

2009 YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY HEALTH SURVEY FACT SHEET

Key Findings for Young Men

No. of young men surveyed: 319 (88%)

Social determinants:

- 25% of young men had been placed in care before the age of 16 years (40% young women).
- 44% have had a parent in prison (48% young women).
- 38% were attending school prior to custody (36% young women).
- 28% were working in the 6 months prior to custody (13% young women).
- 40% had been bullied (26% young women) and 51% had bullied others (60% young women).

Mental health:

- 57% had a history of child abuse or trauma (81% young women).
- 15% had a possible intellectual disability (IQ 69 and under) (5% young women).
- 33% scored in the borderline intellectual disability range (IQ 70 to 79) (26% young women).
- 86% were found to have any psychological disorder (92% young women), with conduct disorder (57%), substance abuse (49%), alcohol abuse (42%) or ADHD (27%) the most common.
- 14% had thought about suicide (28% young women) and 8% had ever attempted suicide (23% young women).
- 19% had thought about self-harm (35% young women) and 14% had ever self-harmed (35% young women).

Offending behaviour:

- 78% had reported previous time spent in custody (83% young women).
- The average age of first time in custody was 14.3 years (14.3 years young women).
- On average, young men had previously spent 5 times in custody (6 times young women).

Physical health:

- 41% were overweight or obese (50% young women).
- 18% had a mild to moderate hearing loss (24% young women).
- 22% have ever had asthma (30% young women).
- 32% have had a head injury resulting in unconsciousness (33% young women).
- Poor nutrition is a common risk factor and diet improved while in custody - eating fresh fruit three or more times a week increased from 43% in the community to 89% since in custody; and eating vegetables three or more times a week increased from 56% in community to 77% since in custody.
- 35% of young men reported currently taking prescribed medications (48% young women) .

Smoking, alcohol and drugs:

- 94% had ever smoked cigarettes (98% young women) with a mean age of starting smoking at 12 years.
- 43% indicated they currently smoked cigarettes or would smoke on release from custody (68% young women).
- 93% had ever been drunk (95% young women) with an average age first drunk of 13 years.

Smoking, alcohol and drugs cont.

- 66% reported being drunk at least weekly in the year prior to custody (68% young women).
- 60% of young men identified that their alcohol consumption had caused them problems in the past year (with school, friends, health, police, parents) (74% young women).
- 77% were found to be risky drinkers (84% young women).
- 87% had tried illicit drugs (98% young women), with cannabis (86%) the most common used, followed by ecstasy (40%), and Meth/amphetamines (27%).
- 65% had used an illicit drug at least weekly in the year prior to custody (65% young women).
- 66% reported committing crime to obtain alcohol or drugs (60% young women).
- 68% were intoxicated (on alcohol, drugs or both) at the time of their offence (74% young women).

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