

Trends & Milestones

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Changes in Number and Characteristics of People Living in State Institutions, 1977–2008

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Since 1923, statistics have been gathered on the number and characteristics of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in state institutions with 16 or more residents. After reaching their peak average daily population of 194,650 people in 1967, state institution populations decreased to 34,670 people by June 30, 2008 (see Table 1).

This article reports on changes in the number and characteristics of persons living in state institutions between 1977 and 2008 and state-by-state changes between 1998 and 2008. Between 1977 and 1996, the number of people in state institutions declined from 151,112 to 58,320. By 1996, the residents were older, increasingly likely to have severe or profound levels of intellectual disability, and need help or supervision with basic activities of daily living (Lakin, Prouty, Braddock, & Anderson, 1997). Between 1997 and 2008, populations of all ages in state institutions continued to decline, with the most dramatic declines being those younger than 40 years (see Figure 1). By 2008, two thirds of state institution residents were older than 40 years (including 19,651 who were 40–62 years and 3,721 who were 63 years or older). State institution residents were also increasingly male (increasing from 57% in 1977 and 1987 to 60% in 1998 and 64% in 2008).

Although the proportion of residents with severe or profound levels of intellectual disability increased from 73% in 1977 to 82% in 1998, it declined to 69% in 2008. Similarly, the proportion of individuals needing supervision or assistance with walking, toileting, communicating, eating, and/or dressing declined between 1998 and 2008, with the biggest change being a decrease from 70% to 59% in the proportion needing supervision or assistance with dressing.

Between 1977 and 2008, the proportion of residents with behavioral or psychiatric disorders (the latter assessed only since 1998) increased steadily (see Figure 2). The proportion of residents with behavior disorders requiring special staff attention increased from 25% in 1977 to 41% in 1987, 41% in 1998, and 53% in 2008. The proportion of residents with a psychiatric disorder requiring psychiatric attention rose from 34% in 1998 to 55% in 2008. After decreasing from 27% to 17% between 1977 and 1998, the proportion of residents with mild or moderate levels of intellectual disability nearly doubled from 17% to 31% between 1998 and 2008.

States operating large facilities between 1998 and 2008 varied substantially in the extent to which their population characteristics were consistent with national trends (see Table 2). Overall, the number of people living in state institutions decreased by 33% between 1998 and 2008, and 48 facilities closed completely. By 2008, 9 states reported not operating any state institutions for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. During this time, state institution populations decreased in all states and by 50% or more in 12 states.

Nationally, between 1998 and 2008, the proportion of state institution residents ages 40 years and older increased 18% overall and increased in all but five states. The proportion of residents with severe or profound levels of intellectual disability decreased by 16% overall between 1998 and 2008 and by more than 50% in four states. The proportion of state institution residents with behavioral disorders increased 27% between 1998 and 2008, with six states reporting increases of 96% or more and only three states reporting decreases.

Table 1 Characteristics of Residents of State Institutions on June 30, 1977, 1987, 1998, and 2008 (%)

Characteristic	1977	1987	1998	2008
Total residents (<i>N</i>)	151,112	94,695	51,485	34,670
Gender (% male)	57.0	57.0	60.4	63.8
Age				
0–21 years	35.8	12.6	4.8	5.4
22–39 years	41.3	54.1	38.1	27.2
40–62 years	19.2	27.3	48.9	56.7
63+ years	3.7	6.0	8.2	10.7
Level of intellectual disability				
Mild/No ID	10.4	7.2	7.8	17.9
Moderate	16.4	9.8	9.1	13.0
Severe	27.6	20.0	17.6	16.4
Profound	45.6	63.0	64.6	52.7
Other conditions				
Psychiatric disorder ^a	N/A	N/A	34.3	54.6
Behavior disorder ^b	25.4	40.7	41.4	52.5
Needs assistance or supervision with...				
Walking	23.3	29.5	38.9	36.5
Toileting	34.1	46.6	59.5	50.7
Communicating	43.5	54.8	59.6	51.2
Eating	21.4	37.8	56.4	52.0
Dressing	55.8	60.5	69.9	59.1

Note. From Prouty & Lakin (1999); Salmi, Larson, & Lakin (2009). ID = intellectual disability; N/A = data not collected in this year.

^aCondition requires special staff attention. ^bCondition requires psychiatric attention.

The proportion of state institution residents reported to have a psychiatric disorder increased 59% between 1998 and 2008, with only four states reporting decreases. Although the proportion of persons with psychiatric disorders increased dramatically, the estimated number of people with psychiatric disorders in state residential facilities increased only from 17,659 to 18,917 individuals. The estimated number of people with mild or no intellectual disability also increased (from 4,016 in 1998 to 6,204 in 2008). Because of the decreasing overall populations of state institutions, these were the only categories with more estimated residents in 2008 than in 1998.

Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2 show the national trends between 1977 and 2008 in total number of state institution residents, the proportion of residents 40 years and older, the proportion of

residents with severe or profound intellectual disability, and the proportions with behavioral and psychiatric disorders. Table 2 presents state trends between 1998 and 2008 for the same characteristics. In the United States and in each state, the number of people living in state institutions continued to decrease. In 2008, persons 40 years and older made up more than two thirds of all state institutions' residents and a majority of residents in more than 80% of states. This compares with one third of residents being 40 years or older in 1987. Between 1998 and 2008, the proportion of residents who were male, 21 years or younger, with mild or moderate intellectual disability, and with psychiatric or behavior disorders increased, whereas the proportion requiring assistance or supervision with various activities of daily living decreased.

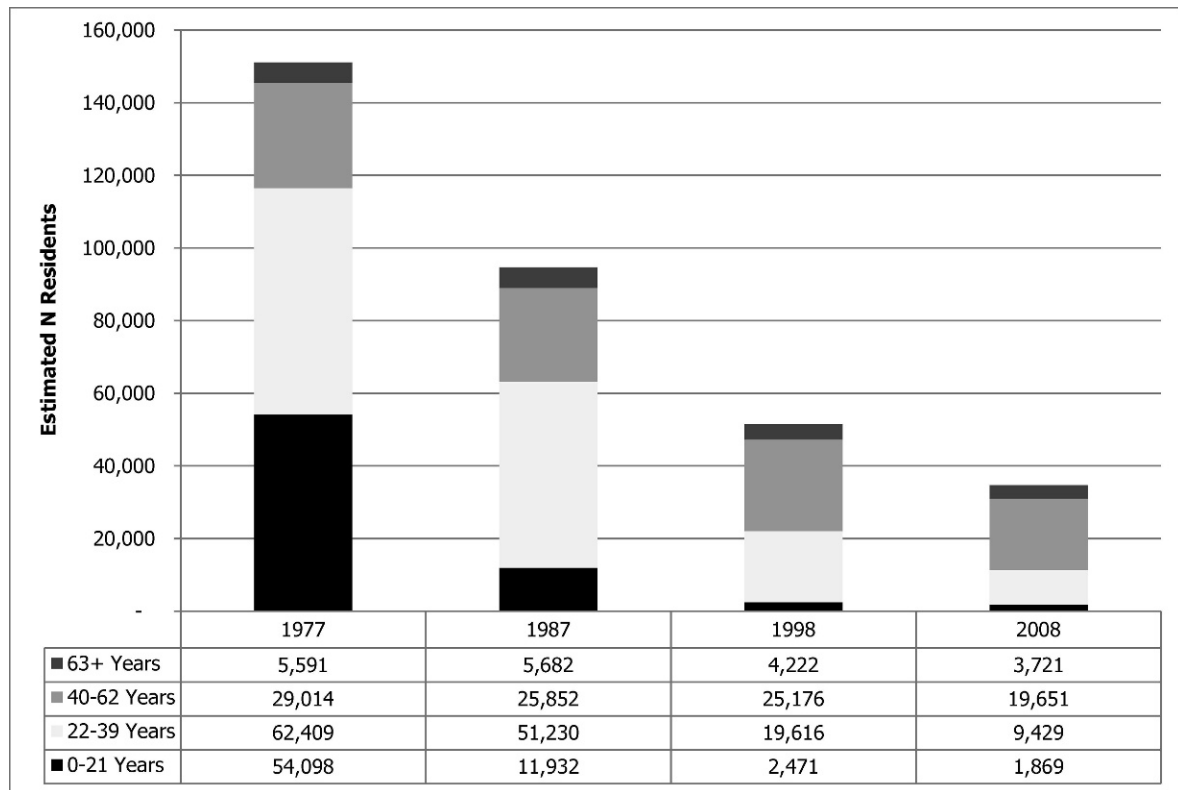


Figure 1 Changes in numbers and ages of state institution residents with intellectual disabilities, 1977 to 2008.

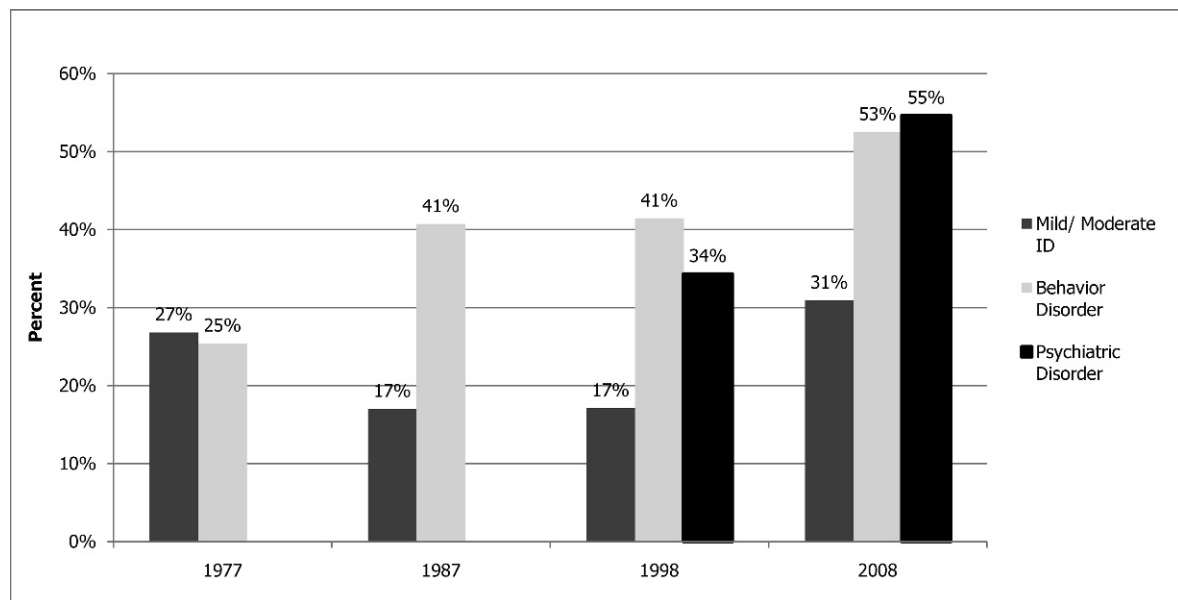


Figure 2 Changes in percentage of state institution residents with mild or moderate intellectual disability and behavior of psychiatric disorder, 1977 to 1988.

Table 2 Changes in State Institution Populations and Resident Characteristics, 1998 to 2008

State	1998					2008				
	Age 40+	Severe/ profound ID	Behavioral disorder	Psychiatric disorder	N	Age 40+	Severe/ profound ID	Behavioral disorder	Psychiatric disorder	N
AL	64.3	83.2	45.7	34.0	709	80.4	73.2	6.7	66.5	194
AK	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
AZ	^a	^a	DNF	DNF	173	99.2	81.7	42.9	42.9	126
AR	45.9	86.2	23.3	25.1	1,245	54.8	76.9	67.8	71.8	1,096
CA	56.7	85.1	34.5	27.7	3,951	61.2	56.4	33.6	58.5	2,530
CO	54.7	83.3	59.5	11.9	169	42.9	—	^a	100.0	105
CT	76.7	79.3	10.7	6.3	1,070	76.9	86.9	^a	35.8	760
DE	65.3	91.9	25.5	18.8	271	84.8	94.9	20.3	31.6	79
DC	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
FL	53.6	78.5	44.5	21.3	1,533	56.3	35.7	54.4	47.7	1,109
GA	55.5	89.3	15.8	40.0	1,622	^a	^a	^a	^a	988
HI	66.7	66.7	70.8	58.3	24	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
ID	41.7	57.4	58.3	^a	108	50.6	49.4	71.8	51.8	85
IL	^a	^a	^a	^a	3,358	72.9	76.4	68.4	47.8	2,424
IN	55.3	69.8	56.4	40.3	1,106	^a	^a	^a	^a	157
IA	51.3	65.7	15.7	75.9	664	61.2	59.3	55.6	79.4	547
KS	36.6	77.6	64.8	23.1	415	68.1	72.7	59.2	38.3	354
KY	^a	^a	^a	^a	640	62.7	69.3	60.1	55.9	173
LA	48.1	84.1	45.9	41.4	1,897	55.7	88.1	32.7	32.3	1,199
ME	—	—	0.0	0.0	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
MD	55.8	82.1	39.6	26.7	593	^a	^a	^a	^a	370
MA	85.1	82.8	46.4	21.6	1,461	92.0	51.8	22.4	54.6	901
MI	38.3	43.6	56.7	72.3	283	45.8	38.1	73.7	89.0	118
MN	41.0	47.0	79.9	59.7	138	14.6	2.4	26.8	90.2	41
MS	^a	83.8	^a	^a	1,399	54.9	75.2	33.5	40.3	1,321
MO	52.4	57.9	48.9	38.3	1,394	72.8	65.2	65.0	51.1	877
MT	56.4	70.7	12.0	35.3	133	25.4	11.9	100.0	91.0	67
NE	67.2	84.2	59.3	40.0	405	^a	^a	59.9	53.9	267
NV	27.0	60.7	38.7	68.1	169	23.4	57.4	87.2	87.2	51
NH	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
NJ	61.2	84.1	54.3	41.5	3,672	86.2	77.2	44.3	48.5	2,894
NM	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
NY	^a	^a	^a	^a	2,770	46.6	27.2	^a	77.0	1,551
NC	58.9	93.1	57.7	23.7	2,084	85.3	88.6	46.6	39.2	1,666
ND	63.6	72.6	31.2	40.4	141	65.0	55.0	40.0	^a	120
OH	66.5	81.3	67.2	52.5	2,019	76.9	73.8	61.7	60.1	1,518
OK	31.0	81.9	21.6	35.1	436	63.9	90.5	30.0	23.5	294
OR	56.7	83.0	35.9	61.5	350	100.0	93.1	41.4	44.8	29
PA	82.8	86.5	33.0	39.2	2,533	95.6	87.7	42.8	55.3	1,285
RI	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
SC	50.3	87.0	44.8	42.8	1,295	61.3	81.5	59.1	38.4	820
SD	47.3	65.8	100.0	22.8	228	30.7	24.0	98.7	98.0	150

Table 2 Continued

State	1998					2008				
	Age 40+	Severe/ profound ID	Behavioral disorder	Psychiatric disorder	<i>N</i>	Age 40+	Severe/ profound ID	Behavioral disorder	Psychiatric disorder	<i>N</i>
TN	56.3	92.6	35.4	29.1	1,081	83.9	96.1	31.6	45.9	488
TX	43.7	84.1	36.8	33.6	5,436	66.5	73.4	60.1	59.4	4,842
UT	48.9	^a	36.3	36.3	262	69.4	83.4	71.1	61.7	235
VT	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
VA	55.8	86.4	61.2	34.2	1,888	67.4	85.9	56.7	47.7	1,351
WA	32.4	87.0	13.3	9.6	1,222	70.1	83.5	61.9	53.6	951
WV	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
WI	47.1	94.0	44.0	45.1	1,010	79.9	95.6	50.6	50.4	455
WY	65.6	92.2	54.7	35.2	128	^a	^a	^a	^a	82
Est. U.S.										
Total	57.1	82.2	41.4	34.3	51,485	67.4	69.1	52.5	54.6	34,670

Note. NA = no large state-operated facility in this state, DNF=did not furnish data element.

^aFacilities housing less than 60% of the large, state-operated facilities reported this statistic.

**Insufficient data for either 1998 or 2008, or both.

(Sources: Lakin, K. C., Prouty, B., Braddock, D., & Anderson, L. (1997). State institution populations smaller, older, more impaired. *Mental Retardation*, 35, 231–232; Prouty, R., & Lakin, K. C. (Eds.). (1999). *Residential services for persons with developmental disabilities: Status and trends through 1998*. Minneapolis: University of Minne-

sota, Research and Training Center on Community Living; Salmi, P., Larson, S. A., & Lakin, K. C. (Eds.). (2009). *Residential services for persons with developmental disabilities: Status and trends through 2008*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Research and Training Center on Community Living.)