ADHD & INCARCERATION - What is the connection?
A cheat sheet created by Extended Family for the
8th Annual Southeast Regional ADHD Conference January 22-23, 2016, Orange Beach, AL

SOURCE: [https://add.org/undiagnosed-adult-adhd-a-high-cost-for-society/](https://add.org/undiagnosed-adult-adhd-a-high-cost-for-society/)
Between 25 and 40 percent of prison inmates have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and most are undiagnosed and untreated. This is an alarming overrepresentation considering that it’s estimated that only 4 to 8 percent of the general population has ADHD. (Denver, Dec. 19, 2014)

The ADHD brain constantly searches for novelty, attracted to activities that are highly stimulating and often risky. What’s more, many individuals with untreated ADHD self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. All these behaviors increase the likelihood of legal issues and criminal charges. To find out more about how ADHD affects individuals in the justice system visit www.adhdjustice.add.org.

SOURCE: Chris A. Ziegler Dendy, author and ADD/ADHD expert
Information derived from Department of Juvenile Justice:
- Characteristics of ADHD increase risk of DJJ, such as impulsivity/daring, don’t learn from punishment and rewards easily, don’t consider consequences, don’t plan ahead
- The average 9th grader in Juvenile Justice is on a 4th grade reading level
- 9% ADHD youth are incarcerated during adolescence
- 54% of youth in DJJ have ADHD

- 46% of female prisoners in Rhode Island met criteria for childhood ADHD.
- Swedish study showed 40% of adult male longer-term prison inmates had ADHD.
- Half of the male prisoners in Iceland (50%) were found on screening to have met criteria for ADHD in childhood
- Studies show that at least 25% of prisoners in the United States have ADHD.
- Hyperactive children are at risk for both juvenile and adult criminality. The risk for becoming an adult offender is associated with conduct problems in childhood and serious antisocial behavior (repeat offending) in adolescence.
- Children with impulsive ADHD were more likely to commit impulsive crimes such as theft. Children with inattentive ADHD were more likely to engage in premeditated crimes, such as burglary and selling drugs.
- Follow up study using arrest records showed the development of an antisocial or substance use disorder in adolescence completely explained the increased risk for subsequent criminality for ADHD inmates

... according to Goodman [Dr. David Goodman at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, specializing in ADHD]; ADHD often runs in families. According to Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or CHADD, an advocacy group, the disorder can be inherited. If a parent has ADHD, the child has more than a 50 percent chance of also having it. If a twin has ADHD, the other twin has up to an 80 percent chance of having the disorder.