

1

About me

I am a PhD Candidate writing my dissertation on Adolescent Social Media Use During Covid-19 Lockdown and Current Levels of Anxiety, Depression and Loneliness.

I am a trained clinical counsellor and I work with children and adolescents that have complex needs within public health as well as in private practice.

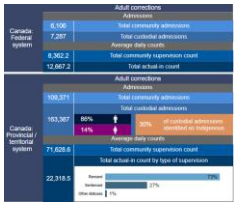
I am trained and work with adolescents and adults that are struggling with substance use disorders, complex mental health disorders, and those that have been justice involved.

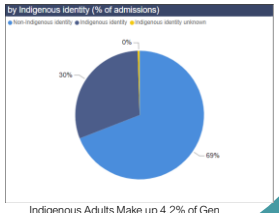
I am passionate about working with First Nations Communities and supporting the clients using culture and tradition to see success.

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Correctional Stats – Reference Year 2022/2023 – Adults per 100,00



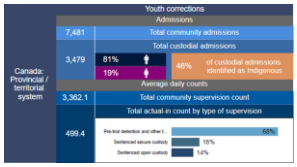


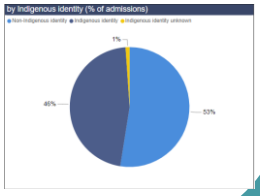
Indigenous Adults Make up 4.2% of Gen Population of Canada (2016/2017)

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Correctional Stats – Reference Year 2022/2023 – Youth per 100,00





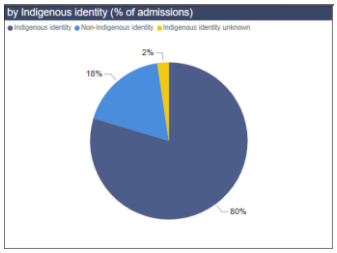
Indigenous Youth Make up 8% of Canadian General Population (2016/2022)

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Saskatchewan Adult Involvement in Corrections 2022/2023 per 100,000

2021 CENSUS DATA SHOWS THAT 17% OF THE POPULATION OF SASKATCHEWAN IDENTIFY AS INDIGENOUS

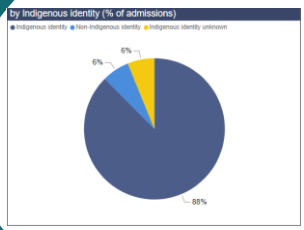


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Saskatchewan Youth Involvement in Corrections 2022/2023 per 100,000

Indigenous youth in Saskatchewan make up about 50% of the overall Indigenous population in the province.



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Solutions for Indigenous Justice Involved People

- Indigenous healing lodges have proven to be successful in reducing the recidivism rate amongst offenders who participate in their holistic programming
- The needs of offenders are addressed through teachings and ceremonies, contact with Elders and interaction with nature
- Among the Calls, the report identifies the need for additional healing lodges that are run by Indigenous communities
- CSC currently has ten healing lodges in Canada. Four healing lodges are operated by CSC, while six healing lodges are operated by Indigenous communities under Section 81 agreements
- Further the MMIWG report called healing lodges to provide residential services oriented to family and community healing

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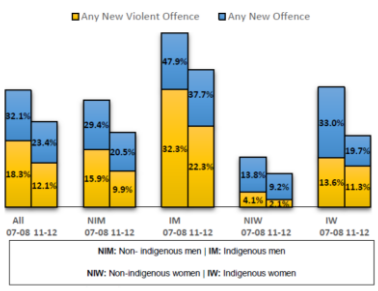
Current Recidivism Rates In Canada

- **Recidivism is defined in many ways throughout Canada including:**
  - Any contact with law enforcement after release
  - Breach of conditions on a parole order
  - Being accused of committing a new crime
  - Being convicted of a new crime
  - The type of crime:
    - violent vs non-violent

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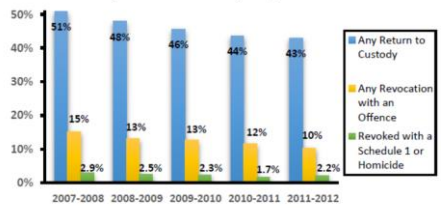
Figure 1. Two-year reconviction rates: 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 cohorts



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Figure 2. Revocation rates by fiscal year of release.



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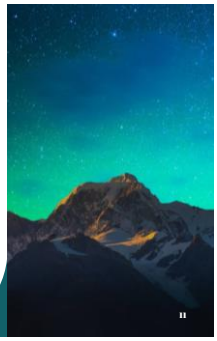
Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism

- The framework was tabled in June of 2022 in federal Parliament
- Consultations were held with over 20 organizations to better understand barriers to successful reintegration
- Five priorities were framed and include:
  - Housing
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Health
  - Positive support networks

It was also highly noted that that over-representation of marginalized groups such as Indigenous people's, Black Canadians needs to be addressed

It was identified that female offenders also have unique needs that need to be met

Expansion of the CSC's Mother-Child Program as a key piece of supporting female offenders



11

11

CSC Mother-Child Program

- Program was formerly implemented in 2001
- Program allows children to live with their mothers in prison until the age of 6 as long as they can afford to
- Across Canada 150 women have participated in this program
- Unfortunately, the program has been understudied and under documented
- There has been low participation rates
- Restrictive criteria has interfered with participation
- Inconsistent practices from institution to institution
- No research done on the impact to the children themselves

12

12

Recommendations for CSC Mother-Child Program

Conduct a review of the program requirements and eligibility criteria for the Mother-Child Program, with a view to increasing access and participation in the program and removing barriers, particularly for Indigenous mothers; and,

Collect, track, and publicly report on participation in the Mother-Child Program to better understand who it is serving and how the program is functioning

These recommendations were made prior to the Commissioner's Directive review that was completed in January of 2023

13

13

Prison Needle Exchange Programs (PNEP)

- Drumheller medium security prison was the first prison to put in a needle exchange program in 2019
- Program was based on the European models, where corrections saw a reduction in the spread of disease, and no increase in drug use or violence was noted
- Stats for Drumheller include:
  - HIV was at 2.02% (2007) vs. .93% (2020)
  - Hep C 21% (2010) vs. 3.2% (2021)

14

14

PNEP cont'd

- There are now 9 prisons that are participating in the program
- Inmates are also offered counselling, use of Naloxone, and preventative treatments for HIV/AIDS
- Use of the program is low, inmates are fearful of staff knowing they are using substances
- Staff are hesitant as many feel that it will encourage inmates to use drugs
- There has been no increase in substance use noted
- There have been no missing needles, and no violence with the needles.
- More research is needed

15

15

University of Alberta Prison Project Researching To Make Improvements for Inmates

- The UAPP is a multi-year, multi-method study of life experiences inside Western Canadian prisons
- It consists of qualitative interviews, quantitative surveys, and ethnographic observation
- The goal of the University of Alberta Prison Project is to collect base-line data on life experiences of Canadian prisoners and staff and utilize our findings for evidence-based changes
- Currently, our research in provincial prisons (remand and sentenced up to 2 years) consists of interviews and surveys with current prisoners (currently close to 800 participants) and prison staff (about 200 participants) inside four provincial prisons in Western Canada
- Questions are related to prisons as spaces for radicalization, and explores issues around gender, gangs, drugs, race-relations, administrative segregation, the opioid crisis behind bars, and topics relating to daily life in prison and the challenges of being incarcerated
- For staff, we are concerned to understand their experiences on the job, best practices, and possibilities for beneficial reforms
- The University of Alberta Prison Project has expanded its research efforts into the federal prison system
- The two main research objectives are: (1) creating baseline data about the realities of the victim-offender overlap for male and female inmates held in Canadian prisons and (2) developing an empirical understanding of the consequences of the opioid crisis on prison life
- So far, prisoners and staff at one federal institution have been interviewed, and two more are expected in the upcoming months
- For the latest updates on the University of Alberta Prison Project, follow us on Twitter at: @theUAPP

16

16

Thank you

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17