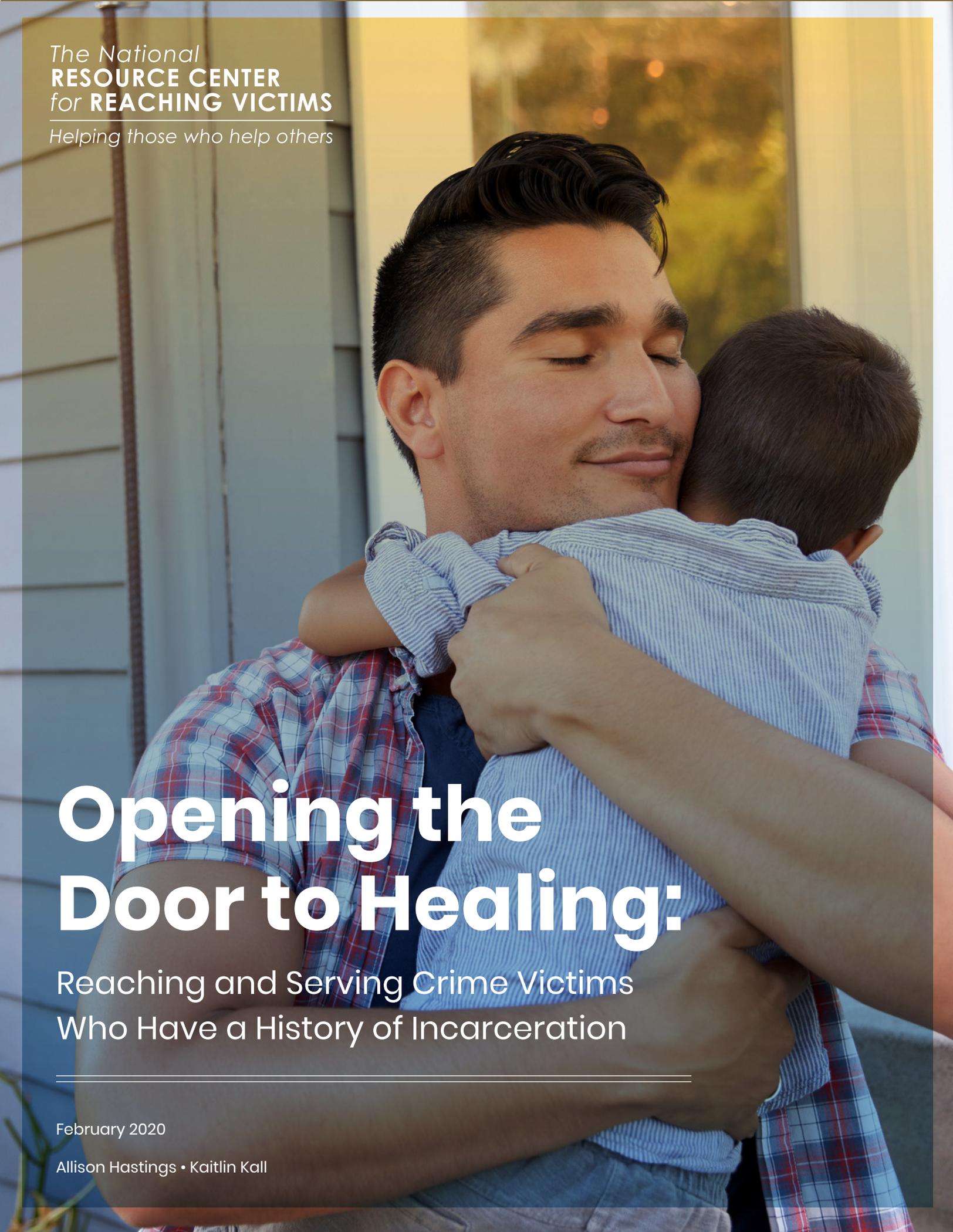


The National
RESOURCE CENTER
for **REACHING VICTIMS**

Helping those who help others

A photograph of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a red and blue plaid shirt, hugging a young boy from behind. The boy is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. They are outdoors, with a light-colored building wall and a window in the background. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

Opening the Door to Healing:

Reaching and Serving Crime Victims
Who Have a History of Incarceration

February 2020

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From the Project Director

I knew I needed to talk to someone, so I went and the counselors didn't know how to handle me [as a survivor who was raped in prison]. You see them tense right up. My husband kept pushing me to get help. Otherwise, I would've given up.

This is the voice of one of many survivors who lives with a history of both victimization and incarceration. As the Vera Institute of Justice, on behalf of the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims, embarked on the journey to understand more about people who have had both experiences, we often heard that the shame and societal stigma of being “offenders” eclipses the less visible but painful reality that they are also survivors of violence—harm that may have happened to them before, during, and/or after their time behind bars.

The stigma of being formerly incarcerated and the stark lines between “victim” and “offender” in our society are deep-seated. That stigma can make it extremely challenging for survivors who have previously been incarcerated to seek help. It can also make it hard for victim service providers to see this population of survivors as crime victims. As a result, they may not realize that their outreach efforts, community partnerships, and services are not effectively reaching these survivors because they aren't knowledgeable about incarceration and reentry or don't know about the overlap between victimization and incarceration.

On the other hand, a number of formerly incarcerated people do get support from reentry programs during their transition back to the community after a period of incarceration. However, most reentry programs are designed to help people find housing and jobs, not heal from trauma. Reentry service providers are generally not asking their clients about trauma and wouldn't know what to do if someone disclosed victimization. They may only recognize signs of trauma when a client's behavior (such as, substance use) indicates that something is wrong, and the behavior is interfering with the person's ability to keep a job or meet parole conditions. By that time, a crisis may be unfolding that ends with the person's parole being revoked or a new arrest, both of which often lead back to jail or prison.

These realities help explain why so many survivors with a history of incarceration do not get the services they need to heal. They also point to real opportunities for change. These range from naming this population of survivors to help reduce stigma and affirm their humanity to exploring ways to build skills and collaboration among victim service providers and reentry programs. In this report, we shine a light on crime victims who have previously been incarcerated, examine their needs and barriers to services, and offer strategies for opening the door to healing for these survivors.

Allison Hastings
Project Director

About the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims

Funded by the federal Office for Victims of Crime, the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims (NRC) is a one-stop shop for victim service providers, culturally specific organizations, justice system professionals, and policymakers to get information and expert guidance to enhance their capacity to identify, reach, and serve all victims, especially those from communities that are underrepresented in healing services and avenues to justice. The NRC is working to increase the number of victims who receive healing supports by understanding who is underrepresented and why some people access services while others don't; designing and implementing best practices for connecting people to the services they need; and empowering and equipping organizations to provide the most useful and effective services possible to crime victims. The NRC is a collaboration among Caminar Latino, Casa de Esperanza, Common Justice, FORGE, the National Children's Advocacy Center, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the National Clearinghouse on Abuse Later in Life, Women of Color Network, Inc., and the Vera Institute of Justice. The NRC's vision is that victim services are accessible, culturally appropriate and relevant, and trauma-informed, and that the overwhelming majority of victims access and benefit from these services.

Introduction

More than 2 million people are locked up in U.S. jails and prisons.¹ Most were victims of crime before they were incarcerated, and many experience victimization during their incarceration or once they return home.² But regardless of when their victimization occurred, the vast majority of survivors who have previously been incarcerated do not get the services they need to heal. They face many barriers to services, including often not being viewed by service providers as “victims” because of their criminal history. As a result, many survivors who have a history of incarceration live with a great deal of unaddressed trauma.

Unfortunately, lack of access to such services is not unique to survivors who were once incarcerated. Every year, millions of people nationwide become victims of crime. But according to the National Crime Victimization Survey, only about 8 percent of people who experience violent victimization report that they have received victim services.³ To understand the reasons that so many victims do not get services—as well as what resources and tools the field needs to reach more survivors—the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims (NRC), funded by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) of the U.S. Department of Justice, undertook a comprehensive yearlong assessment of the victim services and related fields, beginning in the summer of 2017. The NRC, a collaboration among nine organizations, sought to understand who is underrepresented and why some people access services and others do not. (For more about the collaboration, see “About the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims” on page 3.) Using a number of methods including informational interviews, listening sessions, literature reviews, surveys, and reviews of practice documents, the NRC found that a number of groups of survivors were particularly hard to reach, including people who are formerly incarcerated.

The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera), the NRC partner leading the work to improve access to victim services for formerly incarcerated survivors, conducted a landscape analysis to understand service needs and gaps for this population of crime victims. Vera assembled a group of experts comprising victim service providers, advocates (including people who have personally experienced incarceration), and allied professionals to help design and implement this assessment.⁴ With the group’s guidance, Vera engaged more than 40 people through

informational interviews, listening sessions, and exploratory phone calls. They represented a range of perspectives and included Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) administrators, victim advocates, lawyers, reentry professionals, formerly incarcerated survivors, researchers, and criminal justice reform advocates.⁵ Vera also compiled and analyzed practice documents as well as an academic literature review.

“According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, only about 8% of people who survive serious violence report that they have received victim services.”

This report synthesizes the information and insights Vera and the NRC gleaned from these activities and includes references to research and practice materials. The first section summarizes current knowledge about the overlap in experiences of victimization and incarceration, and the second section provides foundational information about incarceration in the United States. The third section describes what we learned from the assessment, and the last section outlines the priority needs that, if addressed, could lead to more crime victims who were once incarcerated getting the services they need to heal.



Adults involved in the justice system are victimized at high rates before, during, and after incarceration.

Many formerly incarcerated people have unaddressed trauma stemming from victimization they experienced at some point in their lives. This section describes what is known about the violence people experience prior to incarceration, during incarceration, and once they have returned to the community.

Many people in U.S. jails and prisons were victims of crime before they became incarcerated. Although the last national data BJS released about victimization prior to incarceration is 20 years old, that study found that men and women in state or federal prisons, in jail, and on probation had higher rates of childhood physical and sexual abuse than rates reported by the broader public.⁶ The study also found that one-third of women in state prison and a quarter in jail said that they had been raped before their sentence; more than half of women said they had been abused by their intimate partners. In the two decades since BJS published its report on the victimization experiences of people under some form of correctional control, other researchers have published studies that shed light on similar experiences that people had before they were incarcerated. A 2009 study coauthored by Rutgers University Professor Nancy Wolff examined 7,500 incarcerated people across multiple prisons in one state and found that more than half of men and women reported childhood physical abuse.⁷ Approximately ten percent of men and 47 percent of women surveyed reported childhood sexual abuse.⁸ Another noteworthy study from 2012 looked at 491 women in nine rural and urban U.S. jails and found that trauma and victimization were nearly universal among this population. Eighty-six percent of women had experienced sexual violence, 77 percent had survived intimate partner violence, and 60 percent had experienced caregiver violence.⁹

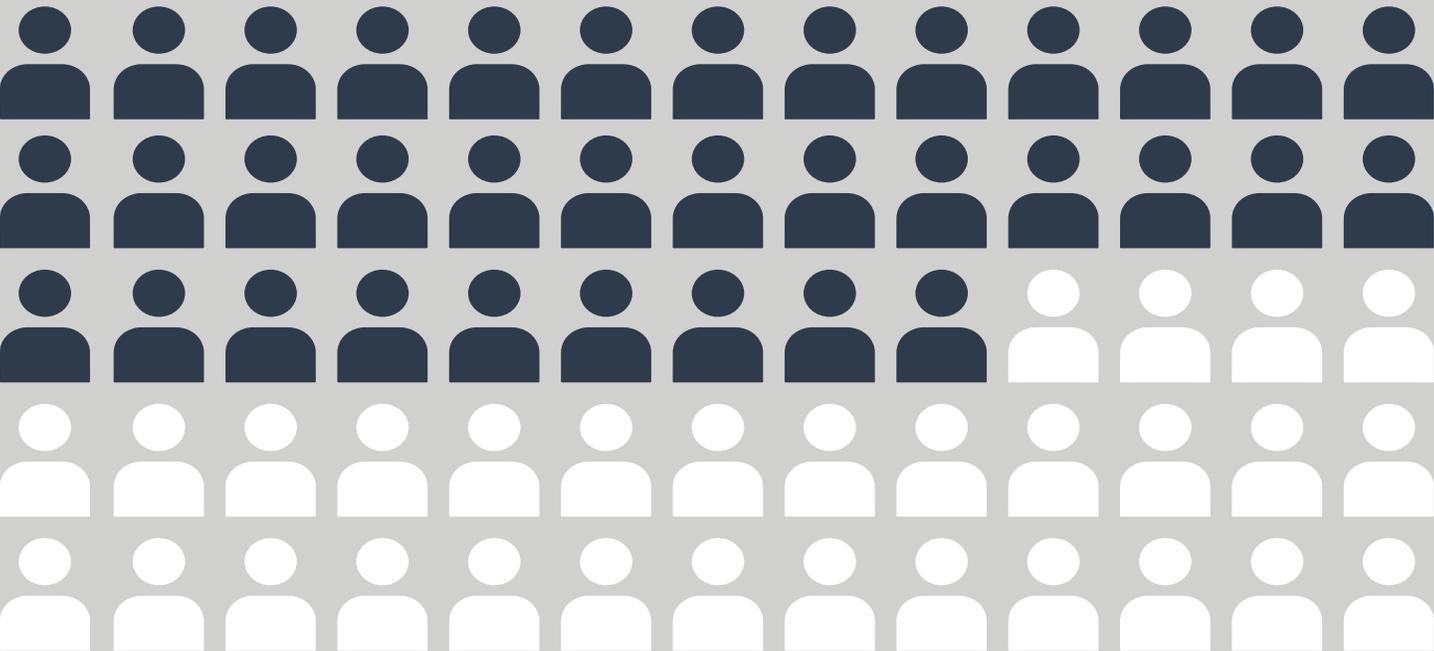
Sociologist Bruce Western's 2018 book, *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison*, takes an expansive view of victimization and chronicles the violence his study participants experienced beyond childhood sexual and physical abuse. Western studied 122 people (107 men and 15 women) who returned to the Boston area post-incarceration, and found the following about participants' experiences prior to their imprisonment:¹⁰

- **40 percent** had witnessed someone being killed;
- **nearly half** had been beaten by their parents;
- **one-third** grew up with family violence;
- **16 percent** reported being sexually abused; and
- **half** had been seriously injured while growing up.

Western's researchers conducted lifetime history interviews with 40 participants who reported a total of 291 violent situations (such as suicides, accidents, sexual abuse, domestic violence, murders, assaults, and fighting). Among these participants, 25 percent had been shot or stabbed. ¹¹

People experience high rates of sexual and physical violence while they are incarcerated. As described in the previous section, people entering jails and prisons have experienced higher than average levels of trauma and violent victimization. Sadly, a lot of people experience high rates of sexual and physical assault during their incarceration; many are revictimized and re-traumatized. Much has been written about how conditions of confinement can cultivate hypervigilance, fear, and mistrust of others, all of which can lead to aggression and situations in which people resort to violence quickly.¹² When people survive violence while they are incarcerated, they have little access to victim services. Most jails and prisons simply do not have infrastructures for healing. The DOJ *National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape* require that correctional facilities provide incarcerated people with access to outside confidential support services and victim advocates before and after a sexual assault forensic medical exam,¹³ but compliance with these requirements varies dramatically in facilities across the country.

More than half of men
and women surveyed
experienced childhood
abuse.



Research on victimization other than sexual abuse inside detention settings is sparse. The research we do have—findings that have been reinforced and upheld by formerly incarcerated people who have spoken about their experiences inside—indicates that many people are victimized by staff and other incarcerated people during their detention. Some localized nonfederal studies provide useful data points, such as the following:

- Of the 122 participants in Western’s study, three-quarters reported witnessing assaults in prison.¹⁴
- Wolff and her coauthors found that 38 percent of men surveyed in prison had been a victim of sexual or physical violence by another inmate or staff member in the previous six months, as had 37 percent of incarcerated women.¹⁵

The passage of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in 2003 led to more robust data collection about the incidence and prevalence of sexual abuse and harassment in correctional facilities. In 2013, the last time BJS reported on the sexual victimization of incarcerated people, researchers found that about 4 percent of people incarcerated in state and federal prisons and 3 percent of those in jail said they had been sexually victimized by staff or another inmate or both within the previous year.¹⁶ Significantly, a year before that study was released, BJS published the results of a survey of people who had previously been incarcerated in state prisons, research that indicated higher rates of sexual violence behind bars than did the 2013 study, which relied on self-reports from currently

incarcerated people. In the study of people formerly held in state prisons, nearly one out of 10 participants reported that they had been sexually victimized at least once during their last period of incarceration.¹⁷ These rates may be higher than in the aforementioned BJS study of current prisoners for two reasons. First, those who were surveyed while incarcerated may have felt less comfortable reporting victimization due to fears including not being believed, retaliation, and potentially being placed in isolating protective custody units. Second, researchers asked about the entire length of incarceration, not just the previous 12 months, and thus a longer time frame was considered.

People continue to experience violence after they return to the community from jail or prison. It is difficult to find information about the victimization people experience once they return home, but Bruce Western's work is instructive. In his Boston Reentry Study, he reported that one-fourth of the study's participants had been threatened or attacked since their release.¹⁸ Anecdotally, in the course of the needs assessment this report is based on, NRC staff occasionally heard formerly incarcerated people describe becoming crime victims after they had come home. In those instances, they typically reported reluctance to report the crime to police or cooperate with investigations, citing their previous negative interactions with law enforcement and the criminal justice system. More research is needed to understand fully the experiences of people who are victimized after they return to the community after a period of incarceration.

Many people in the United States experience incarceration.

The number of survivors who have previously been incarcerated is extremely high because incarceration touches so many lives in the U.S. This section offers a snapshot of the reach and impact of incarceration in the United States to drive home this reality.



Spending time in jail or prison has become a common American experience. To understand how many crime victims with a history of incarceration live in our communities throughout the United States, it is important to recognize how common it is to be involved in the justice system in this country. One quarter of the world's prisoners are in U.S. correctional facilities, and on any given day more than 2 million people are living in the country's jails and prisons.¹⁹ Every year, over 600,000 people return home from prison.²⁰ This breaks down to roughly 1,700 people leaving prison every day in the United States. By contrast, on any given day, approximately 731,000 people are detained nationwide in 3,000 local jails, and many are released within a number of days.²¹ But this is just a one-day snapshot; more than 10 million people churn in and out of local jails year after year.²²

It is far more common for people of color, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, and others with marginalized identities to be incarcerated in the United States. Unmistakably, people with these characteristics are among those who are most likely to spend time in jail or prison and are also among the crime victims least likely to access services. By and large, people who end up incarcerated tend to have characteristics that

In a day



One quarter of the world's prisoners are in **U.S. correctional facilities**

More than **2 million** people are living in the country's jails and prisons

731,000 people are detained nationwide in **3,000 local jails** and many are released within a number of days



1,700 people leave prison in the United States

This is just a one-day snapshot; **more than 10 million people** churn in and out of local jails year after year

constitute a minority in U.S. society; they also tend to be more socially and economically vulnerable.²³ Perhaps most glaringly, people of color are widely overrepresented in the country's jails and prisons.²⁴ Using data from the U.S. Census and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) for 2017, the Pew Research Center reported that African Americans represent 12 percent of the U.S. population but 33 percent of the country's prison population. Latinos account for 16 percent of the population but are 23 percent of sentenced prisoners. By contrast, white people make up 64 percent of the U.S. population and only 30 percent of those in prisons nationwide.²⁵

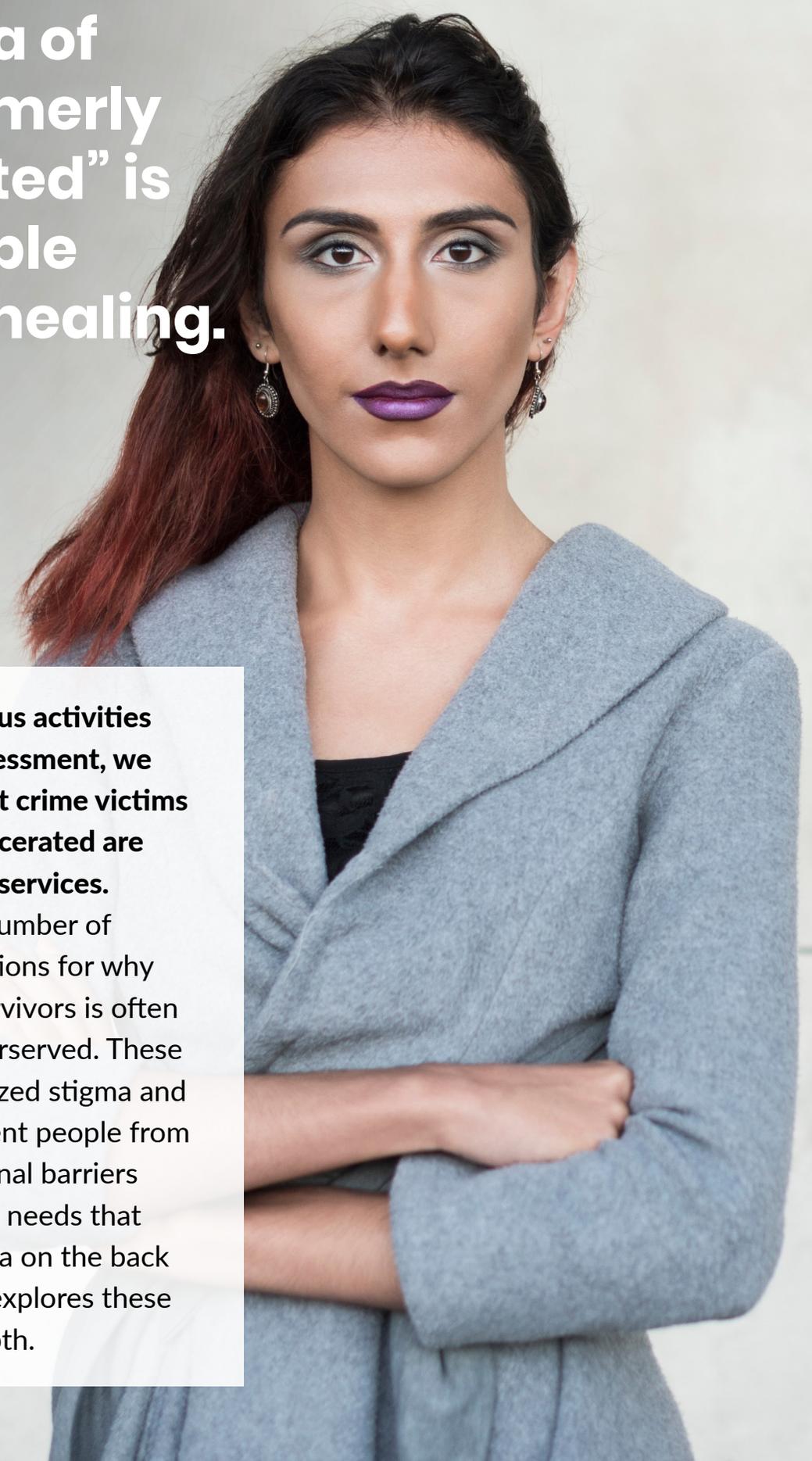
Researchers have found other groups are also at a disproportionately high risk for incarceration. Strikingly, lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people in the United States are incarcerated at more than three times the rate of all adults nationwide.²⁶ And a large study of more than 6,500 transgender people found that 16 percent of participants had been held in U.S. jails or prisons—an incarceration rate five times higher than the national average.²⁷ Researchers have also found that people in prison have disabilities at rates four times higher than the national population.²⁸ Significantly, these figures do not include psychiatric disabilities or mental health issues (such as anxiety disorders or schizophrenia), though it is well established that many incarcerated people have mental illness.²⁹ Finally, adults age 55 and older are one of the fastest growing groups of people imprisoned in the United States. People serving long sentences are aging behind bars, but older people are also being sentenced to prison more frequently than in the past. From 1993 through 2013, the number of people sent to prison in this age group increased 400 percent.³⁰



The stigma of being “formerly incarcerated” is a formidable barrier to healing.

Through the various activities of the needs assessment, we repeatedly heard that crime victims who were once incarcerated are not accessing victim services.

Participants cited a number of reasons and explanations for why this population of survivors is often overlooked and underserved. These ranged from internalized stigma and shame that can prevent people from seeking help to external barriers and pressing material needs that put addressing trauma on the back burner. This section explores these factors in greater depth.



Perceiving someone as either a “victim” or an “offender” often keeps service providers from seeing formerly incarcerated people as victims and keeps survivors from seeking help for trauma.

Service providers may not perceive people who have a criminal history as “victims.” Throughout the assessment activities, we repeatedly heard service providers and formerly incarcerated victims of crime struggle to see beyond the firmly rooted societal categories of “victim” and “offender” to recognize how an individual can embody both of these identities. This struggle may be particularly acute when it comes to male victims who have been incarcerated. Many mainstream providers often have trouble viewing someone who has been incarcerated as a victim, and this can impact everything from how an organization does outreach and engagement to the partnerships it develops and the services it provides. Each of these decision points and activities can ultimately lead to excluding survivors who have previously been incarcerated from the organization’s services. The false binary of victim/offender and the stigma of having a criminal record can also manifest in other, less formal signaling

About the Victims of Crime Act

Congress passed the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in 1984 and established a Crime Victims Fund, which is financed by fines and fees paid by those convicted of federal offenses. In 1988, Congress established the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) to administer this fund and oversee programs nationwide that support victims in the immediate aftermath of a crime and over time as they rebuild their lives. OVC accomplishes its work through grants programs to the states and territories in two categories: victim assistance and victim compensation. State administering agencies receive this funding and make victim assistance subgrants to organizations that provide direct services to survivors. Although the same agencies usually administer victim compensation, these funds and victim assistance grants are dispersed for different purposes. Victim compensation grants support reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses that survivors may have incurred as the result of a crime.

that people involved in the justice system are not welcome, such as through body language and other nonverbal cues that indicate discomfort—or asking “What did you do to become incarcerated?” rather than “What trauma have you experienced?”

We heard from many advocates and survivors that initial negative interactions with service providers can have a chilling effect on a person’s willingness to seek help at that site or elsewhere. One survivor of prison rape told us that it was extremely difficult to get help in the community once she returned home. She spoke about going to see counselors who would “tense right up” the moment she said she’d been in prison, and that made her think, “These services aren’t for me.” Several people spoke about how these interactions can trigger trauma survivors who have previously been incarcerated, by bringing to mind negative interactions they have had with other systems as well as internal beliefs of shame and unworthiness.

Correctional agencies’ efforts to implement the requirements of the PREA standards have helped connect incarcerated sexual abuse victims with crisis services and victim advocates. In 2016, the lifting of the restriction on VOCA funding that prohibited those funds from being used to serve incarcerated victims helped pave the way for more community-based programs to use their funding to support these survivors. But during our assessment we learned that some advocates and crisis counselors still have reservations about working with incarcerated sexual abuse victims, making it clear that greater efforts are needed to direct VOCA dollars to programs that support healing behind bars. Beyond PREA implementation, a number of resources have been developed to help service providers support women who have survived domestic violence and are involved in the justice system.³¹



The stigma of having been incarcerated can keep people from seeking help. Advocates who have relevant lived experience repeatedly told us that the terminology providers use—and the deep beliefs undergirding those words—creates a barrier to seeking help. Most people who have been incarcerated have experienced trauma, yet very few of them identify with the term “crime victim.” Many internalize the deep societal stigma of being a “perpetrator” or an “offender” and believe society cannot view them as victims because they have spent time in a correctional facility. Others view the term “victim” as a “weak” label that has negative connotations in neighborhoods and inside jails and prisons. Some may view themselves more as “survivors,” “veterans,” or “victors” as a way to combat that stigma and regain their power and self-image. In informational interviews, several service providers spoke about how people who have an extensive history of trauma and are involved in the justice system want to be seen as strong and autonomous when they return to the community. As one provider said, “In 20 years I have never met someone who wasn’t a crime victim, but [people] don’t identify that way. The words we use are not the words our clients use.” Someone else described people’s inability to recognize trauma and victimization in their own lives because those types of experiences have been so pervasive around them; a person may think, “This is just life.”

What’s more, people with a history of incarceration often anticipate rejection, and this may keep them from even attempting to access services. As one reentry service provider explained, many of those who have been incarcerated see themselves—and perceive society’s judgment of them—as part of a “pool of undesirable people.” Another provider said, “These people are so used to losing, they don’t understand they can win.” Another described instances when clients of hers were rejected from domestic violence shelters because of previous convictions: “If you have a conviction, it’s like everyone is the judge or the jury throughout your life.”



Society does not see men who have been incarcerated, especially those who have committed acts of violence, as trauma survivors, and men may not see themselves that way either. More than 90 percent of people who are incarcerated are men, so the vast majority of people who fall under the umbrella term “formerly incarcerated” are too. Given this reality, a significant portion of the people who have experienced both incarceration and victimization are men. However, as one male advocate with related lived experience told us, there is a perception that “men need jobs, not programming.” Several people said that it is more common for men to end up in anger management programs than trauma recovery programs, despite the fact that men—especially black men—often have a history of trauma that is broad and pervasive. Their trauma often stems from adverse childhood experiences such as parental neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, abandonment, or exposure to community violence. As one service provider observed, “We—men of color—haven’t even had the space or opportunity to acknowledge victimization. We always have to be in survival mode, but we have no ongoing sense of safety as men of color.”

“If you have a conviction, it’s like everyone is the judge or the jury throughout your life.”

One interviewee described how formerly incarcerated men often have a deep need for mental health counseling, which can be viewed as stigmatizing in itself. He suggested that seeking out services related to victimization is often viewed as even more shameful. This person noted that pride and denial often get in the way of men getting the help they need to heal, including help with trauma and learning how to forgive themselves. He suggested that as more men admit that they need help and actually get it, the more they will find pathways to heal and move forward from the anger, shame, anxiety, and depression associated with their trauma and incarceration.



Reentry poses challenges to healing from trauma.

When people leave jail or prison, they face many challenges to meeting their basic survival and material needs, and these challenges often overshadow their emotional and psychological needs and create barriers to healing from their trauma. People returning to the community face many pressing needs.

After release from jail or prison, they face the immediate and pressing needs of securing food, housing, transportation, employment, and sometimes medical care. For people who were living in poverty before their incarceration, they are likely coming home poorer than when they left.³² A prevailing theme we heard throughout the assessment was that people typically cannot seek help for trauma if they are living in survival mode. As one interviewee put it, “If a person doesn’t know where he’s going to sleep tonight, he’s not going to be thinking about how to deal with his past trauma.” The experts we spoke to also pointed out that therapeutic services are not likely to have an impact if the client is struggling with other consuming issues such as hunger, mental illness, or homelessness. As someone else said, “A lot of things need to happen concurrently; you can’t do the trauma work without also doing the housing work.”

“If a person doesn’t know where he’s going to sleep tonight, he’s not going to be thinking about how to deal with his past trauma.”

Many advocates said that when people who have been incarcerated move through the world with unaddressed trauma and anxiety stemming from violence, they may experience a range of serious negative outcomes. If they are anxious or depressed and cannot get out of bed in time for an appointment with a parole officer, for example, or are self-medicating their symptoms with alcohol or other drugs, their actions may constitute a technical violation of their parole conditions that sends them

back to jail or prison.³³ If they are sometimes triggered by large gatherings and their job requires them to be surrounded by people, they may quit or behave in ways that lead to their termination. This in turn could sabotage their reentry success and put them at greater risk for recidivism. Several advocates stressed the need for trauma-informed reentry services and post-release supervision that allow people to make mistakes and be imperfect. Throughout the assessment we heard that making room for people to fail, giving them opportunities to learn from peers and others, and providing support for healing could lead to better chances for positive outcomes (such as housing and employment stability, abstaining from substance use, and family reunification).

Finally, most people returning home experience collateral consequences stemming from their criminal conviction, which make it harder for them to access healing services.³⁴ Collateral consequences like public housing restrictions, temporary or permanent ineligibility for food stamps, and employment restrictions can make it extremely difficult to find housing and employment and can be psychologically and emotionally taxing reminders of one's criminal conviction. Denial of basic services and public benefits can reinforce feelings of unworthiness and discourage help-seeking behavior, particularly if people are struggling to find stable housing or reliable transportation.

Formerly incarcerated women face additional challenges.

Women returning home are often more economically disadvantaged, are primarily responsible for the care of children, and typically have access to less consistent employment.³⁵ Many need help with civil legal matters (such as child custody cases) and do not always have access to legal representation. Significantly, the interviewees who spoke about currently or formerly incarcerated women noted that almost every woman they had



worked with had a history of sexual violence, domestic violence, or both.³⁶ One service provider emphasized that our society needs to better understand that women who are incarcerated are usually mothers and victims—and in some cases were coerced to commit the crimes that landed them in jail or prison. This interviewee stressed the importance of providing services while women are still incarcerated—including opportunities for one-on-one counseling—because they sometimes end up in coercive relationships with other incarcerated women that resemble the power and control dynamics of relationships they had with abusive partners on the outside. Programs serving women in jail or prison need mechanisms to spot those patterns and check in with each individual.

“Programs serving women in jail or prison need mechanisms to spot patterns of abusive relationships and check in with each individual.”

Another interviewee noted that if service providers want to reach more formerly incarcerated women, they need to think about their clients’ childcare needs. This person suggested that online support groups may be promising for women who have children at home. During one of the listening sessions, an advocate with relevant lived experience told us, “We are not recognizing or supporting women with children who are justice involved.

They can't move on with their lives because they don't have the support [to access services] when they have children." This woman noted that many young mothers are unable to attend classes or programs if they have childcare needs and no way to meet them.

Reentry programs usually focus on helping people find jobs or housing, not healing from trauma. We heard from a number of people that reentry programs do not typically integrate trauma care into services. Some said that reentry programs do not routinely assess for a person's history of victimization or experience with victim services. They may assess for behaviors or factors related to causing harm (if men have a history of committing domestic violence, for example, they may be referred to an intervention or anger management program), but assessing any type of trauma history or use of victim services is not universal among reentry programs. One person told us, "If you don't assess for it, you can't identify it." Another said that integrating trauma services into reentry planning "is not a thing" at this point. She suggested that some kind of public awareness campaign or targeted assistance to help reentry service providers start these conversations with therapeutic partners would be a necessary first step to making trauma-informed care a standard feature of reentry programs.

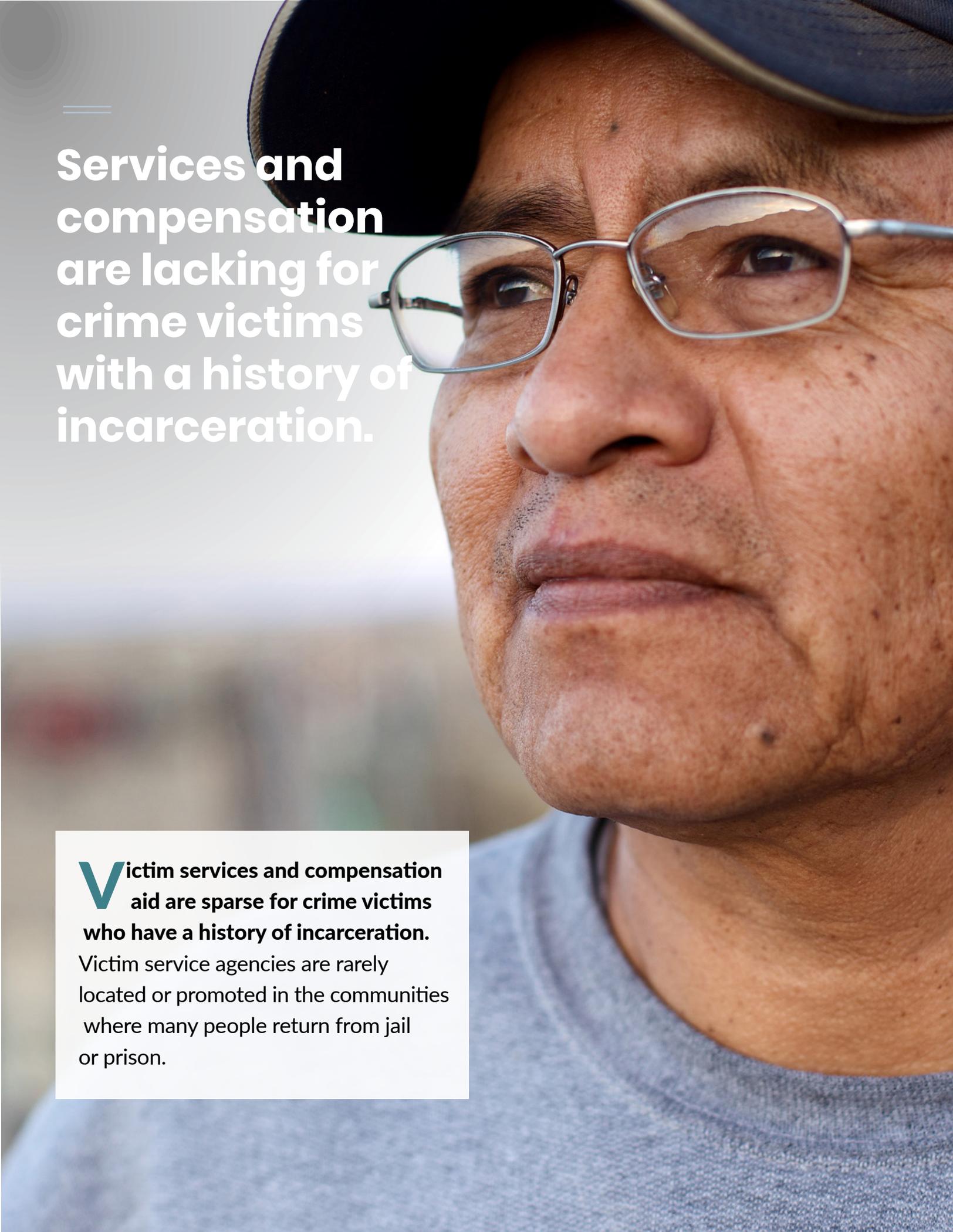
Others underscored the need for trauma-informed reentry programs by pointing out that gaining employment, finding stable housing, and healing from trauma ideally should happen concurrently. As one service provider put it, "You can't do trauma work without housing—and you can't put off trauma work until someone's life is back together." Some reentry service providers expressed a real interest in learning more about how to access victim services and victim compensation. They acknowledged

that they and their colleagues “never even talk about victimization in this field.” Instead, people come out of jail or prison and, more often than not, are simply given a list of parole requirements and programs to complete.

A lot of people are navigating the challenges of reentry on their own, so trauma takes a back seat to other, more immediate needs.³⁷ Unfortunately, the resources and services available to people during reentry vary significantly across counties and states. Some rural communities, for example, may have no reentry services at all. Without any support during the transition from a correctional facility to the community, newly released people will likely be even more consumed by meeting their immediate material needs, and healing will take a back seat. In other places, reentry services may be available but depend on a highly motivated individual system actor or community volunteer to assist with navigation. Advocates with relevant lived experience have also expressed a desire to see more culturally specific reentry services that feel welcoming to people of different races and ethnicities, people with limited English proficiency, LGBTQ and nonbinary people, and people with disabilities and those who are Deaf.

Even when reentry services and resources exist in a person’s community, meaningful reentry planning that considers housing, family reunification, and employment often does not start early enough. If it is available at all, planning usually starts at the end of a person’s jail or prison sentence (often during the last 30 to 180 days) and typically does not include victim services or emotional support for trauma and anxiety. For incarcerated survivors of domestic violence, this planning and support may be particularly crucial to ensure that they have safe, stable housing options. Otherwise, as noted earlier, they may end up returning to abusive partners to meet their housing needs. And people who briefly pass through a jail face particular challenges; even a few days in jail can bring a cascade of collateral consequences, push someone further into poverty, and retrigger trauma, yet these people are often an afterthought in the reentry sphere.





Services and compensation are lacking for crime victims with a history of incarceration.

Victim services and compensation aid are sparse for crime victims who have a history of incarceration.

Victim service agencies are rarely located or promoted in the communities where many people return from jail or prison.

As discussed earlier, many victim service providers have trouble viewing people with a history of incarceration as “victims”, which affects how they conduct outreach and engagement and where they provide services. We heard from a number of formerly incarcerated people and several victim and legal advocates that many people return home to communities severely affected by violence and poverty. Many of them do not know what services are available or believe they will be rejected because of their criminal records or their probation or parole status. Through our assessment, we were not able to determine whether policies or regulations explicitly exclude people from services if they are involved with the justice system or if this is merely perception among staff and potential clients. We also heard about the general lack of services in many of these communities. One advocate with a history of incarceration told us, “We need to bring the services to the neighborhoods, but people [service providers] don’t want to go to these communities because they don’t feel safe in them.” Without options for support in their communities, many survivors lack real choice about where to get help. They may end up at victim service agencies that don’t feel comfortable or trustworthy to them. One legal advocate summed up that sense of mistrust in this way:

The other issue is a lack of trust—and that lack of trust is completely rational because most of my clients have had lengthy interactions with systems that say they’re there to help, but they don’t—or in some cases they make their lives worse. [Obtaining] high-quality services is a barrier. Our clients encounter a revolving door of underpaid professionals and are very often being seen by students who are overseen by professionals. . . . Most of the people doing this work look nothing like our clients. Most of our [clients] are poor people who are black and most of our therapists are white.

Mainstream victim service providers often don't know enough about incarceration and reentry to understand how to reach and serve formerly incarcerated survivors. In conversations with advocates whose work is culturally specific and involves formerly incarcerated people who have experienced violent victimization, we heard that mainstream services often seem sterile and unwelcoming to formerly incarcerated people, particularly people of color, Native people, immigrants, people with disabilities and Deaf people, and LGBTQ people. Advocates said that people with these identities often feel that mainstream victim services were not designed for them and do not speak to the norms and values in their communities. And as one interviewee told us, service providers in mainstream agencies often look nothing like her clients and understand little of their lived experience. She suggested that too often mainstream service providers approach victims with a predetermined idea of what they need to heal rather than asking them what they need and responding accordingly.

We also heard that providers may not “know what they don't know” when it comes to survivors who belong to traditionally marginalized communities and have a history of incarceration. A few advocates said that it is fairly common to hear mainstream service providers say, “We serve all victims; identity doesn't matter.” Although this sentiment may reflect good intentions, it fails to acknowledge how past—and sometimes current—marginalization requires active shifts in policy, language, and practices to make sure that providers can serve all victims in a welcoming and culturally competent way.

Other advocates and service providers working directly with formerly incarcerated people noted that healing services for this population may encompass a range of nontraditional services or peer-based programs and may not fit neatly into defined categories that federal agencies and private foundations use.



One survivor of prison rape who serves on Just Detention International's Survivor Council told us that "healing is expensive" and described how kickboxing classes turned out to be among the most affordable and effective avenues for her healing. Others talked about the need for more "outside the box" services like trauma support groups run by formerly incarcerated people for those who are in jail or prison; trauma support groups in transitional housing, reentry programs, and public housing; and specific services to help LGBTQ survivors during their transition back to the community.

Because they often lack knowledge of incarceration and reentry, most victim service providers have not designed services with formerly incarcerated survivors in mind. As noted earlier, providers often have a hard time viewing people with criminal convictions as victims. During the assessment, we spoke with one longtime victim advocate and service provider who described her own personal journey of "hating offenders and wanting to lock them up and throw away the key." After she became involved in delivering victim impact programs in correctional facilities, she came to understand that many people in prison have experienced "layers upon layers of victimization." She acknowledged that many people in the victim advocacy field and beyond still hold the views she had 20 years ago, perceptions likely driven by anger and fear of people who commit violence. Although the anger and fear are understandable, these feelings may influence decisions about policies and practices including those related to eligibility for services, location of programs, and allocation of resources.

“Too often mainstream service providers may approach victims with a predetermined idea of what they need to heal rather than asking them what they need and responding accordingly.”

To the extent that victim service providers want to be involved in the reentry process, it is often to advocate for victim notification and other protective measures when someone who committed a crime is leaving jail or prison. They may also play a role in programming that promotes offender accountability.³⁸ Although this advocacy is important, we heard very little about victim service providers developing and providing support services or outreach with trauma survivors who are leaving correctional facilities. During the assessment, we spoke with staff of a few culturally specific organizations that do trauma and healing work with people who have passed through the criminal justice system, but they do not identify as “victim service providers” in the traditional sense. They typically view themselves as grassroots advocates or community workers.

Culturally specific victim service providers have the knowledge and expertise to help formerly incarcerated survivors heal from trauma, but often lack the resources and access to decision makers to reach and serve many survivors. To reach more people who have been harmed by violence, several interviewees discussed the need to have stronger connections among state and federal sources of funding, mainstream organizations, and the people on the ground doing the work. Some expressed a desire to

see more people of color and directly impacted people driving the agenda for criminal justice reform and improved access to victim services. They stressed that people need the tools and training to be effective agents of change and also underscored that they need meaningful opportunities to be players in local and state efforts to address the issues people face when they are involved in the justice system. One person we interviewed described a need for coaching and mentoring on how white providers and advocates can be allies and support people of color who run smaller organizations.

Crime victims with a history of incarceration are often ineligible for victim compensation funds. Victim compensation programs, which are funded under VOCA, exist in every state to reimburse victims for crime-related expenses like medical costs, mental health counseling, funeral and burial costs, and lost wages. We heard from a number of practitioners and advocates with relevant lived experience that many families and service providers are not aware of victim compensation programs. But people with a history of justice system involvement are often rejected when they apply or are restricted from applying in the first place because of their conviction. Seven states' victim compensation programs currently have some type of restriction related to people with felony convictions; in Arkansas and Florida, people convicted of certain violent felonies are permanently banned from eligibility for these funds.³⁹ We heard from several advocates that even for those who are eligible, the application process can be onerous and difficult. Other sources have described the process and requirements—such as having to report the crime to police—as “toilsome” and “daunting” for many survivors who live in neighborhoods where there is great distrust of the criminal justice system.⁴⁰



A woman with short, curly blonde hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt over a grey t-shirt and blue pants, is standing and speaking. She has her hands raised in a gesturing motion. To her left, a man with a full white beard and glasses, wearing a purple shirt, is looking towards her. The background is a blurred office or meeting room with white walls and a yellow accent wall.

Victim services and reentry programs are not working together.

Victim services and reentry programs are typically separate and almost never coordinated or offered at the same location. Reentry programs and victim services agencies are not working together to support people during their transition back to the community.



“You can’t do trauma work without housing—and you can’t put off trauma work until someone’s life is back together.”

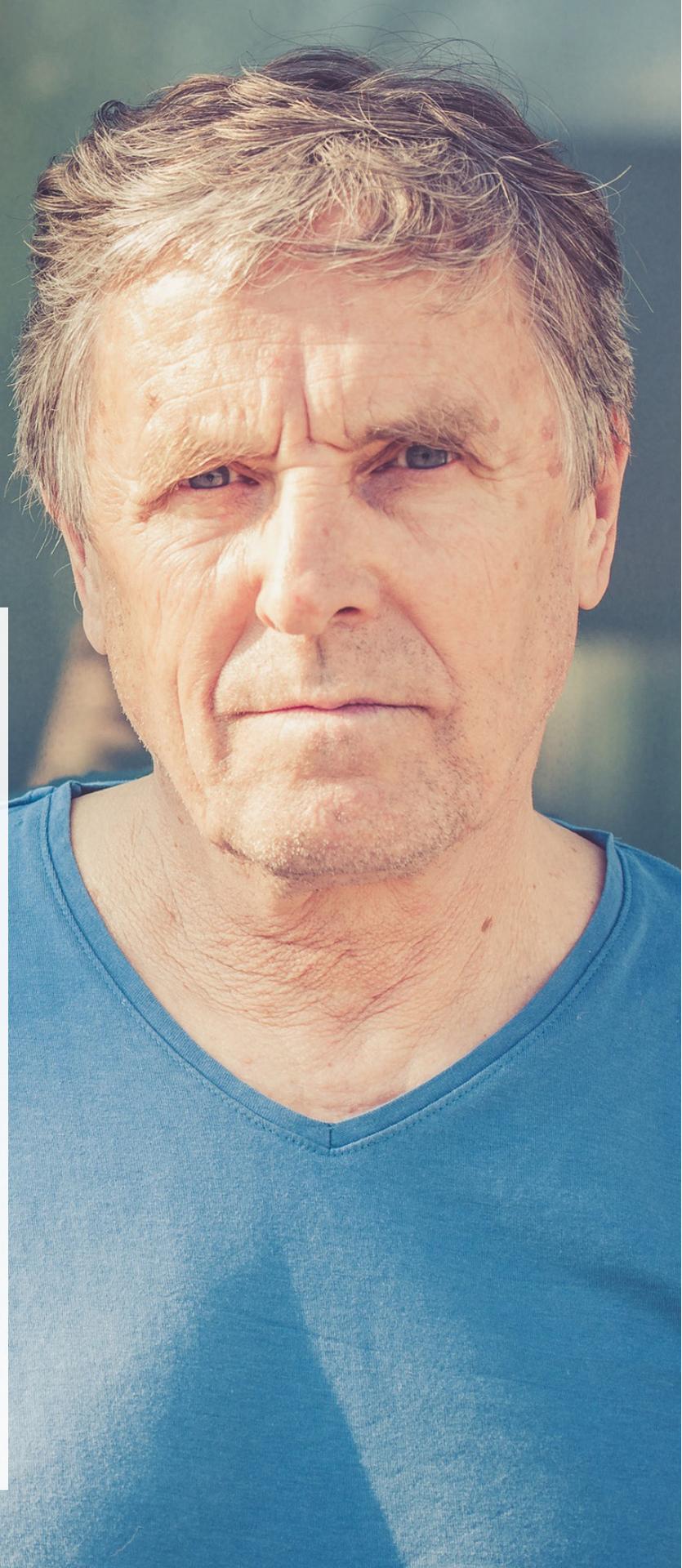


As the previous sections described, survivors often do not get adequate reentry or trauma support before their release from a correctional facility. Whatever services they receive prior to release are highly dependent on the resources available in the community where the facility is located, motivated staff or volunteers, and whether the agency prioritizes reentry planning, trauma support, or both. While doing the assessment, we occasionally heard about trauma support programs that serve incarcerated women or modest reentry planning efforts in state prisons, but we rarely heard about any effort to integrate reentry and victim services to support survivors of violent victimization before their release. The same was true about services offered to people *during* the transitional period back to the community. Several reentry service coordinators and providers acknowledged a need for reentry programs to be more trauma-informed, but some had never thought about the idea of working with victim service providers to support their clients. We spoke with a few victim service providers who work with incarcerated women, but the programs were small, did not work with men, and typically did not extend to the reentry process.

How can crime victims with a history of incarceration start getting the services that help them heal?

Our assessment brought to light a number of obstacles to healing faced by survivors who have been incarcerated.

This section outlines the priority needs that emerged. If addressed, these priorities may lead to better, more meaningful services for formerly incarcerated survivors, increased willingness to seek those services, and greater healing overall for a population of victims that society has often overlooked or viewed as undeserving. Organizations doing and funding this work should prioritize the following needs and take these steps:



Hire victim service providers who are professionally trained, trauma-informed, and comfortable working with people who have been incarcerated—and train current staff to develop related knowledge and skills. Storytelling (when a person with relevant lived experience shares stories of their personal history of trauma and healing), training, and more exposure to people who have been incarcerated may help dismantle some of those traditional beliefs about who victims are.

Hire reentry service providers who are trained and comfortable working with people who have a history of trauma—and train current staff to develop the knowledge and skills they need. Training and education about trauma, knowledge about the range of available victim services and local providers, and efforts to establish relationships with some of those providers may help reentry staff deepen their skills and serve their clients more effectively.

Develop and nurture partnerships between victim service providers and reentry programs. These providers and programs should come together to learn more about each other and find ways to work together to promote healing for people returning to the community from jail or prison.

Adopt broader definitions and terms for victimization. Discussing victimization in terms of “people harmed by violence,” “anyone affected by violence,” or “survivors of trauma or harm” may resonate more with people who have been incarcerated, especially with men. During our interviews and listening sessions, we heard and observed that trauma survivors with a history of incarceration can begin to recognize their own victimization when peers or other credible messengers describe common forms of harm such as witnessing domestic abuse or gun violence.

Foster peer support from people with relevant lived experience who have been trained as advocates, counselors, or other service providers. Peer support from trained advocates (such as mentors or “reentry navigators”) who have related experience can give hope to those who are newly returning. As one such advocate told us, “They see people like them who’ve survived and found resilience and they can learn to tell their own stories.” Most of the formerly incarcerated survivors we spoke with—including those who suffered sexual abuse while incarcerated—spoke about the healing power of telling their story.

Provide more funding to support and expand the capacity of grassroots healers and culturally specific programs to provide trauma-informed services. Funders should work closely with people who have relevant lived experience and with grassroots service providers, so that requests for proposals and grant programs use language that resonates with people who are working with trauma survivors who have spent time in jail or prison.

Develop and provide programming inside jails and prisons to help people heal and learn skills while they have time—before they are overwhelmed by the reentry process. Programs should be developed in consultation with the people serving time, and, when appropriate, should integrate those who have relevant lived experience to provide peer support.

Provide more help with family reunification and support during reentry. Family can be a great source of support and healing for people returning home from jail or prison, but only if those bonds and relationships are intact and strong.

Provide training for probation and parole officers who provide community supervision. Officers may benefit from training on motivational interviewing or some other type of training that could help them provide their clients more supportive monitoring.

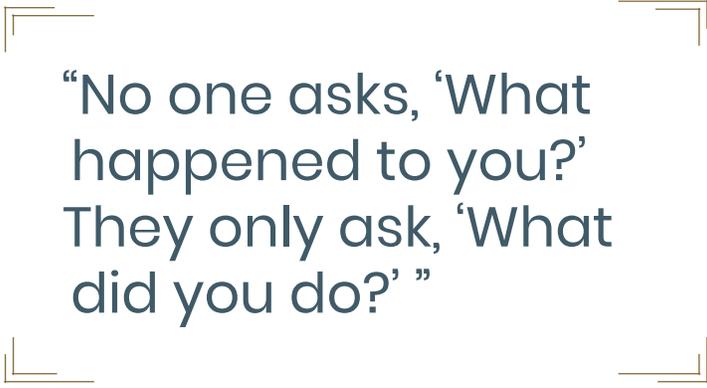


Conclusion

The vast majority of people in our nation's jails and prisons were victims of violence before they were incarcerated. Many also suffer victimization behind bars and some are victimized—either for the first time or again—after their release.

For the many reasons discussed in this report, most incarcerated and formerly incarcerated survivors of violence never get services to help them heal. Many internalize the label of “offender” and do not perceive themselves to be “victims,” nor do they think that service providers will view them that way, much less as “deserving victims.” As one formerly incarcerated survivor put it, “No one asks, ‘What happened to you?’ They only ask, ‘What did you do?’ ”

OVC’s National Resource Center for Reaching Victims is working on an array of initiatives to remove barriers to services and to challenge the binary understanding of crime and victimization. We are committed to lifting up and supporting work at the intersection of incarceration, reentry, and healing; fostering connections and collaboration among reentry and victim service programs; and raising awareness among mainstream victim service providers and funders about the needs of these survivors. Our goal is to help create lasting change so that the overwhelming majority of victims—including those who have spent time in jail or prison—have access to culturally relevant, trauma-informed services that help them heal and thrive.



“No one asks, ‘What happened to you?’ They only ask, ‘What did you do?’ ”

Endnotes

¹ See Wendy Sawyer and Peter Wagner, “Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2019,” www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2019.html, (Northampton, MA: Prison Policy Initiative, March 19, 2019).

² Caroline Wolf Harlow, *Prior Abuse Reported by Inmates and Probationers* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999, NCJ 172879), 1, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/parip.pdf.

³ Rachel E. Morgan and Jennifer L. Truman, *Criminal Victimization, 2017*, Bulletin (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018, NCJ 252472), 8, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv17.pdf.

⁴ See the first ten individuals listed in the Acknowledgements section on page 58 for the experts Vera assembled.

⁵ See the Acknowledgements section on pages 58-59 for a list of the groups Vera engaged for listening sessions and a list of individuals who contributed their expertise to this assessment.

⁶ Among men in jail or prison or on probation, 6 to 14 percent reported being physically or sexually abused prior to age 18; among system-involved women, 23 to 37 percent reported the same. By contrast, citing a review of several studies, the authors estimate that approximately 5 to 8 percent of men and 12 to 17 percent of women nationwide had experienced childhood sexual or physical abuse. See Harlow, *Prior Abuse*, 1999, 1. Other studies have found higher rates of abuse among incarcerated people; a study supported by the National Institute of Justice and published in 1998 found that 68 percent of the men incarcerated at a prison in New York State had experienced some form of childhood victimization. For a summary of this research, see Jeremy Travis, *Early Childhood Victimization Among Incarcerated Adult Male Felons: Summary of a Study by Robin Weeks and Cathy Spatz Widom*, Research Preview (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 1998), 1, www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/fs000204.pdf.

⁷ Nancy Wolff, Jing Shi, and Jane A. Siegel, "Patterns of Victimization Among Male and Female Inmates: Evidence of an Enduring Legacy." *Violence and Victims* 24, no. 4 (2009), 469-484, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3793850.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Shannon Lynch, Dana D. DeHart, Joanne Belknap, et al., *Women's Pathways to Jail: The Roles and Intersections of Serious Mental Illness and Trauma* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2012), 32, www.bja.gov/Publications/Women_Pathways_to_Jail.pdf.

¹⁰ Bruce Western. *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2018), 67.

¹¹ Western, *Homeward*, 68.

¹² Many researchers and scholars have sought to understand the impact of modern imprisonment on human psychology and behavior dating back to the 1950s, when the sociologist Gresham Sykes published the book *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (which Princeton University Press republished in 2007; see <https://press.princeton.edu/titles/8390.html>). For a discussion of the psychological effects of incarceration and how they can lead to increased aggression and violence, see Craig Haney, *The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2001), <https://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/psychological-impact-incarceration-implications-post-prison-adjustment#II>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Justice, *National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape* (Washington, DC: 2012), https://ojp.gov/programs/pdfs/prea_final_rule.pdf.

¹⁴ Western, *Homeward*, 67.

¹⁵ Wolff, Shi, and Siegel, "Patterns of Victimization," 14, 2009. Note that the word "inmate" is used here to reflect the language in the 2009 study.

¹⁶ Allen J. Beck, Marcus Berzofsky, Rachel Caspar, et al., *Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates, 2011-2012: National Inmate Survey, 2011-2012* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013, NCJ 241399), 8, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svpjri1112.pdf. Note that the word "inmate" is used here to reflect the language in the BJS report.

¹⁷ Allen J. Beck and Candace Johnson. *Sexual Victimization Reported by Former State Prisoners*, 2008 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012, NCJ 237363), 8. www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svrfsp08.pdf.

¹⁸ Western, *Homeward*, 67.

¹⁹ Sawyer and Wagner, "Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2019," www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2019.html, (Northampton, MA: Prison Policy Initiative, March 19, 2019). Also note that the majority of people sentenced to prison (93 percent) are men. See Jennifer Bronson and E. Ann Carson, *Prisoners in 2017*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019, NCJ 252156), 3, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p17.pdf.

²⁰ Bronson and Carson, *Prisoners in 2017*, 2019, 12.

²¹ Ram Subramanian, Ruth Delaney, Stephen Roberts, et al., *Incarceration's Front Door: The Misuse of Jails in America* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2015), 4-5, https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/incarcerations-front-door-the-misuse-of-jails-in-america/legacy_downloads/incarcerations-front-door-report_02.pdf.

²² See Zhen Zeng, *Jail Inmates in 2016*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018, NCJ 251210), 1, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ji16.pdf.

²³ Ruth Delaney, Ram Subramanian, Alison Shames, et al., *Reimagining Prison* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, October 2018), 16-18, https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/reimagining-prison-print-report/legacy_downloads/Reimagining-Prison_FINAL3_digital.pdf.

²⁴ The information presented focuses on disparities among African American and Latino people in the United States. Less is known about the numbers of Native Americans involved in the criminal justice system nationwide. For example, the Bureau of Justice Statistics does not regularly report information regarding the number of Alaska Natives or American Indians in state and federal prisons.

²⁵ John Gramlich, “The Gap Between the Number of Blacks and Whites in Prison Is Shrinking,” Fact Tank (blog), Pew Research Center, April 30, 2019, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/12/shrinking-gap-between-number-of-blacks-and-whites-in-prison. (Note that the author uses data from Bronson and Carson, *Prisoners in 2017*, and 2017 information available from the U.S. Census. See <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>.)

²⁶ Ilan H. Meyer, Andrew R. Flores, Lara Stemple, et al., “Incarceration Rates and Traits of Sexual Minorities in the United States: National Inmate Survey, 2011–2012,” *American Journal of Public Health* 107, no. 2, (2017), 234–240, https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Meyer_Final_Proofs.LGB_In_.pdf. Note that this study uses categories of “men” and “women” and does not discuss transgender or gender-nonconforming people.

²⁷ Jaime M. Grant, Lisa A. Mottet, Justin Tanis, et al., *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey* (Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011), 163, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/566c7f0c2399a3bdabb57553/t/566cbf2c57eb8de92a5392e6/1449967404768/ntds_full.pdf.

²⁸ Jennifer Bronson, Laura M. Maruschak, and Marcus Berzofsky, *Disabilities Among Prison and Jail Inmates, 2011–12*, Special Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2015, NCJ 249151), 1–3, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/dpji1112.pdf.

²⁹ Jennifer Bronson and Marcus Berzofsky, *Indicators of Mental Health Problems Reported by Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2011–12*, Special Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2017, NCJ 250612), 1–4, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/imhprji1112.pdf.

³⁰ E. Ann Caron and William J. Sabol, *Aging of the State Prison Population, 1993–2013* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016, NCJ 248766), 1–3, www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/aspp9313.pdf.

³¹ See The National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, *Working with Battered Women in Jail: A Manual for Community-Based Battered Women's Advocates* (Philadelphia: National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, 2009), <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XkCVNW2jPmjdVAXtkwhc5Te2ojM8aNJk/view>; Erika Sussman, *Criminal Records and Employment Rights: A Tool for Advocates Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence* (Washington, DC: Center for Survivor Agency and Justice, 2013), https://csaj.org/document-library/EmptRights_CriminalRecords_AdvocateTool.pdf; and Andrea Bible, *Issues to Consider When Facilitating Groups with Battered Women in Jail and Prison* (Philadelphia: National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, 2011), <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13WlOnEROfErFWe2VahmNitUk9YX7gnqa/view>.

³² A number of studies have documented that fines, fees, and costs associated with the criminal legal system saddle people with crushing debt. Other research has examined how incarceration has a negative impact on employment opportunities and lowers people's earning potential. For a good summary of these issues, see Douglas N. Evans, *The Debt Penalty: Exposing the Financial Barriers to Offender Reintegration* (New York: City University of New York, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Research & Evaluation Center, 2014), <https://jjrec.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/debtpenalty.pdf>.

³³ A "technical violation" occurs when people under community supervision do not comply with their supervision conditions—such as violating a curfew or missing supervision appointments—as opposed to committing a new criminal offense. Depending on the jurisdiction's policies, sanctions for technical violations can range from a lighter punishment, such as being placed on a higher level of supervision, to very serious sanctions, such as being sent to jail or prison. See Public Safety Performance Project, *When Offenders Break the Rules: Smart Responses to Parole and Probation Violations* (Washington, DC: Pew Center on the States, November 2007, Public Policy Brief 3) 4, www.pewtrusts.org/~media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs_assets/2007/%20when%20offenders%20break%20the%20rulespdf.pdf.

³⁴ See Ram Subramanian, Rebecka Moreno, and Sophia Gebreselassie, *Relief in Sight? States Rethink the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Conviction, 2009-2014* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2014), https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/relief-in-sight-states-rethink-the-collateral-consequences-of-criminal-conviction-2009-2014/legacy_downloads/states-rethink-collateral-consequences-report-v4.pdf.

³⁵ For a fuller examination of these issues, see Elizabeth Swavola, Kristine Riley, and Ram Subramanian, *Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2016), https://storage.googleapis.com/vera-web-assets/downloads/Publications/overlooked-women-and-jails-report/legacy_downloads/overlooked-women-and-jails-report-updated.pdf.

³⁶ Every person we spoke with about incarcerated men also told us that men have extensive trauma histories. But this section highlights some unique challenges faced by women who are returning home.

³⁷ “Reentry services” refers to any program or activities that help someone returning to the community from jail or prison in one or more of the following areas: employment assistance, substance use treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victim support, and other social services. Community-based nonprofit organizations, other local groups, and government agencies may provide such services. Post-release community supervision is part of someone’s criminal sentence and is not considered a reentry service, although probation and parole officers often refer or mandate that the people they supervise participate in certain reentry services. For more on reentry, see the Council of State Governments Justice Center’s National Reentry Resource Center at <https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc>.

³⁸ See, for example, Anne K. Seymour, *A Community Response Manual: The Victim’s Role in Offender Reentry* (Lexington, KY: American Probation and Parole Association, 2001), www.appa-net.org/eweb/docs/appa/pubs/VROR.pdf; the National Center for Victims of Crime, *Bringing Victims and Victim Service Providers into Reentry Planning in New Jersey* (Washington, DC: The National Center for Victims of Crime, 2005), <https://victimsofcrime.org/docs/Reports%20and%20Studies/NJ%20Victims%20Report%20Final.pdf?sfvrsn=0>; and the National Reentry Resource Center, “How Victim Advocacy Improves the Work of Reentry Staff,” webinar (New York: Council of State Governments Justice Center, February 8, 2017), <https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/webinars/how-victim-advocacy-improves-the-work-of-reentry-staff>.

³⁹ Alysia Santo, “The Victims Who Don’t Count,” The Marshall Project, September 13, 2018, www.themarshallproject.org/2018/09/13/the-victims-who-don-t-count.

⁴⁰ See Elizabeth Van Brocklin, “States Set Aside Millions of Dollars for Crime Victims. But Some Gun Violence Survivors Don’t Get the Funds They Desperately Need,” The Trace, February 12, 2018, www.thetrace.org/2018/02/gun-violence-victims-of-crime-compensation.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to extend their gratitude to the many people who contributed to the needs assessment and made this report possible. We extend our thanks to Just Detention International's Survivor Council, the Fortune Society in New York City, and the JustLeadershipUSA alumni network for engaging in listening sessions with us. We would also like to thank each of the following individuals, who provided expert guidance, information, and insights:

Quetita Cavero, National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

James Logan, Converge

Alison Lass, Homeboy Industries

Ronald Simpson-Bey, JustLeadershipUSA

Lashonia Thompson-El, Women Involved in Reentry Efforts

Kenton Kirby, Center for Court Innovation

Cynthia Totten, Just Detention International

Linda McFarlane, Just Detention International

Heather Warnken, OVC Fellow

Peter Pollard, OVC Fellow

Melanie Conner, Department of Community Supervision

Patricia Jordan, Red Lodge Transition Services

Jen LaChance, Through These Doors

Afua Addo, Center for Court Innovation

Sandra Barnhill, Foreverfamily

Janelle Melohn, Iowa Attorney General's Office, Crime Victim Assistance Division

Verna Wyatt, Tennessee Voices for Victims

Kathleen Creamer, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Eddie Ellis, One by 1

Georgia Lerner, Women's Prison Association

Carmen Pitre, Sojourner Family Peace Center

Jaclyn Kolnik, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Center for Victim Studies Research & Analysis Unit

Michelle Garcia, District of Columbia Office of Victim Service and Justice Grants

Kathleen Culhane (formerly of the Vera Institute of Justice)

Anne Patterson, STEPS to End Family Violence

Aswad Thomas, Alliance for Safety and Justice

Anna Cho Fenley, Californians for Safety and Justice

Reuben Miller, University of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration

Mary Weaver, Friends Outside in Los Angeles County

Kelly Quintana, Friends Outside in Los Angeles County, Incarcerated Parents Program

Cheryl Bonacci (formerly of the Anti-Recidivism Coalition)

Juan Gomez, MILPA Collective

John Pineda, MILPA Collective

Cristian Franco, Jr., MILPA Collective

Dolfinette Martin, (formerly of Voice of the Experienced)

Ariel Jeanjacques, Voice of the Experienced (VOTE)

Felice Davis (formerly of the Washington State Department of Corrections, Washington Corrections Center for Women)

Kristina Ray, Spokane County Detention Services, Medical and Mental Health Unit

DeAnna Hoskins, JustLeadershipUSA (formerly U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance)

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for REACHING VICTIMS

Helping those who help others

The NRC's vision is that victim services are accessible, culturally appropriate and relevant, and trauma-informed—and that the overwhelming majority of victims access and benefit from these services.



reachingvictims.org