

Quick Facts: Women & Criminal Justice - 2009

Over 200,000 women are in prison and jail in the United States, and more than one million are under criminal justice supervision.

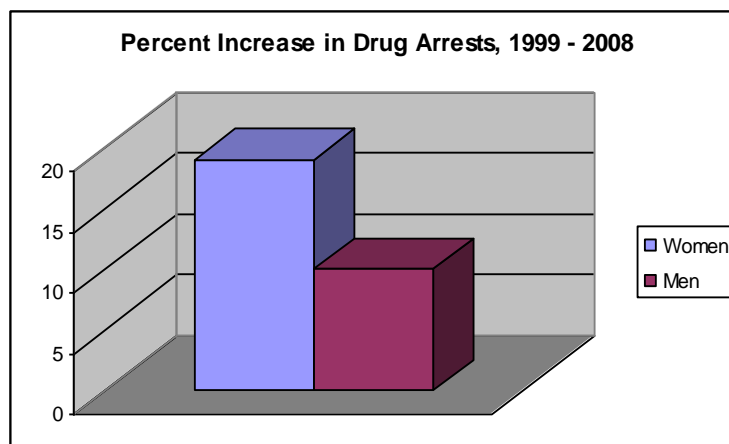
- There were 115,779 women incarcerated in either state or federal prisons at midyear 2008.¹
- The average daily adult female jail population at midyear 2008 was 99,175.²
- At year end 2007, there were 987,427 women on probation, representing 23% of the total probation population.
- Women represented 12% of the parole population (98,923 women) in 2007.³

The number of women in prison has grown by over 800% in the past three decades.

- The female prison population grew by 832% from 1977 to 2007. The male prison population grew 416% during the same time period.⁴
- Oklahoma has the highest female imprisonment rate at 134 per 100,000 women. Massachusetts has the lowest rate of female imprisonment at 13 per 100,000 women.⁵

Two thirds of women in prison are there for non-violent offenses, many for drug-related crimes.

- Twenty-eight percent of women in state prison at yearend 2005 were sentenced for drug offenses. Property offenses accounted for another 28% of the female state prison population. Together, property and drug crimes – non-violent offenses – make up nearly 2/3 of the population of women in prison. At yearend 2005, 35% of women in prison were convicted of violent offenses.⁶
- Over 2.5 million women were arrested in 2008, accounting for nearly a quarter of all arrests. The arrests of women increased nearly 12% from 1999 to 2008.⁷
- In the ten-year period from 1999 to 2008, arrests of women for drug violations increased 19%, compared to ten percent for men.⁸

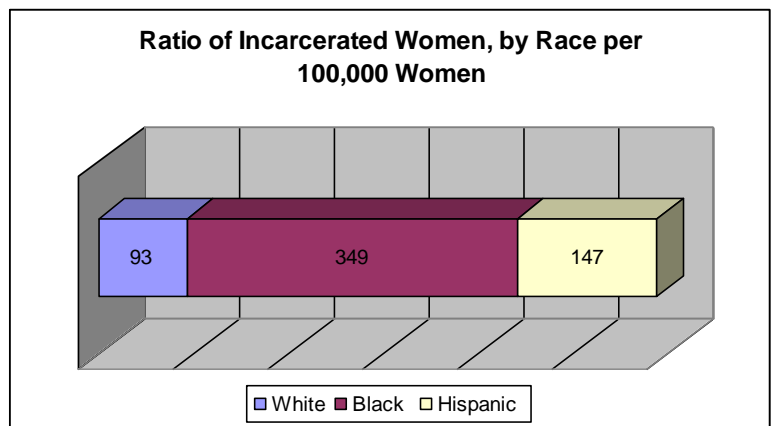
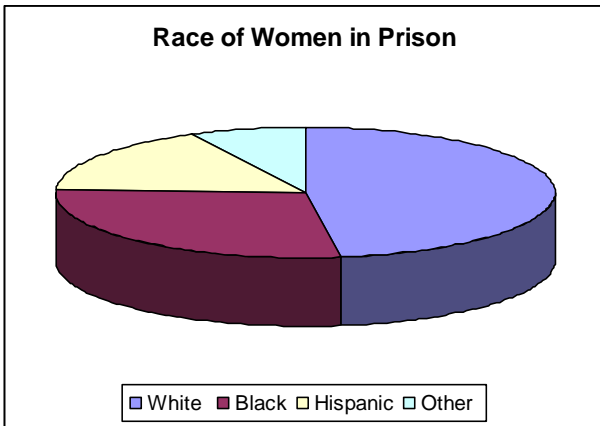


Nearly two-thirds of women in prison are mothers.

- At midyear 2007, approximately 65,600 women in federal and state custody reported being the mothers of 147,400 minor children.⁹
- Seventy-seven percent of incarcerated mothers reported providing most of the daily care for their child(ren) before incarceration.¹⁰
- Eleven percent of incarcerated mothers reported their children being placed in foster care, compared to only two percent of fathers.¹¹

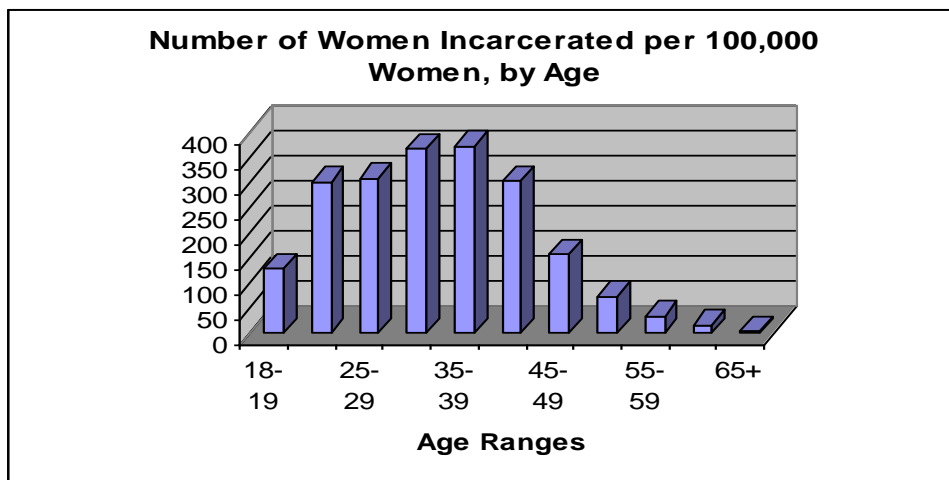
Women of color are disproportionately represented in prison.

- White women made up the majority of women in custody at 45.5%, black women account for 32.6% of incarcerated women and Hispanic women represent 16% of this population at midyear 2008.¹²
- Ninety-three out of every 100,000 white women were incarcerated at midyear 2008. During the same time period, 349 out of every 100,000 black women and 147 out of every 100,000 Hispanic women were incarcerated.¹³



Women in prison are largely in their thirties and forties.

- Fifty-one percent of sentenced women were between the ages of 30 – 44, with 36% of those between the ages of 35 – 39 at midyear 2008.¹⁴



¹ West, Heather C. and William J. Sabol. *Prison Inmates at Midyear 2008 – Statistical Tables*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Mar. 2009 - Page 2

² Ibid. – Page 5

³ Lauren E. Glaze, Lauren E. and Thomas P. Bonczar. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2007 Statistical Tables*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: December 2008.

⁴ National Prisoner Statistical Data Series conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and West, Heather C. and William J. Sabol. *Prisoners in 2007*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: December 2008.

⁵ West, Heather C. and William J. Sabol. *Prison Inmates at Midyear 2008 – Statistical Tables*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Mar. 2009 - Page 11

⁶ West, Heather C. and William J. Sabol. *Prisoners in 2007*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Dec 2008 - Page 22

⁷ *Crime in the United States, 2008*. Federal Bureau of Investigations: Sept. 2009 – Table 33 and 42

⁸ Ibid. – Table 33

⁹ Glaze, Lauren. and Laura M. Maruschak. *Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children*. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report; August 2008 – Page 2

¹⁰ Ibid. – Page 5

¹¹ Ibid. – Page 5

¹² West, Heather C. and William J. Sabol. *Prison Inmates at Midyear 2008 – Statistical Tables*. Bureau of Justice Statistics: Mar. 2009 – Page 17

¹³ Ibid. – Page 18

¹⁴ Ibid. – Page 17