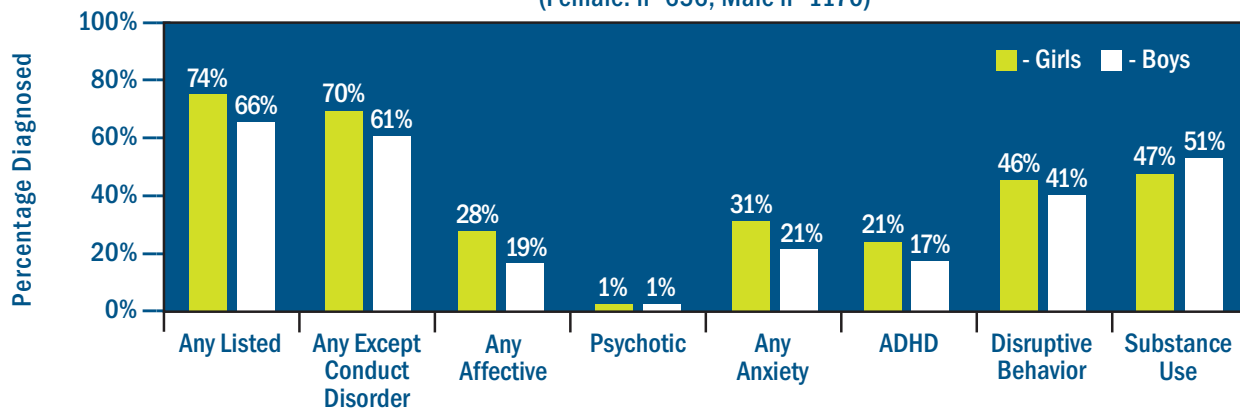




Gender Differences in Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders Among Juvenile Justice Involved Youth

The number of adolescent girls involved with the juvenile justice system has increased dramatically over the past decade. The number of girls arrested in the United States increased by 45 percent, while the number of boys arrested decreased by almost 10 percent (ABA, 2001; Snyder, 2001). Available research suggests that a majority of these girls are more likely than boys to be diagnosed with more than one disorder, particularly a mental health disorder with a co-occurring substance use disorder. Despite this trend, the juvenile justice system continues to operate as a system predominately designed for boys, and does not adequately address the unique needs of girls. In the face of their growing numbers and significant health needs, a number of system improvements (such as research, training, and gender-specific services) will be necessary to effectively identify and respond to justice-involved girls.

Percentage of Psychiatric Diagnosis by Gender
(Female: n=656; Male n=1170)*



* Epidemiological study conducted in Cook County, Illinois by Teplin, L.A., Abram, K.M., McClelland, G.M., Dulcan, M.K., & Mericle, A.A. (2002). Psychiatric disorders in youth in juvenile detention. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 59 (12), 1133-1143.

Source: Adapted by TASC from National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, *Research and Program Briefs: Adolescent Girls with Mental Health Disorders Involved With the Juvenile Justice System*, July 2003. Available online at http://www.ncmhjj.com/pdfs/Adol_girls.pdf

Prepared by TASC, Inc. TASC is an independent, statewide, nonprofit agency that provides case management for clients who are mandated or referred to substance abuse treatment by public systems (e.g. corrections, criminal justice, child welfare, TANF). TASC serves approximately 30,000 clients in Illinois each year. For more information visit www.tasc.org.

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