



Virginia Longitudinal Data System Research Agenda

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Introduction

VLDS (Virginia Longitudinal Data System) is a pioneering collaboration for Virginia's future, giving the Commonwealth an unprecedented and cost-effective mechanism for extracting, shaping, and analyzing partner agency data in an environment that ensures the highest levels of privacy. Funded by the 2009 Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program of the United States Department of Education, VLDS is comprised of several component technologies that support secure, authorized research addressing today's top policy and state program questions.

VLDS is a shared resource among multiple Virginia government agencies: the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Virginia Department of Health Professions (DHP), Virginia's Office of Children's Services (OCS), the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and the Virginia Department for Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI). VLDS is built on a federated system to merge data across the participating agencies in a complex double-deidentifying hashing process that leaves private data behind the existing firewalls of the participating agencies. Additional information about VLDS can be found at vlds.virginia.gov/about-vlds.

A Focus on Equity-Centered Research

The Commonwealth's [One Virginia Plan](#) focuses on cultivating and promoting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture across state agencies. VLDS, as an extension of robust state agency partnerships, is poised to become a critical tool in the toolbox to promote equity among Virginians. By making data available and collaborating across agencies and research institutions, VLDS can answer equity-centered research questions about program access, pathways, and impacts, and identify conditions that have the greatest effect on individuals' ability to thrive.

The VLDS Research Agenda, centered in equity, reflects a shared commitment among VLDS members to prioritize equity in Virginia's data landscape. VLDS supports policy development and service delivery models that ensure every Virginian receives what they need, when they need it, to achieve the excellence they are looking for in their lives. Members of VLDS strive to achieve equity through the availability of data, research, and partnerships in service of this goal within the Commonwealth.

What is equity?

Equity refers to the creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access and equitable opportunity. Equity is also the process of allocating resources, programs, and opportunities to employees, customers, and residents, to address historical discrimination and existing imbalances.¹

Inequities in education, social service, workforce, criminal justice, and health systems exist because of historical and long-standing imbalances in power and resources across lines of race, gender, socioeconomic conditions, sexual orientation, ability, and other dimensions of individual and group identity. Addressing long-standing system inequities requires an intentional, focused investigation into the policies and practices that created inequities, and into effective strategies that can reduce barriers and create equitable, material outcomes for all Virginians.

The VLDS Research Agenda is a communication tool that establishes priorities, frames conversations, and promotes partnerships, collaboration, and trust building across the Commonwealth. The VLDS Research Agenda necessitates interdisciplinary collaboration and critical exploration of equity in Virginia's state policy and service delivery models. Researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and advocates will find the VLDS Research Agenda useful for understanding high-priority research questions for the VLDS.

A note about data availability:

In most cases, VLDS data are currently available on the Research Agenda's priority research questions. However, the Research Agenda also acknowledges the importance of additional data sources to understand equity, which may not be available yet. VLDS continues to expand the richness of its data by onboarding additional agency partners. Those wishing to conduct research using VLDS data are encouraged to contact [Agency Project Leaders](#) to understand data availability before requesting data access. Those wishing to understand the outcomes of the research conducted using VLDS data are encouraged to view the [Insights page on the VLDS website](#).

Intended Outcomes of the Research Agenda



Promoting action to dismantle systemic inequities and bias

Putting the VLDS commitment to equity into action means using the Research Agenda to drive policies that end systemic inequities and re-create systems free from material inequality and oppression. Implicit within the Research Agenda is the need to examine the variation in opportunities and outcomes by dimensions of individual and group

¹ Virginia Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. (2021). *One Virginia Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence*. Available at: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/one-virginia/>

identity. Only through acknowledgment and understanding of discrimination and bias will appropriate actions to promote change be identified.



Impacting social issues of political and practical importance

The Research Agenda focuses on six social issues of great importance to Virginians; Measuring Equity, Promoting Equity through Spatial and Longitudinal Systems-level Evaluations, Impacts of COVID-19, Early Childhood, Virginia's Workforce, and Overrepresentation of Racialized Minorities and the Overextension of the Criminal Justice System. These issues, along with related priority and sub-questions for each topic, will guide the research using VLDS data.



Addressing critical knowledge and information gaps

The Research Agenda aims to add to the body of equity-centered research by focusing on areas that need additional investigation or insight to prompt action. Research must inform practice in ways that improve services. Identifying knowledge gaps can begin the process of increasing equitable access and outcomes for Virginians who have experienced historical, social, and material discrimination.



Acknowledging multi-sector contributions to these research questions

The Research Agenda includes research areas that require data contributions and insights from multiple agencies and organizations. Leveraging collaboration across state agencies, the VLDS aims to provide new insights by combining and analyzing data that agencies were unable to merge in the past.



Demonstrating the importance of collecting and analyzing Virginia data to understand the local context

The Research Agenda allows researchers to find answers to the most pressing questions for Virginia practitioners and policymakers. Virginia is an economically diverse state, so a one-size-fits-all approach – and a single data source – would be inadequate to address each region's needs. VLDS encourages researchers to supplement available data with contextually rich, localized data to identify the best solutions.



Ethical use of Virginia data

One of the core tenants of the VLDS is respecting and protecting the privacy of those whose data are shared within the VLDS. The Research Agenda offers researchers an opportunity to investigate key research areas without compromising the data's confidentiality. VLDS encourages researchers to question and to understand the source and rationale for collecting data, and to use data to better the lives of those studied. Research is intended to be conducted with the beneficence of Virginians in mind.

Research Questions

Development of Research Topics

In July 2020, the VLDS members began developing the Research Agenda by creating a shared vision. Through a series of meetings, the Research Agenda Planning Committee, which represents 22 organizations from around the Commonwealth, hosted a series of meetings to determine the research topic areas and develop the agenda. The committee members represented the diverse identities of the Virginians VLDS serves.

Through a brainstorming session, the committee suggested critical topics and research questions expected to have a high impact on equity. These topics were grouped according to similarity, and disseminated to the committee for further consideration between formal meetings. Topical sub-groups within the committee engaged in a recursive process where topics and questions were regrouped, revised, and merged into a draft Research Agenda. Additional stakeholders from the 22 organizations, plus others from the greater VLDS research community, provided input to the draft Research Agenda during the open comment period from November 12, 2020 through November 24, 2020. At the final committee meeting, members used a consensus-building process to refine the questions further. The committee provided feedback on multiple iterations of the Research Agenda to arrive at the final set of research questions in addition to a list of relevant scientific literature (see Appendix A). VCU Performance Management Group facilitated the Research Agenda development process.

Priority Topic: Measuring Equity

The topic of measuring equity is broad in concept, spanning conversations from how equity is operationalized within and across sectors, to questioning the origin and purpose of data collected to quantify it. Coupled with conversations about measurement is the importance of defining research priorities in ways that require action when inequities are discovered. Such actions could range from monitoring and reporting group-level differences in opportunities and outcomes, to identifying the root causes of systemic inequity.

The research questions outlined in this section prioritize the use of data from the VLDS to promote action. Priority questions focus on malleable factors that drive variation in opportunity and access to services, identifying programs that are successfully preparing individuals for the workforce, and the actualized benefits of engagement with human service programs. In addition, priority questions focus on the importance of educators in conversations about equity, particularly in the distribution of qualified educators aligned with students' needs.

Equity-centered researchers must adopt, as a point of practice, publishing disaggregated results by group dimensions, such as race or gender. Researchers should also translate findings into policy- and practice-based recommendations, but not in isolation. In other words, the research process should include early and frequent engagement with stakeholders and equity experts to

avoid the consequences of well-intentioned but ill-informed recommendations. This collaborative process is even more critical when administrative data are used for research, which is often lacking important context and history.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: What factors drive variation in the access to and availability of opportunities (e.g., housing, employment, education, ability and healthcare) in Virginia?

Example Research Questions:

- What are the longitudinal impact of social and geographical location throughout the lifecycle?
- What are the drivers of differences in opportunities and outcomes across Virginia?

Research Priority 2: Which programs or policies have been most successful at preparing students for higher education and for the workforce, and why? How do definitions of college and career readiness align with the experiences and success of Virginia students?

Example Research Questions:

- How should Virginia operationalize college readiness?
- How should Virginia operationalize workforce readiness?
- What factors contribute to differential attendance and retention at public versus private colleges?
- How do opportunity gaps in student participation in college preparatory or advanced coursework classes vary? How do college readiness inequities (e.g., access to college preparatory coursework or advanced coursework) inform workforce disparities?
- How do systemic inequities affect K-12 graduation rates, post-secondary training, and employment outcomes?
- How effective is Virginia’s PK-20 education systems in preparing students for college and careers?

Research Priority 3: How do individual and family outcomes vary by level of engagement in human and community service programs and the types of support received?

Example Research Questions:

- How does variation in an individual or a communities’ engagement across human service systems over time impact outcomes?
- Do human service systems have connected effects across systems and programs?

Research Priority 4: Through which pathways are educator characteristics (e.g., race or ethnicity) and educator qualifications (e.g., preparation, licensing, and endorsements) most likely to affect student outcomes positively?

Example Research Question:

- How do educator characteristics and educator qualifications affect students' academic, post-secondary, and workforce outcomes?

Priority Topic: Promoting Equity through Spatial and Longitudinal Systems-level Evaluation

The emergence of many data systems and frameworks used in government infrastructure has enhanced administrative data opportunities in systems-level evaluations. These studies can lead to an enhanced understanding of system cross-sectionalism, interrelatedness, and effectiveness. The VLDS partners are prioritizing the use of systems-level evaluation to promote equity in Virginia. When considering this priority research topic, researchers are encouraged to use a broad vision of equity factors, including race, income, gender, ability, geography, and others.

The topic of systems-level evaluations could be viewed as a meta-topic while considering other areas of the Research Agenda, specifically the impacts of COVID-19, early childhood, and criminal justice. Systems do not work in isolation but rather intersect with one another and may enact positive or negative feedback. Researchers are encouraged to consider how systems-level evaluations may provide additional insight into equity throughout all of the Research Agenda priority topic areas.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: What are the consequences associated with segregated and isolated systems across Virginia by group and individual characteristics such as race, socioeconomic status, gender, other identities and the intersections of those?

Example Research Questions:

- How does the level of integration within one system influence other systems?
- What programs reduce inequities in segregated systems?
- How should systems be aligned to mitigate school and housing segregation?
- When and where can the consequences of segregated systems first be identified, and how long do they last?

Research Priority 2: Which programs or policies promote family, community, or economic prosperity, and what impact do such programs have on student, workforce and health outcomes?

Example Research Question:

- How, and to what extent, do programs promote prosperity and support successful educational achievement throughout life trajectories?

Research Priority 3: What factors are most likely to change, predict, or anticipate life trajectories?

Example Research Questions:

- How do inequities become exacerbated over an individual’s life course?
- How do inequalities in childhood affect individuals now and later in their lives?
- How do communities differ or are similar in their supports to families?
- How do children's early experiences and environments shape their trajectories and outcomes?

Research Priority 4: What factors contribute to the gaps between earnings and costs of living, and what are the consequences of those gaps for other outcomes?

Priority Topic: Impacts of COVID-19

This priority topic addresses research questions that examine the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on Virginians in the Commonwealth, including the potentially disparate effects on different individuals and communities. These research questions intentionally define COVID-19 impacts broadly across various domains and stakeholders. The research priorities address not just the disease itself (SAR-CoV-2), but also its social and economic residual effects and community responses to the pandemic. For instance, the consequences of COVID-19 may be felt in areas such as employment, housing stability, family welfare (e.g., poverty, hunger, child abuse, and domestic violence), child care, public education (pre-kindergarten through post-secondary), and health and mental health issues (e.g., prevalence, detection, treatment).

These research questions assume that COVID-19 will have immediate, short-term and long-term impacts across multiple sectors. Not all data needed to quantify the influence of COVID-19 is available through VLDS alone. Researchers are encouraged to use multiple sources of information to contextualize near-term events, and to define further the duration of the effects based on time or milestones, such as the implementation of state and federal policy changes, relief programs, public health mitigation strategies and campaigns, and public mass vaccination.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: Which communities have been most impacted by COVID-19, and what is their relative use of human services?

Example Research Questions:

- Which communities have experienced restrictions or stay at-home orders the most during the pandemic and what are the trends in their relative use of human services?
- Which communities have the highest proportion of essential workers, and what is the communities' relative use of human services?
- Which communities have endured the highest hospitalization and mortality rates due to COVID-19 and what is their relative use of human services?
- How has COVID-19 affected access and use of child-serving programs?

Research Priority 2: Which components of PK-12 schools' response and recovery to COVID-19 had the greatest impact on learning loss and students' educational outcomes? Which components of response and recovery had the greatest impact on educator retention and working conditions?

Example Research Questions:

- How did PK-12 students receive instruction (in-person, remote-online, remote-physical) in School Year (SY) 2020 - 2021? How did schools respond to students' lack of access to the internet and connected devices? How are schools leveraging the online learning environment moving forward?
- How do educational outcomes in SY 2020-21 compare to pre-shutdown trends by type of instruction received? How do the trends change moving forward and how does that change compare across groups?
- How are schools assessing and addressing learning loss? What hurdles do schools face in addressing that learning loss?
- How does the educator workforce in SY 2020-21 compare to prior years? Which educators did not return? How did teaching assignments change? Who fills teaching vacancies?
- How has the pandemic impacted educator perceptions of their working conditions? Impacted their mental health and well-being? What are schools doing to counter this? How does this change over time?

Research Priority 3: How has COVID-19 impacted student enrollment trends in Virginia K-12 schools and enrollment in higher education? How do changes in enrollment vary by student groups and what are the outcomes for those students?

Example Research Questions:

- Which students who were previously enrolled did not enroll in public schools in SY 2020-21? Which of these students return in SY 2021-22?
- How did access to higher education, defined as enrollment patterns (whether enrolled and where) of recent high school graduates and older students change during and after the pandemic?

- How did student outcomes, such as graduation rates, field of study, and career and technical education (CTE) participation and credentials change during and following the pandemic?

Research Priority 4: Which colleges in Virginia have been most successful at blunting the impact of the pandemic on underrepresented students? Which colleges and programs are best preparing students for success in the post-COVID economy?

Example Research Questions:

- How did public funding for higher education and the net prices paid by students change during and following the pandemic?
- How have the economic outcomes of new college graduates evolved over the course of the pandemic?

Research Priority 5: How have trends in household income, poverty, and demand for human service programs changed with COVID-19? What is the impact of relief programs and policies on family economic, social, and educational prosperity?

Example Research Questions:

- How do changes in family economic health impact students' social-emotional well-being and educational outcomes? What are schools doing to counteract any possible negative impact?
- How has the loss of healthcare coverage due to job displacement affected the well-being of individuals and families?
- How have family household incomes changed? Are more families living in poverty?
- Have there been more evictions? Are there more families with children who are without stable housing because of job loss and eviction due to the pandemic?
- Are more households, with or without children, experiencing food insecurity?
- Are more people and families applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits?
- Has opioid use (measured through drug-related hospitalizations and arrests) increased? Were there more deaths due to opioid and illegal prescription drug use?
- Are there more calls to domestic violence hotlines and shelters?
- Has the number of Child Protective Services reports (including substantiated reports) increased? Has mandated reporting decreased because fewer children are not being in school, daycare, or visiting the doctor?
- Have more children been removed from homes or families due to neglect, abuse or maltreatment because of parental substance use, family violence, or housing instability?

Research Priority 6: What is COVID-19's immediate, short, and long-term impact on workforce demand signals in Virginia, particularly in highly impacted sectors such as healthcare and education?

Example Research Questions:

- How has a decrease in healthcare demand, due to job displacement and loss of coverage, impacted healthcare service providers by profession?
- How has job displacement affected workers skills and experiences over the long-term?
- Has COVID-19 induced a structural change within industries?
- How is workforce quality distributed across Virginia?

Research Priority 7: How proportionally are mental health resources allocated to schools and communities based on the relative impact of COVID-19, specifically across race and socioeconomic status?

Example Research Questions:

- How has the prevalence of diagnosed mental disorders changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How proportionally are mental health resources allocated to communities and schools based on the relative impact of COVID-19?

Priority Topic: Early Childhood

While a wide range of experiential and environmental factors in early life shape an individual's future outcomes, this priority topic focuses mainly on early childhood education due to the relative high dosage of intervention and impact. While health, social, and family influences lay a primary foundation for the child, access to quality early childhood education has the potential to enhance both their short-term and long-term outcomes. Prior research demonstrates that access to quality early childhood education from birth to elementary school has multiple benefits, including readying children with skills for their education, interpersonal, and workforce trajectory, as well as impacting their families' work and life success.

Many young children and their families still lack equitable access to programs that can provide these benefits. An opportunity remains to investigate the primary dynamics, characteristics, and ingredients of childcare and early education programs that directly drive children's positive outcomes. Additional research is needed to look at factors of access to, availability of, and quality of interactions and experiences within early education environments that support children's optimal growth and development, and how these factors vary in relation to families' demographics, socioeconomic status, and geographic location. Analysis of whether high quality early education programs are accessible, affordable, and meet families' preferences with young children who stand to benefit most can shed light on where inequities may limit participation and accrual of benefit. Uncovering these gaps and disparities in access can inform and shape policies and investment in areas that will most greatly impact equitable outcomes for all children.

While the priority questions focus on early childhood education, additional opportunities remain to augment VLDS data and broaden the research scope. Some examples of additional services and support systems in early childhood that can affect outcomes are access to primary health care, developmental screenings, mental and behavioral health services, social services, family services, including home visiting programs, and nutrition or food security supports. Researchers are encouraged to consider both traditional and alternative pathways for families to equitably access comprehensive services to meet their needs, support their best outcomes, and improve how Virginia’s public sector systems across health, education, and social and family services can be improved to better support these outcomes.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: How do early childhood programs vary in availability, affordability, and access across different regions of the state, as well as by the demographic and socioeconomic status of the child?

Example Research Questions:

- Are there some areas of the state that lack affordable, quality early childhood programs?
- Are there some populations whose needs are not met by the early childhood education programs available to them? Do existing early childhood programs meet the needs of their communities?
- Are high quality facilities, programs, and services equitably accessible (including whether they are affordable and available) to all children, families, and communities?

Research Priority 2: Which components of early childhood education programs and facilities are indicative of program quality and most predictive of children's success?

Example Research Questions:

- What measures can be used to effectively assess the impact of early childhood education and programs on child outcomes?
- To what extent do Virginia’s publicly funded early education programs adopt standards to guide program quality, and is support needed to ensure programs adopt quality standards and measure outcomes?
- Is there a correlation between the adoption of quality standards and measures of children’s success? Are children achieving and succeeding as expected if the programs are meeting standards and quality goals?
- Are Virginia’s standards, definitions, and measures culturally competent, and do they promote social equity?
- How does the early childhood education workforce, including its demographics and diversity, qualifications, access to professional development, and conditions, including compensation, affect young children’s outcomes?

- How are childcare facility’s condition and location related to the program and children’s success?

Research Priority 3: Through which pathways can access to comprehensive early childhood programs and services be improved, particularly in areas of need based on community health indicators?

Example Research Questions:

- How can improving families’ access to early childhood support services and programs promote young children’s optimal growth and development?
- What types of community partnerships and cross-system strategies best support families’ holistic success?
- What outreach, communication, and engagement strategies work best to meet families’ needs, preferences, and encourage their participation in early childhood programs?

Priority Topic: Virginia’s Workforce

Priority research areas on Virginia’s workforce focus on the relevance, quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of workforce preparation efforts and programs across the Commonwealth. Virginia increasingly implemented and expanded workforce development programs over the last decade, to include industry credentialing, increased access to associate degrees from community colleges, internships, and required career exploration programs for all K-12 students, including students with disabilities. Investigating the effectiveness of Virginia’s workforce preparation will increase understanding of additional opportunities for improvement in the availability and quality of these programs.

Priority research areas were developed to seek analytics and research that will drive intentional action to promote equitable access to high quality, effective workforce preparation programs. Identifying barriers that challenge the Commonwealth's ability to provide the most effective workforce preparation programs is also important. Researchers are encouraged to consider the varying audience, purposes, and goals of workforce preparation programs to inform the methods selected to measure quality and effectiveness.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: How well are workforce preparation programs accessed by students, including students with disabilities, aligned with future industry trends, and predictive of employment and earnings?

Example Research Questions:

- Does alignment between workforce preparation programs focused on community needs restrict outcomes of students?

- Are state employment data providing desired information to determine the quality of workforce preparation and performance?
- To what extent is data available to assess whether workforce supply, preparation and performance are equitably distributed across local communities throughout the Commonwealth?
- Are programs relevant and focusing on industries with the greatest demand, as well as where people can get jobs?
- How many people are being attracted to these programs and what are the outcomes of preparatory programs?

Research Priority 2: What programs, policies, or services promote or inhibit intergenerational mobility in the workforce?

Example Research Questions:

- Do workforce preparation programs lead to higher-level jobs?
- Are programs increasing awareness of and preparing students from diverse geographical backgrounds for higher-level or paying jobs?
- Are there barriers in Virginia that constrain entry and/or advancement in the labor market, with particular attention to higher skilled or paid jobs across multiple sectors?

Research Priority 3: Through which pathways does school funding for workforce preparation programs and resources target communities in need? How do school funding formulas enable or constrain equitable access to educational programs?

Example Research Questions:

- Does Virginia's education funding formula enable or constrain adequate and equitable access to job training or educational readiness programs for students?
- What is the relationship between school funding and college or workforce readiness inequities?

Research Priority 4: How does the relationship between earned credentials and the ability to achieve a living wage vary by individual demographic and socioeconomic factors?

Research Priority 5: What factors contribute to pay inequities in Virginia?

Example Research Question:

- Do differences in resources and opportunities across local communities in the Commonwealth contribute to differences in labor market outcomes?

Priority Topic: Overrepresentation of Racialized Minorities and the Overextension of the Criminal Justice System

This priority topic focuses on understanding and explicating the root causes of systemic disparities in the Virginia criminal justice system. While many factors lead to an overrepresentation of racialized minorities in the criminal justice system and mass incarceration, education and social service systems must be examined to identify and eliminate fundamental inequities that influence these outcomes. For instance, poverty, exposure to violence, negative school experiences and educational outcomes, and other factors that increase the likelihood of criminal involvement are more prevalent among non-white populations. Systematic biases in the infrastructure and operations of criminal justice agencies also contribute; for example, increased police presence in poor, non-white neighborhoods result in more arrests of Black residents. Instead of addressing resource scarcity and community needs, Virginia and the United States as a whole has relied on the systematically inequitable systems of policing and incarceration. This overextension leads to disproportionate incarceration rates. For Black people, the rate of incarceration is two and a half times their percentage of the population.² For Indigenous people, the incarceration rate is seven times that of whites.³

With that in mind, research questions in this priority area were developed to address systemic issues rather than individual-level characteristics. Individual-level policies (e.g., recruiting a diverse police force) and interventions (e.g., implicit bias training for judges) alone are unlikely to change systemic, discriminatory outcomes and they have even, in some instances, demonstrated harmful effects. Instead, the research questions focus on identifying the role of educational systems, public service programs, and human and community services in identifying, addressing, and providing solutions for the resource scarcity, community need, and system structures at the root of the inequities of the criminal justice system.

Priority Research Questions

Research Priority 1: What factors reduce disproportionality in school discipline? What programs, policies, or interventions interrupt the school to prison pipeline?

Example Research Questions:

- How does disproportionality in exclusionary school discipline affect students' later involvement in the criminal justice system? What individual and school-level factors lead to disproportionality in school discipline?
- How does school quality affect later students' court involvement?
- What interventions affect the relationship between school discipline disproportionality and students' later involvement in the criminal justice system?

² Sentencing Project (2020). Trends in U.S. Corrections. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Trends-in-US-Corrections.pdf>

³ Daniel, R. (2020). Since you asked: What data exist about Native American people in the criminal justice system? Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2020/04/22/native/>

Research Priority 2: What attributes of human service programs are most likely to reduce the risk of future criminal justice involvement?

Example Research Questions:

- What human service resources affect the relationship between higher education outcomes and reduce the risk of criminal justice involvement?
- What is the relationship between the age of entry into foster care, placement type, and later criminal justice involvement?
- What is the relationship between people participating in human service programs and involvement in the criminal justice system?
- What services received while in foster care mitigate or increase the likelihood of an individual’s involvement in the criminal justice system?

Research Priority 3: What policies or programs reduce disparate treatment in the criminal justice system?

Example Research Questions:

- How do judicial districts and judges vary in the application of sentencing guidelines by offense type and defendant demographic characteristics?
- What individual and system factors determine incarceration?

Research Priority 4: What economic, social, or community characteristics eliminate or reduce the effects of concentrated poverty, over-policing, and other criminal justice involvement?

Example Research Questions:

- What neighborhood characteristics help eliminate or reduce the effects of concentrated poverty, over-policing, and other criminal justice involvement?
- What is the relationship between social determinants of health, environmental factors such as transportation access and housing discrimination and the likelihood of criminal justice involvement?

Research Priority 5: What programs, policies, or interventions reduce the likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system or reduce the likelihood of recidivism?

Example Research Questions:

- Which post-release resources have the biggest effect on recidivism rates?
- Which interventions effectively reduce the overrepresentation of key demographic groups within the criminal justice system?
- What aspects of implementation and administration affect the success of these programs, policies, and interventions?

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