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First Nations Justice Statistics in Canada

Focus on 2005 – 2006 Report

- A total of 232,800 Canadian adults were involved in investigative custody during the year
- 153,000 individuals were placed under direct supervision of Correctional Services Canada
- 33,440 adults were incarcerated in both Federal and Provincial/Territorial prisons

First Nations Behind Bars 2007 – 2008: A Snapshot

Whilst comprising approximately 8% of the adult population in Saskatchewan **First Nations account for 80% of all prison male inmates and 87% of all female inmates.**

In Manitoba whilst comprising 9% of the adult population, **First Nations make up 69% of all male inmates and 83% of all female inmates.**

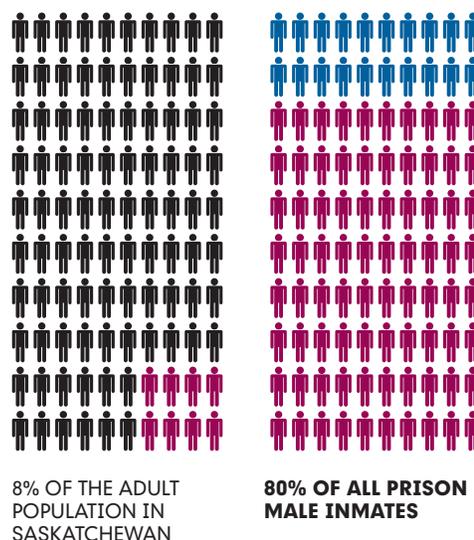
A similar picture prevails in Alberta the most affluent province in Canada with a First Nations incarceration rate 11 times greater than non-Aboriginal.

Ontario and BC also experience high over-representation of First Nations compared to the non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Correctional Services Canada has raised the alarm predicting future growth in the offender population of First Nations for 2014 – 2015.

Statistics Canada predictions indicate that First Nations incarcerations will rise by 2017 due to amendments to the Criminal Code and mandatory sentencing provisions imposed by the Federal Government.

The high cost of incarcerating Native Canadians represents a large proportion of the \$10 billion of Justice Expenditures for 2006.



**\$95,000 per male inmate per year and;
\$150,000 per female inmate**

These unpalatable statistics show more First Nations are entrenched in the Justice System than in Post Secondary Education in Canada

Using 2% inflation rate × six years to 2012 would add another \$1.2 billion to above Justice Department costs.

This represents a enormous on-going negative cost impact if solutions required to effect change are not addressed by Provincial/Territorial and Federal Governments.

Saskatchewan, the one province with a projected budget surplus for 2012, has the resources to implement positive change for First Nations, a current blot on their resource rich landscape.

Low levels of education, poor literacy and high unemployment are all common problems faced by Manitoba, British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario with the highest First Nations population base.

A focused policy by each jurisdiction to change negative funding to positive funding could reap substantial benefits for First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as well as the Canadian economy.

This approach heralded successful focus in New Zealand through the late nineties and early millennium years; **reducing negative funding and investing in positive action that had a huge beneficial impact on New Zealand's Indigenous Maori population**, which is approximately the same size as First Nations in Canada.

As a result, Maori participation in Post Secondary Education was several times higher than involvement in the New Zealand Justice System a stark contrast to the situation in Canada with the reduction in the unemployment rate from the high 20's to single digit numbers.

New Zealand's *Closing the Gaps* policy exceeded its objectives, officially ending this initiative in 2006!

For statistics refer to: <http://www.prisonjustice.ca/politics>