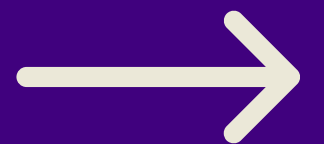


# BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Prioritize People Over Prisons



”

**“PRISONS DO NOT DISAPPEAR SOCIAL PROBLEMS, THEY DISAPPEAR HUMAN BEINGS. HOMELESSNESS, UNEMPLOYMENT, DRUG ADDICTION, MENTAL ILLNESS, AND ILLITERACY ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE PROBLEMS THAT DISAPPEAR FROM PUBLIC VIEW WHEN THE HUMAN BEINGS CONTENDING WITH THEM ARE RELEGATED TO CAGES.”**

– Angela Davis



# COMMUNITY OVER PRISONS

Building strong communities is a preemptive approach to solving social issues and addressing increases in crime.

## Vision and Goals:

- Fund supports like housing, education, mental health programs, substance use disorder treatment to address root causes of crime.
- Stop prison construction and focus on decarcerating current prisons.
- Create new systems for addressing harm and fostering accountability that that will be more effective than prison at preventing violence.

## Cost Figures:

- 95,000 per year to incarcerate one person in VT (rate is higher for those with medical conditions)
- \$500 million for new construction with each secure bed estimated to cost between \$800,000 to \$900,000.
- \$20-\$30 million to address staffing shortages. From – Hard Time: Vermont Hasn't Lost a Single Prisoner to COVID-19. But at What Cost? | Crime | Seven Days

# WHY WE SHOULD FOCUS ON COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

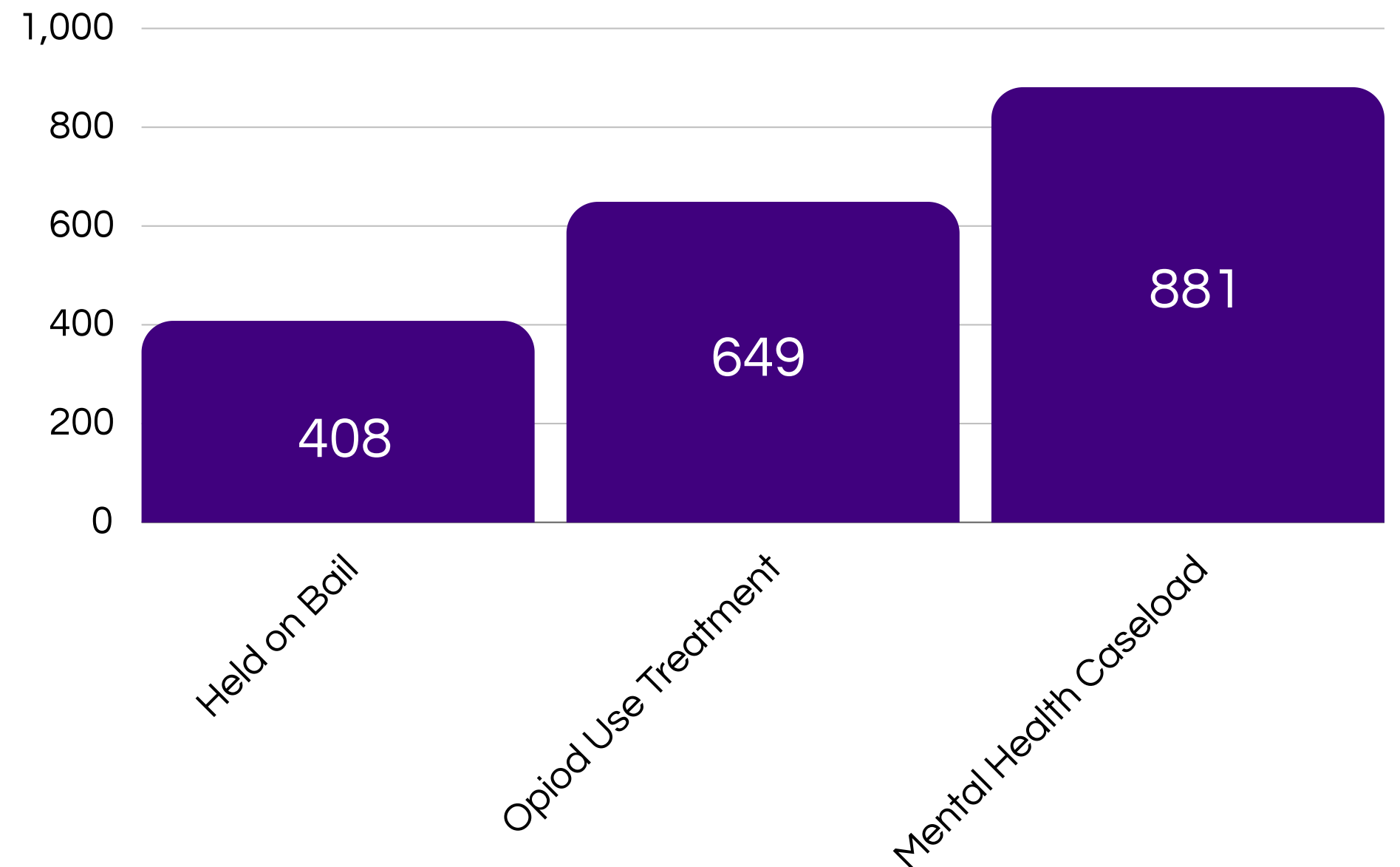
## Incarceration is Inherently Harmful for People

Many national studies cite this, and the Mental Health Systems Director for the Department of Corrections stated on the record that incarceration negatively affects the health of individuals

## Vermonters need more support, not prisons

Let's break the cycle and research alternatives that could serve incarcerated populations better, sooner, and at lower costs.

### In Vermont's Prisons:



Data from: [https://doc.vermont.gov/sites/correc/files/documents/FY2024\\_Budget%20Presentation\\_DOC.pdf](https://doc.vermont.gov/sites/correc/files/documents/FY2024_Budget%20Presentation_DOC.pdf) and [Advancing Public Health Interventions to Address the Harms of the Carceral System \(apha.org\)](https://www.apha.org/advancing-public-health-interventions-to-address-the-harms-of-the-carceral-system)

# WHO WE INCARCERATE

## Trauma to Prison Pipeline

UVM's Department of Sociology's study demonstrated that nearly 40% of incarcerated Vermonters had had at least one parent incarcerated during their youth and overall, 14.8% of them were homeless during their youth and another 23.3% were in foster care.

1 in 17 Children have an incarcerated parent in VT. Many lose custody of their children as a result of being incarcerated. Families are the hidden victims of incarceration and we are recreating the cycles present in the UVM study by continuing to invest in prisons.

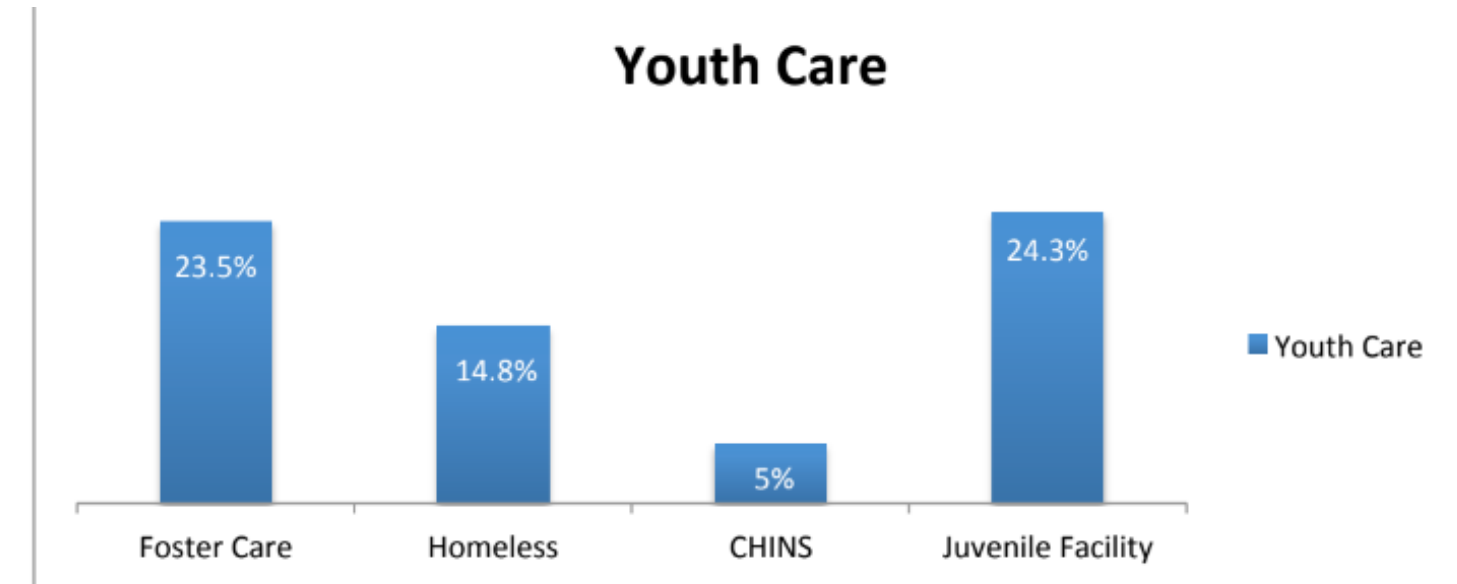


Figure 17: Youth Care

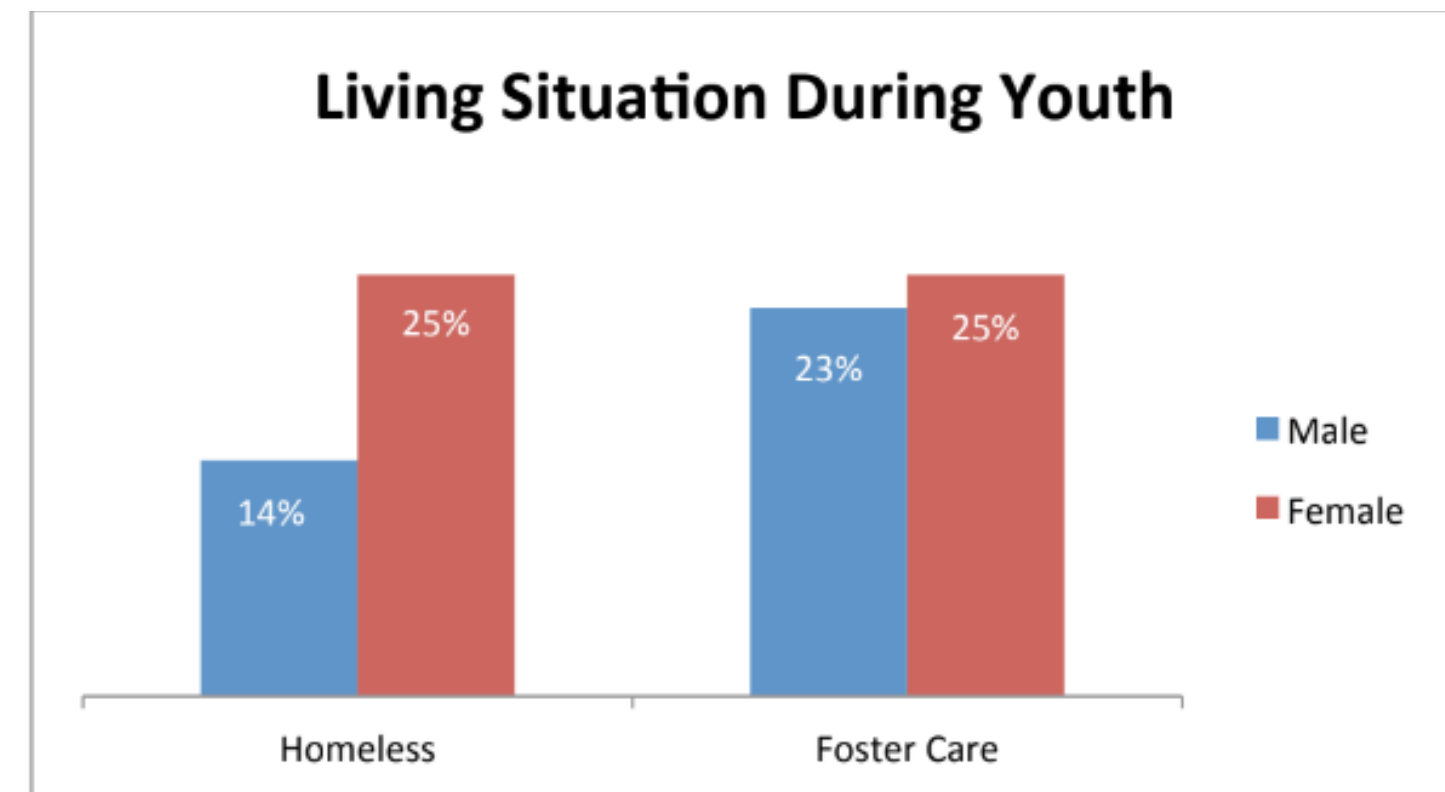


Figure 18: Living Situation During Youth

# FUND COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

## 01

### Community Justice Centers

The CJC's across the state provide many meaningful programs like COSAs, court diversion, reparative panels, transitional housing, youth substance abuse safety programs pretrial and reentry services, community conflict support, and more.

## 03

### Peer Support & Case Management

Turning Point, Life Interventions Team, F.A.C.T program through Pathways, Howard Center, Samaritan House and Peer Respite all offer services that address the social issues that cause incarceration.

## 02

### Supportive/Transitional Housing

We need to create more housing-first model options and expand already existing ones like: Dismas House, Jenna's Promise, Vermont foundation of recovery sober homes, ANEW place, Serenity House, Valley Vista.

*Passing the prison moratorium (H.445) would give us five years to think about what path is best to move forward with, and the alternatives to incarceration working group (H.438) would help us explore new systems*