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Equity and Criminal Justice
Cradle to Prison Pipeline

Rebecca Nannery, Erik Steiner, Sarah B Smith, Unai Miguel Andres, Jay Colbert, Matt Nowlin
Equity and Criminal Justice

Today’s SAVI Talk will demonstrate disparities among different people groups and tell the story of how these can influence children’s lives as they grow.
The Cradle to Prison Pipeline

• A child’s social and economic environment influences them through adulthood. Among some children, this can result in a developmental path that moves from **cradle to prison**.

• Equity-related risk factors result in greater likelihood of disciplinary action, including in schools and the juvenile justice system, ultimately playing a role in a child’s interactions with the criminal justice system.
The Cradle: Childhood
Opportunity Atlas (Raj Chetty)

- Linked adults in 2015 back to their parents’ income tax and census records in the 1980s and 1990s.
- Permits longitudinal analysis connecting adult outcomes to family conditions and neighborhood characteristics of childhood.
- Based on idea that place matters. The root conditions of where you grow up play an influential role on your opportunity in adulthood.
- Chetty has focused on interpreting economic outcomes, but using his data, we did an independent analysis of incarceration rates.
Birth conditions

• The data show that before one’s first breath, your likelihood of being incarcerated in adulthood can be largely determined by your race and gender

Male
3.3%

Female
0.3%

Black
6.3%

White
1.1%

Source: Opportunity Atlas • Created with Datawrapper
Birth conditions: Race and Gender

• Acknowledging these persistent inequities is essential to reframe conversation away from “implicit criminality” to address systemic differences across childhood and in the criminal justice system

• While these general patterns are persistent across the U.S., there is significant variation across neighborhoods depending on local characteristics
Incarceration Rates for Low-Income White Men

Children growing up in Indiana and Georgia tended to have elevated white male incarcerated rates for this period.

Rates were relatively low in the Northeast and Ohio River Valley.
Incarceration Rates for Low-Income Black Men

Black men growing up in the northern US tended to have worse outcomes, particularly in mid-sized “white” cities.
Incarceration Rates for Women

Women had dramatically lower incarceration rates overall, but were relatively higher in low-income rural areas such as Appalachia and Southern Georgia.
Indianapolis: Neighborhood Incarceration Rates

The variation in rates between neighborhoods is as great as the variation across the whole U.S.

Incarceration rates vary due to neighborhood conditions, not just because of the kinds of people that live there.
Neighborhood influences

• Education
  • Growing up in a neighborhood with a high percentage of college-educated residents tended to decrease one’s chances of being incarcerated in adulthood

• Incarceration
  • Growing up in a neighborhood with a high percentage of incarcerated residents tended to decrease one’s chances of being incarcerated in adulthood

• Employment
  • Growing up in a neighborhood with a high unemployment rates tended to decrease one’s chances of being incarcerated in adulthood
Family environment

• Opportunity Atlas data allows researchers to track individual family circumstances from childhood

• Parent income
  • Children growing up in low-income households were 6x as likely to be incarcerated as adults vs high-income households

• Family structure
  • Children growing up in single parent households were xx more likely to be incarcerated as adults vs. two-parent households
  • We also found this factor was present as a neighborhood influence
Minority effect

• Incarceration rates for racial subgroups tend to be higher in areas where that group is a minority.
• In Central Indiana, black males tended to be incarcerated at higher rates in mostly white neighborhoods and vice versa.
• The incarceration rates for black males were lowest in mostly black middle-class neighborhoods, where white males were equally likely to be incarcerated.
Incarceration Rates by City
For children growing up in low income households

The disparity between black and white incarceration rates is the highest in predominantly white cities.

Black children growing up in low income households are more than twice as likely to be incarcerated in predominantly white cities than in predominantly black cities.
Incarceration Rates for White Men

Incarceration rates for white children were lower than for black children, but significantly higher than the national average.

The highest rates were in predominantly black neighborhoods in the north (e.g. Devington).

High rates in the west (West Indianapolis) and southeast (Fountain Square) seem to correlate with low-income neighborhoods.
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Childhood trauma can impact children’s ability to respond appropriately to future challenges in life.

- Neighborhood influences: violence, lack of social capital
- Family influences: abuse, neglect, lack of an emotional support system, parental imprisonment
School Discipline
School Discipline

School discipline policies can result in direct or indirect contact with justice system

• Can also impact learning outcomes of children
• Students of color, those experiencing poverty, and those with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by school discipline
Zero-tolerance Policies

- Zero-tolerance policies of the 1990s = escalation of consequences for minor infractions
- Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 = mandatory expulsions and law enforcement referrals
- GFSA expanded to include other behavioral issues
- School discipline policies can impact student learning and other outcomes
School Discipline

Percent of Hoosier students of all races receiving suspension or expulsion:

- In-school suspension: 3.9%
- Out-of-school suspension: 5.2%
- Expulsion: 0.2%

Created with Datawrapper
Marion County School Districts

**In-school suspensions**

**Out-of-school suspensions**

Source: Indiana Department of Education - Created with Datawrapper
In-School Suspensions

Disparities
In-school suspension rates for white, Black and Hispanic/Latino students

Source: Indiana Department of Education • Created with Datawrapper
Out-of-School Suspensions

Disparities

Out-of-school suspension rates for white, Black and Hispanic/Latino students

- Indianapolis Public Schools
- State of Indiana
- Warren Township
- Beech Grove City Schools
- Perry Township
- Decatur Township
- Franklin Township Com Sch Corp
- Wayne Township
- Lawrence Township
- Washington Township
- Pike Township
- School Town of Speedway

Source: Indiana Department of Education • Created with Datawrapper
Other Disparities

Out-of-school suspension rates for low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities

Source: Indiana Department of Education • Created with Datawrapper
Juvenile Crime
Juvenile Crime

Children and youth move closer to the end of the pipeline when they are charged with crimes and have their first interactions with the criminal justice system.
Juvenile Charges

Overall Trend

Juvenile charges of all races in Marion County

Juvenile charges have fallen since the 2006 implementation of the evidence-based Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative in Marion County.

Source: SAVI Community Information System • Created with Datawrapper
Juvenile Charges
Juvenile Charges

Disparities

Black, Latino, and white juvenile charges per 1,000 people aged 5-17 in Marion County

Source: SAVI Community Information System • Created with Datawrapper
Juvenile Charges

Disparities

Relative likelihood of charges for Black youth and Latino youth compared to white youth

Source: Polis Center analysis of data from Marion County Superior Court via SAVI • Created with Datawrapper
The End of the Pipeline: Jail and Prison
For decades, Marion County had a higher jailed population rate than the state.

After a steep decline, Marion County’s jailed population rate is one third less than Indiana’s.
Black jail population rate peaked in 2004 in Marion County and 2007 in Indiana.

Marion County's white jail population rate has been falling since 2009.

Source: Vera Institute • Created with Datawrapper
How can we interrupt the Cradle to Prison Pipeline cycle?
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PIBS)

A school-based approach that teaches children behavior expectations and strategies to achieve these.

• Identification of causes of behaviors and reinforcement of positive behaviors
• Students are empowered to manage their emotions
• Outcomes include improved social-emotional competence and academic performance
Restorative Justice

Relationship-based response to conflict or wrongdoing that focuses on the accused and the affected amicably making amends.

- Prevention and intervention, not punishment
- Understand and address causes of behaviors
- Proven to reduce school suspensions
Implicit Bias Training

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

• Students of color make up over half of public school students, yet four out of five teachers are white and non-Hispanic/Latino.
• Understanding implicit bias will help educators and administrators to combat institutional racism in our school systems.
Moving Toward a Promising Future

Severing the Pipeline
Thank you for attending today!

Visit www.savi.org/savi-talks/equity-and-criminal-justice/ to access the Cradle to Prison report and presentation.

Digital Encyclopedia of Indianapolis launches tonight! Visit indyencyclopedia.org

Please visit us online to learn more!
• SAVI Equity Data & Information Hub - www.savi.org/equity-data-hub
• WFYI – www.wfyi.org