

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Importance	Both violent crimes and incarceration have negative effects on the community and the individual. The negative effects of violent crimes vary from a victim experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to residents of a community feeling unsafe. ¹ Incarceration has both direct and indirect effects not only on the individual who is incarcerated but their families, their loved ones, and their communities. ²
Definitions	<p><u>Violent Crime:</u> Aggravated assault, forcible rape, robbery, or homicide.</p> <p><u>2011 Public Safety Realignment:</u> California legislation was implemented October 1, 2011 to alleviate overcrowding in California State Prisons to 137.5% of the prisons' design capacity, per Supreme Court ruling (Brown v. Plata), through various methods including <u>AB 109</u>, which allows non-violent, non-serious, and non-sex offenders to serve their sentences in county jails instead of state prisons.^{3,4}</p>

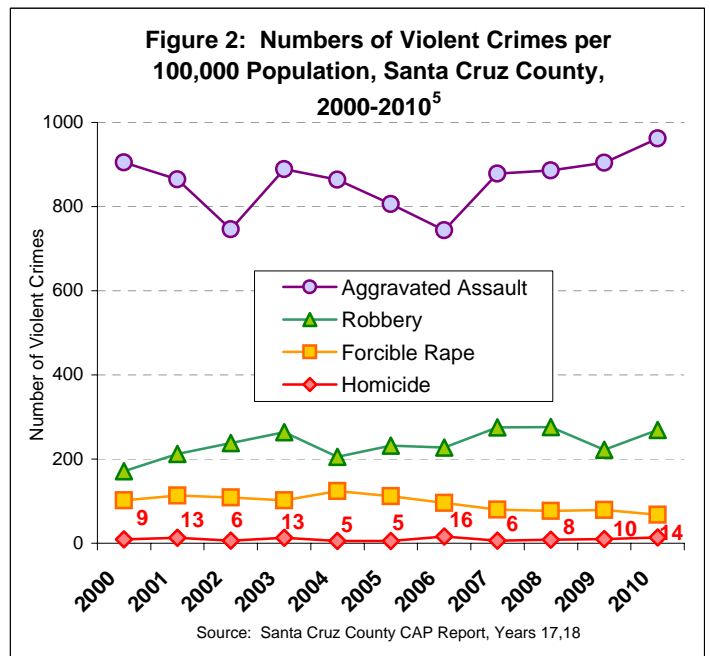
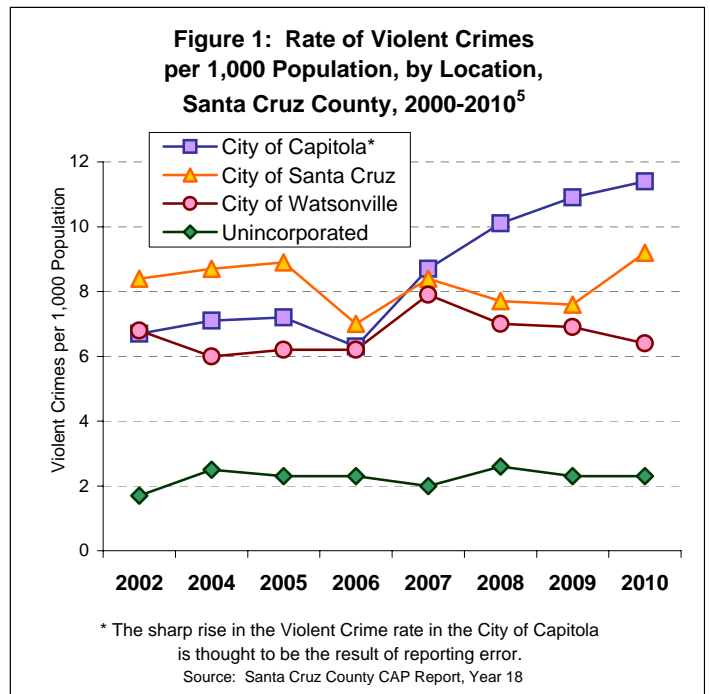
VIOLENT CRIME RATE

“High levels of violent crime compromise physical safety and psychological well-being. Crime rates can also deter residents from pursuing healthy behaviors such as exercising out-of-doors. Additionally, some evidence indicates that increased stress levels may contribute to obesity prevalence, even after controlling for diet and physical activity levels.”¹

The crime rate in Santa Cruz County in 2009 was 36.7 per 1,000 population, and the violent crime rate was 5.0 per 1,000 population.⁵ The City of Capitola recently investigated the sharp rise in their violent crime rate, and it is thought to be a reporting error. Future reported rates will reflect more accurate reporting, starting with 2011 data (Figure 1).⁵

In 2011, 65.2% of surveyed Santa Cruz County residents reported feeling safe in their neighborhood, varying from a low of 58.9% in South County to a significantly higher proportion, 86.1%, in San Lorenzo Valley.⁵ Additionally, in 2011, 36.1% of Santa Cruz County residents reported being "very concerned" about crime, varying from a low of 21.6% in San Lorenzo Valley residents to a significantly higher proportion, 46.5%, among South County residents.⁵ (South County refers to a set of zip codes – 95003, 95019, 95076, and 95077 – or a set of places – Watsonville, Aptos, Corralitos, Freedom, La Selva, and Pajaro.)

Between 2007 and 2009 the rate of violent crimes in Santa Cruz County averaged 494 per 100,000 population, while the rate in California averaged 500 per 100,000 population.¹



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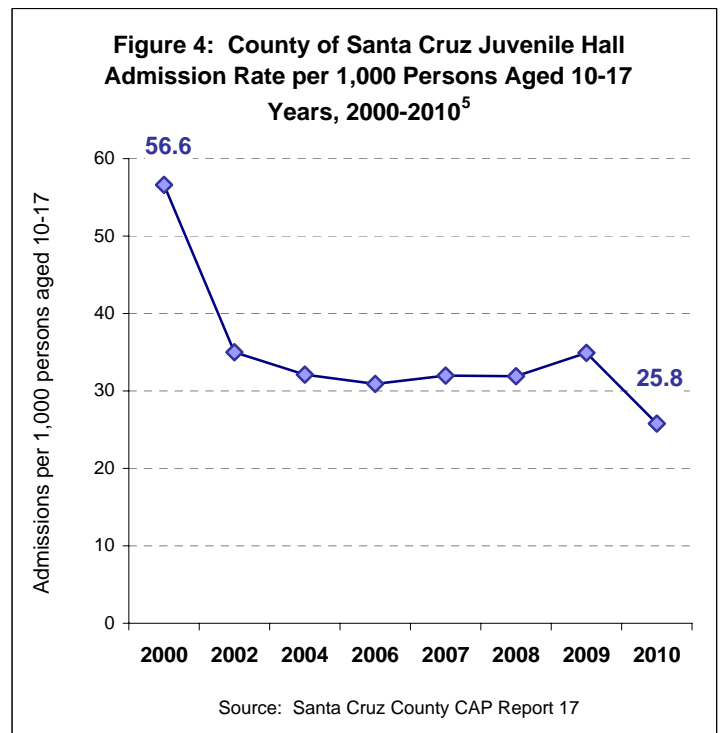
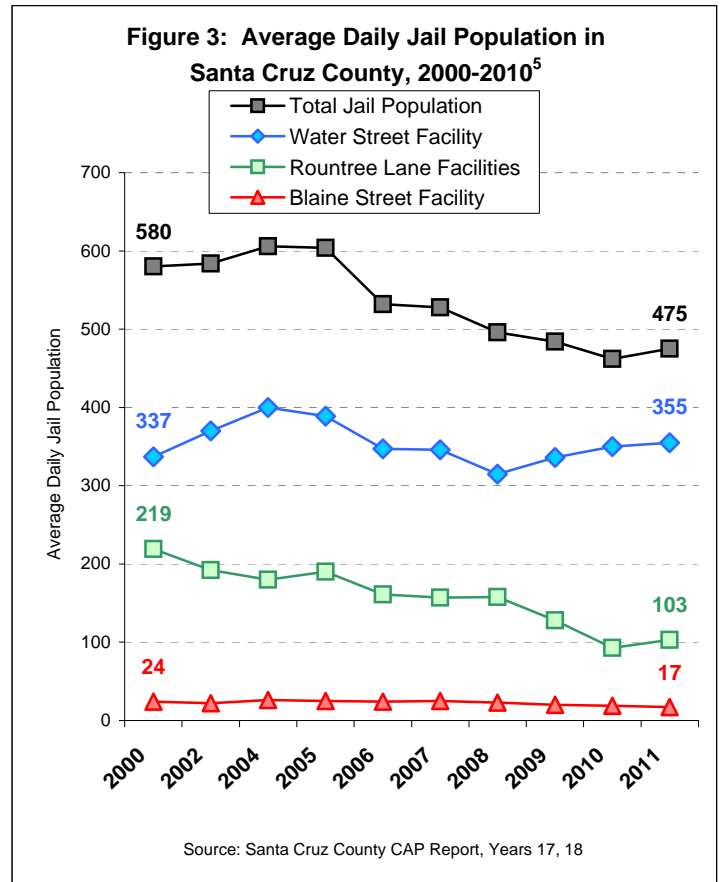
In Santa Cruz County, the most common reported violent crime is aggravated assault, with between 744 and 962 reports annually between 2002 and 2010.⁵ The number of aggravated assault reports is followed distantly by robbery, forcible rape, and homicide in that order (Figure 2).⁵

INCARCERATION

While incarceration may have direct effects on the health of an individual, “it is more likely to indirectly affect health by shaping employment, income, and marital trajectories.”² Studies have shown that people who have been incarcerated develop a range of behaviors that set them apart from the rest of society. These behaviors interfere with community adjustment and personal recovery after release.² Because certain segments of the population are at a higher risk for incarceration, those segments are disproportionately affected by the negative health effects associated with incarceration, in Santa Cruz County as well as elsewhere.

In total, the number of inmates in Santa Cruz County jails has decreased from 8,324 in 2002 to 7,674 in 2011.⁵ There are three facilities that house incarcerated adults in Santa Cruz County: Main Jail on Water Street, Rountree Men's Medium Security Facility, and Blaine Street Women's Facility.⁷ Black/African American inmates are over-represented in the jails compared to the entire population of Santa Cruz County. The percentage of Black inmates was five times the percentage of Blacks in the general population.^{5, 6}

The Santa Cruz County Juvenile Hall population is small compared to other jurisdictions throughout the nation. Juvenile Hall admissions decreased from 56.6 per 1,000 population in 2000 to 22.0 per 1,000 population in 2011 (Figure 4).⁵ This is likely attributable to changes initiated in 1997 when alternatives to incarceration, such as house arrest and job placements, were made available.⁸



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2011 Public Safety Realignment and AB 109

On October 1, 2011, as part of the 2011 Public Safety Realignment, AB 109 was put into effect to alleviate overcrowding in the state prison system. AB 109 allows non-violent, non-serious, non-sex offenders to serve their sentences in the county jail instead of a state prison.³ The Santa Cruz County Community Corrections Partnership is working with the County Sheriff's Office to mitigate the local effects of AB 109, such as crowding in jails and potential effects on public safety.⁹

<p>Primary Prevention Activities</p>	<p>Neighborhood Watch: A program utilized in neighborhoods throughout the nation, usually in cooperation with local law enforcement, that encourages residents to report suspicious or potentially criminal behavior to police or a neighborhood coordinator. Neighborhoods may also work together to solve problems and/or encourage residents to mark personal property with personal identifiers.</p>	
<p>Helpful Websites</p>	<p>2-1-1</p>	<p>http://211bayarea.org/santa-cruz/</p>
<p>Sources</p>	<p>(1) University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. <i>County Health Rankings 2012</i>. http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/.</p> <p>(2) London, Andrew, and Myers, Nancy. "Race, Incarceration and Health: a Life-Course Approach." <i>Research on Aging</i> 28(3):409-422, May 2006. http://roa.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/3/409.</p> <p>(3) California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. "Information Sheet: 2011 Public Safety Realignment." July 15, 2011. Accessed August 2012. http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/About_CDCCR/docs/Realignment-Fact-Sheet.pdf.</p> <p>(4) Brown v. Plata 563 U.S. (2011). http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/10pdf/09-1233.pdf. 22 August 2012.</p> <p>(5) Applied Survey Research. <i>Community Assessment Project, Santa Cruz County 2011/12, Years 17 and 18</i>. United Way of Santa Cruz, 2011. Accessed August 2012. http://www.santacruzcountycap.org and http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/projects_database/quality-of-life/santa-cruz-county-community-assessment-project-cap.html.</p> <p>(6) U.S. Census Bureau. Populations Estimate. County Characteristics: Vintage 2011. Spreadsheet CC-EST2011-6RACE-06. August 2012. http://www.census.gov/popest/data/counties/asrh/2011/index.html.</p> <p>(7) <i>Santa Cruz County Grand Jury 2011-2012 Final Report</i>. "Jails and Juvenile Hall Inspection Report: Status of Inmate Management in Santa Cruz County." Accessed August 2012. http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/grandjury/GJ2012_final/Jails_And_Juvenile_Hall_Inspection_Report.pdf.</p> <p>(8) Santa Cruz County Probation. Santa Cruz Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. 2008. Accessed August 2012. http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/prb/index.asp.</p> <p>(9) Executive Committee of the Santa Cruz County Community Corrections Partnership. <i>Santa Cruz County Public Safety Realignment and Post Release Community Supervision 2011 Implementation Plan</i>. October 4, 2011. Accessed August 2012. http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/prb/RealignmentPlan.pdf.</p>	