

Re-incarceration among young people in custody in NSW

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- **Operational Support**

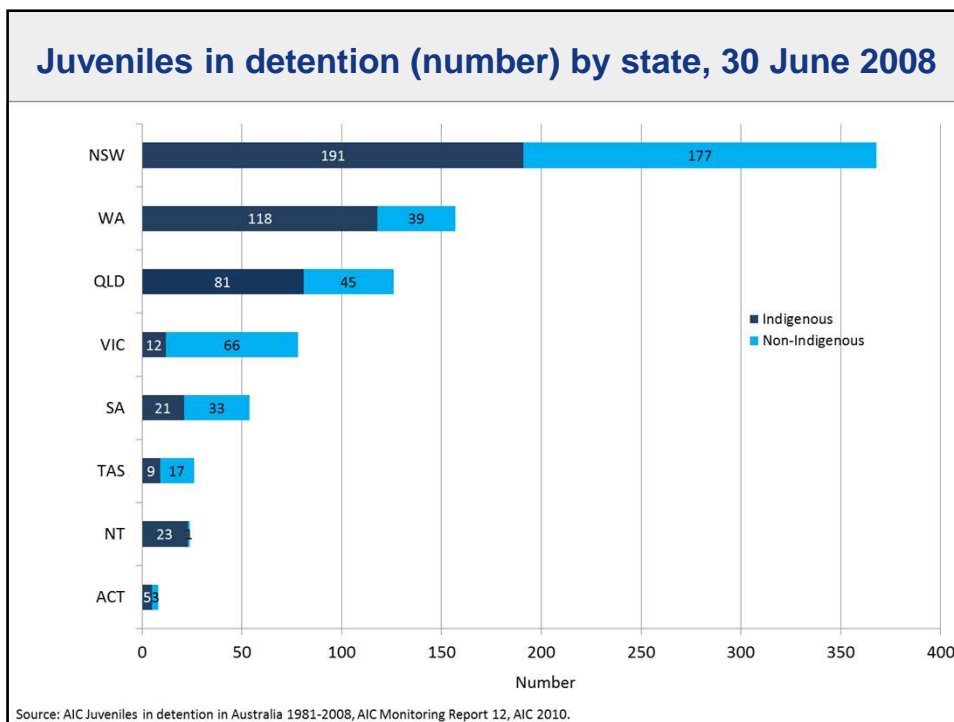
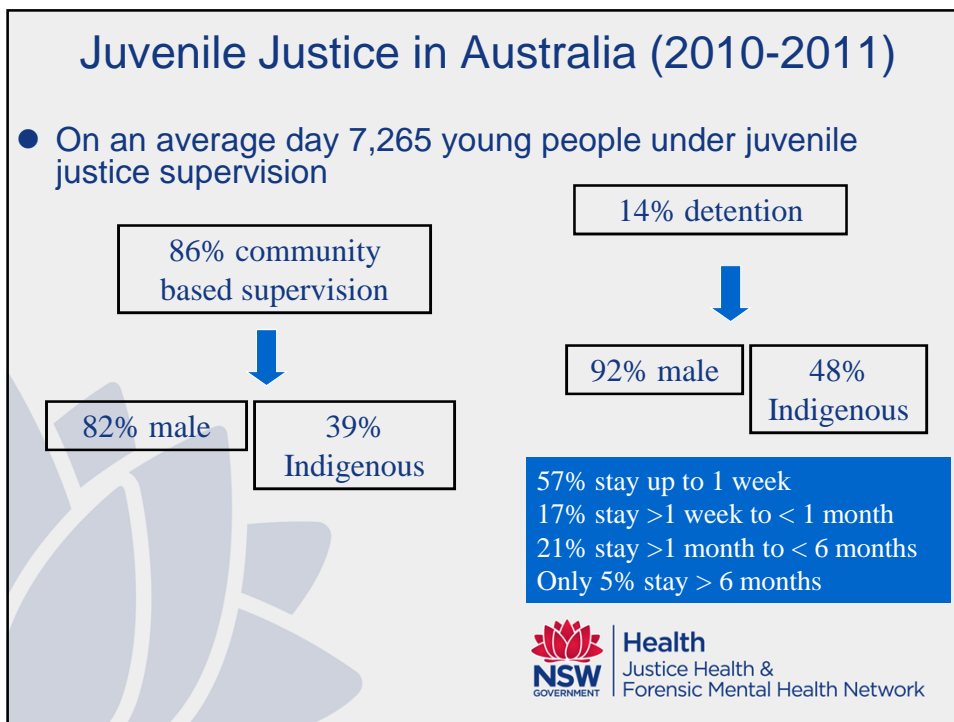
- Juvenile Justice Centre Managers, Justice Health Nurse Unit Managers

- **Funding Bodies**

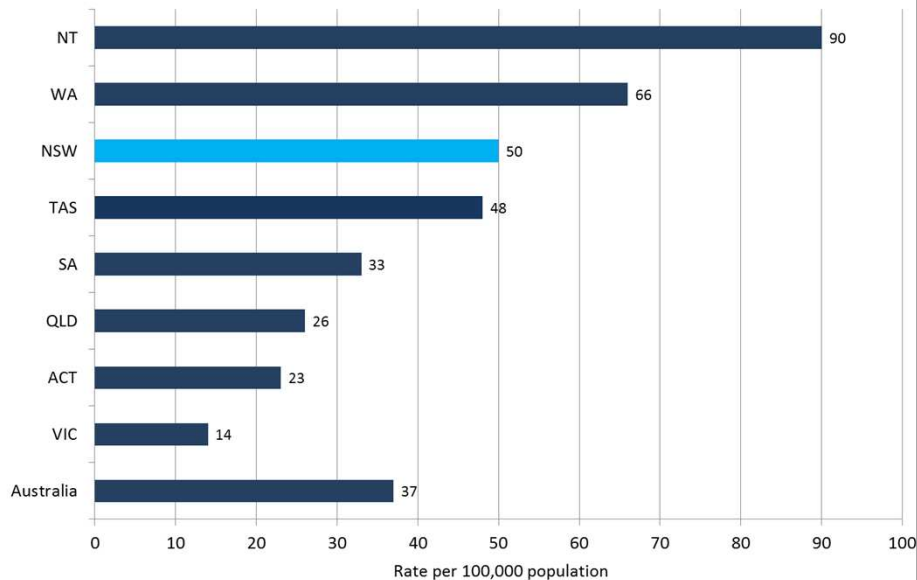
- Juvenile Justice, NSW Health (Centre for Aboriginal Health)

- **Participants and Families**





Juveniles in detention (rate) by state, 30 June 2008



Source: AIC Juveniles in detention in Australia 1981-2008, AIC Monitoring Report 12, AIC 2010.

Background: defining recidivism

- Recidivism = repetitious criminal activity
- Methodological issues:
 - sample selection
 - definitions
 - counting rules
 - observation period

Source: Payne (2007) ; Mbuba & Grenier (2008)



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Background: Prevalence of recidivism

- 50% of juveniles in detention in Australia have a prior history of custody
- More than half reconvicted within 6 months
- 80% of juvenile detainees released will be subject to supervision within 7 years; 50% will be imprisoned as an adult
- Juvenile detainees reconvicted of new offences much sooner than adult prisoners
- 1/3 with court appearance, reconvicted by age 18; 2/3 early adulthood

Source: Payne (2007)



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Background: Correlates of recidivism

- Age (risk greatest 17 to 21 years old)
- Gender (male)
- Criminal history (young age initiation, prior imprisonment)
- Offence type (seriousness, robbery/property)
- Psychological disorder and drug use
- Family and social factors (unemployment, education, family / childhood problems)
- Post-release difficulties

Source: Payne (2007); Cottle et al (2001)



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Study aims

1. To examine the rate of re-incarceration among young people in custody in NSW;
2. To explore the characteristics associated with re-incarceration.

Methods: 2009 Young People in Custody Health Survey (YPICHS)

- Conducted Juvenile Justice (primary funder) and Justice Health
- Baseline interview, follow-ups at 3, 6 and 12 months
- Ethics approval granted from: Justice Health, Juvenile Justice, Corrective Services NSW and AHMRC
- Informed consent provided for each component of study (parental consent sought if under 14 years)
- Baseline: paid \$10 and provided with lunch and snacks;
Follow-ups: paid \$10 for each follow-up in custody and movie vouchers if followed up by telephone in community

2009 YPICHS Baseline Survey

- N=361 overall participants; 87% male, 48% Aboriginal origin
- Most young people invited to participate (excluded some units due to insufficient time)
- Response rate: 80% all young people; 95% among those invited to participate; N=21 refusals (2003 survey: 85%)
- N=331 face-to-face baseline health interviews
- 10 weeks (August – October 2009)
- 8 juvenile justice centres and 1 juvenile correctional centre
- Each participant 1 day to do all components of the study
- Health questionnaire nearly identical to 2003 Survey



2009 YPICHS Baseline Survey Parts

- 1. Health questionnaire** - demographics, education/occupation, family history, health status, disability, medication, asthma, dental, injury, smoking, alcohol, drugs (including SDS), drug treatment, mental health, SF12, sexual health, diet, K10, etc
- 2. Physical health exam** - height, weight, blood pressure, eyesight, peak flow, audiometry, ear exam, dental exam, blood/urine samples (BBV/STI, etc)
- 3. Psychometric testing** – IQ testing (WISC, WAIS, ABAS), mental illness (K-SADS-PL), abuse/neglect (CTQ), self-reported offending behaviour



2009 YPICHS Follow-up

- Face to face interviews if in custody or via telephone if in the community at 3-, 6-, and 12-months post baseline
- Re-incarceration measured at 18-months post baseline using data from the Juvenile Justice Client Information Management System
- Data excluded for 12 young people who were continuously in custody for 18-months since the baseline interview
- n=331 completed baseline
n=250 (76%) 3-month
n=171 (52%) 6-month
n=157 (47%) 12-month



2009 YPICHS Participants/Non-participants

Characteristic	Participants N = 361 (80%)	Non-Participants N = 91 (20%)
Gender		
Male	319 (88%)	76 (84%)
Female	42 (12%)	15 (17%)
Ethnicity		
Aboriginal	174 (48%)	31 (34%)
Non-Aboriginal	187 (52%)	60 (66%)
Mean age years ± SD	17.0 (1.5)	16.9 (1.5)
Custodial Centre		
Rural	94 (26%)	10 (11%)
Urban	267 (74%)	81 (89%)

p<0.05



2009 YPICHS Participant Characteristics

Social determinants:

N=331

88% male 48% Aboriginal

mean age 17.0 years (47% <17 years old)

37% attending school 27% placed in care <16 years old

45% either parent ever in custody

Tobacco, alcohol, illicit drug use:

73% daily tobacco smokers

78% risky alcohol use

25% used illicit drugs (other than cannabis) at least weekly

34% problematic cannabis use



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2009 YPICHS Participant Characteristics

Mental health:

N=331

70% psychological disorder (excluding SUD)

60% exposed child abuse or trauma

46% possible ID/borderline ID

Group differences:

Young women: younger, more likely to smoke cigarettes, report child abuse/trauma, be diagnosed with a mental illness.

Aboriginal young people: higher rates for almost all demographic and psychosocial characteristics

Non Aboriginal young people:
higher rates of violent offending



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Offending & re-incarceration by Aboriginality

	Aboriginal (N=160)	Non-Aboriginal (N=171)	Total (N=331)
3+ prior admissions to custody	67.5	44.4	55.6
Mean age (SD) first incarcerated	13.6 (1.9)	14.9 (1.9)	14.3 (2.0)
Violent offence baseline episode	68.8	90.6	80.1
Robbery or theft baseline episode	40.5	27.5	33.8
12 months or longer in custody (cumulative time)	26.3	32.7	29.6
Any re-incarceration (juvenile or adult) over 18-month FU [^]	57.7	41.7	49.5
Self-reports any offending charges at any FU [^]	78.7	60.8	70.2

p<0.05



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[^] excludes n=12 continuously in custody FU

Self-reported charges in follow-up

- Property crime (33%-49%)
- Assault (26-30%)
- Breach bail or parole (2%-11%)
- Driving offences (3%-9%)
- Affray (4%-9%)

Reasons for re-offending in any follow-up

- Was intoxicated (D&A) (39%)
- Other (bored, provoked, angry, multiple responses) (25%)
- Impulsive/habit (20%)
- Didn't do it (10%)
- Needed money for D&A (6%)
- Needed money to survive (1%)



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Correlates of re-incarceration (unadjusted)			
p<0.05	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total
Baseline survey			
Not working, school or TAFE prior to custody	NS	2.26 (1.13-4.55)	1.64 (1.02-2.66)
3 or more previous admissions to custody	NS	NS	1.57 (1.01-2.46)
Ever diagnosis of major depressive episode	NS	NS	X ² (2)=8.41
Ever PTSD diagnosis	X ² (2)=6.14	NS	NS
Follow-up survey			
No support or contact with family / friends	2.45 (1.05-5.77)	NS	2.21(1.25-3.91)
Self-rated fair or poor health	6.60 (1.45-30.05)	NS	3.55 (1.55-8.14)
Alcohol use (6+ drinks, 3+ times p/week)	3.12 (1.00-9.87)	NS	2.77 (1.26-6.09)
Used any illicit drug	4.84 (2.29-10.24)	4.50 (2.10-9.64)	4.92 (2.90-8.35)

Correlates of re-incarceration (adjusted)

Whole sample:

Excessive alcohol use in follow-up
(p<0.05, OR 3.96, 95% CI 1.39-11.31)

Aboriginal young people:

Excessive alcohol use in follow-up
(p<0.05, OR 4.57, 95% CI 1.14-18.29)

Non-Aboriginal young people:

Used illicit drugs in follow-up
(p<0.001, OR 5.10, 95% CI 2.09-12.46)

All associations remained after controlling for time at risk (i.e., cumulative time incarcerated at 18-month follow-up)

Summary

NSW incarcerated youth:

- Highly disadvantaged
- Aboriginal over-representation
- Re-incarceration common

Discussion

- Aboriginal young people:
 - First incarcerated younger age
 - 3+ prior admissions to custody
 - Re-incarceration
- Not engaged work/school, psychological disorder, prior custodial episode – each linked to re-incarceration
- Post release difficulties important

Study limitations

- Only 40 young women participated in the study so was not able to conduct the analysis by gender
- Difficult to determine the temporal relationship of events.
- There may be other confounding variables not accounted for which may be associated with re-incarceration.
- Not all psychometric instruments were validated for use in Aboriginal young people so results must be interpreted with caution.

Where to from here?

- Time at risk variable only a proxy measure
- Longer observation period might be informative
- Broader picture of offending - data on cautions and YJC for example
- Data on types of offences in follow-up period, and dates of subsequent charges

Thank you

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**Indig D, Vecchiato C, Haysom L, et al. (2011) 2009
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