

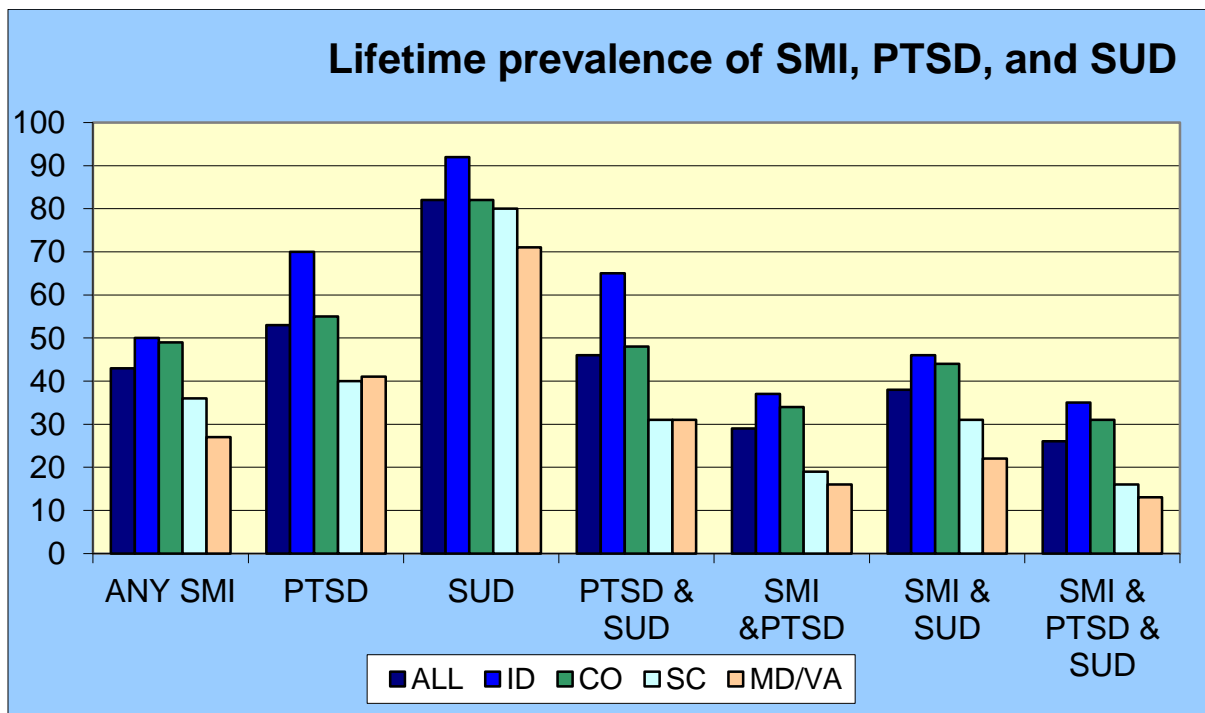
Mental Health & Trauma among Women in Jails

These findings are from a national study of the prevalence of serious mental illness (SMI), substance use disorders (SUD), and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in nearly 500 female jail inmates in urban and rural counties in the U.S.

Lifetime disorders: A majority of women in jail had at least one of the assessed mental health disorders in their lifetime. One in four women met criteria for lifetime SMI, PTSD and SUD.

- 82% had a lifetime substance use disorder (SUD);
- 53% had posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in their lifetime;
- 43% had a serious mental illness (SMI) such as depression (28%), bipolar disorder (15%), or schizophrenia (4%).

There were regional differences in the rates of the assessed mental health disorders. In general, women in jails in Idaho and Colorado reported higher rates of SMI, PTSD, and SUD than did women in jails in South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. This pattern replicates findings on SMI prevalence rates by state from a National Survey on Drug Use and Health from SAMHSA in 2011.

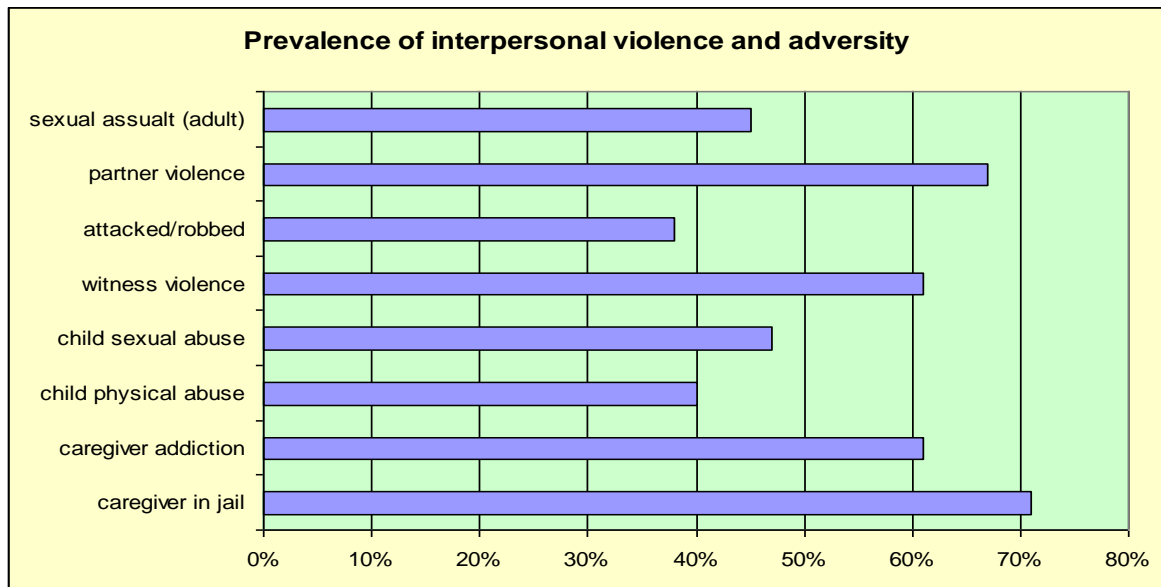


Current rate of disorders: Many women also met criteria for SMI, PTSD, and/or SUD in the past 12 months, and 25% reported severe functional impairment in the past year.

- 20% had both a SMI and SUD in the past 12 months;
- 53% had a substance use disorder (SUD) and 28% had posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- 32% had a serious mental illness (SMI) such as depression (22%), bipolar disorder (8%), or schizophrenia (4%) in the past 12 months.

Half of the women received substance use treatment or mental health treatment prior to incarceration. Of those who received treatment, approximately 30% disagreed that their symptoms and coping improved in mental health or substance focused treatment.

Understanding women's pathways - most of the women in jail experienced multiple types of adversity and interpersonal violence in their lives.



Trauma and mental health were associated with onset of crime. In comparison to women in jail without these specific forms of victimization or mental health problems, women with histories of

- **Caregiver violence** were **9x** as likely to run away as teens;
- **Partner violence** were **4x** as likely to engage in sex work and **2x** as likely to deal drugs;
- **Witnessed violence** were **2x** as likely to commit property crimes or assaults and **9x** as likely to use weapons;
- **Substance use disorder** were **7x** as likely to get DUIs and **6x** as likely to engage in sex work.

Women with SMI were more likely to have experienced trauma, to be repeat offenders, and to have earlier onset of substance use and running away.

These findings have implications for primary prevention, rehabilitation, and re-entry into communities. Services in jails and communities need to address women's histories of trauma and co-occurring mental health problems. Findings are important for professionals in child welfare, mental health, substance use, law enforcement, court diversion, corrections, and transitional services for re-entry.

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