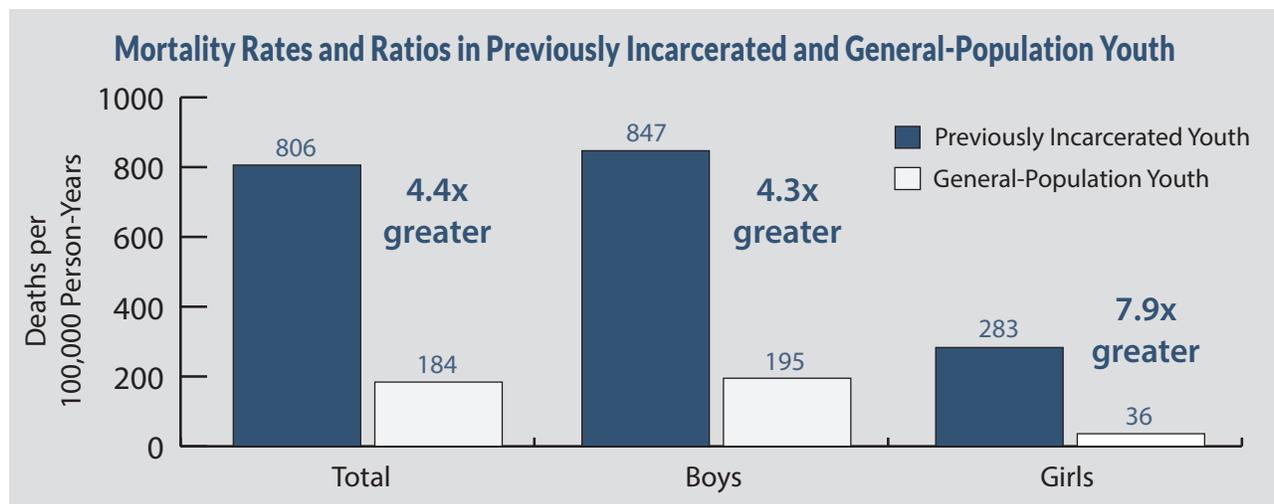




Previously Incarcerated Youth Die at More Than Four Times the Rate of Their Peers in the General Population

Previously incarcerated youth die at significantly higher rates than youth in the general population, according to results of the Northwestern Juvenile Project¹ published by the U.S. Department of Justice. Through calculating ratios that compared the mortality rates of these groups,² researchers determined that youth who had been detained died at a rate 4.4 times greater than their peers in the general population (806 vs. 184 per 100,000 person-years). While boys in both groups died at higher rates than girls in both groups, respectively, girls who had been detained died at a rate 7.9 times greater than their peers in the general population (283 vs. 36 per 100,000 person-years). Researchers found that homicide was the leading cause of death³ among previously incarcerated youth (90.1%), and that the vast majority of these homicides resulted from gunshot wounds (93.0%). The authors made an extensive series of policy recommendations, including implementing delinquency and violence prevention programs, reevaluating firearm policies in terms of public health, and improving mental health services for high-risk youth.



Source:

Teplin, L. A., McClelland, G. M., Abram, K. M., Mileusnic-Polchan, D., Olson, N. D., and Harrison, A. J. (2015). Violent death in delinquent youth after detention. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Notes:

¹ The project is a longitudinal study of youth detained at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago between 1995 and 1998. Study participants included a sample of 1,829 youth detained between ages 10 and 18. As of March 31, 2004, participants had been monitored for 0.5 to 8.4 years (mean: 7.1 years; median: 7.2 years). The comparison group included all individuals aged 15-24 in the Cook County general population. Researchers examined deaths in both groups among individuals who were 15-24 years old.

² Mortality ratios provided a measure of comparison between the standardized mortality rates (SMRs) of previously detained youth and those in the general population, controlling for gender, race, and age differences. Mortality rates were measured in deaths per 100,000 person-years, which take into account both the number of people in the study and the amount of time each person spent in the study.

³ All of the participants who died during follow-up (65 individuals) did so as a result of external causes, including homicide and legal intervention, motor vehicle accidents, accidents and effects non-vehicle related, suicide, and other external causes.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to support 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, training, and consultation in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

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