

Incarceration Violates Reproductive Autonomy

Canada has one of the highest incarceration rates in the Western world.¹ Incarceration is founded on colonialism and racism.² Black people, Indigenous people, newcomers to Canada, people with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities are hyper-criminalized and hyper-incarcerated.





32.5%


From 2009 to 2019, the number of women experiencing federal incarceration increased by 32.5%.¹ In 2021, 50% of women experiencing incarceration were Indigenous.⁵

Incarceration violates reproductive autonomy through:

- 1 Denial of and barriers to care**
People in prisons designated for women report being denied access to basic reproductive care.³
 Prisons are often in rural areas, creating geographic barriers to care.⁴
- 2 Exposure to sexual violence**
People in prisons are subject to personal (strip) searches and are at increased risk of sexual assault.²
- 3 Separation from children**
People in prisons are separated from their families, children, and communities, causing intergenerational harm.^{1,6}
- 4 Delay and disruption of fertility**
Being in prison prevents people from forming families and having children when they are ready.

 80% | 80% of incarcerated women report an unmet need for contraception.³
Reproductive care services are frequently not provided in prisons.³

 70% | 70% of incarcerated women report being mothers to minors.¹
Mother-child programs are not a solution to the harm of parental incarceration.

 6% | 6% of all people incarcerated in federal prisons are women.⁷
Gender specific health needs are not met in prison environments.⁸

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