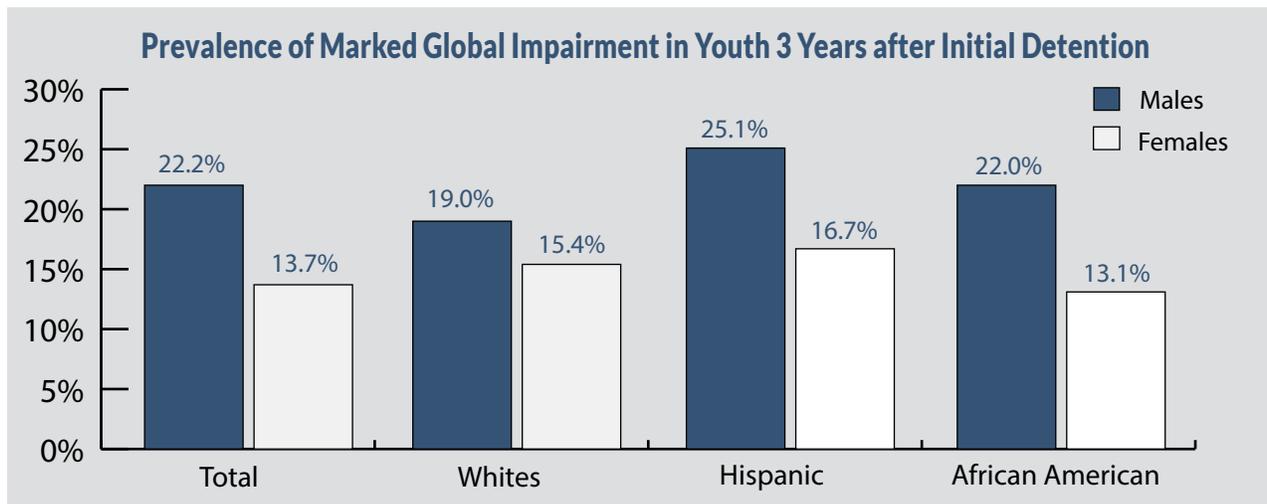




## Youth Incarceration Linked to Problems Functioning in Society

Previously incarcerated youth face challenges functioning in society as they age, according to Northwestern Juvenile Project study results recently published by the U.S. Department of Justice.<sup>1</sup> Researchers assessed the “functional impairment” (i.e., routine social, psychiatric, and academic difficulties) of 1,653 youth across eight domains three years after their initial detention, finding that one in five (21.6%) demonstrated “marked global impairment.”<sup>2</sup> A greater percentage of males than females showed such impairment (22.2% and 13.7%, respectively). Only 7.5% of participants exhibited no notable impairment. At 25.1%, Hispanic males demonstrated the highest rate of marked impairment, and authors noted the vastly unmet needs of young minority males.<sup>3</sup> Findings suggest the need for improved interventions and care after release, and underscore that failing to provide effective rehabilitation services during and after detention perpetuates the ongoing costs for youth and society alike.



**Source:**

Abram, K. M., Choe, J. Y., Washburn, J. J., Romero, E. G., Teplin, L. A., and Bassett, E. D. (2013). Functional impairment in delinquent youth. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> The longitudinal study participants included youth detained in the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago between 1995 and 1998. Participants were ages 10-18 at the time of initial interview, and ages 13-22 at follow up.

<sup>2</sup> Domains included home, school/work, community, behavior toward others, emotions/mood, substance use, self-harm, and rational thinking. Researchers assigned scores to quantify level of impairment on each domain: minimal (0), mild (10), moderate (20), and severe (30). Summed scores of 100 or greater across all domains indicated “marked global impairment” and called for more intensive care than outpatient and/or more than one source of care.

<sup>3</sup> Hispanic and African-American males were more likely to have scores of severe impairment in the school/work and community domains than non-Hispanic white males.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at [www.centerforhealthandjustice.org](http://www.centerforhealthandjustice.org).

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