

# Prisoner Reentry 101: National Trends and Challenges



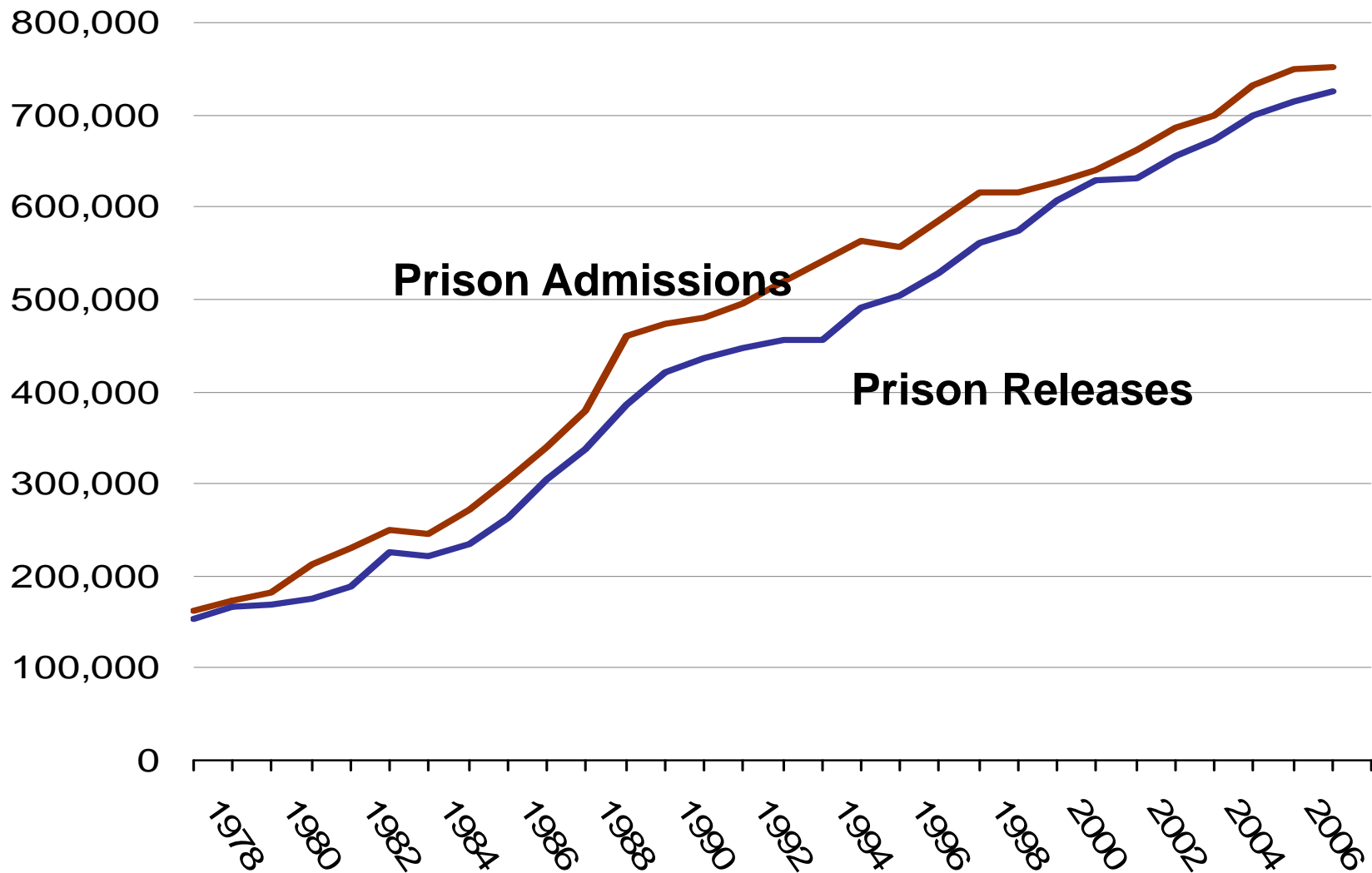
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**December 8, 2011**

**JOHN  
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OF  
CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE

# More People are Leaving Prison

## More than 700,000 Released in 2006

Sentenced Prisoners Admitted and Released from Federal and State Prison, 1977-2006





# Costs Are High

## Public Safety Risks

- 67% rearrested within 3 years (30% within 6 months)
- 47% reconvicted for new crime within 3 years
- 25% reincarcerated for new crime within 3 years

## Fiscal Implications

- \$52B on corrections in 2008 - up from \$9B in 1982

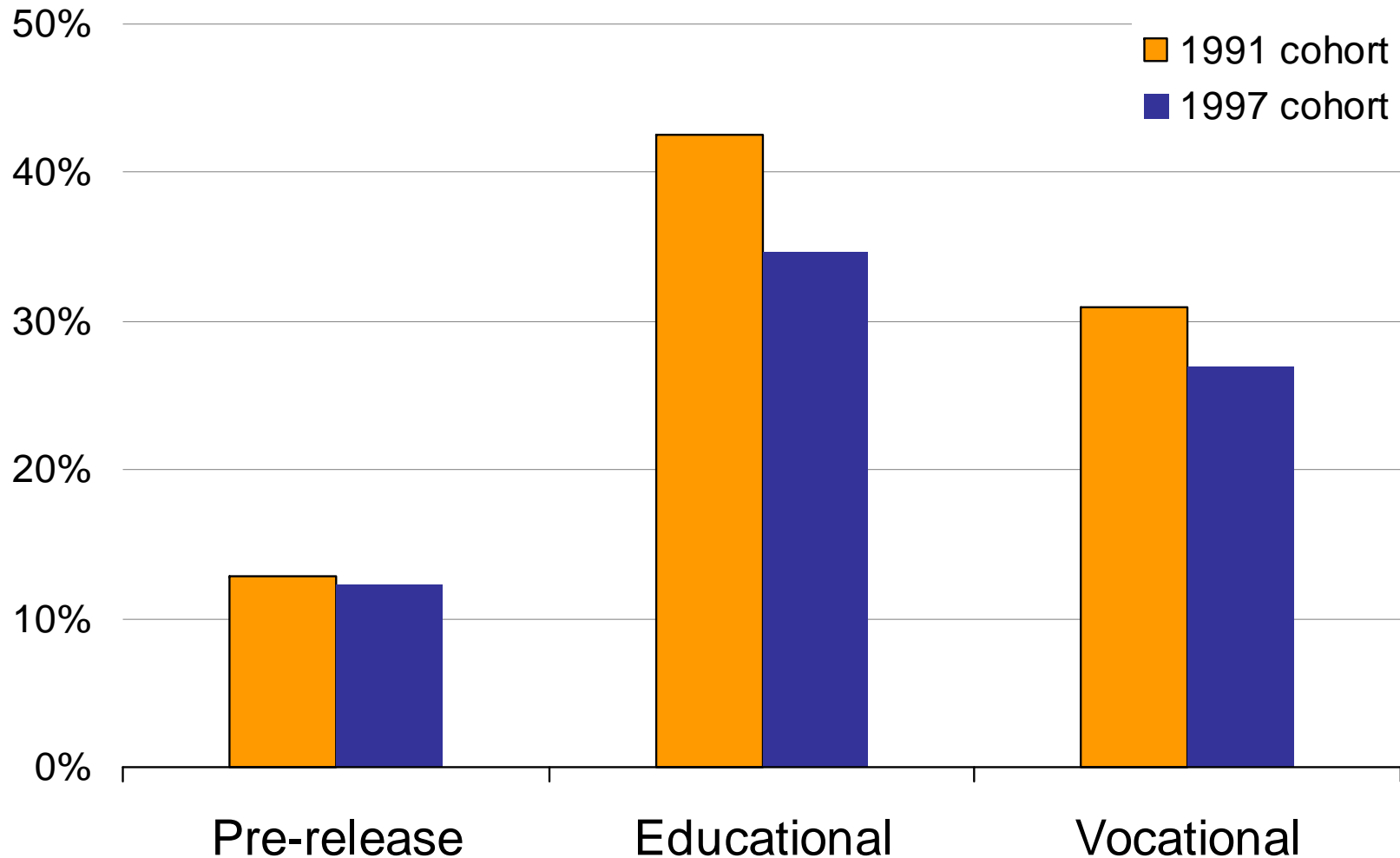
## Social Costs

- public health, homelessness, disenfranchisement, social capital

# Prisoners are Less Prepared for Reentry

## Prison Program Participation Rates are Down

Prisoners to be Released in the Next 12 Months: Percent Participating in Prison Programs, 1991 and 1997



Source: J.P. Lynch and W.J. Sabol, *Prisoner Reentry in Perspective*. Urban Institute Crime Policy Report, September 2001.



# Moment of Release

- **Pivotal transition period**
- **Little systematic attention to release processes**
- **Opportunities**
  - time of release
  - identification
  - reporting instructions
  - connect to treatment, job, parole officer, family, housing



# Diminished Capacity to Support Reentry Post-Release Supervision

- Most released to supervision (80%)
  - 798,202 on parole, up from 220,000 in 1980
- Resources have not kept pace
  - caseloads up (70:1)
  - average one or two 15 minutes meetings a month



# Parole Violations

- **Large numbers of parolees return to prison for violations**
  - Parole violators account for 34% of new prison admissions up from 18% in 1980
  - 1/3 for new convictions, 2/3 for technical violations
- **Difference in Parole Success Rates**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> releases = 64% success
  - Re-releases = 21% success



# Challenges for Reentry

**Substance Abuse**

**Health (Physical and Mental)**

**Employment**

**Housing**

- high prevalence of problem
- some in-prison intervention
- evidence of intervention effectiveness
- few linkages to aftercare





# **Most Prisoners Have History of Substance Abuse**

- **74% of “soon-to-be-released” prisoners have substance abuse problem**
- **18% participate in formal treatment in-prison**
- **Studies show treatment is a cost-effective way to reduce both drug use and criminal activity**



# High Rates of Infectious Disease and Mental Illness among State Prisoners

## Public health opportunity

- **2-3% are HIV+/AIDS**
  - 5-7 times greater than US population
- **18% are infected with hepatitis C**
  - 9-10 times greater than US population
- **8-16% have serious mental health disorder**
  - 2-4 times higher than US population



# Returning Prisoners Have Difficulty Finding Employment

- Having a job is associated with lower rates of reoffending
- Job training and placement programs can help
  - Improve the odds of getting a job and lower recidivism
- Yet
  - Insufficient job training and work opportunities in prison
  - Most returning prisoners unemployed

A photograph of classical stone columns, likely from a government building, is positioned in the top-left corner of the slide. The columns are white and have a fluted design. The background of the slide is black, and the title text is white.

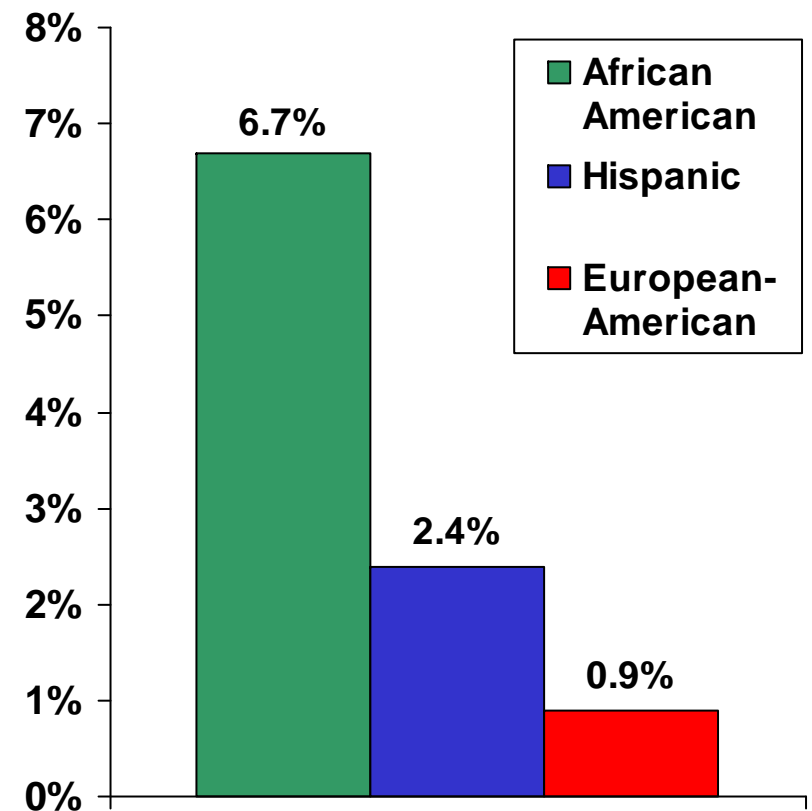
# Housing is an Immediate Barrier

- **Private housing market challenges include money, time, and references**
- **Public housing challenges include federal laws, which bar certain individuals**
- **Risk of homelessness**

# Implications for Families

- **Over 1.7 million children with incarcerated parents (prison only)**
- **Majority under 10 years old**
- **Disproportionate impact on children of color**
- **Consequences for**
  - child care, custody and parental rights
  - child development and child welfare
  - family violence

**Minor Children with Incarcerated Parents, 2007**



Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children*. August 2008.



# Implications for Communities

## Concentrations

Returning prisoners concentrated in few neighborhoods

## Brooklyn example

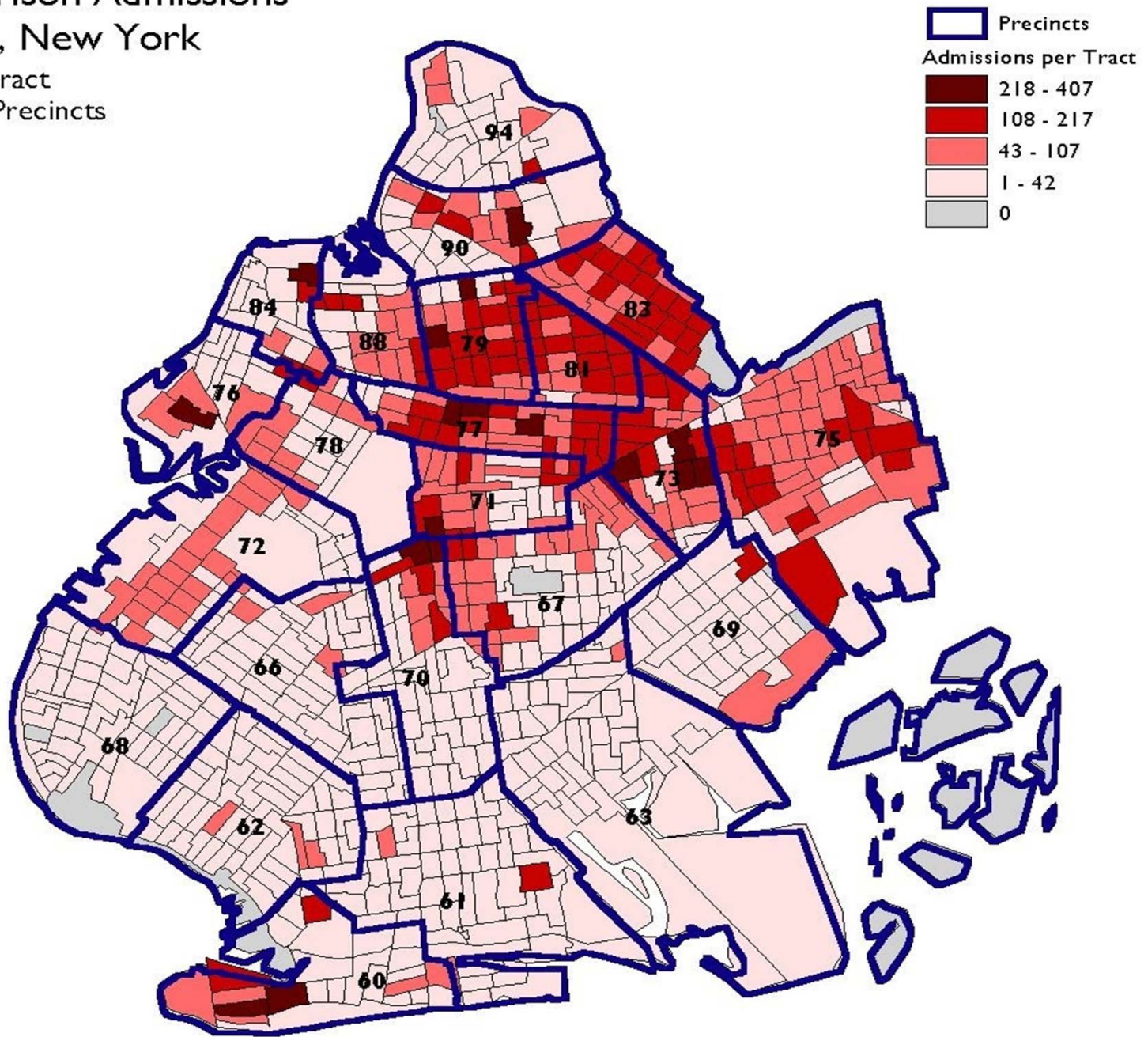
- 1 out of 8 parenting-age males is admitted to jail or prison in a single year in some neighborhoods
- 11% of the city blocks in Brooklyn account for 20% of the population but 50% of the parolees

## Social Capital

- Increased incarceration destabilizes social networks, and leads to increases in crime?

# Jail and Prison Admissions Brooklyn, New York

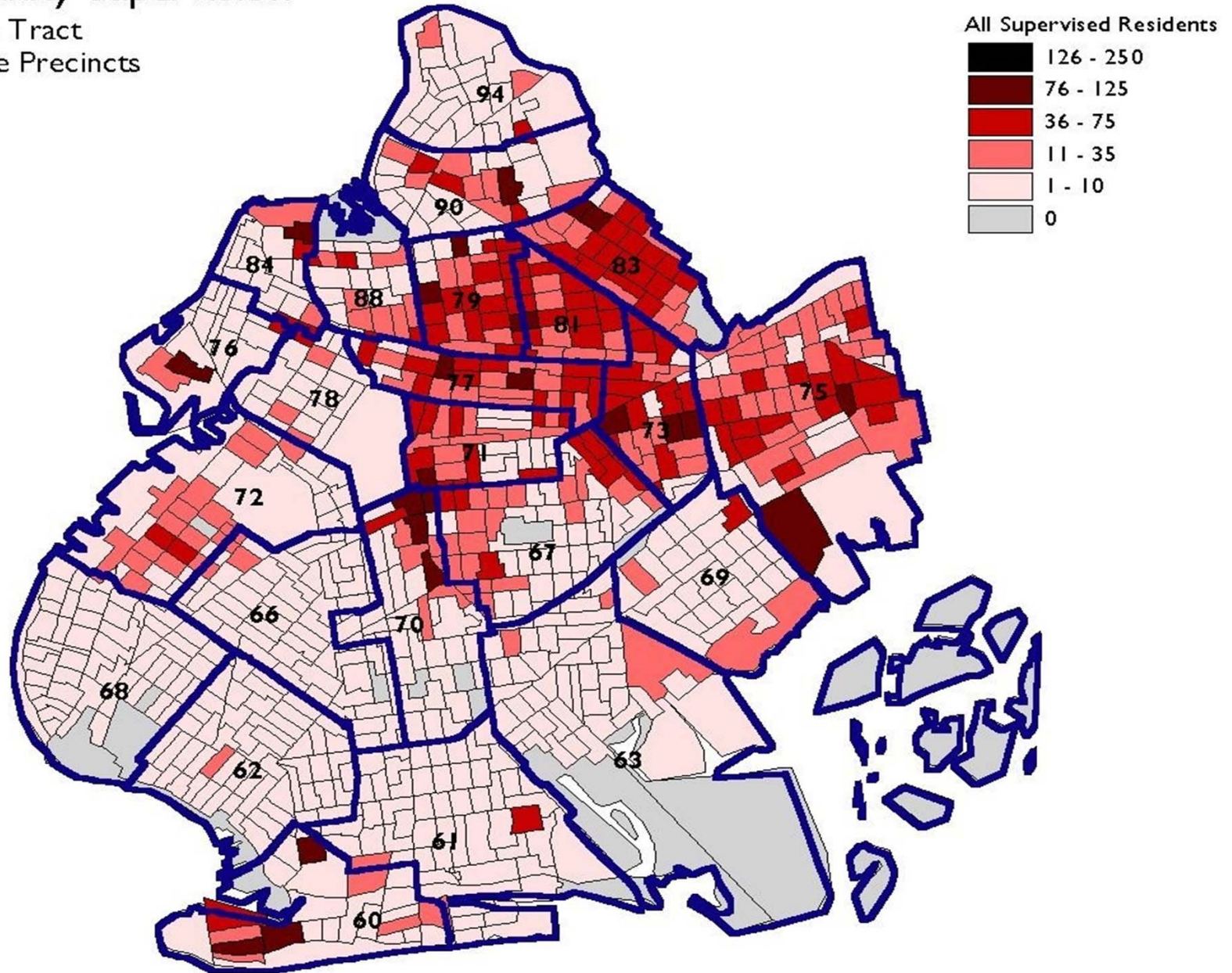
by Census Tract  
with Police Precincts



Source: Justice Mapping Center

# Community Supervision

by Census Tract  
with Police Precincts



Source: Justice Mapping Center





# Key Points about Prisoner Reentry

- More people are leaving prison
- Returning prisoners are less prepared for reentry
- Diminished capacity to support reentry
- Significant challenges facing returning prisoners
- Consequences for communities and families