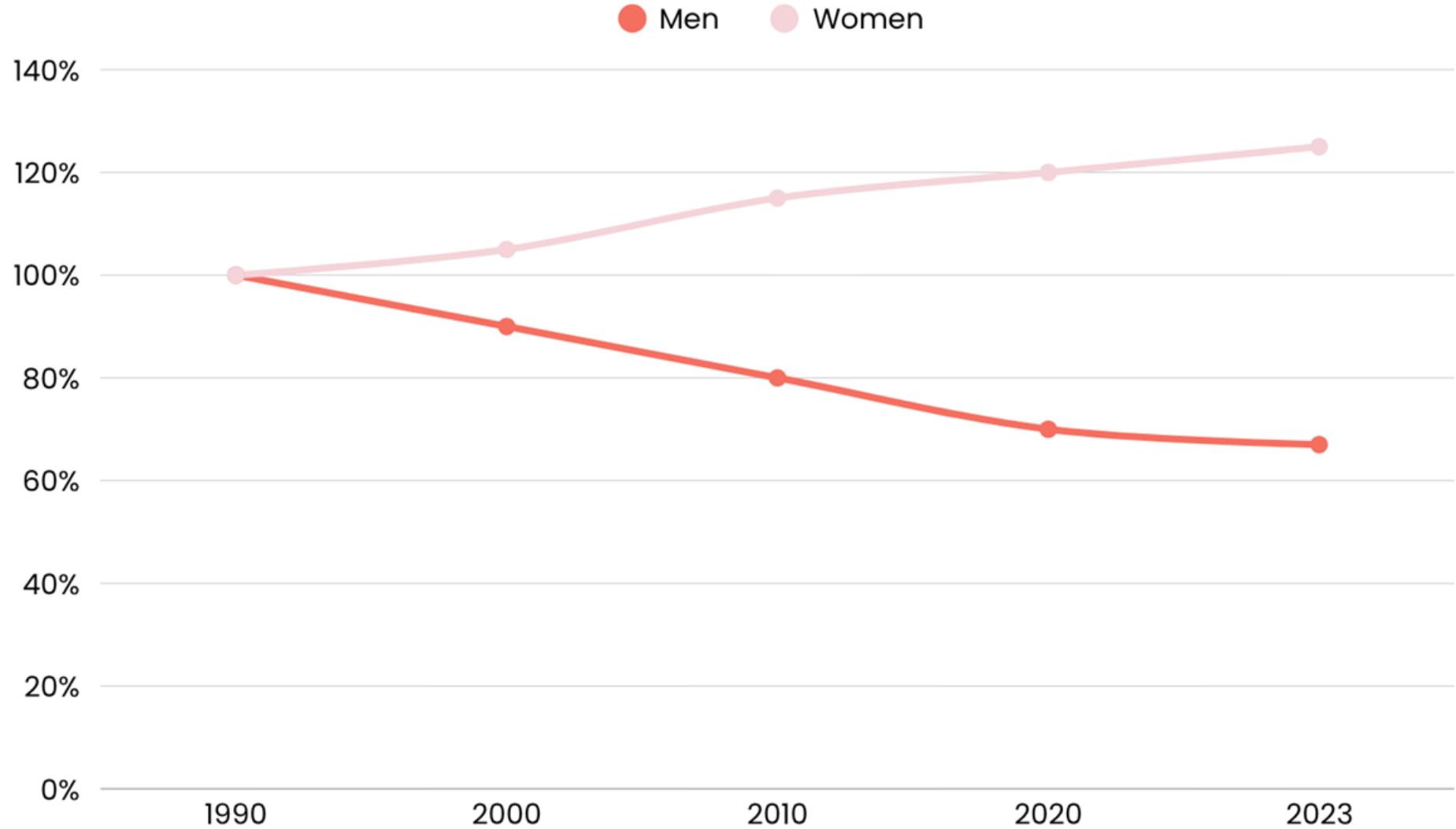




the gemma project
RESTORING HOPE, OPPORTUNITY, AND COMMUNITY

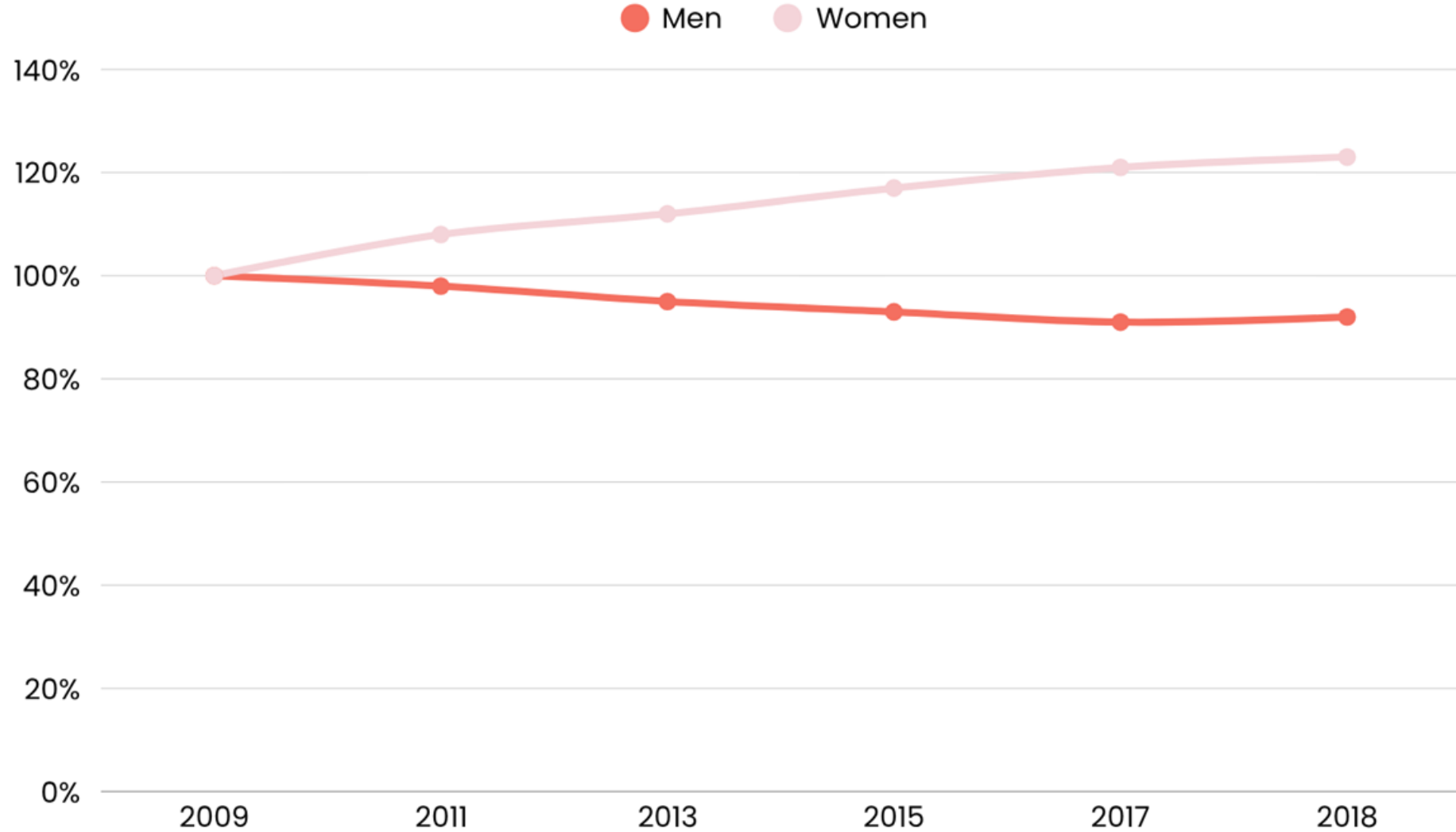
**The Silent 10%: The Untold Crisis of the Justice
System's Fastest Growing Population – Women**

Over the past 35 years, total arrests have risen 25% for women while decreasing 33% for men
We use 100% as a baseline to show these differences



While men's jail populations fell 8% from 2009 to 2018,
women's jail populations grew 23%

We use 100% as a baseline to show these differences



The Stats

Almost 90% of women incarcerated in jail are survivors of sexual violence and 80% are survivors of domestic/intimate partner violence

26% of incarcerated women experienced homelessness in the year before their arrest compared to 16% of men

Fleeing a domestic/intimate partner violence relationship is the leading cause of homelessness for women

Nearly 80% of women in jail have minor children

Because women are often sole - caregivers, they have children's needs to coordinate which impacts availability for employment, job training, education, and treatment

Poverty is the strongest predictor of recidivism among women

Filling the Gap

Because the pathways into incarceration are unique for women, gender - neutral programming often misses the mark.

Gemma was deliberately designed to address these specific needs through gender responsive services.

Gender - responsive means you have intentionally created an environment that demonstrates through site and staff selection, program and policy development, content, and materials the important differences between men and women in psychological development, socialization, culture, exposure to trauma, and life experiences.

The Gemma Project's Legacy

Roots

Gemma was created by incarcerated women in the early 2000's - they wanted programs designed for them instead of one-size-fits all that failed to meet their needs

Origin

Gemma – a name chosen by the founding women means **“a bud ready to grow independently”**
We specialize in meeting the needs of justice-involved women

Rebirth

In 2023, Lara Love a graduate of the original Gemma & Cynthia Chase the original Executive Director reimaged & relaunched with the goal to replicate in as many jails and prisons across the country as possible

Growth

We currently serve 10 counties and both women's prisons in California

Impact

An independent study of Gemma participants found a 40% reduction in recidivism - from 70% to 30%

Gemma Services across the Contra Costa continuum

Pretrial

In-custody
Day Program

In-custody
Reentry
Support

Continuing
Care

Prison &
Parole

All female identifying individuals on pretrial are referred to Gemma. Any participants placed on formal probation are provided a warm-handoff to Gemma Care Coordinator.

Therapeutic skill building group curriculum. Eight weeks, three times each week.* Includes establishing trusted relationship with Continuing Care Coordinator prior to release.


Individual reentry planning and support for participants not enrolled in the Day Program with mild - moderate behavioral health challenges.

Community based structured reentry support, connection to resources, system navigation, and warm handoffs.


Individual reentry planning and support for participants on parole or paroling to Contra Costa County from both CA women's prisons.

What's different about working with women?


Women are socialized to be more relational and social: they will call more, ask for more help, express more needs, make more requests – interactions can't be transactional, they have to focus on trust and relationship building




Women have more co-occurring and much more complex health and behavioral health needs



Women are less likely to be employed and more likely to be homeless prior to incarceration making immediate reentry needs more critical



Women are often sole caregivers and many children are placed in foster care as a **direct result** of their mother's incarceration



Women are more likely to engage in programming, seek resources, and complete terms & conditions

Myths & Facts about justice

- involved women

MYTH: women don't need services because the majority of justice - involved people are men.
FACT: gender neutral programs are often ineffective for women



MYTH: women don't want/need services because they are not showing up for services that are currently available.
FACT: spaces that are male dominated can feel predatory, triggering and unsafe for many women who have been assaulted, exploited, or trafficked



Because women who are incarcerated are often sole - caregivers, women's arrests often result in their children entering foster care and contribute to the next generation of incarcerated individuals. 1/5 of the prison population is comprised of former foster youth.

What makes Gemma Unique

By and For Justice - Involved Women - founded by incarcerated women we center the voices, needs, and leadership of justice - involved women in every aspect of our programming and structure.

We begin in - custody - laying a foundation of trust and continue into the community maintaining the continuity of care with **No Time Limit** - Participants receive support before, during, and long after release. This “no drop - off” approach addresses a common failure point in reentry programs.

Holistic, Healing - Centered Approach - Combines behavioral health support, housing navigation, family reunification, and more. - Uses wellness and reentry plans that reflect each woman’s individual strengths, needs, and goals.

Gender - and Trauma - Responsive from the Ground Up - Designed specifically for justice - involved women, not retrofitted from programs meant for men. - Incorporates trauma - responsive practices, recognizing the deep impact of trauma on behavior, healing, and reentry.

Operate as a “hub and spoke model” where we remain the consistent hub coordinating care to the many spokes of providers including probation, courts, treatment, and community providers - this approaches increases retention in all services and improves outcomes.

Policy Advocacy Coalition Deliverables

Identify and prioritize	Identify and prioritize policy areas that disproportionately impact women
Form	Form a coalition of advocates, including justice-involved women, to influence policy change and increase awareness among policymakers
Draft and present	Draft and present at least three policy recommendations to local and state governments
Work	Work with justice system stakeholders to implement evidence-based alternatives to incarceration, such as diversion
Collect and present	Collect and present demographic, program, and outcome data demonstrating the effectiveness of gender-responsive programming

JOIN US: Community Event



Diablo Valley
College –
JUNE

Specific date to
follow



Screening of
the film:
Breaking
Barriers



Panel Q&A
with justice-
involved
women from
Contra
Costa
County
including the
filmmaker



Policy
Recommendations
from the Policy
Coalition