

Working with Incarcerated Survivors of Sexual Abuse Perpetrated by Women

December 13, 2023



Presenters



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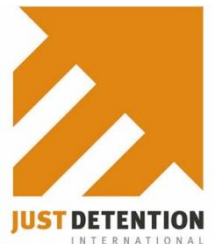


JDI's Work

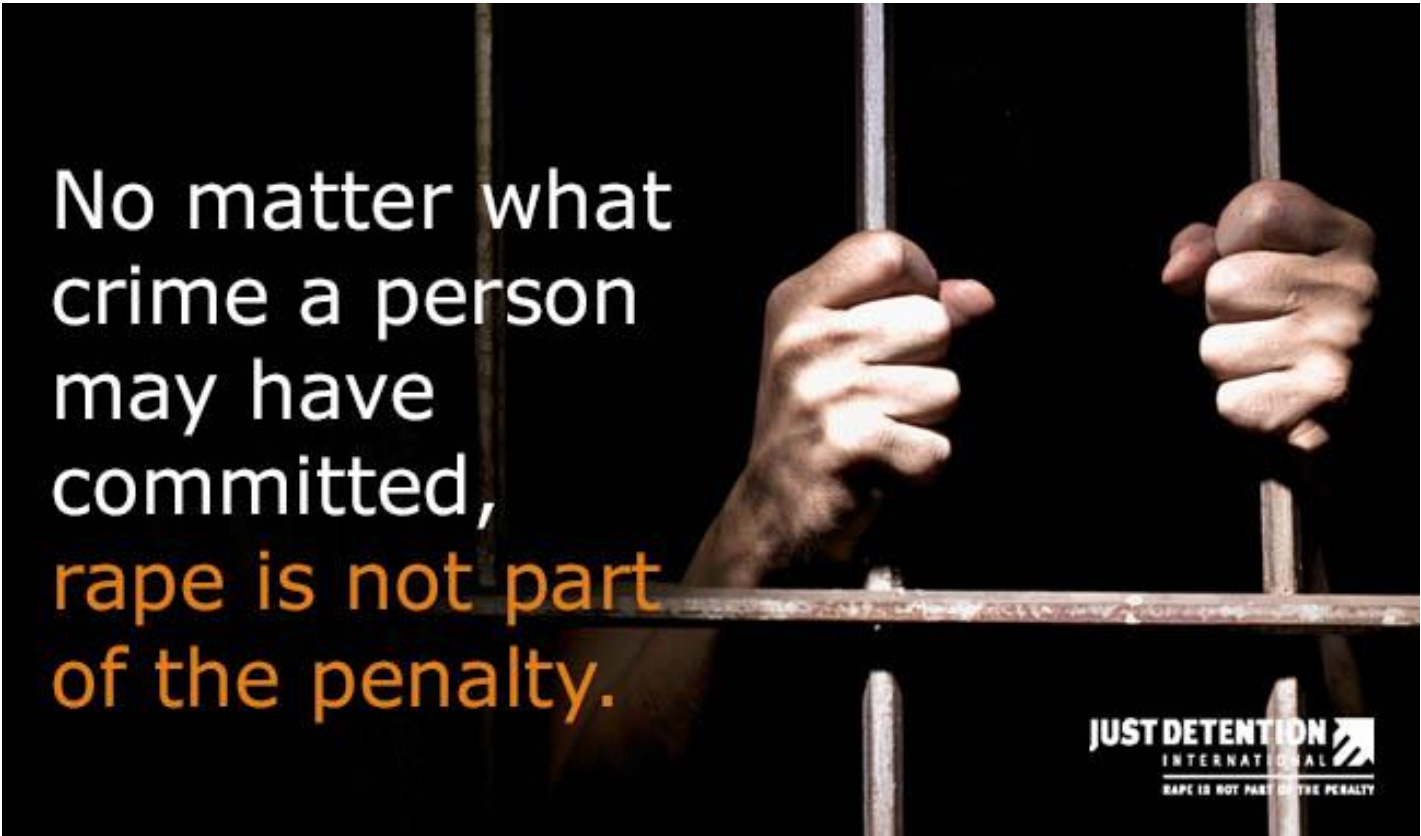
JDI is a health and human rights organization that seeks to end sexual violence in all forms of detention.

JDI's Core Goals:

1. To hold government officials accountable
2. To change public attitudes about sexual violence behind bars
3. To ensure survivors get the help they need



JDI's Core Principle



No matter what
crime a person
may have
committed,
rape is not part
of the penalty.

JUST DETENTION
INTERNATIONAL
RAPE IS NOT PART OF THE PENALTY

This Webinar Series

This webinar is one of a 13-part series focused on providing accessible services for currently and formerly incarcerated survivors who are from particularly underserved groups.

If you're not already on our mailing list, send us your name and email on the chat and we'll add you so you don't miss announcements on future webinars!



Thanks to OVW

JDI's work to help survivors of sexual abuse in detention is possible because of generous support from the Office on Violence Against Women.

This project is supported by Grant No. 15JOVW-22-GK-03999-MUMU awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this training are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.



Today's Objectives:

- Recognize dynamics of sexual abuse perpetrated by women (staff and incarcerated people) in detention
- Identify particular challenges for survivors of this abuse
- Learn strategies for making support services more accessible and meaningful to survivors

GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO

TAKE DEEP
BREATHS

NOURISH
YOUR BODY

STEP OUT AS
NEEDED

TURN YOUR
CAMERA OFF



Defining the Issue



California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Language



Preferred Terms:

- People who are incarcerated
- Survivor
- Women
- Men

Who Are We Talking About?

**Survivors
Abused by:**

**Women
Staff**

In Facilities for:

Men/boys

Women/girls

**Incarcerated
women/girls**

Women/girls

Share Out!

Why do you think it's important to specifically talk about the experiences of survivors who were abused by women?

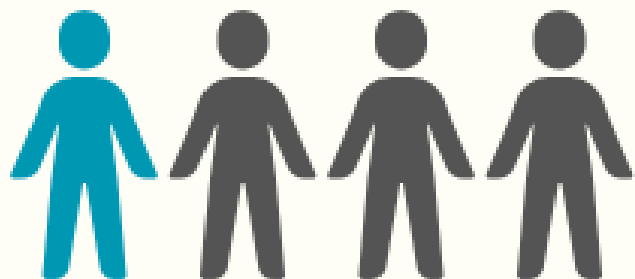


Why It's Important

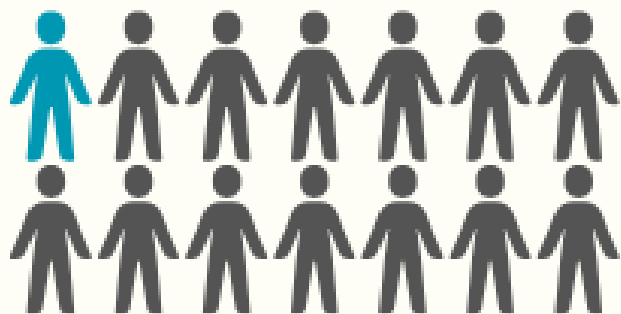
Sexual abuse perpetrated by women is prevalent, yet:

- Survivors of this abuse face tremendous stigma
- Men who are survivors of this abuse are not recognized as such in most cases
- Presumption is of women as survivors and men as perpetrators

Sexual Abuse of Men



1 in 4 men in the U.S. experience some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetime



1 in 14 men in the U.S. are made to penetrate someone during their lifetime

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, and Stalking Among Men*, June 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/men-ipsvandstalking.html>

Characteristics of Detention

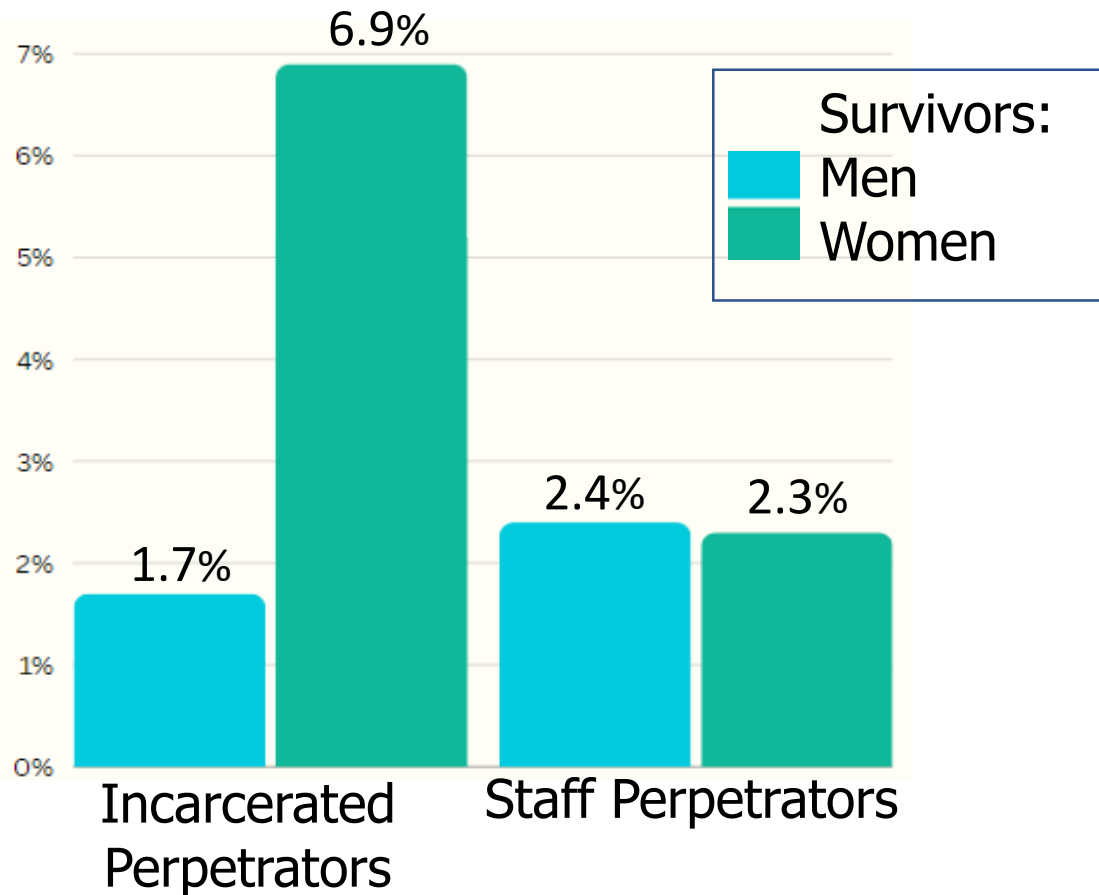
- Men make up over 93% of state prison populations
- Hyper-masculine environment
- Deeply rooted systemic racism
- Intensified power dynamics



California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Prison Policy Initiative, *Beyond the Count: A deep dive into state prison population*, April 2022.

Perpetrators in Prisons & Jails



Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates, 2011-12*. May 2013.

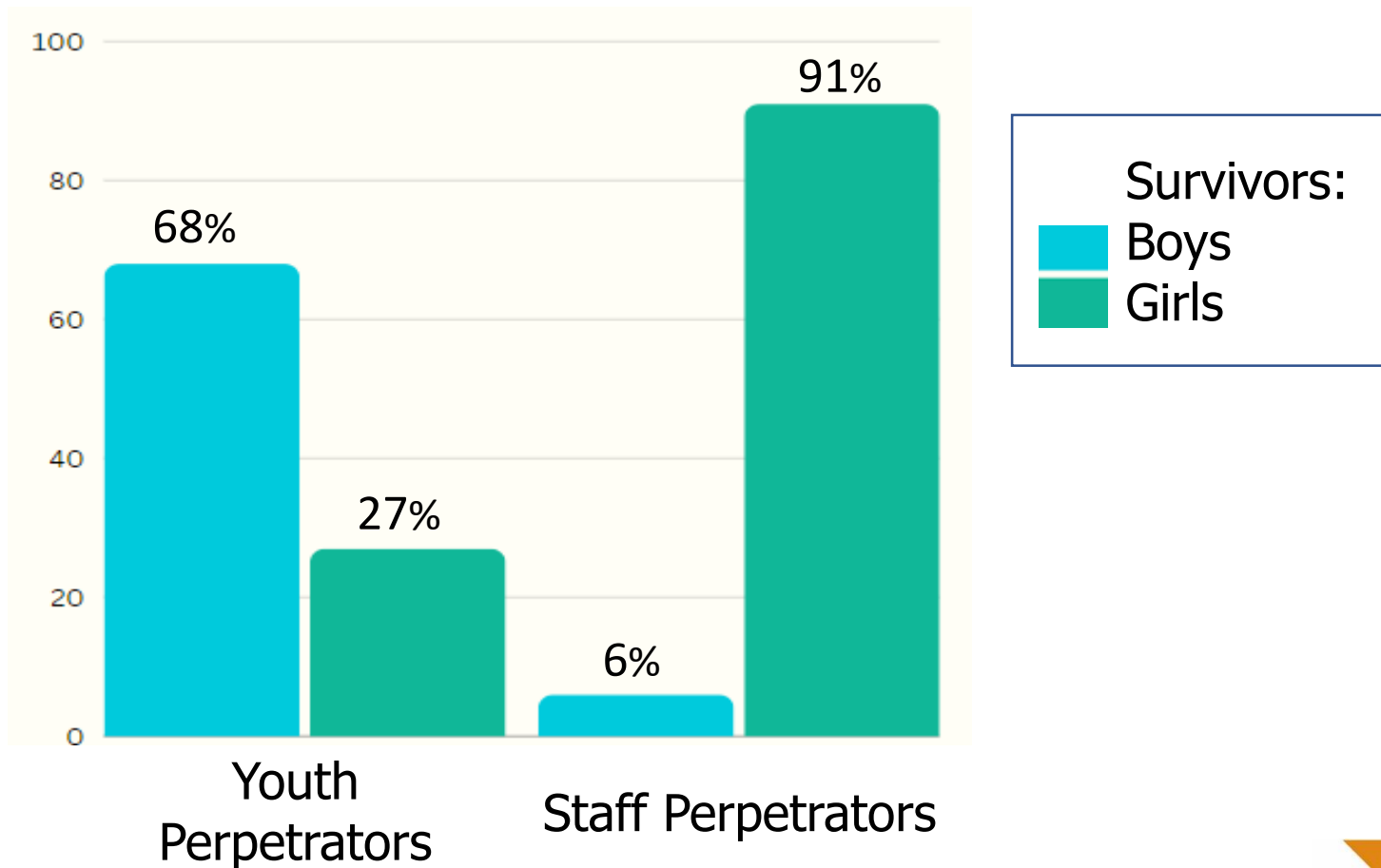
Staff Sexual Abuse

In **youth facilities**, **91%** of reported incidents of staff sexual misconduct involved **only women perpetrators**



Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Sexual Victimization Reported by Youth in Juvenile Facilities, 2018*. December 2019..

Perpetrators of Youth Abuse



Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Sexual Victimization Reported by Youth in Juvenile Facilities, 2018*. December 2019..

Dynamics of Abuse by Women Staff in Detention Facilities



Image: Art created by a participant of JDI's therapeutic art programs in Detention.

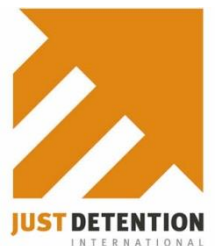
Let's Discuss!

Sexual abuse by staff who are women is often mischaracterized as consensual

There can NEVER be consent between a staff person and an incarcerated person.

Why?

(Tell us why in the chat)



Abuse by Women Staff

Challenging misconceptions:

- Many survivors believe they “willingly” participated in incidents
- Survivors of abuse are seen as “lucky”
- Abuse not seen as “not that bad”

Boundary Violations

How staff cross boundaries in order to facilitate sexual abuse:

- Talk about sex, joke or share sexual stories
- Share personal information
- Give money or other special gifts
- Give pictures or letters
- Give drugs, alcohol and other contraband

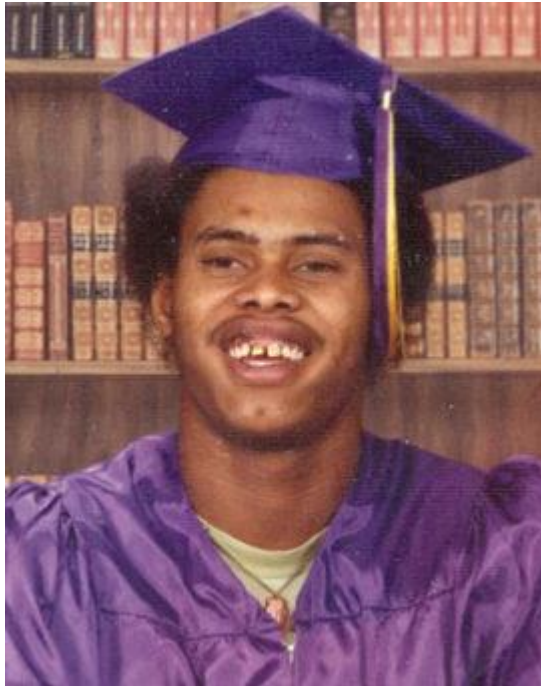
Boundary Violations

How Staff Cross Boundaries Prior to Sexual Abuse



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Victim, Perpetrator, and Incident Characteristics of Sexual Victimization of Youth in Juvenile Facilities, 2018 – Statistical Tables, 2018 (November 2020). © Just Detention International

Ivory's Story



“She began to talk about her childhood. She would tell me things that were so sad, things like how people would take advantage of her. Knowing all this, I felt a sense of pity for her.”

Ivory's Story

"The administration claimed that I was having a consensual sexual relationship with her. As far as I know, she wound up being charged with having improper sexual activity with a person in custody. But it wasn't a consensual relationship."

Dynamics of Sexual Abuse by Incarcerated Women



Photo credit: JustPublics @365

Culture in Women Facilities

Informal family structures:

- Dynamics of familial abuse can be replicated
- “Love” and “friendship” may mask abuse

Less physical violence:

- Abuse can easily be disguised as consensual
- Taken less seriously by staff



Image: Art created by a participant of JDI's therapeutic art programs in Detention.

Dynamics of Abusive Relationships in Detention

- Keeping people from family and support
- Isolating survivor from other people in the facility
- Taking commissary and other financial abuse
- Using incarceration/crime to make survivor feel they are unlovable



Photo credit: Sonya N. Hebert/Staff Photographer// Dallas Morning News

Let's Discuss!

Why might survivors of sexual abuse by women in detention not report or seek help?

(Tell us why in the chat)

Beverly's Story



Beverly was sexually abused by a woman officer in a Texas prison. She was transferred to a maximum security prison far away from her family after reporting the abuse.

Barriers to Reporting

- Cultural misconceptions
- Gender stereotypes
- Discrimination against LGBTQI people
- Fear of being charged with consensual sex
- Risk of retaliation



Image: Art created by a participant of JDI's therapeutic art programs in Detention.

Advocacy Tips

- Remember the dynamics of the environment (hyper-masculinity, racism)
- Recognize how your identity may impact how you are perceived
- Be a resource for your agency to ensure a nuanced understanding and strategic approach

Best Approaches for Supporting Survivors



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Language Considerations

- Think about your agency's name
- Be clear and specify that your agency serves men
- Don't limit your services to "victims" or "survivors" of "abuse" – think more broadly

Tips for Providing Support

- Allow for additional time to establish trust
- Be clear about confidentiality
- Develop a plan with survivor for the time between sessions (given lack of support and resources inside)
- Allow time for decompressing after sessions

Address Shame & Stigma

- Normalize physical reactions
- Discuss masculinity
- Don't label abuse, allow people to come to their own understanding

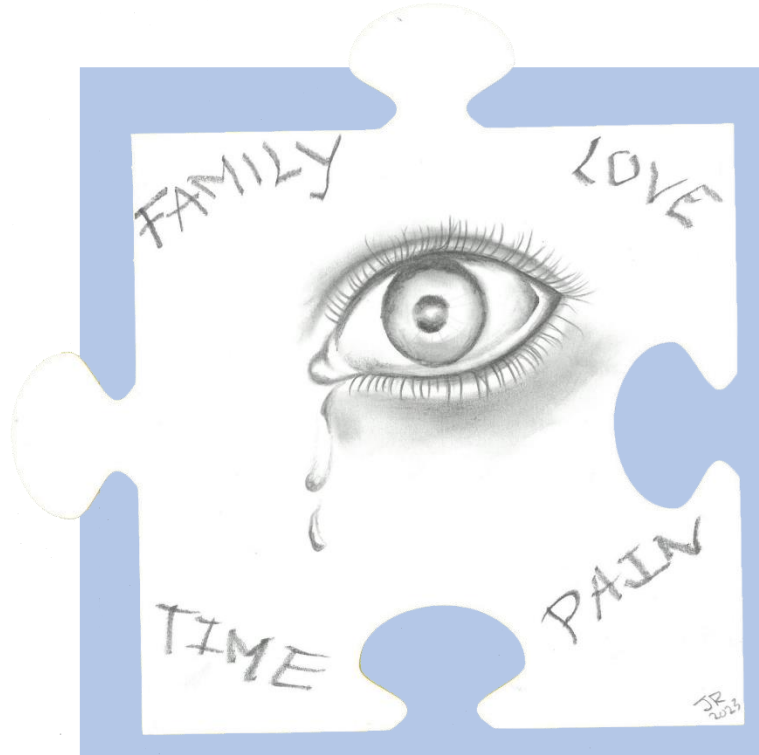


Image: Art created by a participant of JDI's therapeutic art programs in Detention.

Discuss Healthy Relationships

Have honest discussions about relationships between incarcerated people:

- Address impact of living in shared space, and inherent lack of privacy
- Build skills in developing supportive relationships
- Share strategies for expressing various emotions in healthy ways

Questions



Upcoming JDI Events:

Office Hours:

- January 26 at 1pm EST

Webinars:

- February 2024: *Supporting Incarcerated Survivors who are Transgender Men*
- March 2024: *Supporting Incarcerated Survivors who are Transgender Women*

Coaching Opportunity

- One-on-one coaching from JDI to help expand your services for incarcerated survivors
- Intake session and four personalized 1-hour coaching sessions
- Completely FREE

<https://justdetention.org/coaching-ta-application/#search>



For More Information

For additional information, please visit JDI's Advocate Resource page: www.justdetention.org/advocate-resources

Direct questions to: advocate@justdetention.org

For more information about **Just Detention International**, visit www.justdetention.org.

Connect with JDI:

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