

# CORRECTIONS: Rehabilitation, Reform, Recidivism, and Everything in Between.



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## ABSTRACT:

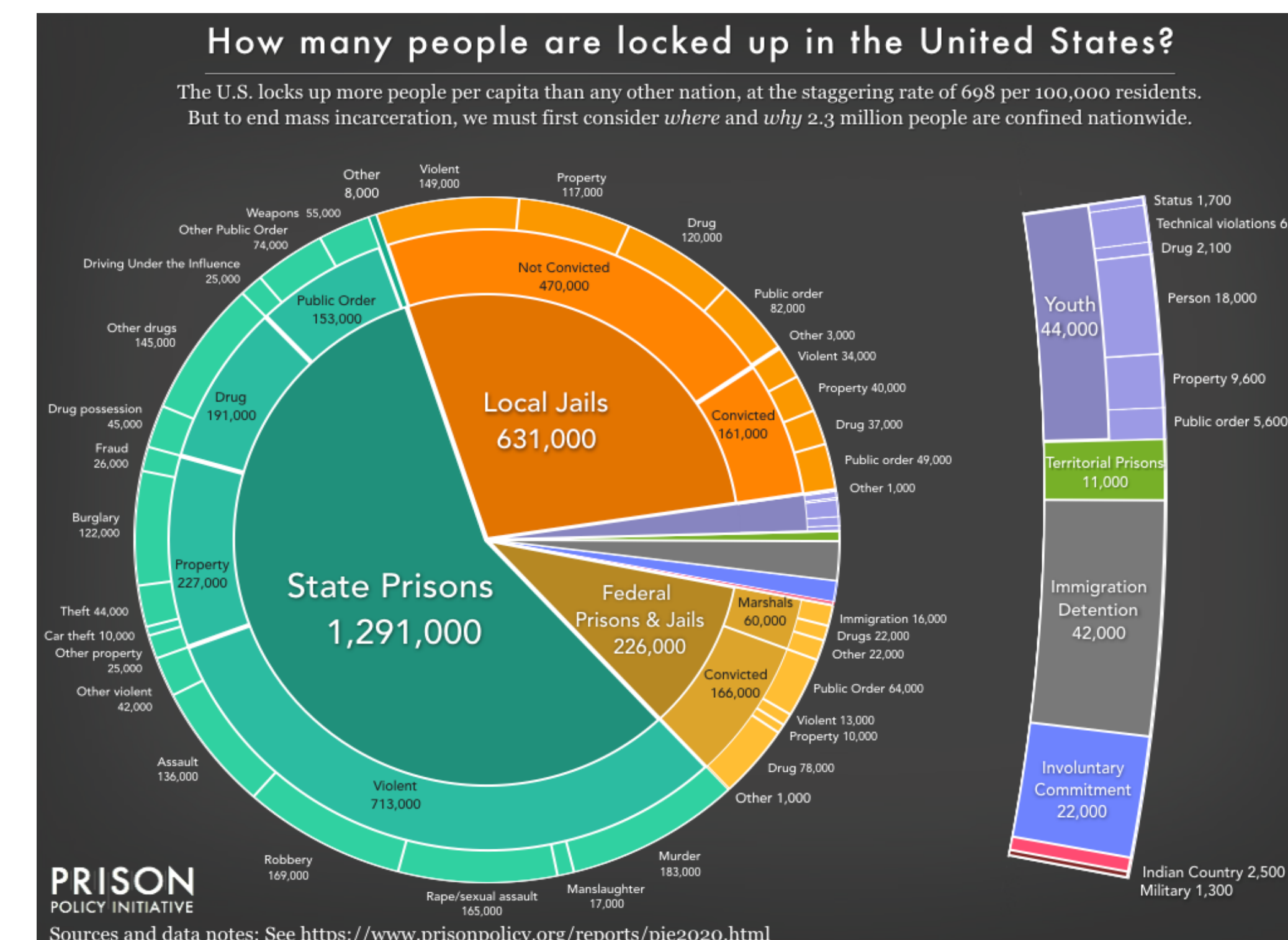
The main purpose of my study is to dive deeper into the ideology of corrections and rehabilitation. Looking into the way these facilities, along with staff and the system, avoid the further outcomes of recidivism from occurring upon their inmate's release. Recidivism is defined as “reengaging in criminal behavior after receiving a sanction or undergoing an intervention for a previous crime.” (Elderbroom & King, 2014; National Institute of Justice, 2014). I would like to gather further information on the programs offered along with the proper steps to prepare those incarcerated for their functioning release into society and the struggles that follow these events.

## INTRODUCTION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES:

According to statistics from the year 2014, nearly 2.4 million people were incarcerated within correctional facilities in the United States alone. The basis of those incarcerated is broken down through the various forms of corrections such as federal, state, and juvenile facilities, along with other jails, as shown in the graphic to the right. Based off these statistics, it is narrowed down to a rough estimate of 688,000 people who are released from these facilities per year. These statistics leave us wondering if those released have received the proper means of rehabilitation that these facilities are intended to serve. Many correctional facilities offer programs within these prisons in order to assist and aid inmates with rehabilitation and reform, but we must ask ourselves- are they working? The main goal of this all is to decipher whether these facilities take the proper precautions to avoid their inmates from reoffending upon their release. What exactly are prisons doing to shape and reform their inmates from their past offenses and return to the public by becoming a contributing member of society again?

## MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES:

I have narrowed down my mechanism, as well as my process, to be the study of how correctional facilities have changed over time since the first federal prison was established in the United States. Focusing on how facilities now, tend to stray away from the original ideals of proper rehabilitation from the start of it all in the 1890s. I want to depict what exactly has changed over the past two decades that have made prisons less effective as the numbers of recidivism rise.

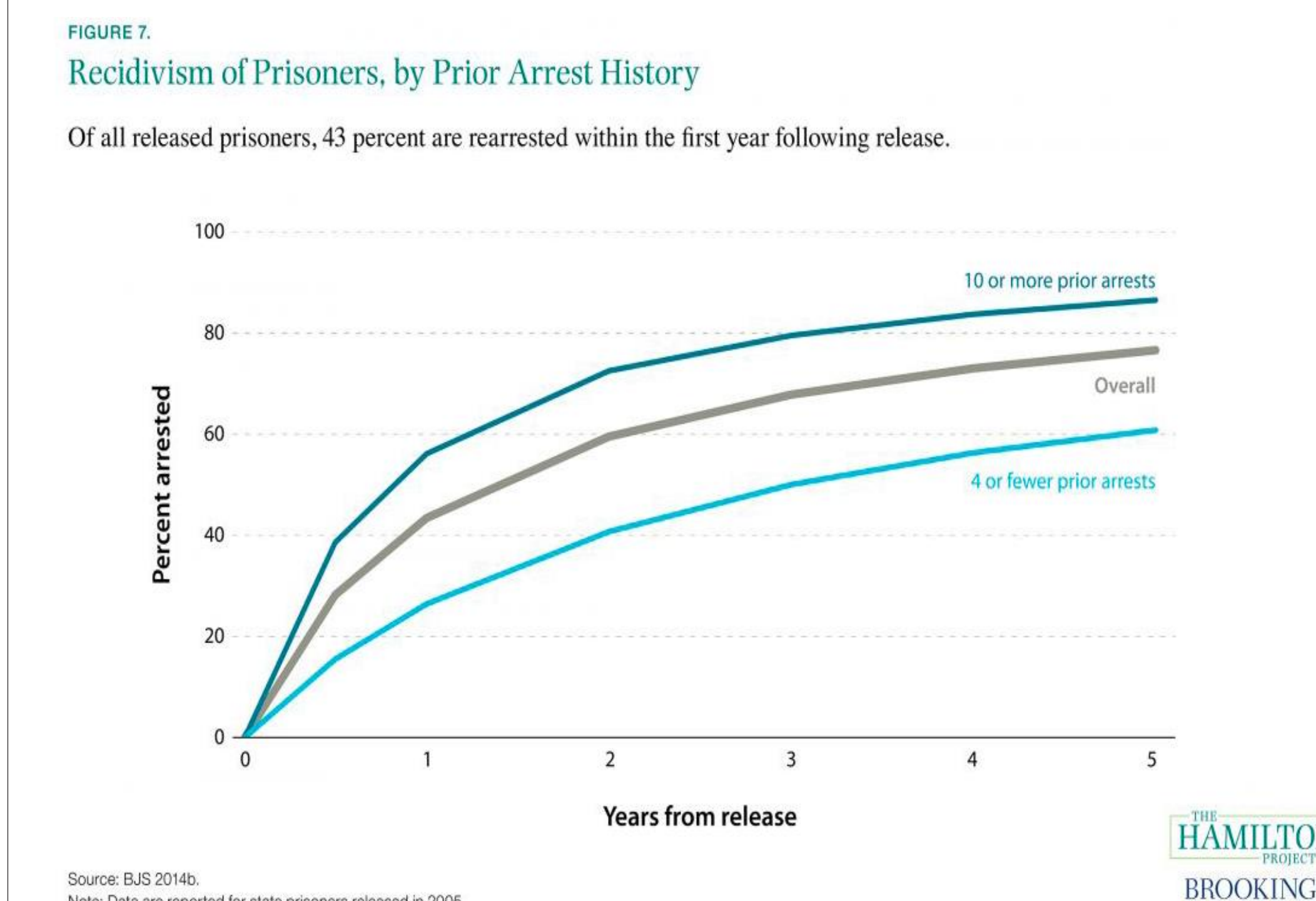


## PURPOSES TO BE SERVED:

The general responsibilities of the staff in these facilities, such as correctional officers and so on, is to encourage “the reform and rehabilitation of sentenced offender’s, organizing educational opportunities, and offering counseling in preparation for reentry into society.” These facilities hire staff in all different departments, such as officers and counselors. These positions all play a major role in providing these opportunities for inmates in order to improve their mindsets and aid them to pursue more from their time incarcerated. These programs that are offered can assist them to better themselves, in hopes to avoid the acts of reoffending and a promising future.

## RESULTS:

According to the The Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2005 “about two-thirds (67.8%) of released prisoners were arrested for a new crime within 3 years, and three-quarters (76.6%) were arrested within 5 years.” When looking at these statistics, what exactly causes such high rates of recidivism? What is it that is not working in these correctional facilities that cause these people to reoffend? Generally, a total of 43% of prisoners reoffend/ are rearrested within their first year of release, as shown below.



## PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Programs that are offered to prisoners to aid them in occupying their time while serving their sentence are those such as work opportunities, education opportunities, and so on. Personally, I was apart of an inside-out prison exchange course with 14 other WVU students and 15 inmates, where we collectively learned from the resources at our disposal and the opinions from one another. This experience brought light to life inside prison in hearing from inmates on their own personal experiences within the system. Along with this, I have been volunteering with a program that provides books to prisoners. Firsthand, I was able see how grateful they were from these opportunities they are provided with and how they have benefited them as a whole.

## CONCLUSIONS:

There is so much more to corrections and correctional facilities than what we see on the outside. The main idea that I am hoping to propose later in my paper is the reasoning in accordance with recidivism and what exactly correctional facilities are doing to provide programs and opportunities to avoid further offenses. It has been concluded that there is no clear answer to why this occurs, but some are relating it to acceptance, stereotyping and the way employers and the public view people who have been incarcerated. Along with what prisoners are left with upon their release, they tend to generally be on their own. Ultimately, my main goal is to once again bring attention to the finer details in prison corrections and what facilities can do to better their means of rehabilitation for the improvement of themselves and their inmates.

## References:

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