

# Los Angeles County Education Based Incarceration Survey

January 11, 2023

Conducted by



**SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION**

In Collaboration with



**CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



**Loyola  
Marymount  
University**



Psychology Applied  
Research Center



Imoyase Community  
Support Services

## **Acknowledgments**

*This report would not be possible without the volunteer data collection and research technical support of faculty and students at Loyola Marymount University, data management and collection support of researchers at the Psychology Applied Research Center at Loyola Marymount University and Imoyase Community Support Services, data collection support from the Civilian Oversight Commission staff, the excellent coordination efforts of the Los Angeles County Commission Services staff, and Los Angeles County Sheriff Department Religious & Volunteer Services, Custody Clearances personnel.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
Introduction.....	3
Survey Methods.....	4
Results.....	7
Summary of Key Findings.....	21
Relevant Literature Contextualizing LA County Jail Survey Findings.....	22
References.....	24

## INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department has made educational programs a core component of incarceration in the jail facilities it administers. Historically, those programs included not only a GED program and high school, but also vocational programs, life skills programs, and personal growth or "12 step" programs. The Sheriff's Department has celebrated these programs for their potential to create "reduced rates of recidivism, increased employability, and family reunification." Indeed, those in custody who stand to gain the most from educational programs are a) people of color, b) under-educated, c) impacted by unresolved past trauma, d) likely to have been previously suspended, and e) likely to have dropped out of school (LASD 2022; YLC 2016, Reese 2017). Additionally, the Sheriff's Department has said that educational programs have correlated with a "definite trend toward our jails becoming safer places" for people who are incarcerated there and those who work there.<sup>1</sup> However, the scale of the Sheriff's Department's educational programs diminished over the past few years, and it has been very difficult for the Sybil Brand Commission to obtain data to assess the number of people currently incarcerated who are eligible, enrolled, or actively participating in educational programming. But as the results of this survey show, there are significant opportunities to meet the needs and demands for educational programs inside the LA County jail facilities.

### Past and Current LASD Education Based Incarceration

LASD's *Education Based Incarceration Bureau* purpose is to provide in-custody education programs to people incarcerated in the jails. Historically, programs offered included vocational job training to education to life skill classes and even cognitive behavioral courses. (LASD 2013; LASD 2021) The Department's catalog of courses mirrors, to some degree, those offered in other programs around nation that offer high school equivalency, job development, personal development, certification programs, and literacy development (Wheeler 2022; Bazos and Hausman 2015; Johnson et al. 2013). However, the Sheriff's Department's website identifying 30 different programs offered at Men's Central Jail is out of date, greatly overstates program availability, and has not been updated since Department personnel acknowledged it was out of date in September 2022. All people incarcerated in the jails are not eligible for these programs, and all people who are eligible do not have access to these programs. Furthermore, the Sheriff's Department has not provided a registry of individuals who participate in the programs or whether it maintains evaluations of these programs or well-designed incentive structures, such as increased visitation access, good time credits, and sentence reduction. (Brazzell et al. 2009)

### Challenges to Educated Based Incarceration (EBI)

Perhaps the biggest obstacles to EBI, identified nationally, are a facility that does not recognize the importance of providing educational programs to people incarcerated in the jails, views the administrative burden of providing educational programming as too great, or views educational programming as contrary to a system of incarceration that is oriented around punishment. In the case of the LASD, these obstacles manifest as unsupportive detention staff, miscommunications between

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553\\_March2013-EBI\\_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf](https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553_March2013-EBI_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf)

programming staff & facility staff, and facility procedures interrupting class time (Reese 2017; Wheeler 2022). While leadership may be supportive of programming, this enthusiasm and support are not effectively communicated to and/or embraced by facility staff. Subsequently, challenges emerge such as external programming staff finding themselves delayed in their ability to enter the facility or having clearance challenges due to lack of notification of their arrival. Additionally, staff may impede participation in EBI by a) discouraging participation, b) succumbing to biases that certain people in custody are irredeemable, c) blocking access to programming to certain demographics etc. (Reese 2017).

A concern expressed by the Sheriff's Department to the Sybil Brand Commission is the lack of space and staffing to support EBI classes within the jails. LASD has cited inadequate staffing to permit for safe movement and management of people in custody to designated areas for classes.

## **Benefits of EBI**

EBI can have a positive impact. Alumni of EBI programs have an increased chance of finding employment, increased potential for a higher income, and are less likely to return to incarceration (Wheeler 2022; Bazos and Hausman 2015). When LASD established the EBI Bureau, in the first year of implementation, over 60% of those released from custody did not become re-incarcerated (2013). LASD's recidivism rate among those who took part in the programming and were then released, was 36.7% from 2011-2012, compared to the rate in the California Department of Corrections which was 63% during the same time period (LASD 2013). Additionally, in the past, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department has found a strong correlation between the reduction in force incidents in the jail system and the advent of the EBI programming, making the jails a safer place for incarcerated people and staff.<sup>2</sup>

There is a cost benefit to EBI as well. Bazos and Hausman (2015) investigated the cost-effectiveness of educating the incarcerated versus arresting more people as a way to prevent crime. They concluded that a \$1 million investment in education can potentially prevent 600 future crimes; that same amount dedicated to more arrests would prevent about 350 future crimes. On average, for every \$1 million invested in education, a state would save close to half a million in future costs. Governments can more effectively and efficiently address crime by investing in education.

## **SURVEY METHODS**

### **Background**

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors tasked The Sybil Brand Commission (SBC), with support from the Civilian Oversight Commission, with designing and implementing a survey to better understand the types of educational programming and services desired by those incarcerated in the LA County Jails. The SBC requested the support of several entities at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) and a community-based non-profit, Imoyase Community Services to assist with the development and implementation of the survey. In January 2022, The Sybil Brand Commission drafted the survey and by March 2022, LMU contracted with Gravic Inc. to develop a scannable survey instrument for administration within the jails.

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553\\_March2013-EBI\\_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf](https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553_March2013-EBI_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf)

**Approvals and Clearances**

The survey was reviewed by Los Angeles County Counsel who in February 2022 provided the opinion that Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was not required for this survey. The survey was reviewed by LMU’s Institutional Review Board. Because the data collected in this will not be disseminated (e.g., data will not be used to write and submit articles for publication based on its findings) and will be used by the LA County Board of Supervisor for program planning and development, the survey was not considered human subjects research and therefore did not require LMU IRB oversight. An exemption was thereby granted.

**Survey Design**

The 5-page survey included both closed ended and open-ended questions. The majority of questions, over 80, are related to courses and programs participants would be interested in while incarcerated. Twenty-seven questions asked participants about their attempts to gain admission into a class, their subsequent success enrolling in courses, and their evaluation of the courses usefulness if they did participate. Approximately 50 questions queried participants’ interest in additional courses, most of which were not yet offered in LA County Jails, such as relaxation (e.g., yoga and meditation), exercise classes (e.g., Zumba and Pilates), high school and college classes (e.g., history and psychology) and reentry classes (e.g., obtaining basic documents, self-expression, gang involvement, health education). For each of these, participants were asked to report their level of interest and, where relevant, the specific type of class they would like to see offered (e.g., cosmetology, truck driving, plumbing). The survey concluded with questions about who participants would like to receive reentry support and a demographic section to gather information related to things like age, race, gender identity, time and status while in custody, educational levels and disabilities.

The final sample size was 814 people in custody across all LA County jails. Table 3 presents the final sample size by jail.

**Table 3: Sample Size by Jail**

Jail	Sample Size	%
Men’s Central Jail	160	20%
Twin Towers	173	21%
CRDF	188	23%
NCCF	293	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection commenced in September 2022. Sybil Brand Commissioners, Civilian Oversight staff members, LMU Faculty and LMU students were cleared by the LA County Sheriff’s Office to enter the jails to conduct the surveys. All those administering surveys were trained in survey administration and were provided with an instruction sheet explaining data collecting procedures. In addition to six SBC Commissioners, a total 27 volunteers assisted with data collection. Surveys were collected in September and early October 2022 by teams of 3 to 7 people. Teams were assigned to collect surveys at all LA County

jails (CRDF, Men's Central, Twin Towers, and NCCF) until the minimum number of participants needed to maintain sampling fidelity was met. Each jail was surveyed between 3 and 5 times. On each occasion, surveyors went to different pre-determined randomly selected units within each jail. Given movement across modules within the jails, when participants were identified as having completed the survey previously, they were asked to not participate again.

LASD personnel within each unit were asked to make time available for participants to complete the survey without cost to their out of cell programming time. In the jail areas where possible, survey administration was completed in groups. Where open space was not an option and participants were in cells, surveyors worked individually with each participant at the entrance to their cell. For all administrations, at least one surveyor explained the purpose of the survey, read the consent statement and asked for participants to volunteer to participate. They were assured that there were no negative consequences for non-participation. In group administration, with guidance, participants completed their own survey forms. Where literacy levels posed a challenge, surveys were administered one on one reading the items and obtaining responses for each option. Surveys were also made available in Spanish for those who needed it.

### **Data Entry and Analysis**

A total of 814 surveys were collected. These were then scanned into PDF files, by jail site, in groups of 10 surveys at a time. These files were then uploaded into the Gravic software called Remark. This software created a data base that recorded each individual survey response and from what scanned file it came. It allowed for data cleaning by also including the image of the actual scanned document for use in data verification and quality control. Once the data was cleaned it was downloaded into a statistics software program, SPSS, where scales and recoded data were created.

Open ended qualitative responses from each survey were manually entered into SPSS.

### **Inferential Analysis**

After completing basic descriptive analyses (e.g., frequencies, means, ranges), we examined (*post hoc*) if jail, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and age influenced interest in classes, ability to enroll, and overall satisfaction when enrolled. For inferential analysis, we calculated course interest by assigning a '1' to individuals interested in at least one course and a '0' to those not interested in any classes. Similarly, we calculated class access by assigning a '1' to respondents who enrolled in at least one class and a '0' to individuals who did not get into a course. We assessed if there were differences in both course interest and course access by jail using generalized linear models (GLM). To account for the possible influence of jail on these variables when testing for differences by demographic group, we used a multilevel GLM that controlled for respondent location. Similarly, when we tested for differences in course satisfaction, we used an ANOVA for between jail comparisons and multilevel linear models (MLM) that controlled for jail when comparing satisfaction by demographic group. Tukey's HSD *post hoc* test was used for all statistical models to assess for differences between groups.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

Thematic analysis was used to identify and quantify themes from responses to open-ended survey items. Examples of open-ended questions included participant specification of types of vocational classes,

classes participants would like to see offered that were not included in the list of potential classes, other things people wanted to share about classes, programming, or services.

## RESULTS

### Demographics

Each respondent provided demographic data related to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and age

The racial distribution of respondents presented below closely mirrored actual LASD demographics of people in custody. Respondent demographics included:

- 54% Latinx
- 29% African American/Black
- 15% White
- 5% Asian American Pacific Islander American
- 5% American Indian Alaska Native
- 5% Other

Respondents had the opportunity to provide more than one racial identity—11% were either bi or multiracial.

In term of gender identity, most respondents were male. Specifically,

- 76% identified as male
- 22% identified as female
- 2% identified as two spirit
- 1% were unsure
- 1% refused to answer

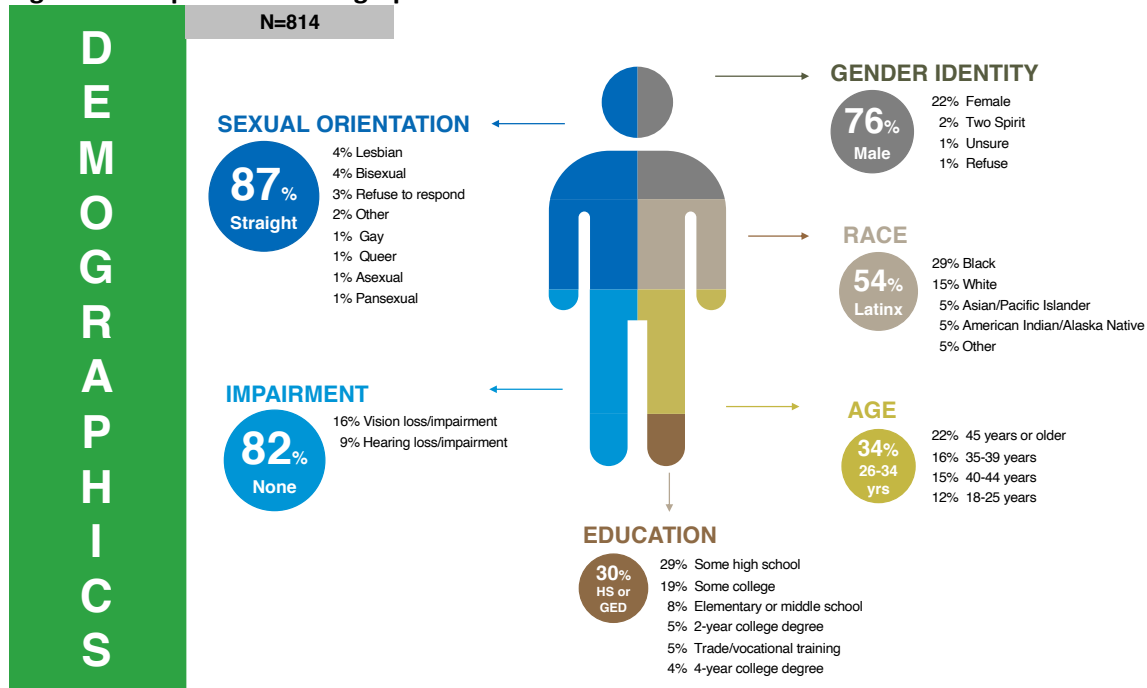
The majority of the sample identified their sexual orientation as straight (87%). LGBTQ+ sexual orientations included: lesbian (4%), bisexual (4%), gay (1%), queer (1%), asexual (1%), and pansexual (1%). Two percent identified as other, and 3% refused to answer.

The sample also included a broad representation of age groups.

- 12% 18-25-year-olds.
- 34% 26–34-year-old
- 16% 35-39-year-olds
- 15% 40-44-year-olds
- 22% 45 years and older

These and additional respondent demographics are presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Respondent Demographics**



Respondents also provided information about their time in custody (ten months, on average), status in jail, remaining jail time, pre-custody employment. Data on respondent background information are presented in Figure 2. There was considerable diversity in the resulting participant sample increasing the likelihood that the findings are representative of a cross section of the jail population.

Most respondents were either awaiting trial (32%) or were unsure of their jail status (29%) when surveyed. Twelve percent had been sentenced to state prison, 8% were partially sentenced, 2% had their case suspended and were awaiting placement in a mental health facility, and 2% had their parole revoked.

Nearly a third were unsure about their remaining jail time (31%). The remaining had between one month or less (27%) and three or more years (2%)—2-6 months (25%), 7-12 months (7%), 1-2 years (5%), 2-3 years (3%).

Before custody, 47% of the respondents were employed, 31% were unemployed, 25% were caring for family members, 12% were in school, 7% were in vocational training, and 6% were in state prison.



**Figure 2: Additional Participant Background Information**

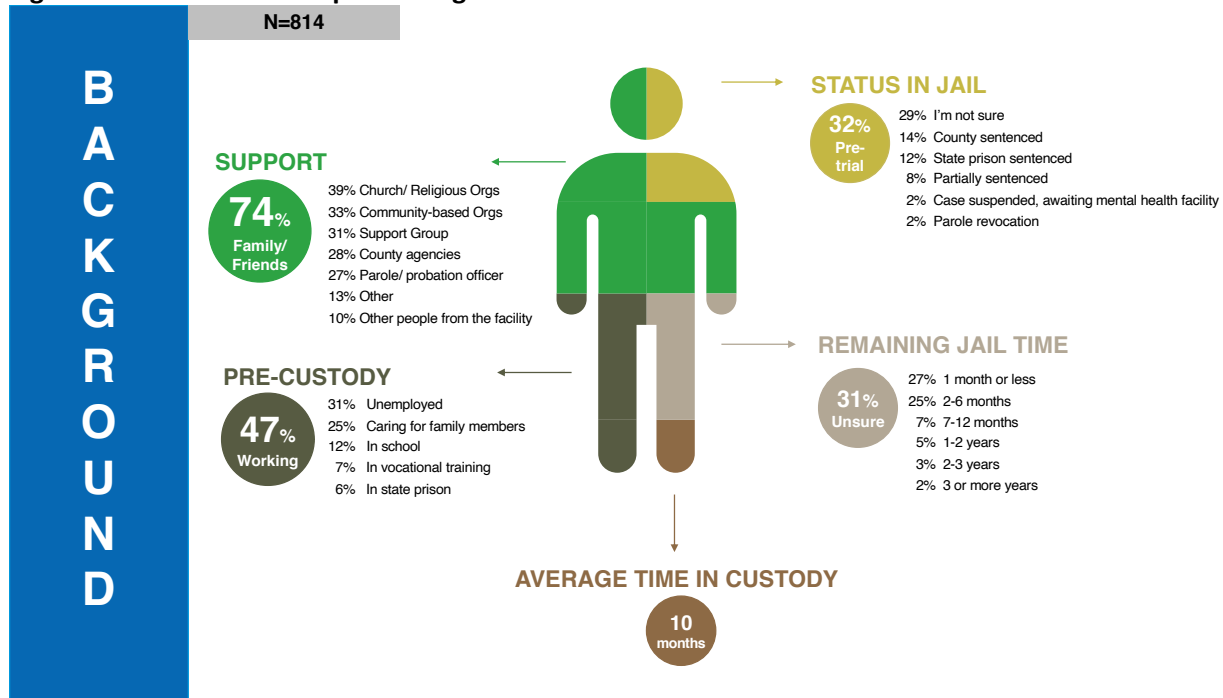
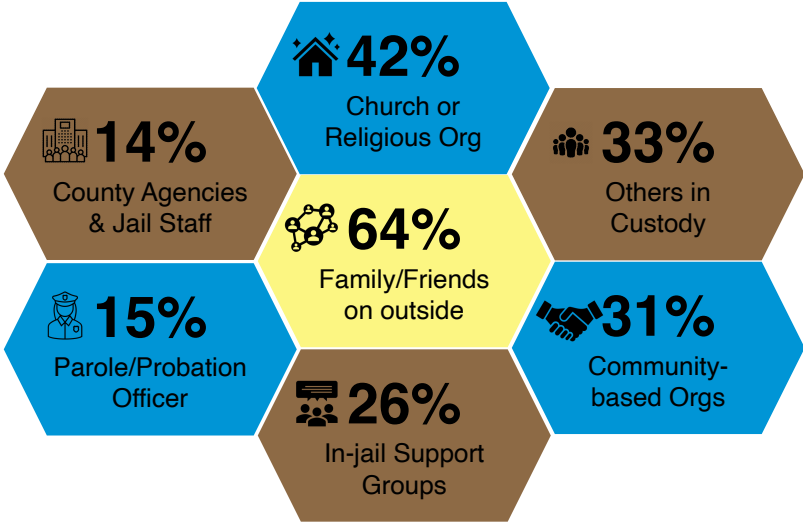


Figure 3 provides a summary of the most common sources of post-release planning. Respondents were predominantly receiving planning support from family and friends (64%). This is not an insignificant finding. It signals consideration of reentry planning services designed for family and friends to increase reentry success. Others reported support from churches/religious groups (42%), community-based organizations (31%), and in-jail support groups (26%). Only 14% noted that they were receiving support from county agencies, 15% from probation/parole officers, and 33% from other people in custody in their facility. These findings are further nuanced when considering demographic differences.

- Black respondents more frequently reported family/friends as a support than any other racial group. They were also the least frequent to cite support from county agencies and in-jail supports.
- White respondents were almost 2X more likely to cite jail staff as a source of support for post release planning than the other racial groups.
- 50% of Transgender/Non-Binary (TGNB) relied on in jail support, which is at least double that of any other gender identity group. This may be reflective of self-generated supportive, in-jail communities by this population!
- Overall- females had higher percentages of support across all categories compared to men.
- Similarly, CRDF had the most in jail support groups (30%) across ALL jails.
- MCJ had by far the lowest reporting of support from jail staff, county agencies, and probation/parole officers—over 4X lower in some instances!

Figure 3: Source of Post Release Planning Sources of Support

### SOURCES OF SUPPORT IDENTIFIED RELATED TO POST RELEASE PLANNING



#### Interest in Education and Support Services

Almost 9 in 10 survey respondents (89%) were “Very interested/Interested” in receiving general education and support services (See Figure 3). Levels of interest were high across all jail locations.

- CRDF - 87%
- MCJ - 84%
- TTCF - 90%
- Pitchess (all facilities) - 90%

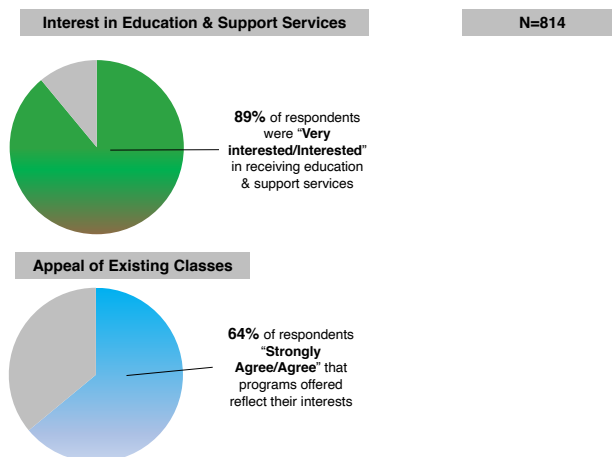
When asked about interest in courses currently offered at their present facility, that number drops to 6 in 10 (64%) reporting “Very interested/Interested”. Levels of interest similarly dropped across all jail locations:

- CRDF - 65%
- MCJ - 60%
- TTCF - 64%
- Pitchess (all facilities) - 67%

Interest in EBI classes was high with 89% reporting they were very interested or interested in a list of potential classes. This dropped (to 64%) when respondents were asked how appealing existing courses were. See Figure 4.

Figure 4: Program Interest

Programming in the Los Angeles County Jails

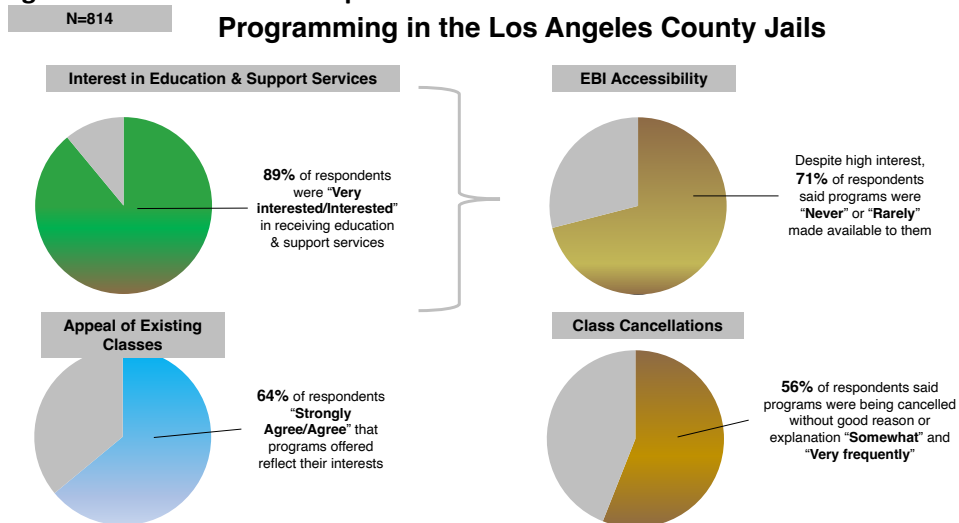


Interest in classes varied somewhat for certain demographic groups. There was almost universal interest in general education classes across racial and gender identities, as well as sexual orientations and ages (between 80-100% for each group sampled). Similarly, regarding the programs currently available, interest levels for most demographic groups mirrored the overall sample (64% strongly agreed/agreed that programs offered reflected their interest). Some outliers included:

- TGNB respondents reported slightly higher interest; 85% indicated that available courses reflected what their interests.
- Individuals over the age of 45 were lower; only 53% indicated that available courses reflected their interests.

While interest in classes (potential or current) was high, access did not match interest levels—**71% of respondents said EBI programs were “Never” or “Rarely” made available to them** and **56% reported that programs were cancelled without good reason/explanation “Somewhat” and “Very frequently.”**

Figure 5: Class Interest Compared to Access



From a list of 45 potential courses, the ten showing the greatest amount of interest are listed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Top 10 Interests in Potential Classes**

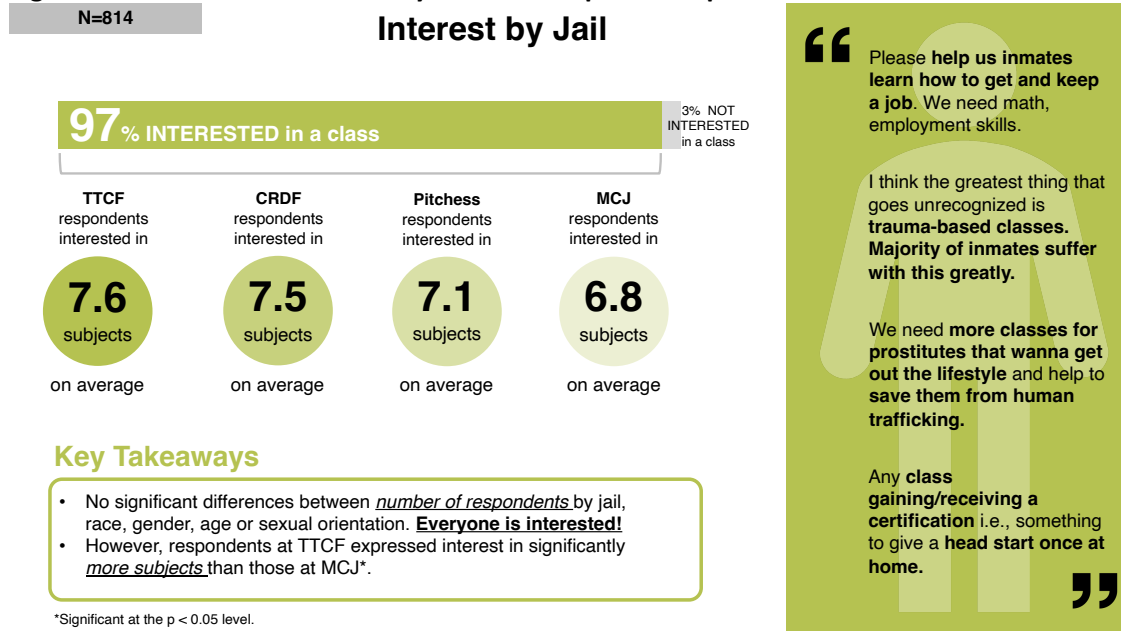
Type of Class	% of Sample Very Interested (N=814)
1. Vocational Training (e.g., cosmetology, auto repair, plumbing, construction, health services, etc.)	88%
2. Obtaining Basic Documents	84%
3. Job Readiness	80%
4. Business management, finance or entrepreneurship	79%
5. Job Skills	76%
6. Computer Class	76%
7. Music Class	75%
8. Housing for reentry	75%
9. Art Class	74%
10. Stress management	74%

There were some important jail and demographic group differences. Specifically:

- Individuals identifying as Latinx or bi/multiracial tended to have a broader set of interests (more “Very Interested” scores across multiple classes).
- Asian and Pacific Islander Americans expressed less interest in vocational training (78%) and obtaining basic documents (73%) courses.
- Respondents who identified as Black or White tended to report “Not Interested” more than those belonging to other racial groups although Black respondents reported more interest in vocational training.
- TGNB respondents were particularly interested in art (87%) and music (87%) classes.
- Men expressed more interest in job readiness, business management, job skills, and computer classes than women, while women expressed more interest in music, art, stress management, and housing for reentry courses.

The 45 potential courses of interest were collapsed into nine subject matter domains: life skills, relaxation techniques, exercise classes, vocational training, obtaining basic documents (CA identification, birth certificate, etc.), job readiness, basic education, health education (incl. mental health), and college/high school classes. Almost all respondents (97%) indicated interest in a class within at least one of these domains. Most individuals however registered interest across multiple domains—seven, on average indicating interest in a more holistic, well-rounded array of courses (see Figure 6). There were no notable/significant domain differences in interest across demographic groups—i.e., for race, gender, age, and sexual orientation). Men at TTCF were interested in more classes than men at MCJ. This was a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ).

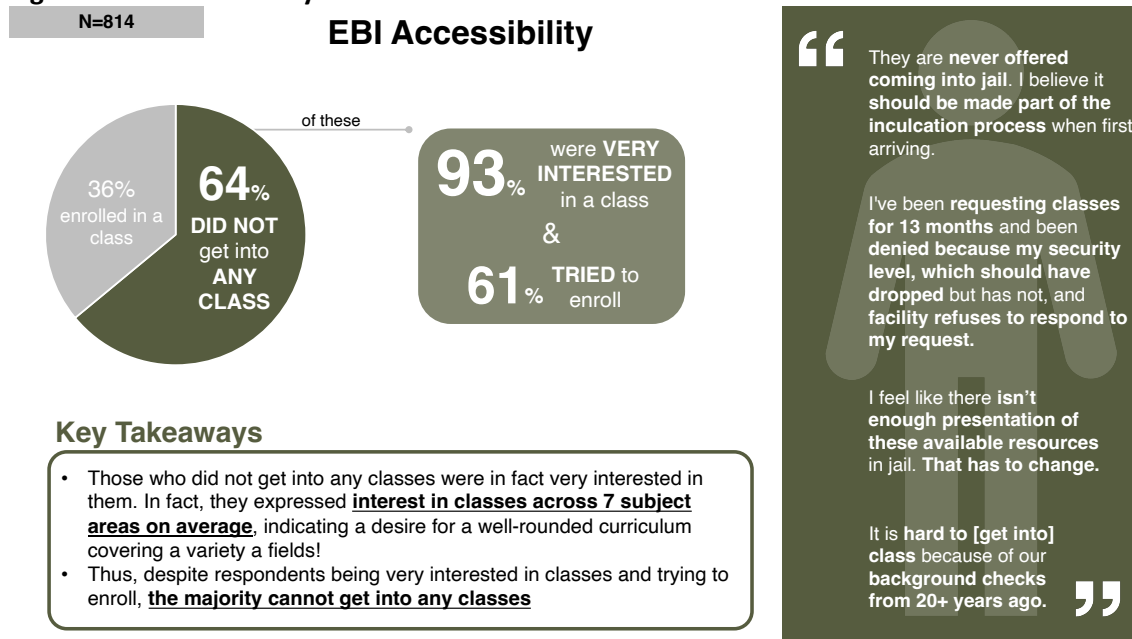
Figure 6: Differences in Interest by Jail and Sample Participant Quotes



### Course Access/Enrollment

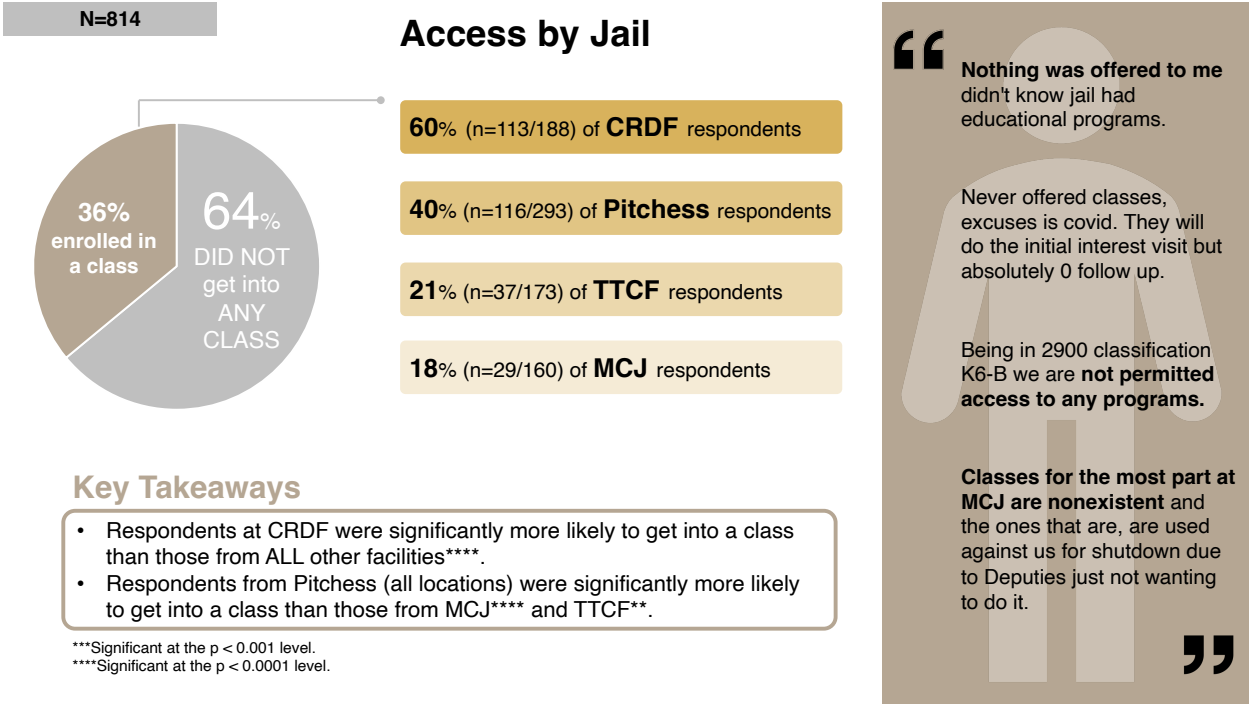
Only 36% of the 814 people surveyed (n=295) were able to enroll in at least one class. Of the 519 individuals who did not enroll in any classes, 61% (n=315) tried to enroll but were not able to do so. Even if they were not able to enroll, 93% of them indicated that they were interested in at least one class

Figure 7. EBI Accessibility.



Lack of access to jail-based education services is likely caused by several factors. First, the number/type of classes available at each facility is highly variable. Second, current courses offered represent only six of the nine domains/subjects of interest to respondents. When examining the percentages of respondents who enrolled in at least one class by facility, their percentages aligned with the extent to which courses were available: at CRDF 60% of respondents accessed a class, at Pitchess – 40%, at TTCF – 21%, and at MCJ – 18%. This difference is statistically significant. Individuals at CRDF are more likely to enroll than those at all three men’s facilities ( $p < 0.0001$  for all). People at Pitchess are more likely to enroll than those at MCJ ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and TTCF ( $p < 0.001$ ). Despite there being significantly more interest in a varied course curriculum at TTCF compared to MCJ, there is no statistically significant difference in actual access to courses in these two facilities. Both had the lowest course enrollment across all the jails. Differences in access by jail are presented in Figure 8.

**Figure 8. Differences in Access by Jail and Sample Respondent Quotes**



Course cancellations were more prevalent at MCJ and TTCF than at Pitchess and CRDF.

- MCJ = 67% reported classes were cancelled either “Somewhat” and “Very frequently.”
- TTCF = 59%
- Pitchess = 52%
- CRDF = 51%

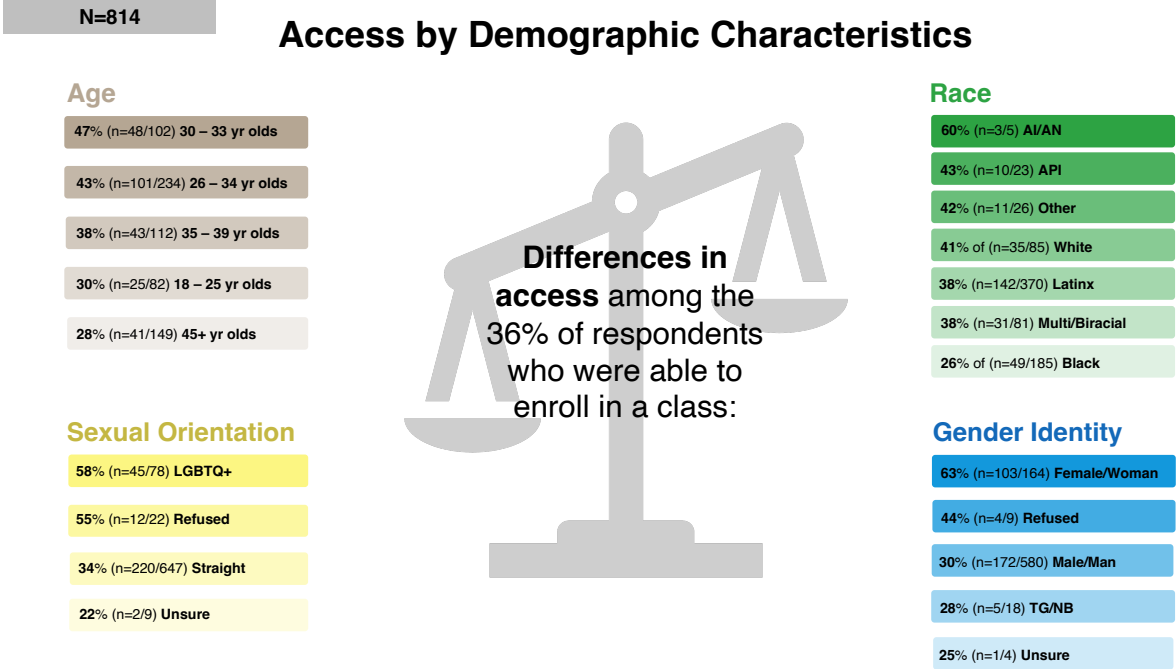
Several key barriers to enrollment were identified. Course accessibility and course availability were the biggest barriers. Respondents also believed that jail staff purposely withheld access to classes as a means of punishment. Lastly, course access is heavily negatively impacted by custody status/security level.

Unsurprisingly, considering that CRDF offers the most classes and has the highest enrollment figures, women have better EBI access than men. This difference is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), even when controlling for jail location. The differences in enrollment frequencies between women and TGNB

respondents is also statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). This finding is contrary to TGNB interest levels—i.e., **TGNB expressed the most interest but had the worst access**. Individuals over 45 were significantly less likely to enroll ( $p < 0.05$ ). Unlike TGNB respondents, this finding aligns with their interest levels—45+ year old individuals expressed the lowest interest.

Notable differences in enrollment figures were found across different racial groups. For example, only 26% of Black respondents compared to 43% of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans and 41% of White respondents were able to access classes. While these differences were not statistically significant when controlling for jail, they are trending towards significance (i.e., a larger sample is needed to detect an effect). Demographic differences in enrollment frequency are presented in Figure 9.

**Figure 9. Differences in EBI Access by Age, Race, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity**



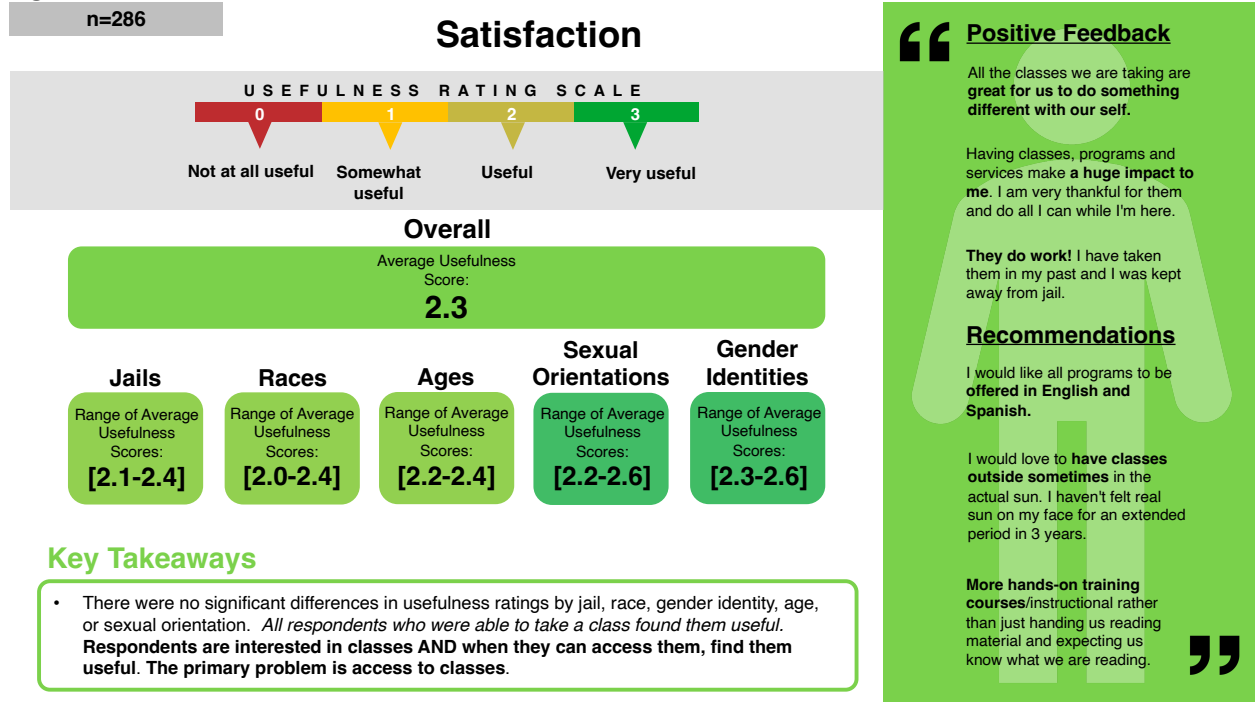
**Course Satisfaction**

If enrolled in a class, respondents (n=286) provided satisfaction scores for at least one course. This reflects 35% of the sample, which mirrors actual reported enrollment numbers. Despite poor access, if they got into a class, respondents found the class to be “useful” or “very useful”. Between 77% and 100% of those who enrolled in a class found the class “useful” or “very useful.” Classes with the highest satisfaction levels were:

1. Job Readiness – 100% of respondents found the course “useful” or “very useful”
2. Exercise Classes – 91%
3. Relaxation Techniques – 89%
4. Life Skills – 84%
5. Health Services – 84%
6. College/High School Classes – 77%

High satisfaction scores were found across all jail sites and demographic categories. All locations, races, genders, ages, and sexual orientations reported classes were “useful” and “very useful”—see Figure 10. There were no statistically significant differences in course satisfaction as a function of jail location, age, gender, race or other demographics.

**Figure 10: Satisfaction with EBI Classes**



In addition to providing feedback to improve EBI, respondents also noted the need to improve general conditions to support education efforts. A sample of these qualitative responses can be found in Table 5.

**Table 5. “Conditions that support well-being”**

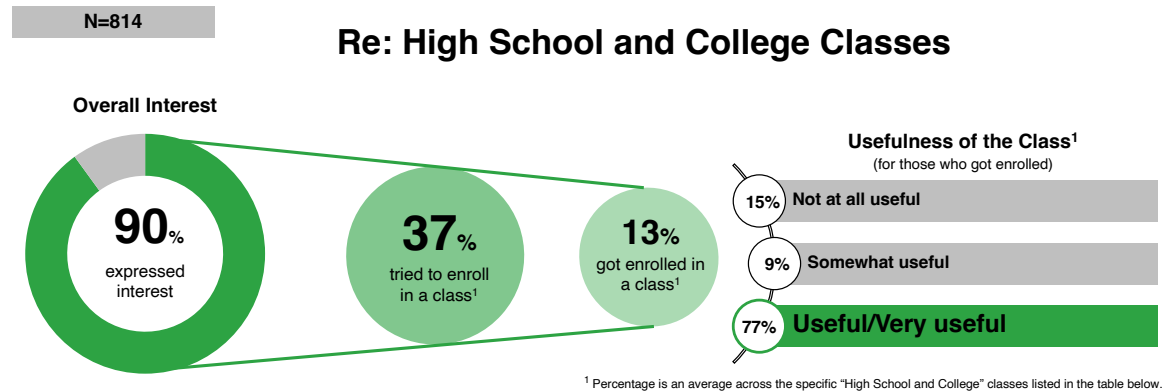
Facility	Code	Quote
CRDF	Conditions that support well-being	Jail here is very bad. They don't care about anything we need. Toothbrushes, toothpaste they never give to us. We need hygiene care more than anything. we need jail to care and give us our needs because for long week
TT	Conditions that support well-being	I feel inmates should be allowed free calling to keep in contact with our families. They charge us a ton of money for the phone.
Pitchess	Conditions that support learning	Classes are fine, the dorms are too crowded, too noisy to do work



## The Intersection of Course Interest, Access, and Satisfaction by Type of Class

People in custody in LA County jails were interested in a diverse/holistic set of courses. Below are a series of infographics that illustrate the relationship between interest, attempts to enroll, actual enrollment, and satisfaction if enrolled. See Figures 11 – 18.

Figure 11

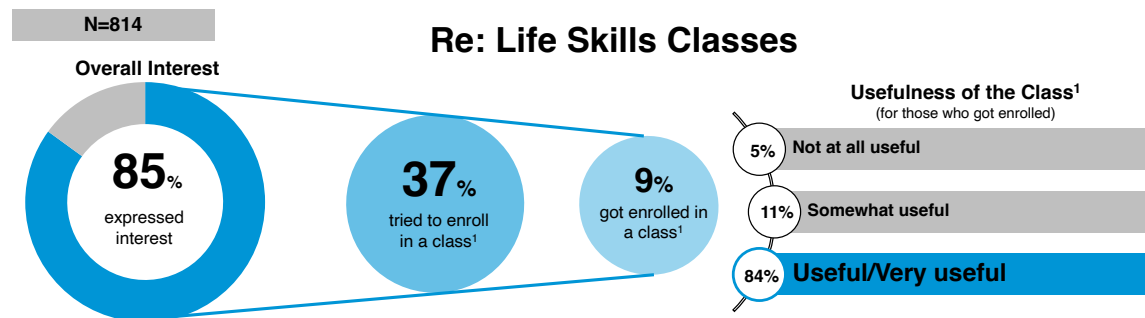


**Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:**

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
Computer	32%	1% <sup>2</sup>	38%	0%	63%
College	40%	11%	2%	10%	88%
High School	38%	26%	5%	16%	79%

<sup>2</sup> This class is only offered at CRDF. The percentages are based only on the CRDF sample.

Figure 12

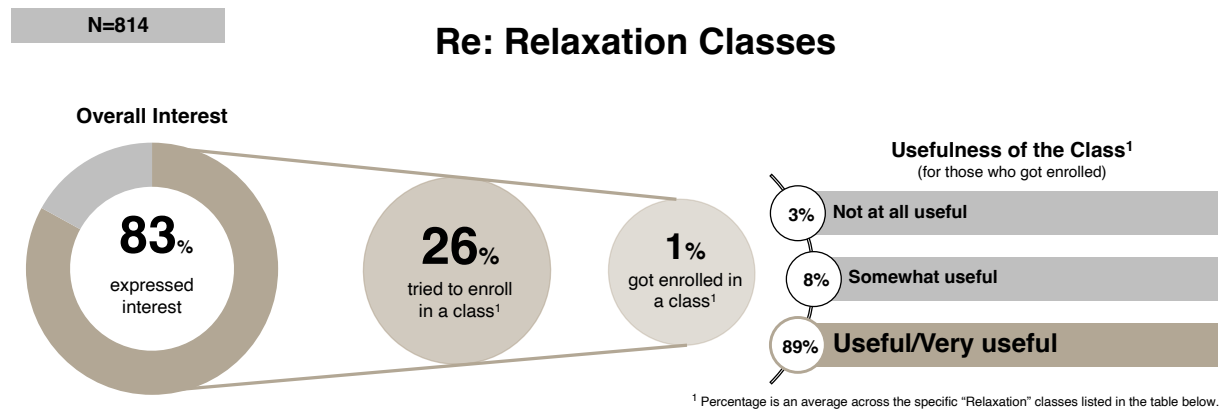


**Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:**

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
Money management	32%	1%	38%	0%	63%
Job skills	42%	9%	4%	11%	86%
Communication skills	31%	6%	6%	15%	78%
Reentry preparation	36%	7%	12%	12%	76%
Anger management	40%	11%	2%	10%	88%
Parenting	38%	26%	5%	16%	79%
Incarcerated Parents Program (CRDF)	23%	1% <sup>2</sup>	0%	0%	100%
ABC program (CRDF)	16%	1% <sup>2</sup>	14%	14%	71%

<sup>2</sup> These classes are only offered at CRDF. The percentages are based only on the CRDF sample.

Figure 13



**Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:**

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
Art	30%	1%	0%	14%	86%
Music and/or choir	25%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Yoga	23%	2%	10%	10%	80%

Figure 14

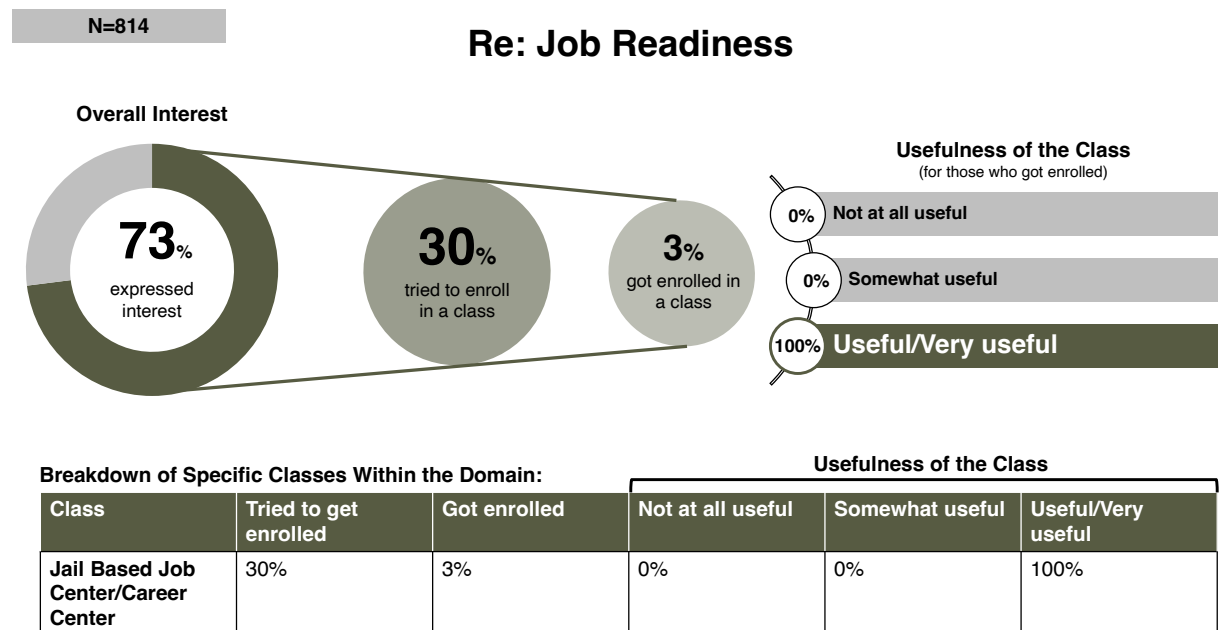
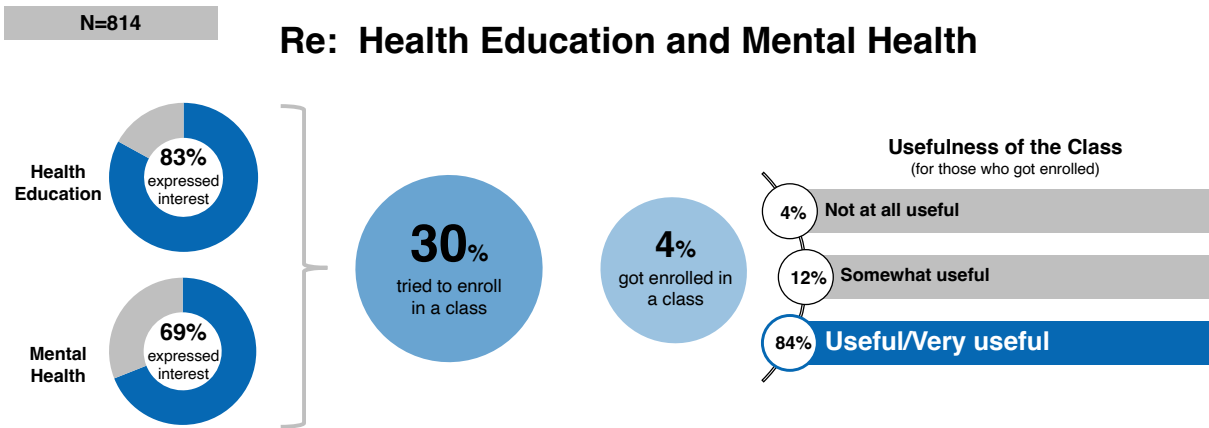


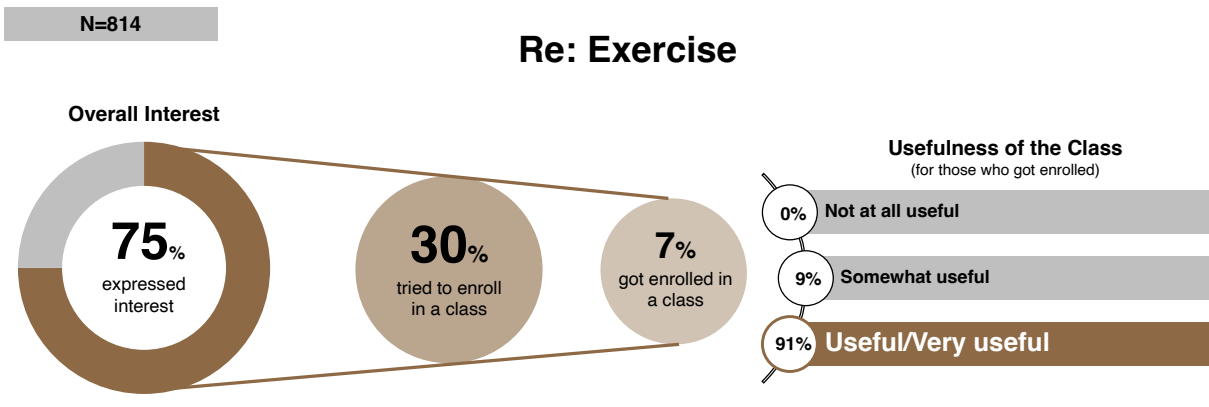
Figure 15



Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
Health & Well-being	30%	4%	4%	12%	84%

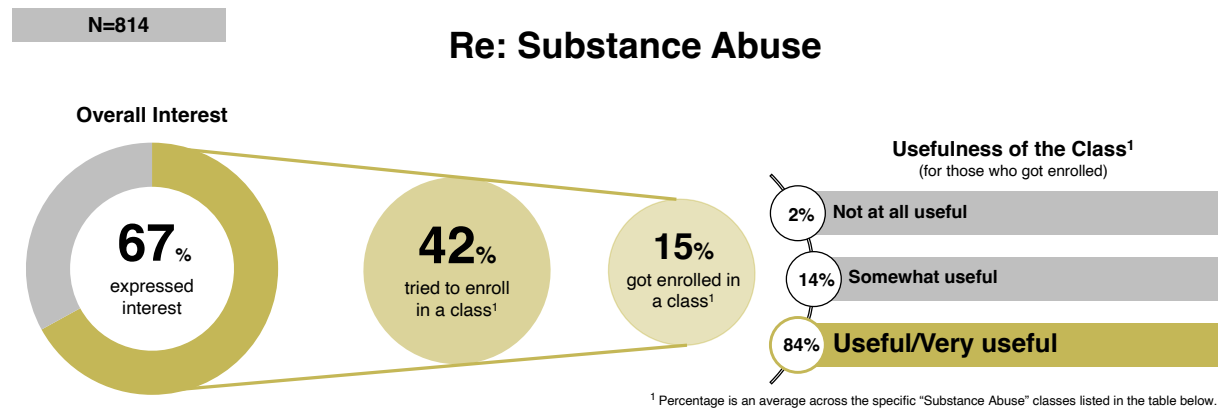
Figure 16



Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
Exercise Class	30%	7%	0%	9%	91%

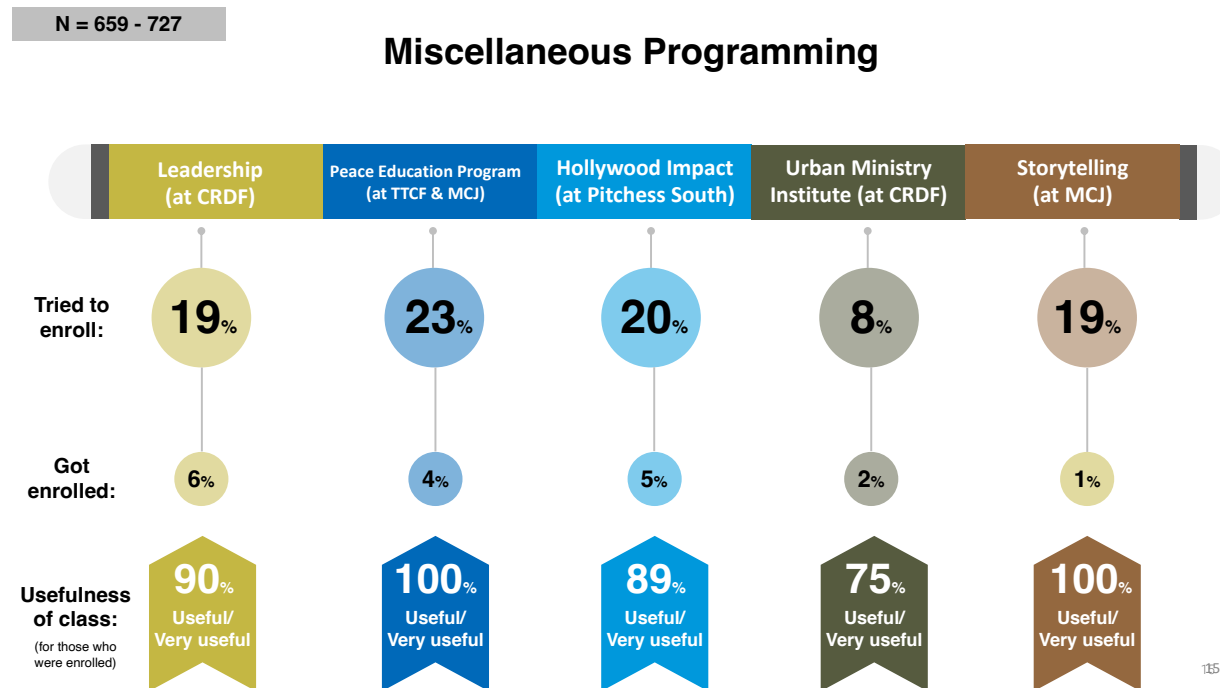
Figure 17



**Breakdown of Specific Classes Within the Domain:**

Class	Usefulness of the Class				
	Tried to get enrolled	Got enrolled	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Useful/Very useful
AA/NA/CA	43%	33%	2%	14%	84%
Drug Abuse/Addiction	45%	6%	0%	14%	87%
Alcohol Abuse/Addiction	38%	5%	5%	14%	81%

Figure 18



185

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

A summary of key findings is listed below. These findings could be helpful in a revisioning of EBI programming in the Los Angeles County Jails. At a minimum, they should inspire serious reflection about current EBI practices and policies within LA County jails.

- A representative sample of people (N=814) incarcerated in the Los Angeles County jails participated in a voluntary survey process. (20% were in MCJ; 21% in TTCF; 23% in CRDF; and 36% across all NCCF facilities)
- While interest in classes was high, access did not match interest levels—71% of respondents said EBI programs were “Never” or “Rarely” made available to them. Additionally, 56% reported that programs were cancelled without good reason/explanation “Somewhat” and “Very frequently.”
- There is overwhelmingly strong interest in participating in EBI classes and programs across all LA County jails. Almost all respondents (97%) indicated interest in a class within at least one of nine categories of classes. Most individuals however registered interest across multiple domains—seven, on average—indicating interest in a more holistic, well-rounded array of courses.
- Despite high interest in classes, most respondents were not able to enroll in any EBI programming. Only 36% of the 814 people surveyed (n=295) were able to enroll in at least one class. Of the 519 individuals who did not enroll in any classes, 61% (n=315) tried to enroll but were not able to do so. 93% of those who did not enroll indicated that they were interested in at least one class.
- Despite poor EBI access, respondents indicated that, if they got into a class, between 77% and 100% found it to be either “useful” or “very useful”.
- Lack of access to jail-based education services is likely caused by several factors. The number/type of classes available at each facility is highly variable. Current courses offered represent only six of the nine domains/subjects of interest to respondents.
- Respondents at CRDF were significantly more likely to get into a class than people in custody from ALL other facilities. Respondents from Pitchess (all facilities) were significantly more likely to get into a class than those from MCJ and TTCF.
- The lowest course enrollment was found at TTCF and MCJ. The highest enrollment was at CRDF.
- Cancellation of classes was noted as a problem across jails but with greater prevalence by people in custody at MCJ and TTCF.
- Top EBI barriers cited were course accessibility, course availability, custody status/security level and withholding access to classes as a form of punishment.
- TGNB people in custody expressed high interest in classes but had the worst access among all demographic groups.
- People in custody over the age of 45 were significantly less likely to be able to enroll in a class but they also expressed lower levels of interest in EBI classes.
- Black respondents across jails reported the lowest access to EBI classes. Only 26% of Black respondents compared to 43% of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans and 41% of white respondents were able to enroll in an EBI class.
- Men’s Central Jail had the lowest ratings in each of the 4 categories: least interest in classes currently offered, least interest in classes that could potentially be offered, worst access to classes, and reported the most class cancellations.

## RELEVANT LITERATURE CONTEXTUALIZING LA COUNTY JAIL SURVEY FINDINGS

Austin, J. (2017). Limits of prison education. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 16(2), 563-569. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1111/1745-9133.12301>

- there is no difference between inmates who do participate in educational programs versus those who do not
- only a small percentage of all inmates are actually able to participate in educational programs

Bozick, R., Davis, L. M., Miles, J. N., Saunders, J., Steele, J. L., Steinberg, P. S, Turner, S., & Williams, M. V. (2014). How effective is correctional education, and where do we go from here? The results of a comprehensive evaluation. RAND Corporation.

[https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR564.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR564.html)

- 2008 recession negatively affected state budgets dedicated to correctional education
- most states use computers in educational programs, however student access to the internet is limited in most states as well

Brazzell, D., Crayton, A., Lindahl, N., Mukamal, D. A., & Solomon, A. L. (2009). From the classroom to the community: Exploring the role of education during incarceration and reentry. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/e692852011-001>

- One of the biggest challenges to EBI programs is lack of funding, materials, space, and other resources
- Even though continuous participation is key to the effectiveness of correctional programming, short stays, inmate transfers, and limited movement in the facilities keeps inmates from constant exposure
- Well-designed incentive structures are key to good attendance (increased visitation access, good time credits, and sentence reduction)

Castro, E. L., Hardison, T., Hunter, R. K., & Johnson-Ojeda, V. (2018). The landscape of postsecondary education in prison and the influence of second chance pell: An analysis of transferability, credit-bearing status, and accreditation. *The Prison Journal*, 98(4), 405–426.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885518776376>

- There are too few postsecondary educational institutions that provide education programs to the incarcerated; of the ones that do, they are typically public 2-year institutions

Courtney, J. (2019). The relationship between prison education programs and misconduct. *The Journal of Correctional Education*, 70(3), 43-54. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26864369>

- In study conducted at Arizona Department of Corrections facilities, the GED program had the longest average participation
- Infraction violations decreased among those who participated in education courses; however, authors maintain it was not a huge difference

Dunleavy, E., Greenberg, E., & Kutner, M. (2008). Literacy behind bars: Results from the 2003 national assessment of adult literacy prison survey chapter 4: Education and job training in prison. *The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*, 30(2), 27-33. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007473.pdf>

- In 2003, only 33% of all adult inmates in the US had some form of postsecondary education
- Prose, document, and quantitative literacy improved across all inmate populations from 10 years prior

Gaes, G. G. (2008, March 31). The impact of prison education programs on post-release outcomes. [Paper presentation]. Reentry Roundtable on Education, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York.

- EBI programs reduce recidivism and enhance employment outcomes but effect size is still unclear
- At the time of this study (2008), not enough high-quality studies had been conducted to determine which kinds of educational programs produce the best outcomes
- The effectiveness of an educational program can be hindered by other issues an inmate may have (e.g., drug addiction and lack of work skills)

Mattson, B., Esposito, M. C. & Eggleston, C. (2012). Assessing educational needs in correctional settings. In A. H. Normore, & B. D. Fitch (Eds.), *Education-based Incarceration and Recidivism: The Ultimate Social Justice Crime-fighting Tool* (pp. 41-58). Charlotte: Information Age Publishing

- One challenge to EBI is the long wait time for admission; many inmates wait a substantial amount of time to get into a program at their facility, thus limiting access to these programs

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability. (2010). *Improving transition outcomes for youth involved in the juvenile justice system: Practical considerations*, Issue 25. Retrieved from [http://www.ncwd-youth.info/sites/default/files/Improving\\_Outcomes\\_for\\_Youth\\_Involved\\_inJuvenile\\_Justice](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/sites/default/files/Improving_Outcomes_for_Youth_Involved_inJuvenile_Justice)

- Most effective strategy to treat and rehabilitate youth offenders is to design a comprehensive, community-based strategy that relies on prevention programming and aftercare programs

Vacca, J. (2004). Educated prisoners are less likely to return to prison. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55(4), 297-305. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23292095>

- Inmates are more likely to be a part of a program where they see clear opportunities for success upon release
- The success of a program in a facility is influenced most by the attitudes of the leaders of the facility (watch commanders, officers, deputies, and instructors)
- One key challenge is that inmates lack self-confidence and have negative views toward schooling
- Recidivism may not be the best outcome measure due to the fact there is no universal definition, it measures law enforcement activity as opposed to education, and it is too “simplistic”

## REFERENCES

- Askew, W., Badu-Nimako, Y., Baurer, E., Gibson, M., Intieri, A., Kaleem, M., Sirianni, M. (2012). *Kept out: Barriers to meaningful education in the school-to-prison pipeline*. Washington, DC: Georgetown Law Human Rights Institute.
- Bazos, Audrey and Jessica Hausman. 2004. "Correctional Education as a Crime Control Program." UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research.
- Beck, J. (2021, October 7). Incarcerated students earn Cal State LA degrees at first-of-its-kind commencement in a California state prison. Cal State LA Newsroom. Retrieved November 9, 2022, from <https://news.calstatela.edu/2021/10/07/incarcerated-students-earn-cal-state-la-degrees-at-first-of-its-kind-commencement-in-a-california-state-prison/>
- Johnson, L. E., Wang, E. W., Gilinsky, N., He, Z., Carpenter, C., Nelson, C. M., & Scheuermann, B. K. (2013). Youth outcomes following implementation of Universal SW-PBIS Strategies in a Texas secure juvenile facility. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 36(3), 135–145. <https://doi.org/10.1353/etc.2013.0019>
- Reese, R. (2017). Project Narrative: The Lessons Learned from Implementing the Prison Education Project. *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men*, 5(2), 85–95. <https://doi.org/10.2979/spectrum.5.2.05>
- Wheeler, R. B. (2022). Does prison education impact offender conduct and recidivism? *Corrections Today*, 30–37.
- (2013). *Education Based Incarceration: Creating a Life Worth Living*. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. [http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553\\_March2013-EBI\\_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lasd/145553_March2013-EBI_CreatingALifeWorthLiving.pdf)
- (2016). *Educational Injustice: Barriers to Achievement and Higher Education for Youth in California Juvenile Court Schools*. Youth Law Center.
- (2022). *CUSTODY DIVISION POPULATION YEAR END REVIEW*. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. [https://lasd.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/08/Transparency\\_Custody\\_Division\\_Population\\_2021\\_Year\\_End\\_Report.pdf](https://lasd.org/wpcontent/uploads/2022/08/Transparency_Custody_Division_Population_2021_Year_End_Report.pdf)