

## Intersection of Trauma, Mental Health, and Youth Justice

- Trauma**
- In general, youth with high Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are at greater risk of becoming youth offenders.<sup>1</sup> One study showed that 80% of [violent youth offenders](#) had an incarcerated household member (an example of an ACE),<sup>2</sup> which is nine times higher than the national average of 9%.<sup>3</sup>
  - Early exposure to high levels of toxic stress can negatively impact executive functioning (e.g., reduced impulse control, difficulty delaying gratification, and challenges in weighing rewards and consequences) frequently leading to behaviors resulting in punitive measures.<sup>4</sup>
- Mental Health**
- Youth with depression are 70% more likely than their non-depressed peers to display violent behavior, including committing violent crimes.<sup>5</sup>
  - Upon admission (also known as a “commitment”) to Wisconsin's two juvenile correction facilities, [Lincoln Hills or Copper Lake](#), assessments indicated that around two thirds of the youth had used mental health services prior to admission (2017).<sup>6</sup>
  - In 2016, 76% of youth at Lincoln Hills or Copper Lake received mental health services such as dialectical behavior therapy, cognitive behavioral treatment, and sex offender or substance use disorder treatment.<sup>7</sup> Youth with more intensive mental health needs may be transferred to the [Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center](#).

### Wisconsin Youth Arrests are Decreasing

In 2015, 44,157 youth between the ages of 10 and 16 were arrested,<sup>8</sup> down 40% from 2011, though still higher than the national average (43 per 1,000 in Wisconsin compared to 14 per 1,000 in 2014).<sup>9</sup>

### Wisconsin Detention Rates are Decreasing

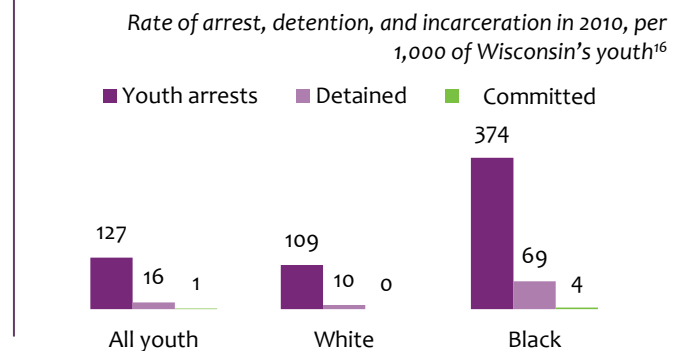
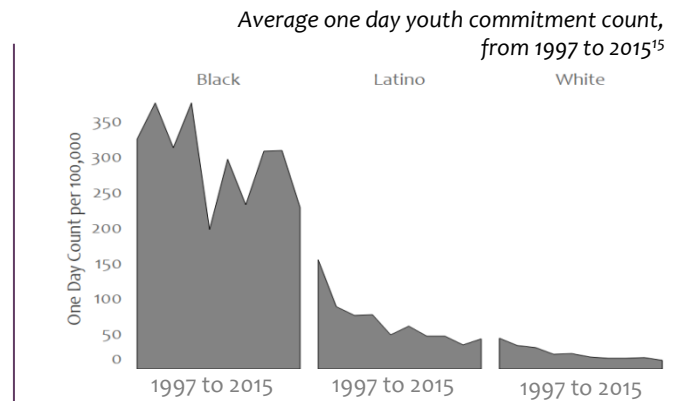
Wisconsin's detention rate has decreased over the past twenty years, with a 51% reduction in the one-day count.<sup>10</sup> Detention is the placement of a youth accused of committing a crime into a secure facility pending hearing or disposition. In 2015, 762 youth from 18 years old and younger were detained, down 7% from 2013, and down almost 30% from the 2010.<sup>11</sup> The 2013 detention rate of 156/100,000 youth, was slightly lower than the national average of 173/100,000 youth.<sup>12</sup>

### Wisconsin Detention by Race and Ethnicity are Decreasing

All races and ethnicities have had a reduction in detention rates between 2007 and 2015, with Hispanic and white youth experiencing the greatest decrease (29%), and black youth experiencing a more modest decrease (23%).<sup>13</sup>

### Wisconsin's Detention Rates Remain Racially Disproportionate

Of all youth arrested in 2015, about 21% of black youth and 9% of white youth were detained. Wisconsin had detention rate 50% higher than the national average for black youth (148 per 100,000), and detains black youth 19 times more often than white youth.<sup>14</sup>



## Key Findings

- Youth with high Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are at greater risk of becoming youth offenders.
- Black youth in Wisconsin are detained 19 times more than white youth, in contrast to the national trend of higher white youth detention rates.
- Wisconsin youth arrests, detentions, and incarcerations are decreasing, though Wisconsin continues to have a higher youth arrest rate than the national average.
- Overall rates of youth incarceration are going down, both for youth in the juvenile justice system, and youth in the adult correctional system.

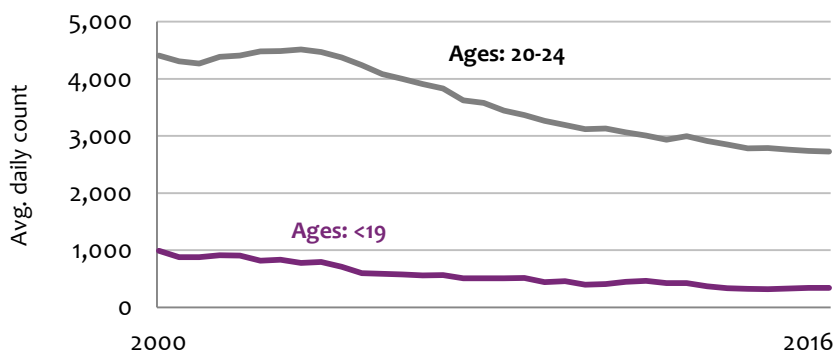
## Trends in Youth Incarceration<sup>17</sup>

Incarceration is the long-term hold of those found guilty of a crime. In Wisconsin, youth are incarcerated, or “committed” to one of two state facilities, Lincoln Hills (for males) and Copper Lake (for females), or at Mendota, a state run mental health facility.

- On 6/30/2017, the state facilities housed 178 youth in Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake Schools.
- These youth facilities had 166 new commitments in 2016.
- More youth of color are committed than white youth (see table to the right).
- The average daily population for Wisconsin youth who are committed decreased by 25% from 408 in 2010 to 307 in 2014.<sup>19</sup>

## Youth Incarcerated as Adults<sup>20</sup>

Wisconsin had a 40% decrease over the last ten years in daily counts for youth (<19) incarcerated in the adult system. Young adults between 20 and 24 have had a 30% decrease (see line graph below).



Racial makeup of all commitments to Division of Juvenile Correction facilities in 2016<sup>18</sup>

Race	Percent of Commitments	Percent of WI Population
<b>Lincoln Hills School (Males)</b>		<b>Male &lt;18</b>
American Indian	3%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1%	4%
Black	71%	11%
White	26%	84%
<b>Copper Lake School (Females)</b>		<b>Female &lt;18</b>
American Indian	12%	2%
Black	50%	11%
White	38%	83%

## Recidivism

The Department of Corrections defines recidivism as individuals with a prior offence who commit a new crime and return to corrections. Recidivism is high among youth (<18) commitments. For Wisconsin youth released in 2011:<sup>21</sup>

- 36% returned to corrections (first year)
- 45% returned to corrections (second year)
- 63% returned to corrections (third year)

Nationally, almost half of incarcerated youth return within three years.<sup>22</sup> For young adults 18 to 29, 20% return in one year, and 40% return after three years.<sup>23</sup>

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