

Disparities in Tribal Youth Incarceration

Tribal Youth Incarcerated 3X More Often Than White Youth

Tribal youth¹ were more than three times as likely to be detained or committed in juvenile facilities as their white peers, according to nationwide data collected in October 2019 and recently released. In 2010, Tribal youth's incarceration rate was 2.9 times as high as their white peers. In 2019, that ratio grew to 3.3, a 14% increase.²

There are 11 states with at least 8,000 Tribal youths,³ and Tribal youth are more likely to be in custody than white youth in all but two of these states: New Mexico and Texas.

Juvenile facilities, including 1,510 detention centers, residential treatment centers, group homes, and youth prisons⁴ held 36,479 youths as of October 2019. (These data do not include the 653 people under 18 in prisons at year-end 2019⁵ or the estimated 2,900 people under 18 in jails at midyear 2019.⁶) Between 2010 and 2019, juvenile placements fell by 48%. During these years, white youth placements declined faster than Tribal youth placements (48% vs. 39%), resulting in the growth of an already significant disparity.

Nationally, the youth placement rate was 114 per 100,000. The Tribal youth placement rate was 236 per 100,000, compared to the white youth placement rate of 72 per 100,000.

In the 11 states with at least 8,000 Tribal youths, disparities grew by more than 10% in four states and decreased by at least 10% in six states.

- In seven states, Tribal youth are at least three times more likely to be held in placement as are white youth: Minnesota, North Carolina, South Dakota, California, Washington state, Montana, and Alaska.
- North Carolina and California have seen their racial disparity more than double.
- Three states decreased their racial disparity by at least one-quarter: Montana, Texas, and New Mexico.

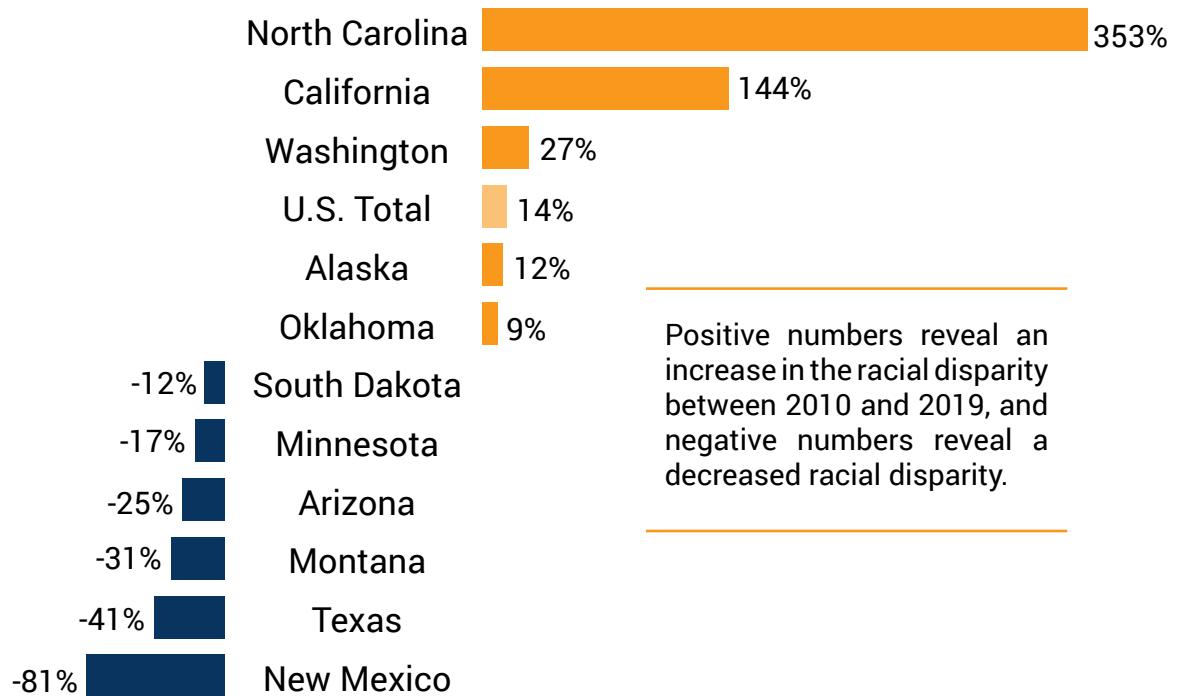
Tribal/White Youth Placement Rate per 100,000 (2019)

State	Tribal Rate	White Rate	T/W Disparity
Alaska	693	219	3.2
Arizona	101	62	1.6
California	212	48	4.4
Minnesota	852	73	11.7
Montana	332	100	3.3
New Mexico	62	277	0.2
North Carolina	296	37	8.0
Oklahoma	105	53	2.0
South Dakota	486	109	4.5
Texas	34	74	0.5
Washington	257	60	4.3
U.S. Total	236	72	3.3

The table above and the figure on page 2 are limited to the 11 states with at least 8,000 Tribal youths between 10- and 17-years old.

Numbers in the last column reveal the extent to which Tribal youth are more likely to be incarcerated than white youth. For example, in Alaska, Tribal youth are 3.2 times more likely to be held in a juvenile facility than their white peers. Numbers less than one reveal white youth are more likely than Tribal youth to be held in that state.

Change in Tribal/White Placement Disparity; 2010 vs. 2019



- 1 For the purposes of this fact sheet, all "Tribal youth" are by definition non-Hispanic/Latinx. (The underlying dataset labels them as American Indian.) See: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Puzanchera, C., & Kang, W. (2021). *Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement, Glossary*. National Center for Juvenile Justice. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp/asp/glossary.asp#Race>. There are roughly 620,000 American Indian youths in the United States, 52% of whom are not Latinx. American Indian youth who claim Latinx ethnicity are included only among the Latinx/Hispanic data; there is no option available to review disparities for all 620,000 American Indian youths in a comprehensive category.
- 2 Most data in this report are derived from Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Puzanchera, C., & Kang, W. (2021). *Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement*. National Center for Juvenile Justice. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp/>
- 3 Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2020). *Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2019*. National Center for Juvenile Justice. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>
- 4 Puzanchera, C., Hockenberry, S., Sladky, T.J., and Kang, W. (2020). *Juvenile Residential Facility Census Databook*. National Center for Juvenile Justice. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/jrfcdb/>
- 5 Carson, E.A. (2020). *Prisoners in 2019*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 25115. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/p19.pdf>
- 6 Zeng, Z. and Minton, T. (2021). *Jail Inmates in 2019*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 255608. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ji19.pdf>

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