

Improving Outcomes for Justice-Involved Girls and Women

Girls and women represent growing segments of the justice-involved population. Justice-involved girls and women have distinct challenges—such as high levels of trauma, abuse, family issues, substance use, and mental health issues—that need specialized treatment and intervention.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) conducts research and provides technical assistance designed to help policy makers and practitioners reduce girls' and women's system involvement. We also help communities strengthen their capacity to provide prevention and intervention programming as well as alternatives to incarceration.



Girls and Gangs

NCCD recently completed a study exploring girls' desistance from gangs, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The study provides insight into why and how girls join gangs; their roles, experiences, and behaviors while in gangs; why and how they leave gangs; and the role of services and service providers in helping girls desist from gang involvement.

With support from The California Wellness Foundation, NCCD is now translating the study's findings into action, including sharing practical applications of the data with service providers, policy makers, and others who want to help gang-involved girls.

Girls' Experiences on Probation

With support from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund and in partnership with the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center, NCCD is currently studying the experiences of girls on probation. The findings of this project will help improve the field's understanding of how current policies and trends in juvenile probation translate into practice, and how practice relates to girls' success in the system. This project will also inform the development of data-driven, long-term solutions for responding to girls on probation.



Girls in the Adult Criminal Justice System

NCCD, as part of a cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), recently co-authored a bulletin called “No Place for Youth: Girls in the Adult Justice System.” This bulletin discusses the growing body of research on issues faced by girls confined in adult facilities in the United States.

Finding Out What Works in Gender-Responsive Programs for Justice-Involved Girls

NCCD has extensive experience evaluating justice-related programs and initiatives, including gender-responsive approaches designed for justice-involved girls or girls at risk of involvement with the justice system. These evaluations have included studies of the Alameda County [California] Probation Department’s Reaffirming Young Sisters’ Excellence (RYSE) program and the Stanislaus County [California] Girls Juvenile Justice Initiative.

A Comprehensive Approach to Gender-Specific Juvenile Justice Programming

With funding from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, NCCD conducted a research study of girls in the

Florida juvenile justice system in order to inform a comprehensive approach to gender-specific juvenile justice programming. The study’s findings supported changed responses to justice-involved girls, both in terms of treatment services and in the policy/system changes needed to increase success with this population.

Policies, Practices, and Conditions for Incarcerated Women

As part of its Women and Justice Initiative, NCCD conducted an intensive investigation of policies, practices, and conditions for incarcerated women in California. Drawing on key findings from the project, NCCD developed a set of recommendations based on decarceration and promoting rehabilitation in a gender-appropriate manner.

For more information on NCCD’s work related to women and girls in the justice system, contact Dr. Angie Wolf, Director of Justice Strategies, at awolf@nccdglobal.org or (800) 306-6223.

