

Rethinking the New

Asylums:

Strategies for Reducing the Incarceration of Persons with Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders

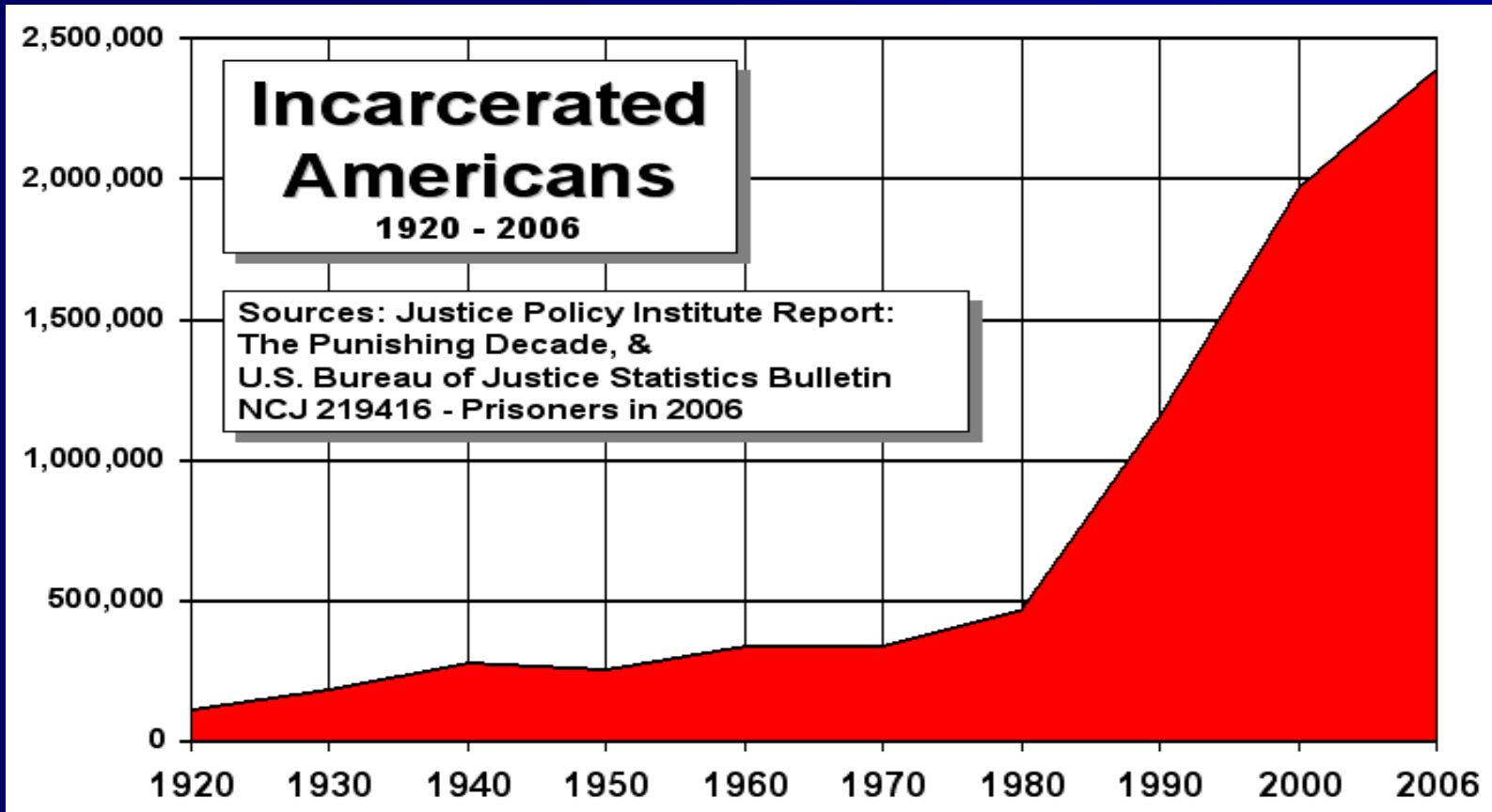
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Growth in Numbers of Incarcerated Persons



Changing Composition of Criminal Justice Populations

- Persons who have committed crimes that have historically been punished via incarceration
- Persons whose substance abuse issues have resulted in criminal justice involvement
- Persons whose mental health issues have resulted in criminal justice involvement

The Nature of Addiction and Treatment

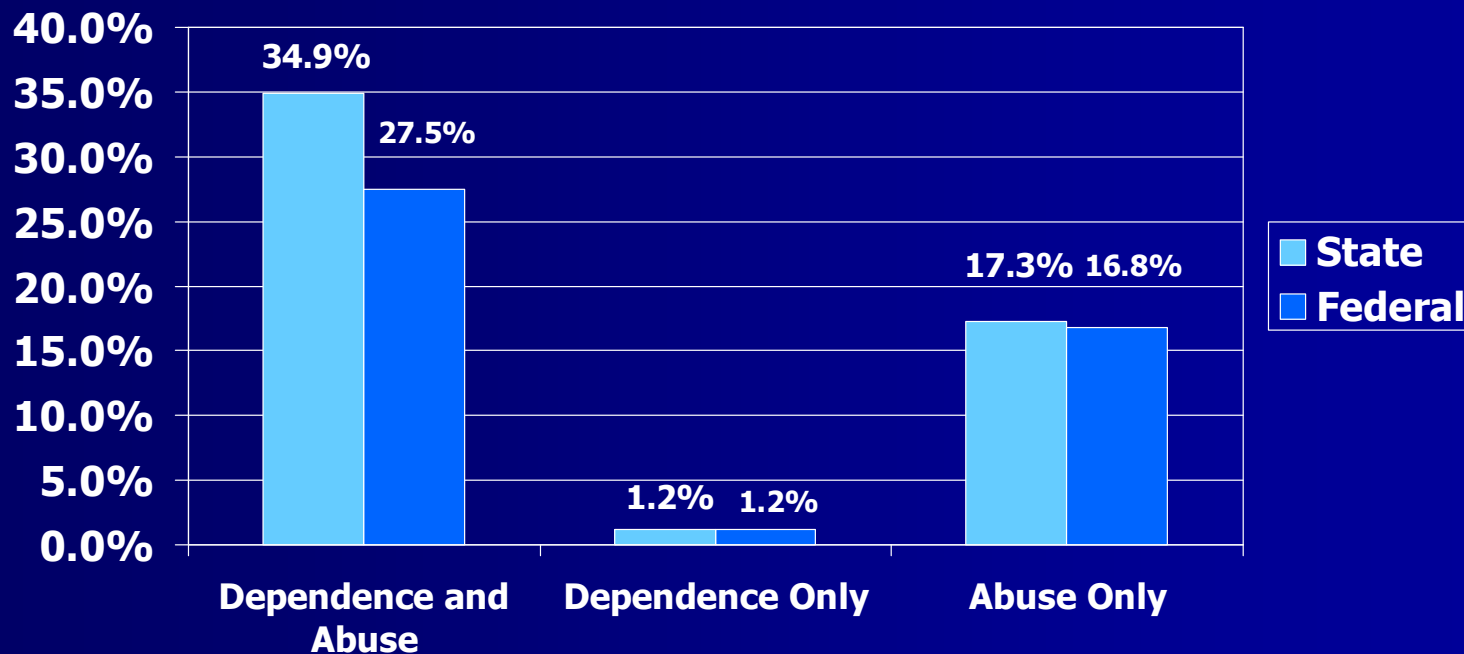
- Addiction as a chronic, relapsing brain disease
- Addiction is treatable
- Relapse rates for addiction are similar to other chronic diseases
- Recovery is possible

Factors Contributing to Incarceration of Persons with Substance Abuse Issues

- War on Drugs
 - Increased funding for drug law enforcement
 - Mandatory minimum sentencing
 - Belief that punishment would stop drug abuse/dependence

Prevalence of Drug Dependence or Abuse

- Among state and federal prison inmates



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Drug Use and Dependence, State and Federal Prisoners, 2004

The Nature of Mental Illness and Treatment

- Mental disorders are serious medical illnesses
- Mental disorders are treatable
- Between 70 and 90% experience a significant reduction in symptoms and an improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports
- Recovery is possible

Factors Affecting the Incarceration of Persons with Mental Illness

- Institutionalization
- Development of psychotropic medication
- The 1960s
 - Deinstitutionalization
 - Civil Rights
 - SSI/SSDI/Medicaid/Medicare
- Lack of community resources
- Transinstitutionalization

The Stats – Offenders with Mental Illness and/or Substance Abuse Issues

- 1,264,300 or “more than half of all prison and jail inmates had a mental health problem” at midyear 2005
- 74% of state prisoners and 76% of local jail inmates also met criteria for substance dependence or abuse

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special Report Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates, September 2006

The New Asylums

- “Asylum” - “an institution for the care of the destitute or sick and especially the insane”
- “Prison” – “a place of confinement especially for lawbreakers ; *specifically* : an institution (as one under state jurisdiction) for confinement of persons convicted of serious crimes”

Consequences of Incarceration

- Convicted felon
- Family separation
- Removal from community supports
- Limited access to treatment
- Environment not conducive to recovery
- Cost of incarceration
- Barriers to reentry

Reasons for Intervening

- Increase public safety
- More cost effective than incarceration
- Facilitate participation in treatment
- Increase participants' positive contribution to society
- Improve the quality of life of participants

System-Level Change

- Develop comprehensive state plan
- Legislative task forces/commissions of stakeholders to legitimize addressing the issues
- Require collaboration among stakeholders
- Implement statewide crisis intervention services

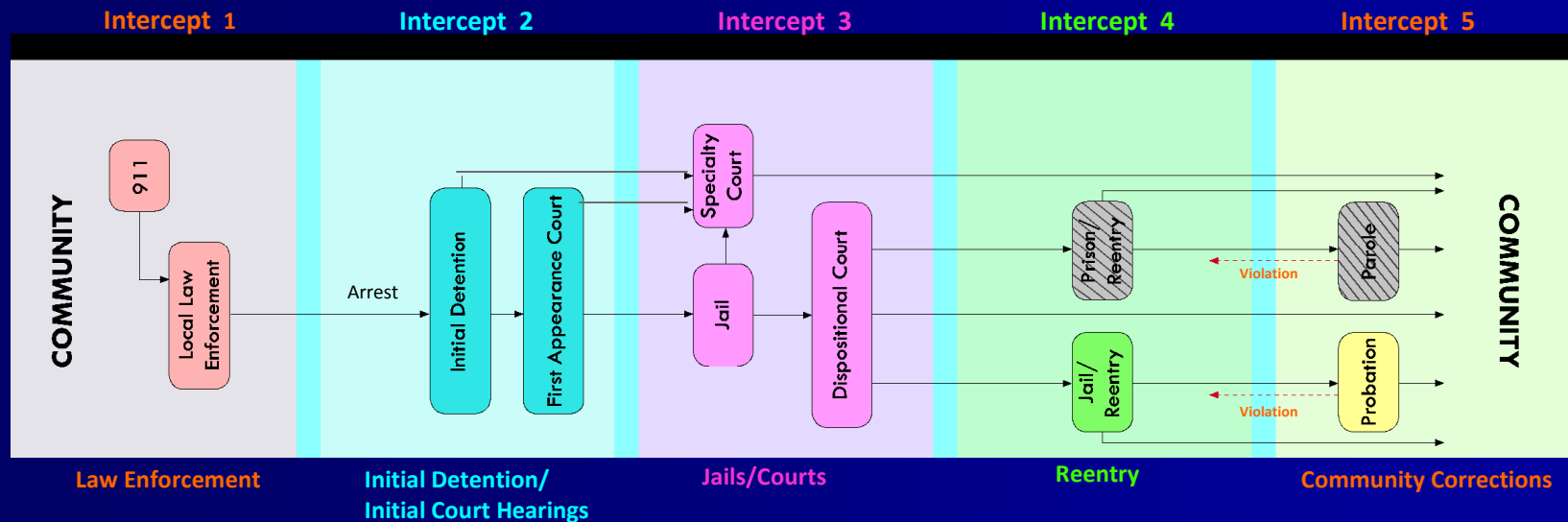
System-Level Change – continued

- Establish/expand jail diversion programs
- Improve access to benefits
- Make housing a priority
- Expand access to treatment, integrate treatment
- Expand support services

System-Level Change – continued

- Ensure constitutionally adequate services in jails and prisons
- Ensure individualized transition plans
- Ensure all systems are culturally competent, gender specific and trauma informed

Sequential Intercept Model



Source: Developed by Mark R. Munetz, M.D. and Patricia A. Griffin, Ph.D.
Reproduced here from www.gainscenter.samhsa.gov

Community Level Intercept

- Point of contact - dispatch
- Law enforcement
- Crisis intervention
- Linkage to services
- Evaluation

Initial Detention/Initial Court Hearing Intercept

- Screening
- Pre-trial diversion
- Service linkage

Jails/Courts Intercept

- Screening
- Court coordination
- Service linkage
- Feedback
- Jail-based services

Reentry Intercept

- Assessment of risks and needs
- Individualized case plan addresses risks and needs
- Link to needed post-release services prior to release
- Coordinate transition plans

Community Corrections Intercept

- Screening
- Establish/maintain a community of care
- Implement supervision strategy responsive to individual needs
- Modify conditions of supervision based on effectiveness/ongoing needs

Additional Legislative Opportunities

- Invest in increased treatment options for non-violent offenders rather than increased arrests
- Implement and use PACT and assisted outpatient treatment
- Increase the number of public psychiatric beds

Additional Legislative Opportunities - continued

- Modify federal and state regulations to allow more flexibility in use of alternatives to psychiatric hospitalization
- Eliminate the federal prohibition on the use of Medicaid in state hospitals
- Increase public awareness of the consequences of the shortage of public psychiatric hospital beds

For More Information

- The Released – Public Broadcasting Service – Frontline – 2009
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/released/>
- The New Asylums – Public Broadcasting Service – Frontline - 2005
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/asylums/>

For More Information

- Center for Mental Health Services' National Gains Center www.gainscenter.samhsa.gov
- The Treatment Advocacy Center
www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
www.nami.org

For More Information

- Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness by Pete Earley, 2006
- The Insanity Offense: How America's Failure to Treat the Seriously Mentally Ill Endangers Its Citizens by E. Fuller Torrey, M.D., 2008