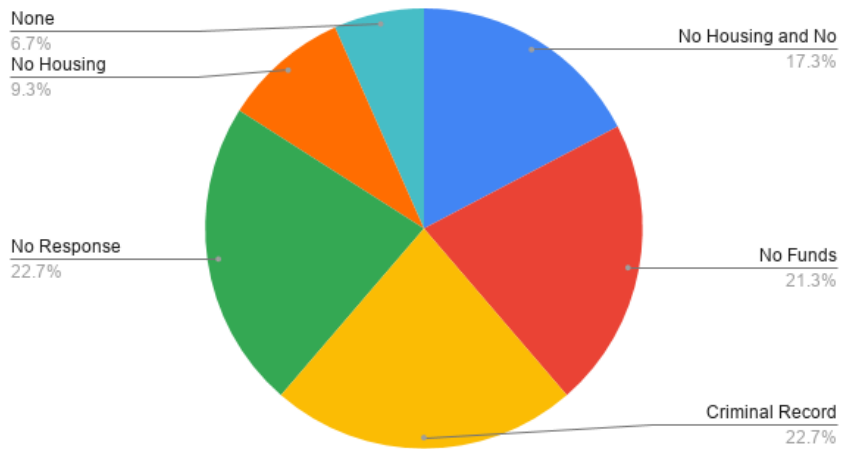
**Figure 1:** Represents the percentage of women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals' living situation after one month after release. 25% of respondents reported having their own room, apartment or house that they owned. 18.4% reported staying with a family member or a friend. 31.6% reported as being homeless or in and out of short-term shelters.

Describe your Current Living Situation



**Figure 2:** Represents respondents' current living situation at time of the survey. 32.9% reported to be homeless and/or in short-term shelters and housing. 34.2% are in their own room, apartment or house that they own or rent. 9.2% are in long-term shelters or halfway houses and 1.3% reported to be staying with family and/or friends.

### Barriers to Housing



**Figure 3** represents what respondents referred to as barriers to housing being a combination of either not having any housing available where they want to live, no funds available for the deposit, security check and discrimination based on their criminal record.

In one of our focus groups, a respondent detailed how she was impacted and mentioned how she became addicted to drugs and homeless for fifteen years:

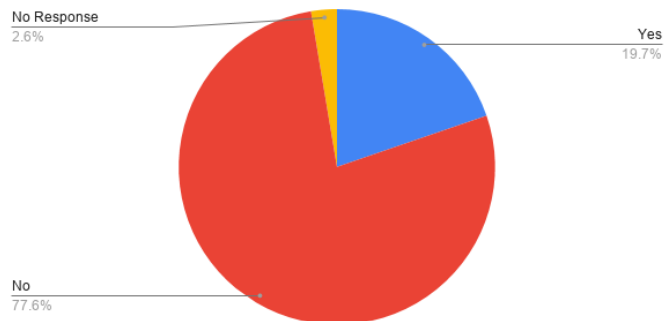
“I knew I was making bad choices. I was rolling the dice with my life not giving myself a chance before I got addicted to crack cocaine because I was out on the street for fifteen years.”

Housing insecurity can lead to a lot of negative consequences and providing the support for safe and secure housing will be essential.

## Topic 2: Rehabilitation

Survey respondents stated that they felt that they were not being rehabilitated or being put in the position to successfully reenter society upon release. Respondents said that they were not offered any mental health services or tested for any conditions (physical or mental) while incarcerated. A shocking amount of individuals said that they did not have a support plan before their release from jail and did not receive support after being released. Over half of respondents stated that they were not required to attend any type of class after being released from jail or during probation or parole. Respondents also said that they didn't feel like there was a way to continue their education while incarcerated.

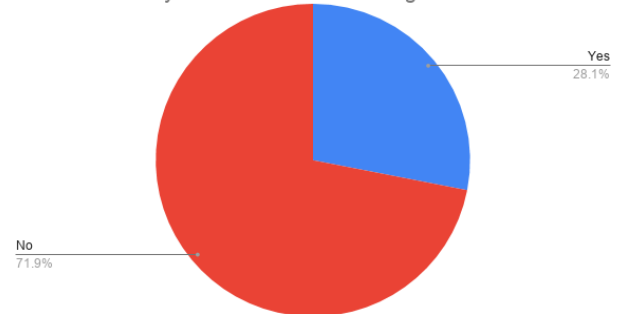
Before your release, did anyone come into the facility to offer some sort of support plan?



**Figure 4:** This graph represents the number of survey respondents that responded to not having received a support plan before release, as well as those that received help.

**Figure 5:** This graph represents survey respondents who were incarcerated parents on whether they had to take parenting class.

As a Parent did you have to take Parenting Class



One focus group participant mentioned how important detox centers are. Many are thrown into jail without proper help of detoxing from addiction and getting their addiction treated, which creates a tremendous obstacle to success.

“If I was still in addiction we need more detoxes. There is a lot of primary programs and you start your structure but you need to detox. Without a detox you are doomed to failure.”

Addiction cannot be treated through incarceration and we need real programs that treat addiction for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals being arrested and incarcerated in Contra Costa County.



## Probation and Parole

Probation data collected by Othering and Belonging in 2019 for a Lift Up Contra Costa electoral vision report stated that Contra Costa County was then home to approximately 3,020 men and women on active post-release supervision (Probation). 2,128 out of the total population of those on probation were living in East and West Contra Costa County, the following cities have the highest numbers of directly impacted residents.

East County has an estimated 1,020 residents on post conviction supervision: Antioch 491, Pittsburg 375, Bay Point 126, Oakley 108, Brentwood 103.

West County there are an estimated 895 residents on post conviction supervision: 573 Richmond, 217 San Pablo, 43 Hercules, 33 Rodeo, 29 Pinole, and 23 El Cerrito.

Central County: Martinez 121

Safe Return requested gender specific data from the Contra Costa County Probation. Disclaimer our current County data collection system only allows for male and female gender preferences. What this means is that its possible for gender nonconforming individuals to be hidden within these datas.

In 2019 Juveniles who identified as female on active supervision were (87) – West -21, Central -21, East – 35, unknown/not clear – 10 and Adults who identified as female on active supervision were (571) – West – 116, Central -190, East – 207, Out of County- 50, homeless – 8.

Our most recent data on active supervision from the Contra Costa County Probation Department as of April 10th, 2021.

Juvenile Probation:

- Young Girls (<18). Total : 44  
East: 17, Central: 8, West: 11, unknown 2  
Out of county : Alameda 5, San Joaquin 1,
- Older (18-21) total 39  
East: 14, Central 9, West 10  
Out of county : Alameda 5, Sac 1

Adult Probation

- (Women).... total 552  
East : 204, Central 108, West 117, unknown 17  
Out of county : Alameda 34, Butte 1, Marin 1, Merced 1, Mexico 1, Napa 3, Oregon 1, Riverside 1, Sac 8, San fran 16, San Joaquin 12, San Mateo 3, Santa Clara 3, Solano 17, Sonoma 2, Tulare, 1, Washington 1.

The relationship between probation and parole is not standardized. Few women and gender nonconforming individuals have good relationships with their probation officers, where they describe receiving “a lot of great help” from their probation officers. There are no gender or trauma-informed care and services. Drug tests are mandatory and can be a cause for violating parole or probation.

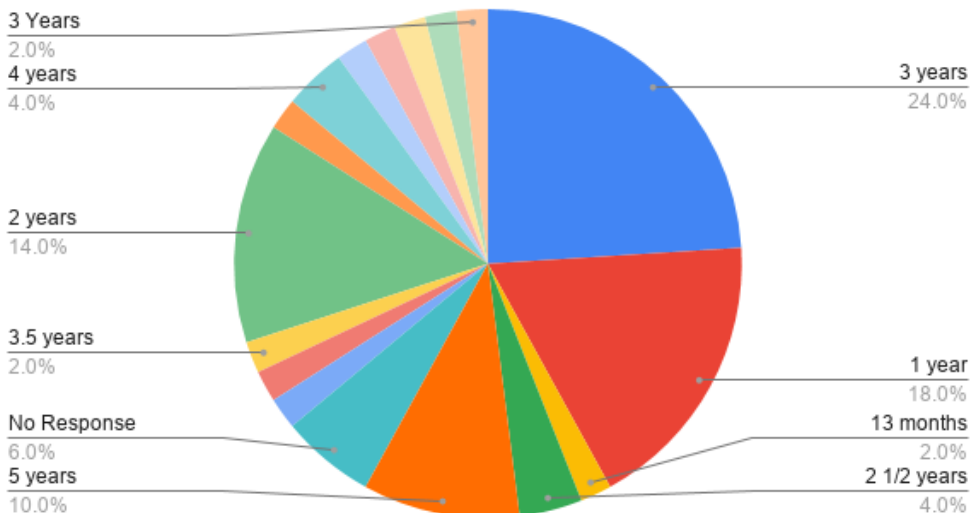
In fact, what was described or considered as a good relationship is a relationship that is non-existent and characterized as not threatening when compared to conditions in jail.

Where probation officers made a difference were ones that went above and beyond their job description to provide financial assistance, advising, connections, housing and a vested interest in the success and well-being of formerly incarcerated women and gender nonconforming individuals.

Probation becomes another encounter with law enforcement where many feel threatened, and those at high risk to abuse drugs don’t get help to quit addictions and are highly vulnerable to violating parole and probation and returning to incarceration. This is also true for those who skip out on meetings and get a warrant placed on them where cops may arrest and incarcerate them if found in public.

In one instance, a violation of parole can be as simple as returning home late from picking up a child from a co-parent.

How long were you on parole or probation?

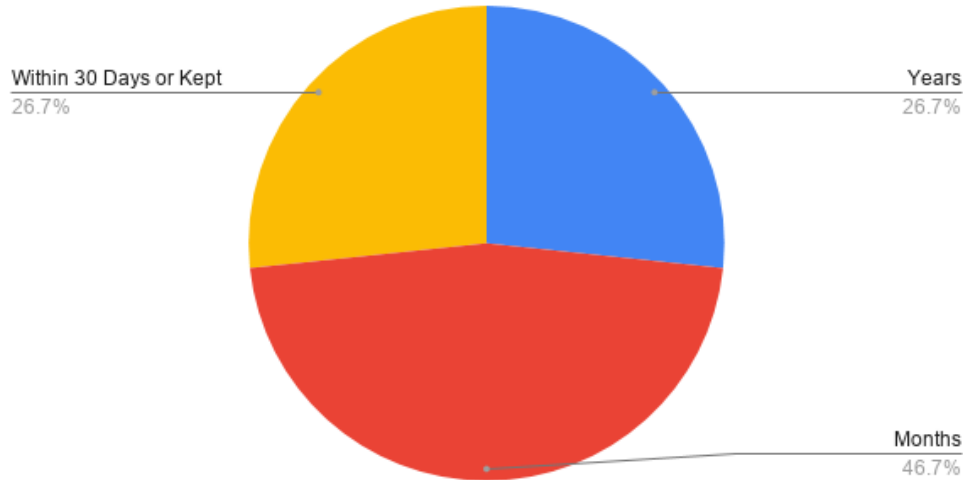


**Figure 6** represents the survey responses providing more information about the number of years on parole or probation.

# Employment

Having a job after incarceration is important. While some respondents were able to keep or find a job within thirty days, it can take others months and even years to find employment.

After you were released, how long did it take for you to be able to find a job?



**Figure 7** includes aggregated responses on how long it took to find a job.

When services and options for employment for formerly incarcerated women and gender nonconforming individuals are not available, this contributes to having more stress and can lead to dangerous and arrestable choices.

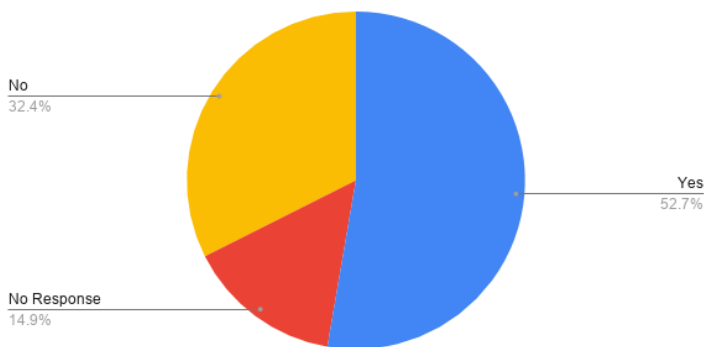
Efforts to reduce barriers to employment such as “ban the box” have helped employment possibilities. However, many respondents still faced discrimination in hiring and applying for jobs. An example of this has been using incarcerated women to fight wildfires in California. Assembly Bill 2147 is a bill that allows inmate firefighters to have their records expunged and become eligible for firefighting jobs upon release.

## Topic 3: Prison/Jail Conditions

Survey respondents reported that conditions in prisons/jails are horrible, poor and not hospitable for the everyday person. More specifically, they recounted their experiences when arriving at the prisons/jails, where the facilities were not hospitable environments for anything. Conditions were described as inhumane, horrible, nasty and terrible. Only a small percentage said that conditions were as normal as they could be under the circumstances. Individuals reported being on the receiving end of discrimination from guards, making conditions harder while serving their time. Respondents said that they did not receive feminine hygiene products or items of that nature and respondents said that they were not allowed to receive visitors.

“Incarceration is no joke. It takes you to a place that is claustrophobic and that is putting it mildly, that is the baby of the beast. I was struggling the whole time.”

During your stay at prison or jail, were feminine hygiene products provided?



**Figure 8:** This chart details that 32.4% of women did not receive feminine hygiene products while incarcerated.

The conditions in jail are also not reflective of the population they serve. When we spoke to a focus group respondent, it was mentioned how much she was able to receive support from a counselor who was not part of the guard and prison system:

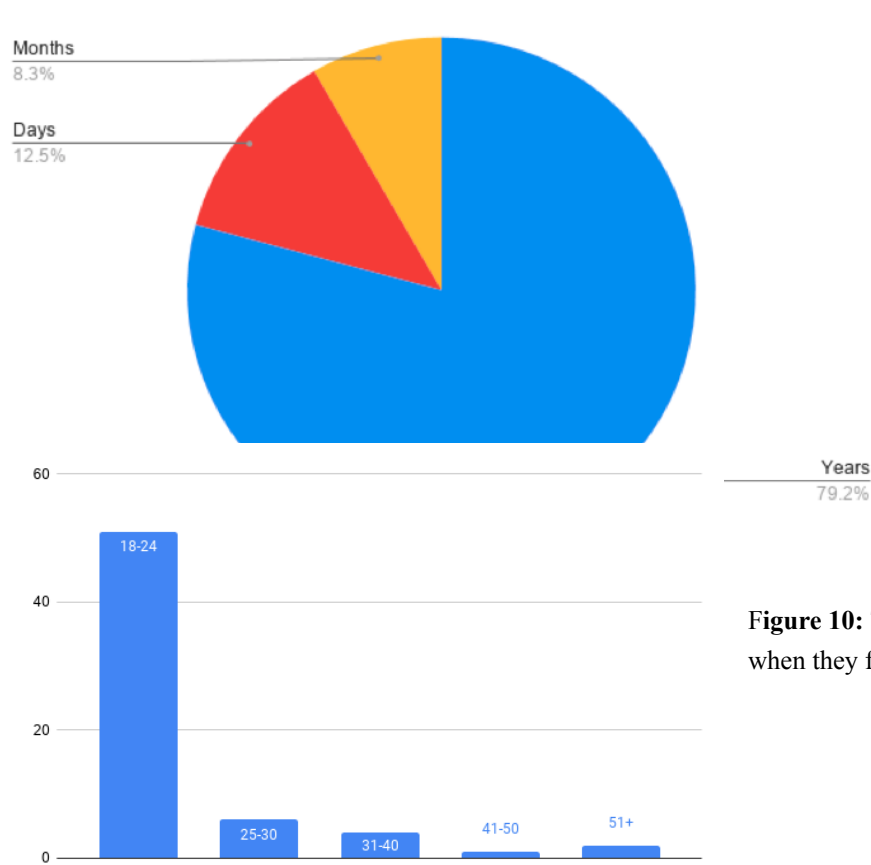
“I talk to mental health everyday when I was incarcerated. They made me because of all the trouble I was in. At first I was resistant but me just talking to that one person that is not an officer that does not have a badge does not have cuffs not saying anything you say can or will be used against you in court. My one stay I talked to her the whole time, whenever something would happen I would want to talk to her good or bad, she really helped.”

Trauma-informed and gender-affirming care is desperately needed for gender equity for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. Nobody talks about incarceration as being empowering; it is mostly referred to as being traumatizing.



# Topic 4: Pre-existing Trauma

Pre-existing trauma could be identified in survey participants. Survey participants reported having one or a combination of parents/guardians charged with domestic abuse, incarceration and alcoholism, or parents/guardians being drug dependent or having been sexually abused, abused drugs or have suffered from physical abuse. Respondents said that the first time they experienced physical abuse was between the ages of 5-18 years old, by a family member such as a sibling, cousin, aunt, or uncle. Respondents stated that verbal/physical abuse continued well into adulthood in their relationships. Women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals suffered from some form of sexual abuse growing up, and a daunting more than 80% did not tell anyone or get immediate medical attention. Those that received medical attention were diagnosed with the following: anxiety, depression, chronic stress and bipolar disorder. Many did not have support systems in place and were left to struggle with the following: regular self-criticism, anger management issues and aggressiveness, low self-esteem, suicidal thoughts, irritability and a lack of self-confidence. Respondents said that one or both of their parents and/or guardians were incarcerated while they were growing up.



**Figure 9:** When asked how long it took for a participant to tell someone about their abuse, many said years (going back as far as ten years for one individual).

**Figure 10:** This graph represents participants when they first started using drugs.

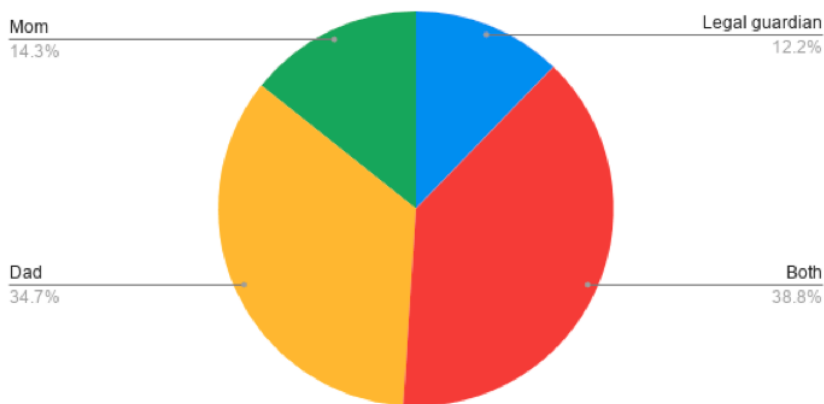
The following quote is a common response for many of those who abuse substances in an attempt to alleviate pain and trauma:

“The way I covered up my pain and trauma was through drugs.”

Another focus group participant also said:

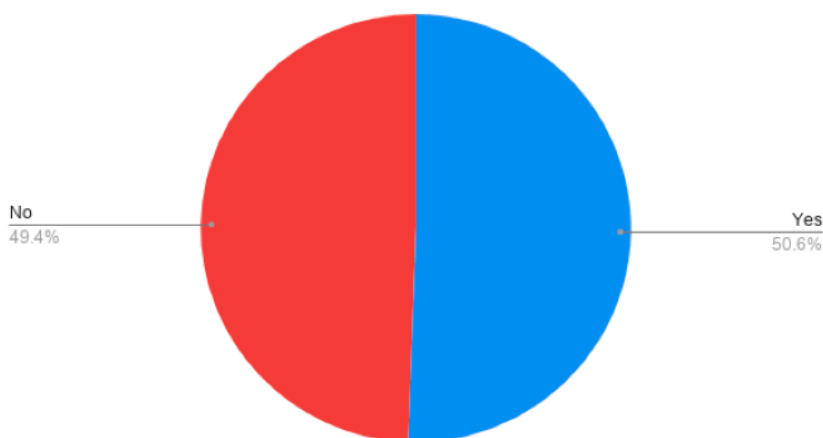
“I was mostly incarcerated when I was under the influence of drugs and alcohol and how it impacted...because that was the thing that got me to steal that got me to cheat and got me arrested.”

Count of Growing up, were either of your parents/guardian's drug dependent?



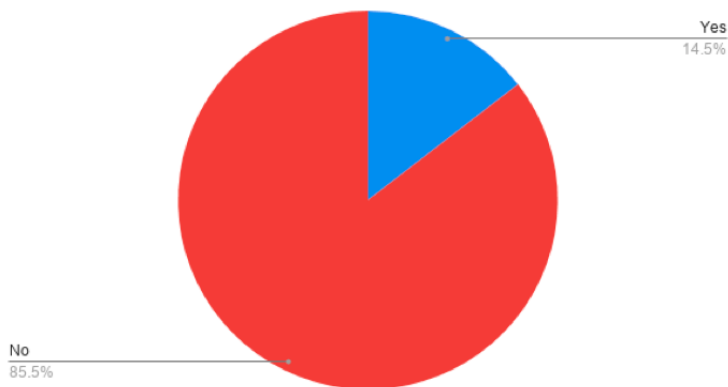
**Figure 11:** This graph shows how, across the board, trauma leads to drug abuse and we are witnessing at decades of trauma.

Count of Have you ever been sexually abused?

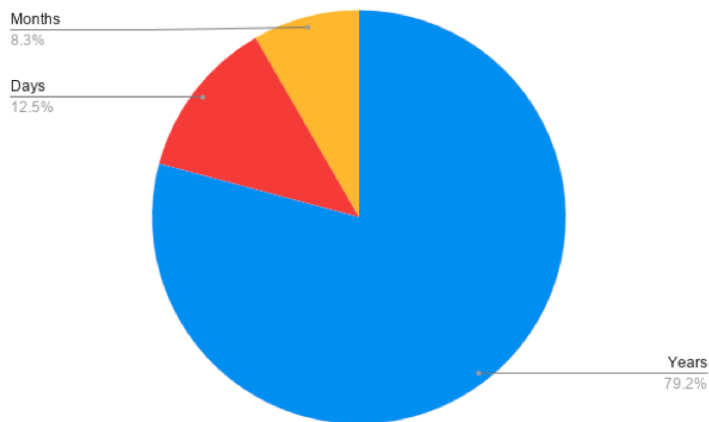


**Figure 12:** Half of survey respondents who reported being incarcerated reported having been sexually abused.

Count of Did you tell right away?



**Figure 13:** When asked a follow-up question to being sexually abused, 85.5% of respondents reported not telling anyone right away.



**Figure 14:** When asked how long did it take to tell someone about the abuse, many reported years, with one person stating ten years.

Our survey respondents articulate deep trauma and pain well before arrest. The policies being levied onto women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals completely ignores the trauma response and instead seeks to incarcerate instead of care.

**Trauma as an adult can lead to arrest.** We find that abuse causes trauma and can cause a person with no early-age trauma to still be arrested. We have one respondent who responded “no” to childhood traumatic indicators, however, this respondent suffered physical abuse from a spouse as an adult. She was later arrested for an unstated reason and spent a week in jail. We find that this individual struggles with housing, safety and security:

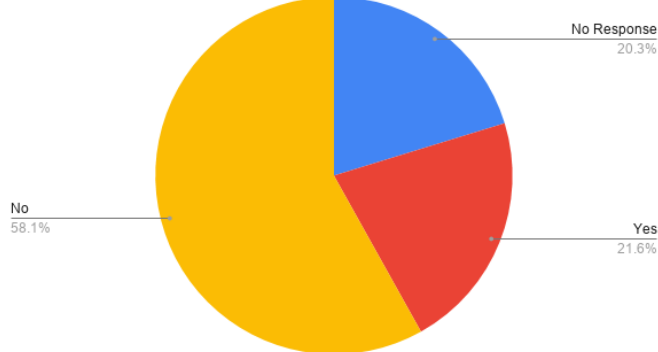
“Some of the trauma I suffered that could have led to my incarceration was facing people around me that were close to me who got killed. I used to be around a lot of gang violence and there was just always a lot of violence in my life. When you need someone to talk to such as mental health or for medical reasons there's a long waiting period, could be days or even weeks.”

## Topic 5: Adequate Visitation Time

We found that in both focus groups and surveys, participants' separation from children was highly impactful and traumatic during incarceration.

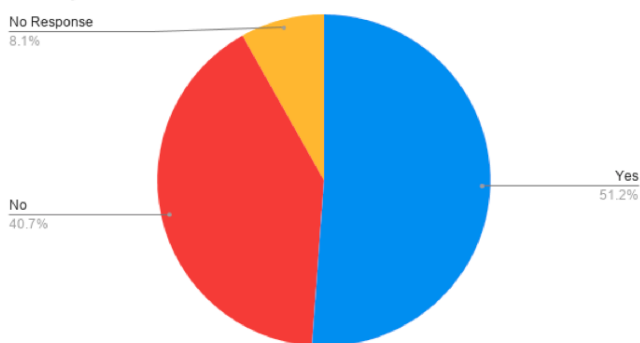
“From my experience when I had my first son and I ended up in jail it was hard because I didn’t know what my baby was doing and I wasn’t there he needed me, you know it hurt me a lot because I was not there. I was only there for a little while, then I got my act together or whatever. Down a couple years it started again and I was doing the wrong stuff and I had to take a step back to see what I was doing. But just knowing I couldn’t get out it hurt a lot. Then having someone in jail. My son’s father, he just did five years. And he missed out five years out of his life. And I had to see my baby go through the good days and bad days of wanting his daddy and I didn’t know what I could do.”

During your incarceration were you able to see your children?



**Figure 15:** 58.1% of respondents stated that they were not able to see their children during incarceration.

Were you able to receive visitors?



**Figure 16:** 40.7% of respondents said that they were not able to receive visitors.

Children who experience the incarceration of a parent are more at risk for abusing drugs, mental health problems and overall trauma.



“Children who experience parental incarceration may, however, have been "at risk" long before their parent was sent to prison. For many children, the pre incarceration environment may have been characterized by parental substance use, mental health problems, and poverty (Dannerbeck, 2005; Johnson & Waldfogel, 2004; Phillips et al., 2006). Each of these adversities may independently heighten risk for maladjustment (Barnard & McKeganey, 2004; Brooks, Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Downey & Coyne, 1990) and thereby either partially or fully account for the negative outcomes that have been observed among children whose parents are incarcerated.”<sup>11</sup>

Keeping families together is incredibly important to prevent unnecessary trauma. Finding alternative means to the way we incarcerate needs to be implemented alongside a multitude of measures.



(Photo: LA County Women's Prison)

<sup>11</sup> Turney, K., & Goodsell, R. (2018). Parental incarceration and children's wellbeing. *The Future of Children*, 28(1), 147-164. doi:10.1353/foc.2018.0007

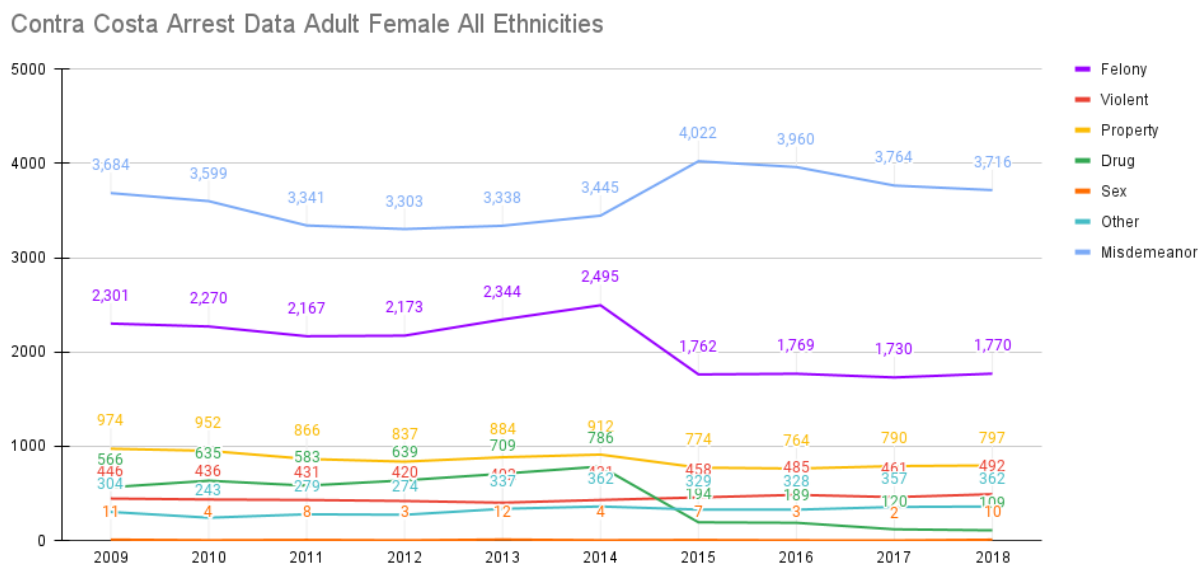
# Arrest Data

Arrest data was gathered from and analyzed by the Safe Return Participatory Action Research Team. We analyzed and looked for context into how arrests were made but were unable to get into specific detail compared to our survey respondents. Many of the data was only able to give us the type of offense, charge, location and which department.

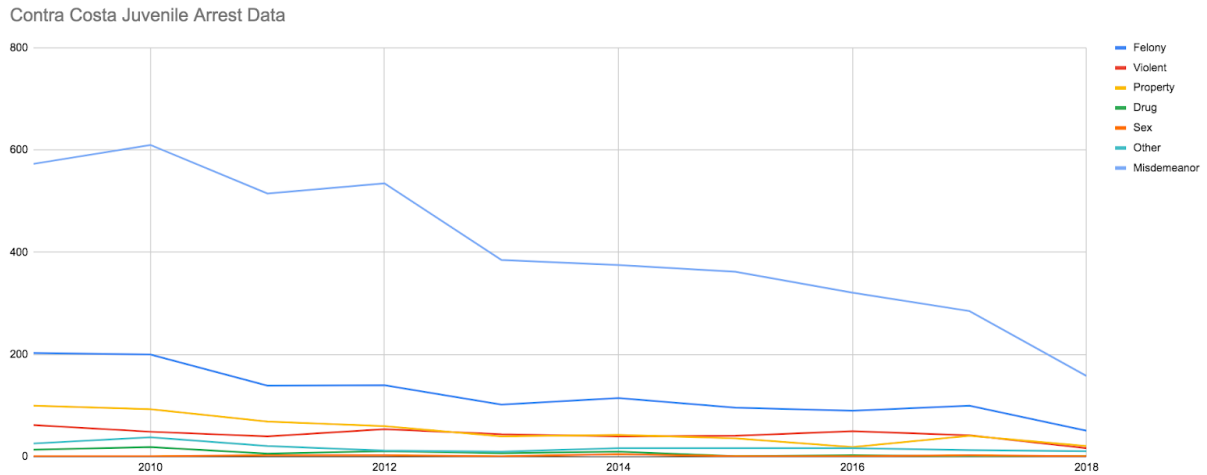
When looking at a glance, we see that nonviolent offenses peaked at no higher than 155 arrests in one year. This is compared to nonviolent misdemeanors; the lowest was 1,680, reaching as high as 2,076 in one year.

## Contra Costa County at a Glance

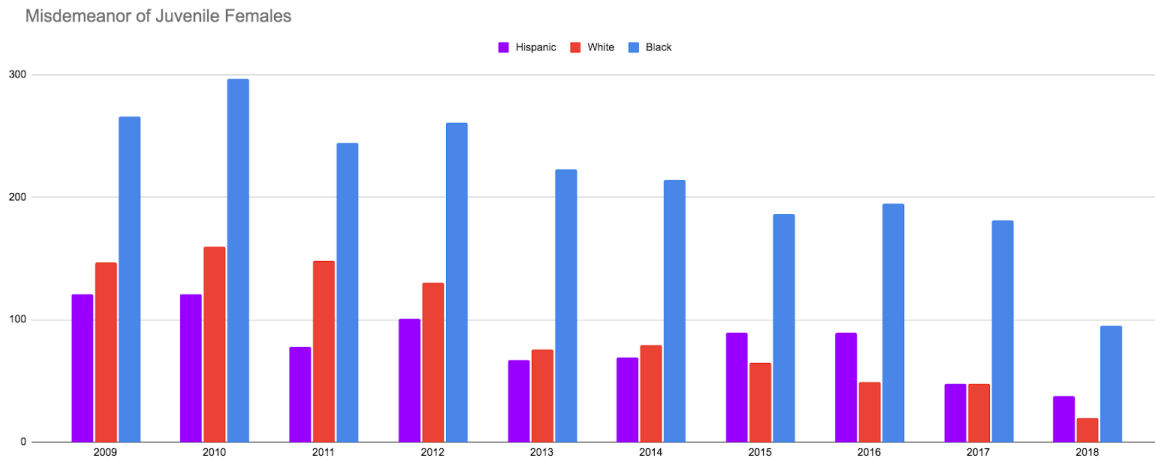
**Figure 15** represents the number of arrests for females (all races and ages). The data shows the overwhelmingly disproportionate amount of violent offenses to non-violent offenses.



**Figure 17** represents the arrests of all adult females (lookin at all ethnicities).



**Figure 18** represents the arrests of juveniles. This is a similar trend to adults in terms of the disproportionate amount of misdemeanor arrests.

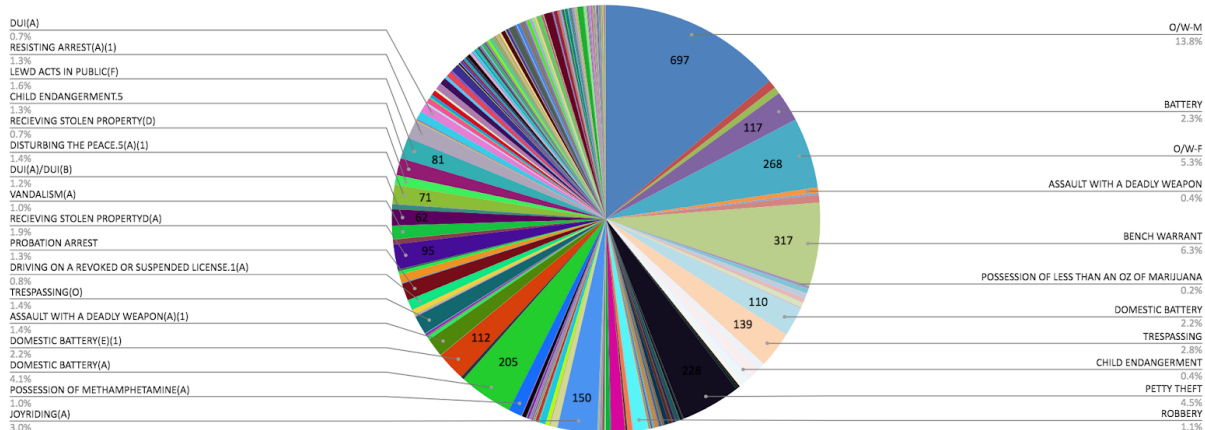


**Figure 19:** This chart shows the overwhelming disproportionate amount of Black girls being arrested compared to whites and Hispanics.

## Arrest Data by City

### Antioch:

In the city of Antioch, from 2015-2019, the highest charges for women, young girls and gender nonconforming individuals were for warrants, domestic battery and petty theft. Out of the 1,652 individuals, 499 were African American, 561 were white and 168 were Hispanic. The age group that had the highest number of arrests was ages 30-39 with 227 arrests and the age group with the lowest number of arrests included individuals that were over 70, with eight arrests.



**Figure 20** represents the different arrests from 2015 to 2019 and shows the high number of warrants.

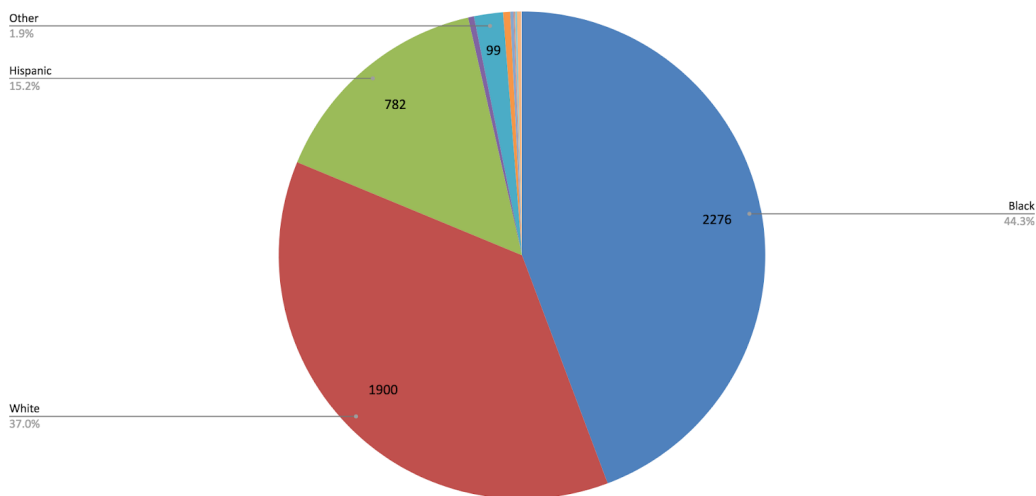
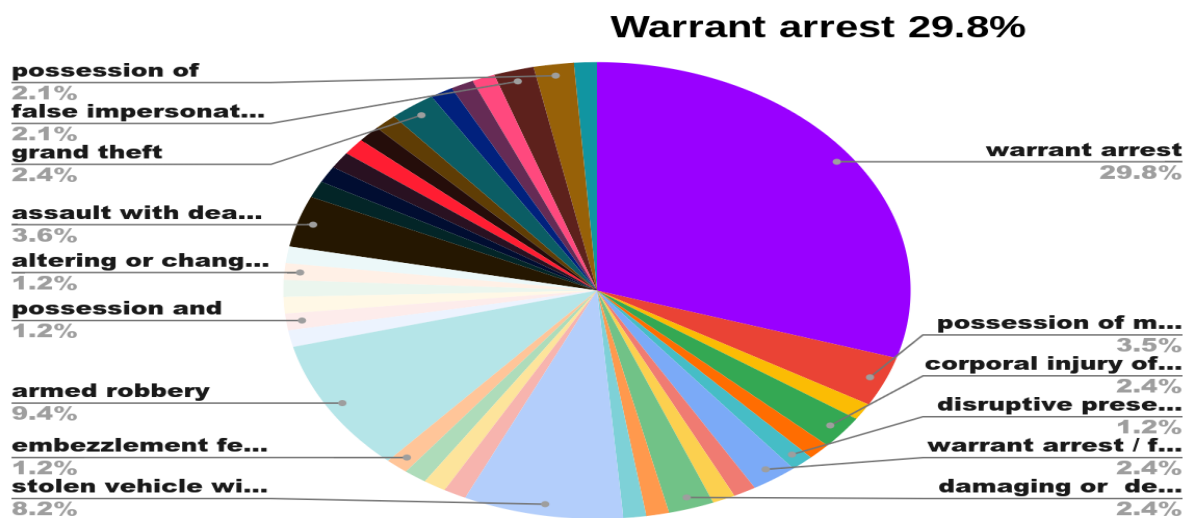


figure 21  
represents  
the Antioch  
arrest by  
race.



In the city of Pittsburgh, from 2015-2019, the highest charges for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals were for warrants, possession of a controlled substance and stolen vehicles/joyriding. Out of 1,520 women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals arrested, 562 were African American, 517 were white and 350 were Hispanic. The age group that had the highest arrests was 20-39 year olds, with 994 arrests, and the lowest age group arrested was 18-19 year olds, with 51 arrests.



**Figure 22:** The number of arrests in Pittsburgh shows the high percentage of arrests by warrants.

## San Pablo

In the city of San Pablo, from 2015-2019, the highest charges for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals were for warrants, trespassing and conspiracy to commit a crime. Out of 1,781 individuals arrested, 886 were African Americans, 491 were white and 405 were Hispanic. The age group with the highest arrests was 30-39 year olds with 1,716, and the lowest age group being 18-19 years old, with 58 arrests.

San Pablo 2019 Race Arrest

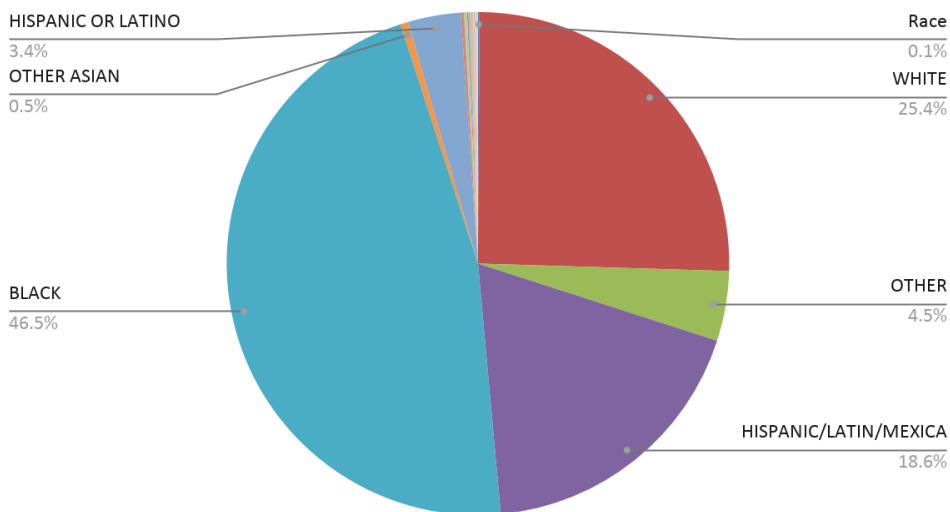


Figure 23 shows the racial breakdown of arrests in San Pablo.

San Pablo Summary of Charges 2015- 2019

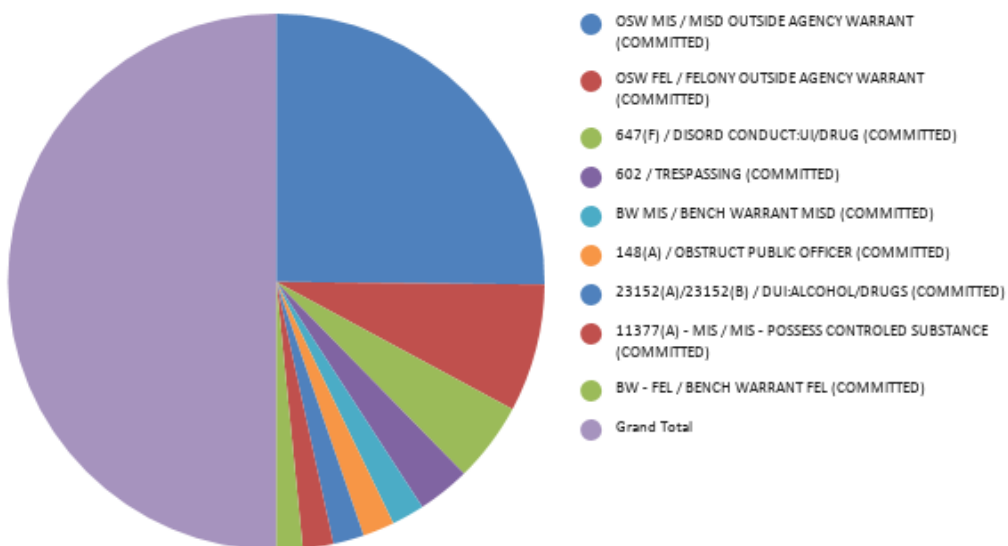


Figure 24: Summary of charges from 2015-2019 in San Pablo.

## Richmond

In the city of Richmond, from 2018-2019, the highest charges for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals were for warrants (22.4%) and intent for prostitution (7.9%). In 2019, however, the second highest charges were corporal injury (12.4%) and assault with a deadly weapon and driving under the influence (both at 7.2%). Out of 526 women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals arrested, 393 were African American, 132 were Hispanic. The group with the highest arrest rate from 2018-2019 was the age group 17-19.

Arrest Charges for 2018

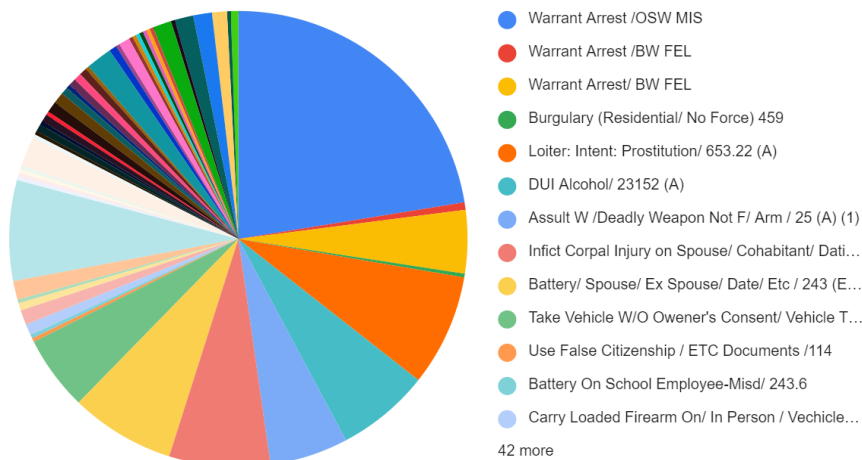


Figure 25 is the breakdown of arrests in Richmond for 2018.

Race (2019)

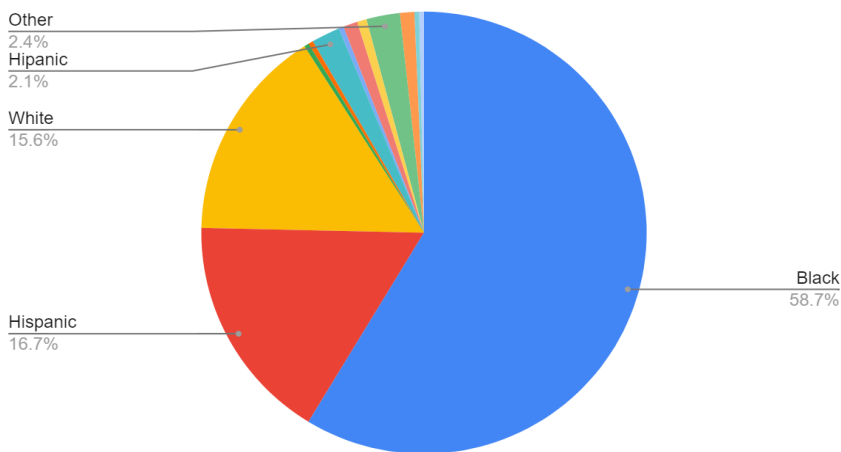


Figure 26 is a breakdown of arrests by race in Richmond from 2019.

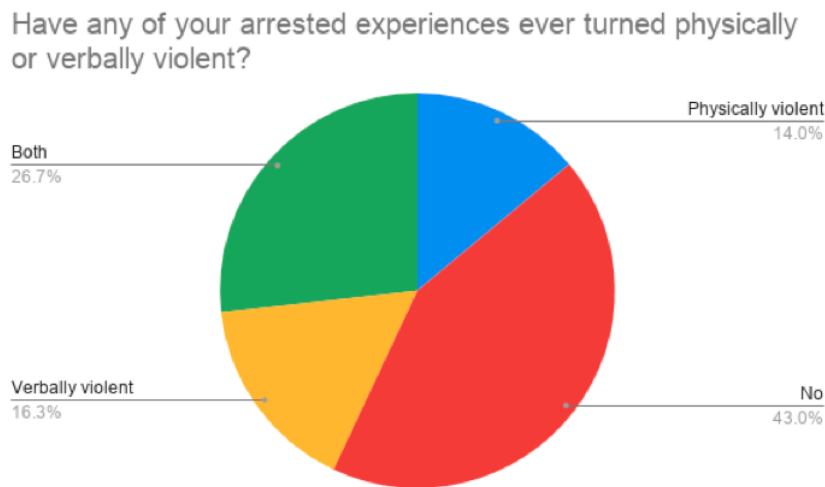
## El Cerrito

In the city of El Cerrito, from 2015-2019, the highest charges for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals were for warrants, shoplifting and possession of a controlled substance. Out of 941 individuals arrested, 480 were African Americans, 230 identified as white and 148 were Hispanic. The age group with the highest arrests were 23-25 year olds with 84 arrests and the 30-39 age group with 74 arrests. The lowest arrest rate was with 68-70 year olds, with two arrests.

The arrest data collectively shows a high number of nonviolent arrests largely stemming from having outstanding warrants. Outstanding warrants can be put on an individual for missing a probation or parole meeting. For those who are traumatized, lack a stable environment and face several social and environmental challenges, violating probation or parole can earn a warrant.

One respondent mentioned how she was put in a difficult position to pick up her daughter from her co-parenting partner but was also under house arrest, prompting a difficult dilemma of caring for her child but not able to because of the inflexibility of her probation terms. Our system in this example shows a lack of trauma and gender-informed care, as her reality as a mother is institutionally neglected and can in turn create more harms that can trigger more unsafe and risky decisions and make the road to recovery all the more challenging.

When we asked survey respondents if any of the arrests became physically or verbally violent, 14% said physically violent, 15% said verbally violent and 26.7% said both.



**Figure 27:** This figure represents the percentage of arrests that escalated into a physical or verbally violent arrest. More than half of the arrests are found to be either physically violent, verbally or both. This contributes to the trauma of incarceration for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.

Police encounters with Black women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals of color can become violent. Then, there are situations where black women and black girls' lives are needlessly lost in tragic death due to police encounters. The following quote is from *Another War on Women: Mass Incarceration, Gender and Color*, where the author Sandra Enos writes about how women of color are disproportionately impacted by criminal justice policy, keeping Black women in prison longer through enhanced sentences.

“Some scholars have suggested that the disproportionate incarceration of minority men and women was a simple consequence of the war on drugs. Since minority populations were using and trafficking drugs, it was highly likely they would get caught up in the criminal legal system web. Data suggest, however, that blacks and whites use drugs equally. If the war on drugs were fought on the battlefields where drugs were being used, more whites would have been victims of



mass incarceration. Whites do get convicted and sentenced to prison, of course, but not in proportion to either their use of controlled substances or their involvement in the trafficking in drugs

If the crime rate doesn't predict the prison population, then what governs the size and composition of the correctional population? Criminal justice policy itself and the attendant collateral consequences of punishment. The increase in the prison population is due to broadening the net of offenses for putting someone behind bars, the reduction of judicial discretion through mandatory minimum sentences, the increased length of sentences and a drop in the rate of early releases by granting parole. State sentencing policies doubled, tripled or quadrupled the likelihood of an offender being incarcerated for a long sentence for possessing drugs, trafficking drugs or assault, respectively (Neal and Rick)”<sup>12</sup>

These arrests show how our community of women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals are likely suffering and enduring the challenges of returning home without trauma and gender-informed care. The number of arrests stemming from warrants creates more opportunities for arrests that can come from challenging environments and situations.

It is essential to examine criteria for how to divert arrests stemming from warrants to programs that can help aid, support and strengthen women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.

It is time to stop arresting and further traumatizing through incarceration our women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. We are arresting those who actually need the most help. It is time we establish a multi-agency effort to provide care instead of incarceration.

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<sup>12</sup> Enos, S. (spring 2017). ANOTHER WAR ON WOMEN: MASS INCARCERATION, GENDER AND COLOR. *International Journals*, 43(1), special issue on gender inequality, 33-57.

## Conclusion

After five years of research, we have concluded that women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals who are suffering from abuse and trauma and go untreated have a high likelihood of being arrested, incarcerated and endure more trauma from incarceration. As a result, they are at risk of becoming stuck in a cycle of incarceration, not only impacting those who are incarcerated but their family, friends and community.

It is important to know how to address trauma and understand how trauma can shape and direct a person's life, especially if that individual is unable to seek out and receive treatment. Our research shows how abusive trauma can occur in the home and continue undetected by service providers. Some respondents who responded to being sexually abused said that it took years to tell someone and finally receive assistance. There is still a significant gap due to gender equity and incarceration is no exception.

Almost all of our participants who have been arrested responded that they had been using drugs and had difficult living conditions where they experienced parents or guardians abusing drugs, having been incarcerated, or had been abused physically and/or sexually.

Along with analyzing the arrest data from the five local jurisdictions within Contra Costa, we clearly see a high number of nonviolent arrests, often arresting someone who is repeating the offense.

By analyzing the arrest data, along with information from our survey and focus groups, we see the make-up of nonviolent offenses and pre-trial detention can lead women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals to take on risky choices that break the law and lead to an arrest. If there was an alternative to incarceration, we would be interrupting the arrest cycle and provide the right support and services instead of incarceration. One focus group participant speaks about the motivation behind choices such as these:

“A lot of women I met and talk about in jail, they got in their because of prostitution. When I ask why they say income, enough for college or something for their daughter.”

Our focus group participants have also stated that they have benefited from financial assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping this in mind, where we have situations where many arrests result from non-violent offenses such as prostitution and petty theft, we have an opportunity to prevent arrests and instead divert support to resources for women facing trauma, living without housing and participating in unsafe and illegal activities.

In California, as the decarceration rate increases, we will see more formerly incarcerated individuals in our community. We need to be ready with a multi-agency response for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals returning from incarceration. From our research, this is a population that needs gender-based and trauma-informed care and services. The decisions we make now will have a significant impact on the well-being of Contra Costa County residents.

# Recommendations

## **Diversion Program**

We need to stop arresting women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals who have been traumatized. One option is a diversion program at the point of arrest and before pre-trial detention that can divert to a corresponding support program. This can transform the worst moment of someone's life to a life-changing opportunity.

## **Prison/Jail Conditions**

- Provide dedicated living spaces for infants and babies that would meet the state infant care facility requirements.
- There is no confinement during pregnancy.
- End prison birthing.
- End family separation. Children of incarcerated women should be with their immediate families instead of CPS as a first option.
- Rehabilitation for narcotic abuse needs to be adequately provided.
- Trauma-informed and gender-specific care and hygiene products need to be offered.
- Staff should reflect the population that they serve, where women and gender nonconforming staff need to reflect a percentage equal to the number of women and gender nonconforming individuals being incarcerated.
- Implement a guaranteed line of communication via technology for incarcerated parents to continue raising their children while serving out their sentences.

## **Post Incarceration Housing**

Provide financial assistance or housing assistance to ensure that formerly incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals have safe housing after incarceration. "Safe housing" in this report is defined as housing that formerly incarcerated individuals own or rent, where they are able to house children and have space for themselves.

## **Community Centers and Direct Service Programs**

- There are many community centers and nonprofits throughout Contra Costa County.
- Establish a Direct Services Program that directly treats women, girls, and gender nonconforming individuals with trauma-informed and gender-affirming care.
- Establish Detox and Rehabilitation Programs that can be housed at community centers.
- Provide education and training on the impact of trauma and incarceration on women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.
- Create a network that allows for community centers to refer participants for direct mental health and social services.
- Create an Institute for Girls that can be a pre-screening detector to provide a safe space for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals to receive mental health services, connect with others and help build a community that lets formerly incarcerated individuals thrive from their lived experiences.
- Promote family resources that will restore relationships impacted by incarceration.

## **Recommendations Regarding Potential Funding Sources**

- Charge a higher tax rate for state and private prisons to assist with the health costs associated with rehabilitation programming (for incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals).
- Utilize reserved county funds for pilot community programs and services.
- Repurpose funds reserved for jail expansion towards community developments.
- Tax all entities associated with prison industrial complex institutions.
- Tax investors who receive labor from imprisoned women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals, and utilize these funds for skill development and job readiness programs addressing these populations.
- A portion of labor cost from state- or privately-run prisons should go towards building communities specifically for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals.
- State prisons should finance the exit costs of incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals. These costs are associated with housing upon release.
- Use funds from the county budget to establish a Taskforce on Gender Equity Justice.
- Funds from COVID-19 relief should be allocated appropriately to help provide financial assistance for women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals as well as fund direct service programs.



# Community Based Organizations

This list is a landscape survey of programs that Safe Return Project has identified as resources or places that serve formerly incarcerated women, girls, and gender nonconforming individuals. We would recommend that organizations servicing formerly incarcerated women, girls and gender nonconforming individuals have direct service programs and are able to be trauma-informed and gender-affirming care and services.

## **BAY AREA RESCUE MISSION RICHMOND**

They provide a Men and Women Center that supports homeless men and women since 1965. They are open 24 hours a day, providing food, shelter and clothing. The mission provides meals three times daily, including holidays. They provide safe shelter each day, serving 220 unhoused people in the community. They operate a Life Transformation Program, where the shelter provides 120 individuals encouragement to find long-term relief from homelessness through an extensive residential discipleship program. The program is designed to be a pathway to restoration, identifying destructive behaviors and equipping them with the necessary resources to establish independent lives of self-sufficiency and self-determination through the discipleship program. The discipleship program offers workshops to break alcohol and drug dependency, as well as receive vocational training, GED coursework, counseling and spiritual guidance, computer training, life management skills, Biblical training, transitional living and job placement.

## **CALLI HOUSE SAN PABLO**

Calli house is a 24 short-term housing and supportive services program up to four months for immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth (18-24 years). They provide drop-in services Monday to Friday 12pm-1pm with access to food, clothing, crisis intervention counseling and life skills education. Healthcare is provided through an adolescent health clinic on-site with a nurse practitioner providing health assessment, physical exams, immunization, STD testing and family planning services. Mental and mental health services are also provided. Calli provides free and voluntary services that include emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, case management, counseling, legal services, healthcare services, family reunification, employment assistance, peer support groups, school enrollment and transportation assistance.

## **CONTRA COSTA NOW (National Organization for Women)**

Contra Costa County NOW's primary issues include reproductive rights, marriage equality, ending violence against women and promoting equal opportunity for girls and women. They provide a Toll Free, 24-hour crisis/counseling line, legal advocacy for residential support, parenting and counseling services for adults and children and a temporary restraining order clinic. Bay Area Legal Aid provides assistance filing restraining orders, Family Law Facilitator Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange, Community Violence Solutions, WOMAN Inc. tracks shelter openings in the Greater Bay Area, Planned Parenthood Health Centers and nursing home abuse resources for community members.

## **COMMUNITY FOR SOLUTIONS**

Community for Solutions seeks to answer what it will take to create a lasting end to homelessness that leaves no one behind. Built for Zero offers a network of eighty communities working towards zero homelessness. They provide homelessness prevention workshops and also work on initiatives, such as a

social impact investment model solving for affordable housing challenges in a way that can be replicated by nearly any community.

### **GEO-GROUP, Inc.**

Geo Group provides leading evidence-based rehabilitation programs to government partners and individuals while in custody and post-release into the community. The GEO Continuum of Care utilizes a point system and allows them to receive items such as clothing, gift cards and outings. Points are based on staying clean and they are tested upon every visit. They are open 24/7 all year around and have plenty of training workshops available. With 118 facilities worldwide, 22,000 employees with 69 GEO facilities with ACA Accreditation also provide comprehensive ESG (Environmental Social Governance) through their annual report disclosing metrics. Geo group also provides In-Custody programs, Secure Transportation, Residential and Non-Residential Reentry Services and electronic monitoring services serving 30,000+ daily participants.

### **GIRLS Inc. RICHMOND**

Girls Inc. serves girls 15-18 years at more than 1,500 sites providing evidence-based programming comprising of the development of the whole girl learning to value their whole self and inherent strengths. The organization offers support to girls to navigate challenges they face as well as mentorship and affirming a positive environment for girls. Girls Inc. also promotes healthy living by supporting academic enrichment and life skills.

### **GREATER RICHMOND INTERFAITH PROGRAM ( GRIP RICHMOND)**

GRIP seeks to eradicate homelessness and revitalize the West County community through case management, enrichment and training opportunities to help stabilize low-moderate income community members. GRIP provides intensive case management and immediate basic needs such as food, clothing, laundry services, mailing services and daily scheduled showers. They provide a family shelter with 65 beds set for transitional housing programs. GRIP also provides nine affordable housing apartments reserved for veterans facing homelessness, as well as services to address alcohol and other drug services including referrals and counseling. The organization offers brokerage services and linkages to community-based programs in Contra Costa County.

### **THE LATINA CENTER**

The Latina Center serves families in the East Bay. The Center provides leadership development and advocacy for Latina women. They provide leadership for women's overall health, including time management, budgeting, project planning, community outreach, health seminars and reflection on leadership styles, and team and networking, including expanded access to community resources. The Center coordinates with Latina Legislative Day in Sacramento, where members speak on behalf of their communities and educate legislative staff on critical issues affecting their families.

### **RAINBOW COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS, CONCORD**

Rainbow Community Solutions builds community and has promoted well-being among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and intersex (LGBQI+) people since 1995. The center offers access to food and meals at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on the first and third Thursdays of each month. They provide teletherapy for outpatient virtual mental health services specifically for LGBQ+

communities. Also, the center provides professional learning and individual coaching groups within the Rainbow Center. They provide opportunity to network, dialogue and consult with Rainbow facilitators and peers and provide professional development and interactive workshops with hands-on learning experiences for all participants.

### **THE RYSE CENTER, RICHMOND**

RYSE creates safe spaces grounded in social justice that build youth power for young people of color to love, learn, educate, heal and transform lives and communities. RYSE engages youth ages 13-24 across Richmond and West Contra Costa County's diverse communities. As a collective care unit, RYSE responds to the specific needs of justice system-involved youth, lethally injured youth and youth at acute risk of lethal injury. RYSE cohesively links wraparound mental health and clinical support, tailored advocacy and case management with non-stigmatizing, integrated youth programming and power-building. This includes a restorative conferencing model that redirects young people and survivors away from the juvenile legal system, as well as transition and reentry services for all young people ages 15-21 following custodial treatment programs. All programming at RYSE is free, and young people direct and engage in programming in the areas of Media, Arts & Culture, Community Health, Youth Organizing and Education & Justice. RYSE allows multiple entry points in a manner that feels cohesive, especially for youth referred through law enforcement or justice-system involvement. Strategies are rooted in racial justice, gender justice and healing work to strengthen young people's ability to successfully navigate education and juvenile justice systems, empowering them to be advocates for change and agents in their own liberation and engaging adults as allies and accomplices. For programming and referral information, please visit [www.rysecenter.org](http://www.rysecenter.org).

### **RUBICON**

Rubicon provides pathways for our participants to develop the economic mobility to move out of poverty. No one service can address the many challenges people living in poverty face. We believe that success comes from participation and achievement in four areas, Assets, Income, Wellness and Connections. Rubicon's vision is an East Bay without poverty and our Mission is to transform east bay communities by equipping people to break the cycle of poverty.

### **RE-ENTRY SUCCESS CENTER**

The Re-entry Success Center provides free services to justice-impacted men and women and their families. They provide hands-on planning and critical next steps after contact with police and the courts. The center offers family services and fatherhood/motherhood coaching and related support. They also provide financial planning courses on financial literacy, assistance in the application process and free tax services, as well as education training, resume training and job search assistance and employment assistance services that include job applications workshops, interview preparation and supplies, such as professional clothing for an interview. The center provides health and wellness services and encourages members to seek treatment and recovery programs, one-on-one counseling and group support. Staff offer free transportation to health and dental appointments, including COVID-19 testing. The Re-entry Success Center works closely with Contra Costa County housing partners, discussing shelter placement, rental assistance and eviction prevention. They provide legal services and the reentry team works closely with various legal partners supporting a wide range of needs from child support and record expungement to

court fines and support letters. They provide public benefits and assist members with applications to receive government assistance like Medi-Cal, Cash Aid and CalFresh.

### **UJIMA RECOVERY, MARTINEZ & SAN PABLO**

Ujima Family Recovery is a drug addiction, alcohol and behavioral health problem agency dedicated to stopping substance abuse for individuals and families, allowing the connection with families to remain intact. The agency provides residential programs and offers specialized evidence-based services critical to recovery in a drug- and alcohol-free environment. They provide outpatient treatment programs throughout Contra Costa County: There are Ujima East, Ujima Central and Ujima West treatment programs addressing drug and alcohol abuse for pregnant, postpartum and parenting women and children.

### **A New Way Of Life (Recommended Model to replicate in Contra Costa)**

A New Way of Life provides housing, legal, policy and leadership development services. Since 1998, more than 1,000 women and children have found safety and support in their re-entry homes and more than 300 women have been reunited with their children. Since its inception in 2007, their legal department has provided pro bono services to assist thousands seeking relief from the burden of criminal histories. Those services have opened doors to job opportunities by expunging criminal records and offering access to occupational licenses. As a result of our leadership-building activities, hundreds more have been educated and empowered to advocate around issues that directly affect their lives. These services are provided at less than a third of the cost to formerly incarcerated individuals.

### **National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Young Girls (Recommended Model to replicate in Contra Costa)**

National Council for Incarcerated Women and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Young Girls is a network of formerly and currently incarcerated women committed to reimagining communities and the abolishment of incarcerating women and girls. Their mission is to shift from criminal legal systems to community-led human justice systems.

### **TIME FOR CHANGE FOUNDATION (Recommended Model to replicate in Contra Costa)**

This organization provides services focused on the mission of empowering disenfranchised low-income individuals and families. They help families transition into permanent housing and offer programs to clients to prepare them for obstacles they may face when they reach the ability to live on their own. Time for Change provides education, counseling and therapy to help clients overcome alcohol and/or other drug abuse challenges. They help to promote advocacy by offering leadership development and civic engagement trainings, empowering women to be the change they want to see in their family. Also, they promote community development by creating a low-income housing model where local families can thrive.

### **Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC) (Recommended Model to replicate in Contra Costa)**

YWFC provides: Leadership Development & Building Power, Healing & Self Determination, Advocacy & Movement-Building, Training & Education, Legal Advocacy & Strategy, Freedom Research Institute, Sister Warrior Freedom Coalition and Changing the Narrative. YWFC has contributed to an annual 79%-85% reduction in recidivism among women and gender non-conforming individuals who complete their program. Up to 90% of those who complete the program maintain employment and reach



educational goals at the 6-, 12-, and 18-month follow-up. By 2030, the Young Women's Freedom Center will have built a groundswell of formerly incarcerated and systems-impacted girls, women and gender nonconforming individuals to lead Freedom 2030 – a ten-year campaign toward the ultimate goal of decriminalizing girls, women and gender nonconforming individuals in California.



(Photo: Protest against Police Brutality in Contra Costa)



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