

#### Where we're taking you...

Illinois Incarceration

O2 Societal costs

The problem in our backyard

How it affects all of us

O3 Project Flex overview
O4 Flex Growth & Potential

A transformative solution
A pathway out of the pipeline

#### Illinois Youth Incarceration

**85%** 



Youth of color are 5 times as likely to be incarcerated vs. white peers

700%

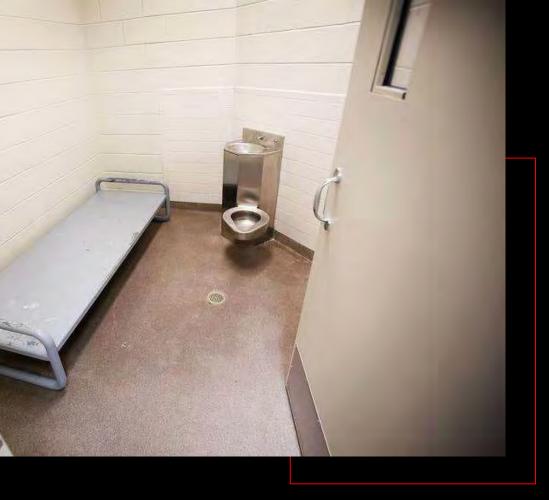


The rate of increase of incarcerated female youth over the last 30 years

\$187,765



The cost to incarcerate one youth per year



# What \$187,765 gets you...

- Seclusion in rooms
- Sedentary lifestyle
  - Subpar nutrition
- Modified education
  - Limited recreation
    - Understaffing





# PROJECT

We leverage the power of sport to unite individuals and develop a culture of opportunity for incarcerated youth.

### **Project Flex Snapshot**



#### Prison Programming

Sole sport-based university/prison partnership

Sport Sessions 1-on-1 Mentoring NIU Leadership Retreats



### **Project Flex Snapshot**



#### People

17 Graduate Students 600 Youth (ages 13-20) NIU Community



#### **Project Flex Snapshot**







Chapter

Co-Creating a Sport-Life Skills
Programme for Incarcerated Youth
By Jennifer M. Jacobs, Kalyn McDonough, Zachary Wahl-Alexander

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Book Sport, Physical Activity and Criminal Justice

Edition

1st Edition

#### Numbers

5 years

3 sites (2 male, 1 co-ed)

\$180K annual contract

14 research papers

22 national presentations



#### Impact on NIU Institutional Goals

"Transdisciplinary
Scholarship &
Curricular Innovation"

"Research questions with multiple lenses that seek to address inequitable conditions"

Goal 3A & 5B





"Attract new students and retain high quality students to contribute to NIU community"

- 30% out of state recruits
- 35% retention of undergrads

Goal 2A

#### Impact on Graduate Students

"FLEX has brought unconditional growth to my life and the youth we serve. This is the first time I've felt 100% valued and supported."

Izaiah Webb, M.S.





"My life was leading me down a bad path, but when I made the choice to work with Flex, everything changed. And now I'm working towards my PhD at UGA."

Javon Davis, M.S.

#### Impact on Youth

""[My coach] is the brother type for real. I'm the little brother. We have real conversations. He motivates me to be better and see the bigger picture."

M. T., 2021



"It's crazy that I had to go to prison to get an experience like this."

S. J., 2019



# Impact



43% vs. 93%

Reduced Recidivism Rate

# The Future of FLEX

Cementing our foothold as the premier university- prison partnership in the country



## Thank You

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