

Preventing Juvenile Delinquency

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3 Juvenile Delinquency: An Introduction

By Carolyn A. Smith, Ph.D.

Juvenile Delinquency is a term which is often inaccurately used. This article clarifies definitions, looks at prevalence, and explores the relationship between juvenile delinquency and mental health. Throughout, differences between males and females are explored.



8 Deviant by Design: Risks Associated With Aggregating Deviant Peers into Group Prevention and Treatment Programs

By Thomas J. Dishion, Ph.D., Kenneth A. Dodge, Ph.D., & Jennifer E. Lansford, Ph.D.

While delinquency has multiple causes, deviant peer affiliation is one of the strongest. In fact, a high proportion of violence, drug use, and other deviant behaviors are committed in groups, rather than in isolation. This article explores how practices within educational, mental health, juvenile justice, and community programs can lead to deviant peer influences.



12 Reducing School Violence: School-Based Curricular Programs and School Climate

By Michael B. Greene, Ph.D.

This article examines two different, but interrelated approaches to reduce school violence: school-based curricular programs, and efforts to change school climate. The state of the research for each approach is reviewed and the relationship between them is explored.



17 Urban Neighborhoods, Families, and Juvenile Delinquency

By Deborah Gorman-Smith, Ph.D.

Delinquency has multiple causes. This article explores the effect of both family functioning and urban neighborhood characteristics on risk for delinquent involvement. It reviews the results of the longitudinal Chicago Youth Development Study and then provides six opportunities to support families in urban neighborhoods.

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From the Editor's PC

Dear Colleagues,

Juvenile delinquency is a topic of great interest that spans many disciplines. This issue of *The Prevention Researcher* provides a broad look at the many factors which can lead to, or protect from, juvenile delinquency.

We start with an introductory article by Dr. Carolyn Smith that defines juvenile delinquency and then uses both self-report and arrest data to show the extent of delinquency. The author ends by examining the co-occurrence of delinquency with emotional problems and developmental issues. Throughout, the article explores similarities and differences between males and females.

Next, Dr. Thomas Dishion and colleagues discuss the role that peers play in deviant behavior. One of the most robust findings in the juvenile delinquency research is the impact of associating with deviant peers, yet many programs group deviant youth together. The article ends with suggestions for change.

Reducing the prevalence of school violence is a priority for many people. In his article, Dr. Michael Greene compares two separate, though interrelated approaches: school-based curricular programs and changing school climate. Research shows that school connectedness and student perceptions of school rules and discipline policies are related to levels of violence and aggression, so this is an area ripe for exploration.

Finally, Dr. Deborah Gorman-Smith looks at the relationship between family functioning and the environment in urban neighborhoods. Results from her Chicago Youth Development Study show that the impact of families and neighborhoods are inter-related and must be considered together. She ends her article with six opportunities to support urban families.

As you may notice, *The Prevention Researcher* has a new look which complements our new Web site (at www.TPRonline.org). Also starting with this issue, we have switched to a paper stock certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. This switch means that our paper comes from responsibly managed forests and verified recycled sources. Using a "chain of custody" certification system, the forest, pulp providers, mills, merchants, and printers must all obtain FSC certification before we can print the FSC logo within *The Prevention Researcher*.

We welcome your comments on this issue and our formatting changes.

All the best,

Steven Ungerleider, Ph.D.
Editor/Psychologist

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