
The authors provide an examination of the influence of mental health status and gender on reentry outcomes within the first year of release from prison. Data from 352 respondents (female = 142) suggest that men and women suffering from mental illness experienced poorer health overall upon release. Further, mental health problems resulted in poorer outcomes in housing, employment, and criminal behavior for women, yet only influenced employment outcomes for men. Further gender differences are discussed, and recommendations are made for improving reintegration for individuals with mental illness diagnoses.


Police use of force encounters include individuals with Excited Delirium Syndrome with some frequency, however the situational factors and risks to officer safety have not been well studied. Data collected from January 2012 to December 2015 were studied. The study provided important information to guide the development of policy and procedure in law enforcement, as police encounter a subject with ExDS 1 in every 58 use of force incidents.


The aim of this observational study was to assess rates of suicide and suicide attempts in north-eastern Italian prison during 2010-2016, and investigate associations with prison overcrowding, offence type, and prior self-harm and suicide attempts. Results indicated that there is a need for suicide prevention polices in Triveneto, which should take into account predictors of suicidal behaviors and individual characteristics.


Using data from the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities (SISFCF) the author analyzed whether individuals with mental illness \( n = 1,904 \) were more likely to receive disciplinary segregation following a misconduct violation compared to a weighted comparison group \( n = 3,919 \). Weighted logistic regression models and multinomial logistic regressions indicated that inmates with a diagnosed mental illness were 1.36 times more likely to be punished using segregation compared to their peers without a known mental illness. Policy and practice implications for the use of disciplinary segregation with mentally ill populations are described.

This study provides an evaluation of a three-day workshop based in the Good Lives Model and aims to increase empathy, victim awareness, and emotional awareness. This study sought to understand the offender’s experience in the workshop and how they believe it contributed to their recovery. This study focuses on the need to encourage group cohesion and trust, and highlights issues relating to peer comparisons that may impede new perspectives on personal identity and rationale for change. The practical implications of effectively delivering this treatment to sex offenders in the context of personal recovery is discussed as well.


This study evaluated the outcomes of Transformation Project, a 13-module cognitive-behavioral intervention program targeting individuals placed in restrictive housing. Follow-up evaluation of subsequent assault, drug/alcohol offenses, and nonviolent misconduct occurred over a six-month period which began after participants (N = 374) were transferred out of restrictive housing. Factors such as type of restrictive housing and time served in restrictive housing after program participation mitigated treatment effects. Notably, no participant completed the full 13-module intervention. Future directions for the implementation of effective programming in restrictive housing are discussed.


This study assessed the effectiveness of evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs) for trauma-related distress in treating individuals with SMI (n = 97) who have been diverted from jail to community-based treatment programs. Results provide novel evidence for the effectiveness of EBPs for trauma-related distress when delivered in an outpatient setting to individuals with SMI who have come into contact with the justice system.


The current study included 925 inmates housed in 2 large U.S. jails and 8 state correctional systems who attempted (79.5%) or died by (20.5%) suicide for whom archival data was available. Results indicate differences between inmates who attempt versus those who die by suicide indicate that when mental health staff are aware of inmates’ current and historical risk factors, deaths by suicide are less likely to occur.


This study examined the efficacy of the JJAM treatment for girls, an anger management and aggression reduction treatment designed to meet the unique needs of adolescent girls in residential juvenile justice facilities. Participants were 70 female youth who ranged in age from 14 to 20 years. Results suggest that JJAM is a promising treatment to effectively reduce anger and reactive aggression among adolescent girls in juvenile justice placements.


This study examined pretreatment and posttreatment scores on the Measures of Antisocial Attitudes and Associates in a sample of 1,858 offenders who had completed offender treatment programs. Results showed that discrete scores on several measures were associated with reoffending hazard at pretreatment and posttreatment.
Change over treatment was also highly significant at the group level. None of the measures of within-treatment change were significantly associated with reoffending.


This study used the full range of PCL-R scores in a sample of 190 male violent offenders to replicate subtypes found by Neumann, Vitacco, and Mokros (2016), and subsequently to examine potential differences in treatment responsivity. Four subtypes emerged. Prototypical psychopathic offenders were significantly more likely to drop out, but completers appeared to proceed through the different phases of treatment in much the same way as the other groups.


The Good School Toolkit is effective in reducing staff violence against children in Ugandan primary schools. A secondary analysis of cluster-randomized trial data was conducted to investigate intervention effects on school operational culture, and on normative beliefs and violence against children from caregivers outside of school. This intervention shows promise as a platform for addressing violence against children within the school environment and surrounding community.


This study aimed to determine (a) rates of suicidal ideation history, suicide attempt history, and current distress due to suicidal ideation, and (b) the associations between psychiatric symptom severity, criminal risk factors, and suicide risk amongst 207 not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) inpatients. Results indicated psychiatric symptom severity, not criminal tendencies or antisocial personality traits, was associated with a greater likelihood of current distress due to suicidal ideation.


There is a high prevalence of mental health need in prisons, much of which is currently unmet. This study used content analysis to review 36 unannounced prison inspection reports in England to establish whether mental health care was provided to an appropriate standard, and whether it is equivalence to services that are provided in the wider community. This study found that the delivery of mental health care within prisons is still not equivalent to that which is provided in the community and has identified a number of areas for further improvement.


Imprisonment has a more pronounced criminogenic effect on drug offenders than on other types of offenders. Additionally, little research has been conducted on the practical application of drug-related alternatives to prison. Therefore, this study describes drug-related alternatives to prison in Belgium over a ten years' period since 2005. The results highlight differences in punishment judgments by age, gender and nationality that continues to be indicative for perceived threat, danger and culpability of the offenders.
The effectiveness of a Motivational Interviewing Case Management (MICM) intervention in sober living houses (SLHs) for individuals on probation and parole was assessed. 149 individuals received the MICM intervention over a twelve-month period and 181 individuals received SLH protocols as usual. Those in the MICM condition showed better criminal justice outcomes as demonstrated by reduced arrests, convictions, and incarcerations. Both groups demonstrated improvements in substance use, HIV risk, psychiatric problems, employment, homelessness, and perceptions of housing stability. Implications for the use of SLH as an incarceration alternative for individuals with drug and alcohol related offenses are discussed.


Criminal recidivism within two years after discharge from a secure Forensic Psychiatric Hospitals is high, that is over 36% for short-term measures. It is assumed that relational care during treatment and continued informal care after discharge are factors that contribute to the reduction of recidivism. This study found that of the patients who received relational care and voluntary contact after treatment recidivated at a lower rate than patients from control groups.


This study investigated the attitudes of probation staff on evidenced based practices (EBP), and how these attitudes may influence the implementation and utilization of recommended standardized assessments in community supervision. 251 probation staff members from 12 probation offices completed a survey regarding their attitudes and use of recommended EBPs. Positive perceptions of staff’s agencies were associated with more positive attitudes towards EBP assessment practices and greater use of case planning. Implications for organizational change in correctional agencies are addressed.


The psychological effects of administrative segregation (AS) were investigated for individuals with and without a history of mental health needs. Psychological deterioration was measured using clinician ratings of the Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale (BPRS). Psychological deterioration was experienced significantly more by mental health inmates in AS compared to nonmental health inmates. Further, mental health inmates showed equal degrees of psychological deterioration regardless of general population or AS housing. Recommendations are made for the monitoring of inmates with mental illness and the theoretical implications for segregation housing unit (SHU) syndrome are discussed.


According to bystander theory, factors such as the community environment, collective efficacy, and history of adverse childhood experiences could be related to likelihood of reporting or intervening against maltreatment. The results suggested that perceiving the vignette as occurring in your own neighborhood was associated with lower odds of viewing the behavior as appropriate and considering it abusive. Findings from this study have implications for neighborhood and education interventions to enhance understanding of and willingness to intervene on behalf of children.

Guided by developmental and feminist pathways theory, the authors investigate the relationship between childhood abuse and subsequent offending trajectories. Particular focus was placed on this relationship in women with early onset, chronic offending. Survey data from 470 Australian female offenders provides support for a model trajectory of early abuse leading to internalizing symptoms, drug use, and subsequent offending, particularly in property crime models. Drug use was not a significant mediator in the model for violent offending. Differences were also found in the effect of abuse type on internalizing symptoms and the temporal onset of offending. Policy implications and intervention recommendations are discussed.


Many studies have reported an effect of childhood maltreatment and parenting behavior with the future development of psychopathic traits. However, there is a limited amount of research on parenting behavior and adult psychopathic traits as possible identifiers of childhood maltreatment. The findings of this study provide support for using parenting behavior and psychopathic traits as markers of childhood maltreatment.


The current study assessed the role of emotion dysregulation and facets of impulsivity as potential mediators in the relation between adverse childhood experiences and general health-risk behaviors, including alcohol-related consequences and risky sexual behavior. Results of this study highlight the importance of assessing for emotion regulation skills when working with young adults with histories of adversity.


The authors investigated the relationship between evaluator’s assigned Psychopathy Checklist – Revised (PCL-R) facet scores and Static-99R scores with their true perception of risk. 99 doctoral-level forensic evaluators completed PCL-R and Static-99R trainings and were then asked to complete at least three risk assessments of sex offenders under the guise of real-world conditions. PCL-R Factor 1 scores were more strongly associated with risk judgments than PCL-R Factor 2 scores, with Factor 1 scores explaining more than three times the variance in clinician judgments. Future directions of study in training and clinician opinion formation are noted.


The current study used cluster analysis to examine the sexuality profiles of adolescents who have engaged in sexual abuse (AESA), which included information on several sexual dimensions. Results suggest three clusters of AESA: 1- Discordant sexuality, 2- Constrictive sexuality, and 3- Overinvested sexuality. Additional analyses reveal that five delinquency and offense characteristics were significantly more likely to be present in the Overinvested than the Constrictive cluster. Advancing our knowledge on this topic can provide relevant data for clinicians to better target interventions.

This study examined the construct validity of the three-factor model of the Interpersonal Measure of Psychopathy (IM-P) which includes dimensions of Dominance, Grandiosity, and Boundary Violation. IM-P scores were associated with PCL-R Factor 1 scores, even after PCL-R Factor 2 scores were controlled for, suggesting that shared variance between Factors was not the cause of this relationship. Clinically meaningful and distinct relationships with external correlates were found for each of the three factors of the IM-P. Implications for the utility of the IM-P measure during forensic evaluations are detailed.


A risk-needs-responsivity model is used to assess how programming reflecting this framework influenced recidivism in a group of Indigenous (n = 37) and non-Indigenous youth (n = 33) serving community sentences. Notes from a multidisciplinary team which completed risk assessments, identified criminogenic needs, and made need-targeted programming recommendations were coded. Groups did not differ on overall level of risk, number of needs, match to needs, or recidivism rates. Further, risk assessment predicted recidivism in both groups. Indigenous youth received higher risk scores in peer and leisure functioning. The examination of colonization-specific factors in future research is recommended.


Given the association between child maltreatment and a host of negative behavioral consequences, there remains a need to continue to identify mechanisms underlying this association as a means of improving intervention efforts. The present study examined disengagement coping. Results have implications for understanding age-related differences in the emotional and behavioral consequences of maltreatment.


Using Arizona Department of Corrections data, the authors assessed time until commission of serious and violent infractions for female inmates (N = 2,777) based on term sentence. Sentences were categorized as short (2 years or less), intermediate (2-8 years), or long-term (8 or more). Using Cox regression analyses and controlling for other factors, those with long-term sentences committed serious and violent infractions at one-third the rate of short-term inmates. There were low base rates of violent infractions, including assaults against staff and other inmates, across all three groups. Implications for policy and institutional practice are noted.


This study examined whether risk and strength factors predicted recidivism differentially between male and female youth. Database searches identified 22 studies, representing 50,601 justice-involved youth and a total of 584 effect sizes. The results provide support for a gender informed perspective on crime, and key risk factors that may be the same for both males and females but also the underlying expression and experience of the factors could be different.


This study examined how the combination of sibling victimization and parental child maltreatment is related to mental health problems and delinquency in childhood and adolescence. The results provide primarily evidence for additive associations and only suggest some co-occurrence and interactive associations of sibling victimization and child maltreatment. These results highlight the unique and combined associations between sibling victimization on child development.

This study examined the role of culture in reducing rates of violent behavior among adolescent and young adult males. Findings suggest that culture plays an important protective role in the likelihood of engaging in violence for this group.


The author explores how biological factors may moderate the relationship between religiosity and crime. A religiosity and genotype interaction was investigated through analysis of the dopamine transporter gene (DAT1) and monoamine oxidase A (MAOA) genotype in 4,053 male adolescents. Specific allele carriers are identified which may mediate an association between religiosity and criminal offending. Implications for theory regarding religiosity, criminal offending, and desistance are discussed.

**FORENSIC ASSESSMENT**


Retrospective chart review of all cases referred for forensic assessments during January 2016 and May 2017 were retrieved and characterized. This study found that the number of criminals found fit to stand trial was small compared to western countries. The study suggests that forensic mental health workers and psychiatrists might need to provide better awareness and education about mental health to legal authorities in Kuwait.


The aim of the present study was to adapt and validate the ISPCAN child abuse screening tool-retrospective version (ICAST-R) in Sri Lanka with a view to investigating the experiences of physical, sexual and emotional abuse during childhood. Overall, the SICAST-R showed adequate validity for the assessment of experiences of physical, sexual and emotional abuse during childhood among Sri Lankan young adults.


Clinicians face unique challenges when assessing suspected child abuse cases. This study aimed to determine factors influencing decision-making and multidisciplinary collaboration in suspected AHT cases, amongst 56 child protection professionals. Participants’ experiences with multidisciplinary collaboration are generally positive, however social workers and police officers are heavily reliant on clinicians to guide their decision-making, suggesting the need for training on the medical aspects of physical abuse for these professionals and multidisciplinary training that provides knowledge about the roles of each agency.

This study aimed to adapt the ICAST child abuse self-report measure (parent and child) for use in intervention studies and to investigate the psychometric properties of this substantially modified tool in a South African sample. The study established that both tools are sensitive to measuring change over time in response to a parenting intervention. Further research is needed to replicate these findings and examine cultural appropriateness, barriers for disclosure, and willingness to engage in child abuse research.


This study utilized a sample of 1,354 youthful offenders from the Pathways to Desistance project to examine the separate effects of the PAI Antisocial Features and Borderline Features scales in predicting future offending behavior and trends in other negative outcomes over a 1-year follow-up. ANT and BOR both explained unique variance in the prediction of various negative outcomes even after controlling for past indicators of those same behaviors during the preceding year.


The authors investigated the potential for juvenile offenders to fake Miranda abilities and the effectiveness of Miranda feigning scales (Juvenile Miranda Quiz, [JMQ] and the Miranda Rights Comprehension Instruments [MRCI]) to identify these attempts. Adolescent offenders in the feign condition (n = 62) were successful at suppressing their scores to significant levels. The JMQ floor effect (FE) and performance-curve detective strategies were effective at identifying malingering. Low scale scores on specific MRCI subtests also showed potential efficacy in identifying malingering. Implications for research and practice are addressed.


This study sought to understand the perspective of key stakeholders on childhood sexual abuse (CSA) screening through qualitative research. Three major categories emerged to inform CSA screenings: 1) early screenings were preferred, 2) due to CSA perpetrators often knowing the child, parental presence in the medial office was a concern, and 3) refinement of the screening process was discussed starting with education of safe touch and defining “normal.”


Despite the growing popularity of telemedicine, no literature exists describing patient and caregiver perceptions of telemedicine for this sensitive exam. This study sought to explore caregiver and adolescent perspectives of the use of telemedicine for the child sexual abuse examination and discover factors that drive satisfaction with the technology. Results indicated that telemedicine was widely accepted by adolescents and caregivers when used for the child sexual abuse examination.


This study examined associations of the SIRS and SIRS-2 with the MMPI-2–RF validity scales in samples of disability claimants and criminal defendants. Results indicate that the SIRS-2 reduced the number of feigning classifications. Additional analyses suggest that the Modified Total Index and Supplementary Scale Index do not assess the test-taking strategy that Rogers and colleagues (2010) intended the indices to capture. Evaluatees reclassified on the SIRS-2 in nonfeigning categories exhibited feigned psychopathological symptoms.

The psychometric properties of the Massachusetts Youth Screening Inventory – Second Version (MAYSI-2) was assessed in a sample of 472 Latino juvenile offenders (female = 153). The factor structure found in this sample showed good representation of the manualized structure. While all seven subscales confirmed adequate fit, there was highly consistent loading for the four subscales of: alcohol/drug use, depressed-anxious, somatic complaints, and suicide ideation subscales. Convergent validity for many scales was found for symptoms measured by the K-SADS-PL. Implications of the generalizability, validity, and practical application of this measure are discussed.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT, CONFESSIONS, & DECEPTION**


Truthful and deceptive mock border control interviewees (N = 52) recorded perceptions about their interview experience having been conducted in either their native or second language. Non-native speakers reported higher nervousness and cognitive challenge than native speakers. Credibility judges (N = 128) exposed to audiovisual, visual, audio, or transcript stimuli showed better accuracy for interviews conducted in the interviewee’s native than non-native language.


Undergraduates and community members viewed a video of a simulated crime and answered coarse- and fine-grained levels of detail. Coarse grain reported did not occur often under the free recall interview conditions. Participants provided coarse grain details when asked to respond to probes about specific details. These coarse-grained details were similar in accuracy to details reported under free recall conditions.


Mr. Big is a Canadian undercover police technique used to elicit confessions. Confessions elicited in this way may prejudice jurors against a defendant. Authors evaluated how various factors influence moral prejudice and decision-making in mock jurors. Experiment 1 (N=270) showed fewer guilty verdicts in high incentive conditions. In Experiment 2 (N=1,666), high incentive and low defendant intelligence were elicited fewer guilty verdicts, favorable character ratings, and skeptical evaluations of confession evidence. Community and participant samples differed.


The researchers had 12 participants engage in a testing situation in which half were induced to cheat. After the task, all participants were accused of cheating and interrogated with approaches that focused on potential benefits of cooperation or approaches that focused on potential risks of withholding information. Participants who cheated were significantly more likely to confess when interrogated with approaches that focused on risks of withholding. Participants reported high rapport in both types of approaches.

This study examined the utility of the Lackland Behavioral Questionnaire to predict attrition and risk of disciplinary offenses in a sample of 50,322 U.S. Air Force recruits in basic military training. For trainees in the top 2% of the general attrition prediction rule, 63% were discharged before completing their first 4 years. Similarly, for trainees in the top 2% of the disciplinary offenses prediction rule, 35% had a significant disciplinary offense over the following 4 years.


Regardless of whether initial questioning was open- or closed-ended, truth-tellers (n = 34) included more verifiable details in their statements than did liars (n = 33). In a follow-up study, participants (N = 96) were interviewed twice, with half receiving instructions emphasizing the importance of including verifiable details between interviews. Only truth-tellers revised their statements to include more verifiable details.


Investigative interviews following National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) protocols were analyzed to explore prompts and responses reactions. 200 alleged abuse victims were categorized into four groups; adolescents and adults with mild intellectual disability (ID; n = 50), adolescents and adults with moderate ID (n = 50), and a mental age matched typically developing comparison group (n = 100). Recall prompts were the most common yet resulted in fewer responses from those in the ID groups. ID groups offered new details following 1/3 of prompts; more frequently in response to recall prompts than recognition prompts. Those with moderate ID were less likely to make spontaneous allegations. Implications for effective investigative interviewing of individuals with ID are discussed.


The authors applied a Naturalistic Decision Making (NDM) framework to analyze the decision-making processes of 91 police recruits. Each recruit engaged in two realistic role-playing scenarios as part of their training. Debrief sessions with their trainer following each exercise were coded using thematic analysis. No officers used purely analytical decision-making processes, relying more on pattern matching and heuristics. However, many did depend on mental simulation to imagine outcomes which suggests some degree of analytical processing. Implications for police training and policies are addressed.


Students (N = 143) watched a simulated break-in then instructed to either lie or tell the truth about the video’s contents. Immediately after, participants were interviewed and instructed to provide further information using one of three mnemonic devices: context reinstatement, sketch, or event-line. When they were interviewed again two weeks later, truth-tellers displayed patterns more indicative of genuine memory decay than did liars.


Three studies (N = 153, N = 102, N = 218) examined prior information and police experience as moderators in decisions to shoot during repeated First-Person Shooter Tasks. Racial bias emerged when students and police officers did not receive prior information about the target; however, both formal police training and receiving information about the target’s race eliminated this effect.
Participants (N = 60) either lied or told the truth about their identity during a recruitment interview. Though no differences emerged in the details provided, truth-tellers used more cognitive process words than liars, whereas liars used more positive language than truth-tellers, suggesting reality monitoring may not be diagnostic in identity deception scenarios.

In a direct replication of Warmelink, Vrij, Mann, and Granhag (2013), Dutch ferry passengers (N = 79) were randomly assigned to tell the truth or lie about their plans at their destination before being questioned about temporal aspects about their journey and day. Truth-tellers did not include more specific time references than liars, thus failing to replicate Warmelink et al. (2013). Suggestions for replication efforts are discussed.

British (n = 49), Chinese (n = 48) and Arab (n = 56) pairs were interviewed about a real or imagined visit to a nearby restaurant, and seventeen verbal cues were examined. Differences between cultures were more apparent than differences between liars and truth-tellers. Additionally, differences between the use of explicit versus implicit, contextual language could lead to misidentification of cultural cues as cues to deceit.

The researchers tested whether a police officer’s decision to apprehend a suspect triggers confirmation bias during interrogation. In Study 1, 60 police officers decided whether to apprehend a suspect or heard about the decision of another police officer or prosecutor. Participants also prepared questions for an interrogation and evaluated the suspect’s denial or confession. Study 2, replicated the first study but with undergraduates. Findings suggest that apprehended suspects were interrogated in a more guilt presumptive way and rated less trustworthy.

The authors investigated changing juror-eligible perceptions of the false confession phenomenon. An online survey was administered to 968 participants who reported their perceptions of confession behaviors broadly, Miranda waivers, interrogation methods, as well as their crime-media exposure. 60% of respondents allowed that suspects may falsely confess. Participants reported an acknowledgment that suspects may not understand their Miranda rights, that innocent suspects are likely to waive their Miranda rights, and that police may use manipulation to achieve this outcome. Potential juror perceptions on other aspects of police coercion and confession obtainment are detailed. The potential use of the media as an educational outlet to potential jurors is discussed.

Due to the increased controversy surrounding the police, specifically in regard to racism, excessive use of force, and communities of color in the United States, a need for centralized training and assessment has arise. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a 50-item questionnaire, has been created and recommended for use to allow for this consistent training and to provide cultural awareness to lead to more effective police work.
Resistance to coaching in forced-choice testing. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 32,* 693-700. DOI: 10.1002/acp.3443
Undergraduates (N = 104) were exposed to either an intelligence scenario or a real estate scenario before completing a forced-choice test for which they were either coached in the mechanisms of the lie detection test or naïve. Coaching eliminated differences of the number of correct items chosen by guilty versus innocent suspects but could not eliminate differences in alternations between correct and incorrect answer selection.

Police response to domestic violence (DV) has continued to change and expand over the past several decades. While child presence increased the odds of victim-directed intervention and victim-directed follow-up, it decreased the odds of arrest. Findings indicated that the frequency of police interaction with children present at DV incidents was minimal. Based on these findings, recommendations for policy and practice are discussed.

Pairs of truth-tellers (n = 34) and liars (n = 33) were interviewed when a model statement was either present or absent. Truth-telling pairs exhibited more detailed reporting and interaction than liars, and exposure to a model statement further magnified the difference between liars and truth-tellers.

A two-phase interview included an initial recall, a model statement, and a post-model recall. Taking the differential verbal strategies of liars (n = 27) and truth-tellers (n = 27) into account, the proportion of complications in adults’ recall of a trip made (or fabricated) during the last twelve months discriminated between liars and truth-tellers better than total information provided.

Millions of arrests occur each year, but little is known about how suspects are informed regarding their rights and whether these rights are accurately understood. In the United States alone, over 300,000 mentally disordered suspects are arrested annually and Mirandized. Despite this, only two published studies have specifically targeted impaired Miranda comprehension for persons with severe mental disorders and none have focused directly on Miranda reasoning and waiver decisions. Findings indicate that Miranda recall and reasoning are extremely low, and that waiver of rights always led to a confession.

**LEGAL DECISION-MAKING/JURY RESEARCH**

Undergraduate participants (N = 362) were given no instructions or instructions to consciously mimic or not mimic a rape complainants facial expressions while watching either an emotional or non-emotional report of the incident. Though participants instructed to not mimic judged the complainant as less believable than the control condition, complainant emotions did not influence perceived believability of the complainant.
The media’s impact on the right to a fair trial: A content analysis of pretrial publicity in capital cases. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 24, 326–340. doi: 10.1037/law0000174

The authors reviewed media coverage for twenty death penalty cases in the state of California in which a change of venue motion was filed. Content analysis of 1,831 newspaper articles discussing these cases indicated that 75% of the articles provided negative pretrial publicity that was either sensationalistic (50%), about the individual (32%), or discussing outrage expressed by the community (33%). Legally excluded information was often included in media reports. Law enforcement and prosecution were cited 6.3 more times than were defense sources. Yet, venue was changed in only six of the twenty cases. Implications for due process protections in capital cases are discussed.


This study examined mock jurors' ability to reliably and “accurately” judge a defendant's mens rea at the time of an offense under conditions similar to the tasks of criminal jurors. Results demonstrated that in a high percentage of cases across many conditions, individual decision-makers are likely to attribute the most culpable mental state to defendants, even when the facts on the record are judged by legal experts to depict no more than negligent or reckless conduct.


The researchers investigated whether innocent and guilty participants who were accused of cheating would plead guilty or take their case before the Student Conduct Committee in a hearing. The researchers manipulated the attorney’s recommendation and the guilt of the defendant, finding that advocate recommendation influenced innocent defendants more than guilty defendants. Innocent participants who were advised to go to trial were less likely to falsely plead guilty compared to those without an advocate.


The current field study aimed to assess the strategies utilized, and the frequency with which they are used, in confrontations within forensic investigations involving children following suspected abuse, and to assess their effects on the children's testimonies. The discussion addresses how confrontations and cross-examination, as a necessary stage of forensic investigation, can affect children’s testimonies, and the implications of these effects for the forensic context.


Three hundred twenty-four jury-eligible undergraduates participated with 36 participants in each experimental session. The researchers tested whether predeliberation juror discussion biased jury verdicts. Findings suggested that when participants engaged in predeliberation, participants placed greater weight on evidence following predeliberation juror discussion. The authors suggest that participants might have assumed that information during predeliberation had already been heard and thus gave more attention to evidence in jury deliberation.


This study explored the effects of free will doubt on support for retribution and consequentialism in response to three categories of crime which have been shown to evoke varying levels of emotion. For high affect crime, results found that free will doubt weakens support for retribution via blame, and increases support for consequentialism. For low affect crime, free will doubt weakens support for retribution to an even greater extent, yet also decreases support for consequentialism via blame.

Past research has shown that an impaired mental functioning and being a single parent are indicators of limited parenting resources. The present study examined parental mental health and single parenthood using data from family law proceedings. This study contributes to a better understanding of the population getting before court and the judicial process. Psychological attributes do play a role in the decision-making of judges; and taking the role of the fathers into account is necessary.


The authors investigated the role of race on juror perceptions of eyewitness identification. Black (n = 192) and White (n = 193) online participants acted as mock jurors in a 2 (defendant race: Black, White) x 2 (eyewitness race: Black, White) x 2 (juror race: Black, White) design. An offshoot design also included a factor in which expert testimony was included. Black jurors were more likely to convict in the White defendant-Black eyewitness condition than in the Black defendant-White eyewitness condition. Experts were rated more favorable in conditions in which there was a Black defendant and White eyewitness. Perceived race salience by Black jurors was higher in this same condition. Future research directions are highlighted.


This article explores the impact of neuroscience evidence on how expert reports are perceived and their effects on the decisions made by trial judges. This study was conducted a study on a sample of 62 judges in order to determine whether their perceptions of the credibility, quality and scientific basis of a psychiatric evaluation of a criminal defendant vary according to whether or not the evaluation includes neuroscientific data. Results suggest that the presence of neuroscience data in an expert report affects judges' perceptions of the report, and the persuasiveness of the evidence it provided.


This study explored the influence that the “Limited Prosocial Emotion” (LPE) specifier for Conduct Disorder (CD) may have on juvenile justice proceedings. 294 participants completed an online study in which they were presented with a vignette of a case where the offenders mental health status was manipulated between, 1) no mental health diagnosis, 2) no formal diagnosis but evidence of CD+LPE, 3) formal CD+LPE diagnosis, or 4) CD diagnosis only. While those in the CD+LPE and CD conditions were 16.88 times more likely to recommend psychiatric hospitalization, the LPE specifier did not produce significantly more negative perceptions or punitive sentencing. Further findings and the utility of these diagnoses in the court system are discussed.


This study utilized in-depth interviews collected as part of the Capital Jury Project to examine how actual capital jurors responded to and engaged with evidence of mental illness. Jurors who dealt with mental illness appeared to be less sensitive. They described evidence as having been overshadowed by the brutality of the crime, indicative of the defendant's future dangerousness, being confusing, and a manipulative attempt on behalf of the defendant to trick jurors.
This study investigated potential mechanisms underlying negative perceptions of wrongfully convicted persons. 253 participants read a vignette about an individual who had been wrongfully convicted of a crime (murder vs. grand theft auto) in which there was evidence (false confession vs. eyewitness identification). Participants then reported their assessments of the exoneree’s intelligence, mental health status, guilt, and support for reintegration services. Those in the false confession condition perceived the defendant as less intelligent, more likely to suffer mental health issues, and therefore were less confident of their innocence and less deserving of reintegration services. Implications for policy to ensure supportive reintegration services for exonerees are noted.


Two experiments examined opposing expert testimony (ET) on perceived reliability of unvalidated forensic evidence. Argument skill and epistemological sophistication were included as measures of individual differences but had no effect. Study 2 included scores on the Forensic Evidence Evaluation Bias Scale. Participants heard: no ET, prosecution ET, or prosecution and opposing ET. Perceived forensic methodological reliability mediated the relationship between opposing ET and verdict. FEEBS scores and age also affected verdict and methodological reliability.


Four hundred and fifty mock jurors read a trial transcript that manipulated whether the defendant’s ethnicity was stereotypic or counterstereotypic of a crime and whether the defendant had confessed or not. The presence of a confession increased people’s perceptions of the defendant’s guilt when the defendant’s ethnicity was stereotypic to the crime. When the defendant’s ethnicity was not stereotypic, the confession did not increase perceptions of guilt.


Two experiments replicated and extended the finding that jurors exposed to capital voir dire are more likely to convict. In Study 1, participants who watched a capital voir dire provided a higher likelihood that the defendant would be guilty and convicted. Participants exposed to death qualification during capital voir dire were less likely to convict than those not exposed to the death qualification. In Study 2, the researchers found that death qualification created an expectation for greater evidence of guilt than did exposure to a standard voir dire. Thus, death qualified jurors might be more likely to acquit if their expectations are not met.

Zumbach, J., Wetzels, P., & Koglin, U. (2018). Predictors of psychological recommendations in child protection evaluation. Child Abuse & Neglect, 84, 196-204. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.08.003. Child protection matters from an important social and legal challenge, in which psychologists may be called upon to address a series of questions relevant for judicial decision-making. The current study investigates variables that influence psychological evaluators’ recommendations in child protection cases. The results support the conclusion that the most important factors for psychological expert recommendations refer to the “harm of the child” criterion in terms of developmental and psychological maladaptation.

This study compared the predictive validities of the J-SOAP II, ERASOR, and VRAG-R scores concerning sexual, nonsexual-violent, and general criminal recidivism in a consecutive sample of 597 male JSOs. Results indicated that the ERASOR was best suited to predict sexual recidivism within 0.5 and 3 years, the J-SOAP II was valid for predictions of sexual and nonsexual-violent recidivism within these recidivism periods, and the VRAG-R showed potential strengths in predicting nonsexual-violent recidivism.


Researchers found that sexual abuse in childhood leads to increased adolescent depressive symptomatology, though this link may vary due to the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator as well as the age of the child when the abuse began. Youth who were sexually abused by a parent were more likely to follow the rising and falling trajectories and youth who experienced sexual abuse at a younger age were more likely to be classified in the falling trajectory. Findings can inform intervention programming on the links between sexual abuse characteristics and subsequent patterns of adolescent depressive symptomology.


This study examined 134 cases decided between January 1, 2010 and December 21, 2016 that included the HCR-20, VRAG, or both. Results revealed that these measures are typically introduced by the prosecution to inform opinions regarding general violence risk. These data suggest the introduction of the HCR-20 and VRAG is rarely challenged and, when challenged, these challenges are rarely successful. However, data suggest that courts and parole boards may focus on specific risk factors.


This study examined public perceptions of life-sentenced juveniles (LSJs). Results indicated that risk, but not circumstances of the crime, strongly influenced participants' views regarding resentencing. When the individual in the vignette was labeled as high risk, participants described him as less appropriate for release, more deserving of punishment, needing more rehabilitation, and more appropriate for specific and general deterrence. Circumstances of the crime had no effect on participants' responses.


This study utilized 147 juvenile probation officers (JPOs), who reviewed case vignettes that varied by the adolescents’ gender, traumatic event exposure, and traumatic stress symptoms, and then scored the YLS/CMI and developed case plans based on that information. JPOs who received a vignette with trauma information identified a higher number of YLS/CMI trauma-specific responsivity factors. Despite an overall high needs match ratio, few JPOs prioritized trauma as a case plan target.

In a simulated SVP hearing, this study examined how mock jurors interpret and use recidivism risk expert testimony communicated either categorically, using verbal labels, or probabilistically, using numeric values. Results found that higher risk levels were associated with more commitment decisions in the categorical risk-communication format. Participants overestimated recidivism risk in general. Finally, participants did not differentiate well between the four levels of risk offered, instead employing a dichotomy between “low” or “high” risk.


This study surveyed the views of a sample of judges in Virginia. Results indicated that a strong majority of judges endorsed the principle that sentencing eligible offenders should include a consideration of recidivism risk. A majority reported the availability of alternatives to imprisonment in their jurisdictions to be inadequate. Most judges opposed the adoption of a policy requiring them to provide a written reason for declining to impose alternative interventions on “low-risk” offenders.


The authors sought to identify how sanction and incentives experienced during incarceration may interact to influence desistance during reentry. Data from four waves of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) followed 1,697 male from 30 days prior to release (Wave 1) to 15 months postrelease (Wave 4). Incentives such as supervision officer praise and other recognition of prosocial behavior were related to lower levels of offending and substance use. Supervision sanctions and reprimands were associated with the opposite. Implications for policy, practice, and future research are detailed.


This study utilized a sample of 1,276 older adolescents to evaluate the dimensionality, sex invariance, concurrent validity, and discriminative power of the VIS. The VIS showed unidimensionality, minor measurement differences across males and females, correlated well with a preexisting measure of VIs and showed a strong relation to criminal violence. These features support the use of the VIS as a possible source of information regarding violence risk in forensic settings.


This study investigated the implementation of the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk for Youth (SAVRY) and a risk-needs-responsibility (RNR) case planning framework in three juvenile probation departments. 385 justice involved youth were followed for up to ten months following adjudication. Probation departments generally adhered to RNR principles and case planning was appropriately guided by client risk level. Policies limiting the number of criminogenic need areas addressed at any one time were followed. Differential service-to-need matching was found based on probation site and risk level. Recommendations for youth rehabilitation and case planning are made.


Although parents are essential to child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention efforts, their views on prevention and protection are not always represented in the research literature. This study adds to the existing literature by presenting information that could be useful in designing programs to include parents in CSA protection and by approaching CSA research with parents as the key agents in the protection of children.

Juvenile justice–involved youth face disproportionate rates of sexual abuse, which increases the risk of PTSD and substance use disorders, both of which are associated with poor long-term outcomes. PTSD symptoms and gender were not significant moderators. Overall, PTSD symptoms mediate the relationship between sexual abuse and substance use disorders in juvenile justice–involved youth, which suggests viability of targeting PTSD symptoms as a modifiable risk factor to reduce the effects of sexual abuse on substance use in this high-risk population.


This study focused on two research questions: 1) which child attributes and case histories are associated with placement disruption and 2) how do associated of child attributes and case history vary by development stage? Results demonstrated that the effects of different risk factors varied by placement end reason and across developmental stages. These findings provide researchers, caseworkers, and policymakers important information on the risk factors for placement instability among children in foster care.


This study assessed the reliability and validity of the SAM in a sample of 146 adult stalkers referred to a community-based forensic mental health service. Both case prioritization and risk for continued stalking ratings discriminated between groups, with high-risk stalkers 5–9 times as likely as low-risk stalkers to reoffend by stalking their original victims. Lifetime SAM total scores also featured moderate to good discrimination.


This study examined 238 NGRI individuals in Oregon who were evaluated with the HCR–20 and placed in the community on conditional release (CR). Most CR individuals maintained their release throughout the entire follow-up period, but 81 had their release revoked. In considering the efficacy of violence risk assessment in predicting CR outcome with NGRI acquittees, the HCR-20 was mostly unrelated to CR outcome. Only two HCR-20 items predicted revocation.

Gender and Violence Risk Assessment in Prisons. Psychological Services, 15, 543-552. doi: 101037/ser0000217

This study examined the association between Historical, Clinical, Risk Management–20: Version 2; Psychopathy Checklist–Revised; and Violence Risk Assessment Guide scores and violence perpetrated during incarceration by male and female inmates. Using a sample of 288 men and 183 women. Results indicated that all 3 instruments demonstrate moderate to good levels of predictive accuracy for both the male and female inmates.


This study revalidated the FL-DOORS screening measure with a new cohort of 5,429 separated parents, including 1,642 pairs. Original subscales were largely confirmed, and validity analyses were extended through a Multi–Trait Multi–Method approach. In this second larger cohort, the FL-DOORS screen was again found fit-for-purpose as an indicator of domestic violence and wellbeing risks in separated families.


Juvenile justice–involved youth face disproportionate rates of sexual abuse, which increases the risk of PTSD and substance use disorders, both of which are associated with poor long-term outcomes. PTSD symptoms and gender were not significant moderators. Overall, PTSD symptoms mediate the relationship between sexual abuse and substance use disorders in juvenile justice–involved youth, which suggests viability of targeting PTSD symptoms as a modifiable risk factor to reduce the effects of sexual abuse on substance use in this high-risk population.


This study focused on two research questions: 1) which child attributes and case histories are associated with placement disruption and 2) how do associated of child attributes and case history vary by development stage? Results demonstrated that the effects of different risk factors varied by placement end reason and across developmental stages. These findings provide researchers, caseworkers, and policymakers important information on the risk factors for placement instability among children in foster care.


This study assessed the reliability and validity of the SAM in a sample of 146 adult stalkers referred to a community-based forensic mental health service. Both case prioritization and risk for continued stalking ratings discriminated between groups, with high-risk stalkers 5–9 times as likely as low-risk stalkers to reoffend by stalking their original victims. Lifetime SAM total scores also featured moderate to good discrimination.


This study examined 238 NGRI individuals in Oregon who were evaluated with the HCR–20 and placed in the community on conditional release (CR). Most CR individuals maintained their release throughout the entire follow-up period, but 81 had their release revoked. In considering the efficacy of violence risk assessment in predicting CR outcome with NGRI acquittees, the HCR-20 was mostly unrelated to CR outcome. Only two HCR-20 items predicted revocation.

Gender and Violence Risk Assessment in Prisons. Psychological Services, 15, 543-552. doi: 101037/ser0000217

This study examined the association between Historical, Clinical, Risk Management–20: Version 2; Psychopathy Checklist–Revised; and Violence Risk Assessment Guide scores and violence perpetrated during incarceration by male and female inmates. Using a sample of 288 men and 183 women. Results indicated that all 3 instruments demonstrate moderate to good levels of predictive accuracy for both the male and female inmates.


This study revalidated the FL-DOORS screening measure with a new cohort of 5,429 separated parents, including 1,642 pairs. Original subscales were largely confirmed, and validity analyses were extended through a Multi–Trait Multi–Method approach. In this second larger cohort, the FL-DOORS screen was again found fit-for-purpose as an indicator of domestic violence and wellbeing risks in separated families.

Latent Class Analysis (LCA) was used to identify typologies of juvenile sex offenders (JSOs) based on patterns of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). 322 male JSOs were organized into five subtypes; those with a) multiple, b) family related, c) peer related, d) neglectful, and e) little/no ACEs. Binary logistic regressions demonstrated differential offending patterns associated with each subtype. The family-ACE subgroup was associated with the use of penetration and nonsexual delinquency, whereas the peer-ACE subgroup showed greater levels of child victims and use of penetration. The neglect-ACE subgroup also showed higher likelihoods of child victims. Recommendations for primary prevention and intervention programs are made.


The authors developed a Go/No-Go Association Task (GNAT) to assess implicit sexual interest in prepubescent children. Response-latencies were measured for 29 individuals with extrafamilial child sexual offenses, 15 individuals with intrafamilial or mixed offenses, and 26 nonoffenders. The extrafamilial group showed faster response-latencies to child and sexual fantasy stimuli than either the intrafamilial or nonoffending group. The GNAT showed a large effect size in its ability to discriminate between the extrafamilial and intrafamilial and nonoffending groups. Research recommendations are made for the further development of indirect measures of sexual interest in children.


Twenty men convicted of child sexual offenses completed a semi-structured interview aimed at exploring the phenomenology of living with deviant sexual interest. Four of the participants also completed a repertory grid interview. Phenomenologically grounded thematic analysis was used to identify themes and patterns within the interview transcripts. Three superordinate themes were identified, “living with a deviant sexual interest in children”, “relational sexual self”, and “possible and feared sexual self”. Implications for therapy and the integration of identity focused and strength-based interventions are discussed.


The convergent and predictive validity of three latent constructs (Sexual Criminality, General Criminality, and Youthful Stranger Aggression) found in static actuarial scales were analyzed in the assessments of 613 sexual offenders. All three dimensions predicted sexual recidivism, but only General Criminality and Youthful Stranger Aggression were predictive of nonsexual recidivism. Sexual Criminality was associated with sexual interests toward atypical objects, General Criminality was associated with antisocial traits, and Youthful Stranger Aggression was associated with an intent to harm. Implications for risk assessment and tools integrating both dynamic and static factors are noted.


The authors sought to measure the level of sexually violent attitudes within dating relationships in different types of male offenders (financial crime, $n = 417$; property crime, $n = 393$; general violent, $n = 417$; and homicide, $n = 117$). Property crime offenders received the highest scores on measures of attitudes of male sexual violence. Emotional abuse was the most common experience reported across groups, yet homicide offenders reported having experienced all forms of maltreatment. Psychopathic traits related to empathy were
also associated with heightened scores on attitudes of sexual violence. Recommendations for interventions during incarceration are made.


The experience of social isolation and loneliness for sex offenders in Dutch correctional facilities were explored. 1,748 male inmates completed a structured interview and self-administered questionnaire which addressed their relationships with correctional officers and fellow prisoners as well as their feelings of loneliness. Participants charged with a sex offense evaluated their relationships with correctional officers and fellow prisoners more negatively, yet there was no difference in self-reported levels of loneliness. No differences were noted between those charged with child sex offenses and other sex offenses. Implications for improving correctional facilities to aid in sex offender rehabilitation are discussed.


The authors analyzed offender, index offense, and victim characteristics along with risk assessment scores among a sample of African American (n = 1,158), White (n = 1,310), and Latino (n = 633) convicted sex offenders. Compared to the other groups, Latino offenders were more likely to have offended against an individual with whom they were living. This group was also more likely to have lower educational attainment but demonstrated higher levels of preincarceration employment. Comparison of Latino offenders based on country of origin and immigration status demonstrated within group differences in educational attainment, criminal background, and psychiatric history. Implications for culturally relevant responsivity models and intervention practices are discussed.


The authors investigated the role that narrative humanization interventions may have on reducing explicit and implicit stigmatization of pedophiles. 100 university students were recruited to either narrative conditions or expert informative conditions which both educated on the topic of pedophilia. Subsequent attitudinal measurements were collected. Reduced levels of stigmatization, moral disengagement, and punitive attitudes towards pedophiles were found in both conditions, yet to a greater degree in the narrative conditions. Compared to the information condition, participants in the narrative conditions showed more positive and negative bias towards pedophiles during implicit measures. Implications for altering societal dialogues around pedophiles to reduce stigma are addressed.


The authors explored the predictive power of implicit and explicit measures of sexual aggression in later self-reported sexual aggressive behavior by men in the community. At two time points, 248 participants recruited online completed the Rape Evaluation IAT (RE-IAT), an implicit association test, an explicit measure of sexual aggression, and measures of sexually aggressive behaviors. Both implicit and explicit measures of sexual aggression independently predicted later sexually aggressive behavior four months later. Directions for future research are discussed.


This study investigated the influence that institutional factors and prison experience may have on subsequent sex offender recidivism. Data was analyzed from 671 male convicted sex offenders which was collected from imprisonment through release. Factors such as prison experience, length of prison terms, treatment completions
and institutional infractions had a significant impact on postrelease recidivism. In particular, longer prison terms were associated with higher rates of postrelease reoffending in high-risk sex offenders. Recommendations for the integration of institutional factors in risk assessment instruments are detailed.


The author tested whether the Static-99R and Static-2002R can be reliably coded using police information and whether these assessments can reliably predict further violence and sexual offending in a nonconvicted sample. Police file documentation, documented evidence, and arrest details were reviewed from 290 cases of sexual assault in Alberta, Canada. The Static-99 was able to predict violent recidivism and less reliably, sexual recidivism. The Static-2002R performed better at predicting all recidivism outcomes. The practical implication of using risk assessment in the police context is discussed.


This study investigates the role of opportunistic or nonpersuasion child sex offending through semi-structured interviews with 346 males convicted of a child sex offense. Nonpersuasive strategies were used in 44.8% of events. Opportunistic offending typically involved nonpersuasion tactics in an event of unexpected opportunity. Opportunistic and nonpersuasion offending were particularly common in intrafamilial contexts. Implications for theory on typology and prevention are discussed.


Little is known about the extent to which institutional child sex offending differs from non-institutional offending. Strategies to secure the compliance of child victims were systematically compared to compare the modi operandi (prior to, during and following abuse), and the type of power (intimate, aggressive, coercive) applied by child sexual offenders in institutional versus non-institutional settings. Results demonstrated commonalities in the modi operandi and grooming methods applied in institutional and non-institutional contexts. Implications for abuse prevention are summarized.


The authors utilized an Approach-Avoidance Task (AAT) for assessing and discriminating sexual interest in pedophilic ($n = 27$) and nonpedophilic gay men ($n = 11$). Reaction time difference between approach and avoidance was calculated for participants response to seminude prepubescent boys, girls, men and women. All participants demonstrated larger AAT scores (stronger impulses) towards their preferred stimulus group. Multivariate binary logistic regression analyses provided 80% accuracy in discriminating between pedophilic and nonpedophilic participants. Future directions for improving this accuracy and potential practical implications are addressed.

**VICTIMIZATION**


Considering the inherently hazardous nature of some artisanal fishing and farm work in Ghana, there is sometimes a thin line between what is considered child work and child labor. Overall, the paper finds that sensitivity to the economic and cultural context is important in understanding the issue of child labor and, more generally, in applying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and working out the parenting policies and practices that are in the best interests of the child.

There is some limited evidence of an association between maternal intimate partner victimization (IPV) and children’s experience of maltreatment. Using data from a longitudinal study, we examine whether this relationship is independent of range of potential confounders including socio-economic, familial and psychological factors. The findings from this study confirm that there is a robust association between maternal IPV and child maltreatment.


This study investigated three risk factors using the developmental psychopathology framework in a racially diverse sample of women residing in domestic violence shelters. Results suggest that intimate partner violence (IPV) related PTSD symptoms, rather than exposure to abuse (i.e., childhood abuse or IPV), is most strongly associated with child abuse potential in recent IPV survivors. Interventions which can ameliorate maternal psychopathology and provide resources are recommended for these vulnerable families.


The present review aimed to provide a quantitative summary of the current knowledge on intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment. Results imply that in families of parents who experienced maltreatment in their own childhood, the odds of child maltreatment are almost three times the odds of child maltreatment in families of parents without a history of experiencing child maltreatment. The need for an improvement in quality of primary research and discuss implications of our findings for clinical practice is discussed.


Preconception and prenatal predictors of time to first child protective services (CPS) contact among Alaska children were examined. Use of multiple linked data sources and time-to-event analysis methods adds to the growing literature regarding predictors of CPS contact. Results suggest that assessing for and addressing clinical, social, and environmental indicators during the prenatal period may aid prevention efforts in mitigating family need for involvement with CPS.


This study sought to determine whether the British Columbia experience implementing a province-wide prevention program reduced abusive head trauma (AHT) hospitalization rates. The results suggest that, despite a low initial incidence and economic recession, reductions in AHT may be achievable with a system-wide implementation of a comprehensive parental education prevention program.


Child welfare and child protection workers regularly make placement decisions in child abuse cases, but how they reach these decisions is not well understood. This study focuses on workers’ rationales. The findings indicate trends in the decision-making process, in the sense that participants who decided to place the child out-
of-home emphasized different arguments and had different attitudes towards out-of-home placement than those who did not.


The authors investigated the potential role of support in eliciting information during 200 interviews of 6 to 14-year-olds who were alleged victims of physical abuse by a family member. All interviews followed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development – Revised Protocol (NICHD-RP) which places an emphasis on supportive techniques. Interviews were coded for instances of interviewer support, indications of interviewee reluctance, and the production of forensically relevant facts. The results indicate that supportive techniques are likely to decrease reluctance and result in better information collection. Mediation analyses provide further insight into potential mechanisms for increased informativeness. Recommendations for training of forensic interviewers and evidence-based practices are made.


Childhood maltreatment is common and has been increasingly studied in relation to perinatal outcomes. While retrospective self-report is convenient to use in studies assessing the impact of maltreatment on perinatal outcomes, it may be vulnerable to bias. Findings suggest retrospective reporting of childhood maltreatment, namely physical neglect, may be prone to systematic differential recall bias with respect to perinatal outcomes. Measures of childhood maltreatment reported before delivery may be needed to validly estimate associations between maternal exposure to childhood physical neglect and perinatal outcomes.


The aim of the current analysis is to elucidate the link between childhood experiences of violence and physical intimate partner violence in young adulthood in a national survey of young Kenyan women. Childhood violence is associated with increased odds of adult physical IPV among young women; efforts to prevent violence against children and provide appropriate care and support to adult survivors are critical to interrupt this cycle of violence.


This study aims to build on the literature pertaining to child sexual abuse (CSA) and other forms of maltreatment by examining long-term consequences of CSA and maltreatment among adopted children. The present study investigated: (a) rates of co-occurrence of pre-adoptive CSA and maltreatment among adopted children, and (b) the relative impact of pre-adoptive CSA and maltreatment on externalizing behaviors at 14 years post-adoption. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.


The aim of this study is to explore this gap and investigate the effects of different types of child abuse and neglect (CAN) according to levels of warmth in the parent-child relationship on common mental disorders (CMD) in adolescence. Evidence indicates that actions to prevent or interrupt CAN and improving parental practices could be effective strategies to reduce CMD in adolescence.

Individual and jail level predictors of violent victimization during short-term incarceration were evaluated in data from the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails and National Jail Census (6,596 inmates in 380 facilities). The authors investigated the role of high-risk situations, attributions that may present individuals as targets, and uncontrolled institutional environments as potential influencing factors. Inmates with longer hours in facility work assignment were less likely to be victimized whereas those with characteristics that indicated vulnerability (youth, previous abuse, first-time inmates, those with mental health problems) were more likely to be victimized. Implications for theory are discussed and recommendations are made for facility management.


The objective of this study was to investigate whether experiences of high betrayal trauma (BT; maltreatment by a parent/caregiver) during mothers’ own childhoods may influence the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment and its associated psychopathology from mothers to their children. Implications for understanding the role of betrayal trauma in perpetuating the cycle of maltreatment across generations are discussed.


This study explores how childhood witnessing of same-gender, opposite-gender, and bidirectional violence perpetrated by adults is associated with adolescent relationship violence victimization only, perpetration only, and combined victimization/perpetration. Witnessing adult males perpetrate is associated with higher perpetration for boys and higher combined victimization/perpetration for girls. Witnessing adult females perpetrate – either as the sole perpetrator or in a mutually violent relationship with an adult male – increases risk for combined victimization/perpetration for boys and girls during adolescence.


This study builds on extant research by investigating the effects of national norms and policies and individual-level attitudes and characteristics on individual attitudes toward child maltreatment in 53 developing and developed nations. Overall, countries with a greater survivalist orientation appear less tolerant of child maltreatment. Policy implications and legislative reform are discussed.


The present study sought to clarify the relative predictive contributions of type of maltreatment compared to salient exposure characteristics. Study findings hold important implications for trauma screening, assessment, and intervention, as well as for traumatic stress research methods that extend beyond abuse-specific or cumulative-risk approaches.


The authors test the component of Battered Spouse Syndrome (BSS) theory which suggests that abused women have different perceptions of imminent danger and reasonableness of force. An online vignette depicting a scenario where a woman kills her husband was presented to female participants with and without histories of abuse. Some conditions reflected a proguilty depiction of the vignette while others described a proaquittal version. Abused women were more favorable to defendants and abuse history appeared to moderate verdict judgments. The authors suggest that participants based judgments upon beliefs that they would act similarly.


This study was developed to further the field’s understanding by investigating cognitive functioning in association with time-variant maltreatment patterns. While maltreatment timing was a significant predictor of cognitive functioning over time, the addition of poverty into the model resulted in a non-significant effect of maltreatment timing. Additional research is needed to disentangle the longitudinal effect of maltreatment on cognitive functioning and address the interacting role of poverty and chronic maltreatment.


Most incarcerated women suffer from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as abuse, neglect and chaotic home, and adult intimate partner violence (IPV). Yet the majority of research on the relationship between ACEs and IPV has been limited to non-incarcerated populations. Using data from a stratified random sample of all incarcerated women in Oklahoma, this study explores the relationships between individual, cumulative, and clusters of ACEs as they relate to multiple forms of IPV in adulthood utilizing a feminist life course theory approach.


This study examines the concordance of abuse self-reported by adolescents at 18 years and child protective service (CPS) determinations and how abuse characteristics predict concordance. It includes 819 youths participating in 18-year interviews of the Longitudinal Study of Child Abuse & Neglect. Results demonstrate differences in abuse characteristics captured by CPS data and youth self-report, which may impact research findings on abuse correlates.


The Partnerships for Families project is a randomized clinical trial to evaluate the effectiveness of Alternatives for Families: A Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (AF-CBT), an evidence-based treatment (EBT) for families who are at risk of or have histories of child physical abuse. The analyses revealed that AF-CBT (vs. treatment as usual) showed improvements in both service systems or one service system, with some outcomes showing no improvement. These findings are discussed in relation to AF-CBT, service system, provider, and family characteristics, and training/dissemination methods that affect the delivery of an EBT for this population in community settings.


The present study investigated distinct typologies of victimization in a sample of adolescents and young adults and explored the relationship between victimization typologies and gender, age, and mental health. Findings underscore the need to promote interventions addressing the co-occurrence of physical and sexual victimization and the persistence of victimization over time.

Parasympathetic processes appear to underlie maladaptive parent–child interactions in maltreating families, but it is unknown whether parent–child coregulation of respiratory sinus arrhythmia (RSA) differs by child maltreatment severity and subtype. These findings show there are distinct patterns of RSA coregulation in nonmaltreating, physically abusive, and neglectful mother–child dyads, which may inform etiology and intervention with respect to stress regulation in maltreating families.


This study seeks to assess the impact of economic factors on sexual, emotional, and physical violence on Nigerian children and adolescents aged 13–24 years. Further research is needed to determine the cause of increased violence amongst high economic status households. Targeted interventions towards this economic statusclass are recommended to reduce violence against children in Nigeria.


The present study examined the associations between mothers’ and fathers’ perception of child behavior and child abuse potential, as well as whether parenting stress mediates the association between these constructs. Findings suggest that parental distress may represent a critical mechanism by which parents’ negative views of their children contribute to abuse potential. Moreover, mothers seem to influence fathers’ tendency towards abusive behaviors.


Content and linguistic analysis of 192 capital trial victim impact statement (VIS) transcripts demonstrated wide variability in format, length, and other characteristics. Linguistic analysis suggested that emotional content of sadness was more pervasive than anger; yet overall emotionality was comparative to everyday language. The most common content reflected characterizations of the victim, trauma narratives, and victim significance in the family unit. Discrepancies between existing VIS policies and extant body of research are discussed.


Maltreated youth are at risk for exposure to online sexual content and high-risk sexual behavior, yet characteristics of their online social networks have not been examined as a potential source of vulnerability. Multiple-group path modeling showed that only for the maltreated group having a higher percent of isolates in the network predicted intentional exposure to online sexual content and offline high-risk sexual behavior. Findings suggest that the composition of the Facebook network may be used as a risk indicator for individuals with child-welfare documented maltreatment experiences.


This study sought to enhance knowledge of the link between child sexual abuse and long-term criminality by investigating gender-specific effects and the role of index sexual abuse characteristics, revictimization, and serious mental health problems. Four key findings emerged from the analysis; implications for future research and clinical practice are discussed.
Childhood sexual abuse of boys was examined in a longitudinal cohort in South Africa, with data on abuse collected at six age points between 11 and 18 years. Boys who experienced childhood sexual abuse tended to be smaller (shorter) and from poorer families. No relationships to measured childhood intelligence, pubertal stage, marital status of mother or presence of the father were found. There was no significant association between reports of childhood sexual abuse and mental health in adulthood and when personal and social vulnerabilities were taken into account.

Early childhood trauma increases the risk of academic difficulties. The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of early contact with child protection services (CPS) and to determine whether early exposure to maltreatment investigations was associated with important academic outcomes. Children associated with maltreatment investigations scored significantly lower on standardized math and reading tests, were more likely to be identified as needing special education and were more likely to be held back at least one grade.

The present study concurrently examined protective factors associated with the adaptive outcomes of resilience and posttraumatic growth, after accounting for relevant demographic factors and the impact of circumstances surrounding childhood victimization. Findings suggest the importance of early intervention to bolster protective factors (i.e., family support, positive thinking, gratitude, and positive religious coping skills) among youth exposed to childhood physical and sexual victimization.

Child Maltreatment (CM) is a public health problem, and experts recommend parent training programs as a prevention method. Few programs target fathers, even though male caregivers are involved as perpetrators in approximately 45% of substantiated CM cases. This study examines the efficacy of an adapted version of SafeCare (Dad2K) with marginalized fathers. Qualitative findings indicated that Dad2K completers exhibited positive knowledge and behavioral change related to parenting.

Past studies examining the child maltreatment (CM)/victimization pathway have been limited by narrow windows of assessment and failure to examine gender differences. In the current study the impact of CM on physical victimization trajectories from adolescence to young adulthood and the extent to which heavy drinking mediated the relationship between CM and later physical victimization was examined. The current study suggests that CM represents a liability for interpersonal violence for both genders and highlights the importance of looking at victimization across time.

This study examined descriptions of behavior perceived as maltreatment by caregivers of minors in Cleveland, Ohio, USA neighborhoods. Associations between specific types of maltreatment and individual and neighborhood characteristics were observed. Potential practice implications and future research directions include seeking greater familiarity with caregivers’ perceptions of maltreating behaviors to better understand how these perceptions might “translate” into child maltreatment reports and investigations.

Van Horne, B. S., Caughy M. O., Canfield, M., Case, A. P., Greeley, C. S., Morgan, R., & Mitchell, L. E. (2018). First-time maltreatment in children ages 2–10 with and without specific birth defects: A population–based study. Child Abuse & Neglect, 84, 53-63. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.07.003. Children with disabilities are at an increased risk for maltreatment. However, little is known about the risk of maltreatment in children with specific types of birth defects. Findings suggest that the families of children with birth defects may need support services throughout early childhood to help families cope with the needs of their children and reduce the risk of maltreatment.

WITNESS ISSUES


Coherence of a report of an experienced event was compared between children with intellectual disabilities (n = 44) versus typically developing children matched for mental or chronological age (n = 65). Overall, markers of narrative coherence predicted accuracy of testimony and resistance to suggestion. However, children with lower mental ages, especially CWID, displayed lower narrative coherence.


The extent of the problem of intoxicated witnesses within England is unknown. Authors surveyed police about the prevalence of intoxicated witnesses, the procedures employed and their effectiveness. Intoxicated witnesses are a common occurrence—most officers determine intoxication through physical symptoms and witness admission. Initial details are taken whilst witnesses are intoxicated, but evidential interviews are taken when sober. Cases with intoxicated witnesses are less likely to proceed to court and officers viewed the witness as less accurate.


The researchers examined whether asking witnesses to re-evaluate a lineup after identifying a suspect, and if confirming feedback, would solidify selections. After identification, participants re-examined the lineup and half received confirming feedback. Then, participants received the lineup for a final time. When participants re-examined the lineup, 70% changed their initial decisions. Additionally, when their decision was reinforced, 72% selected the suspect they shifted to in the final lineup. People make changes when viewing lineups and when that decision is reinforced they often stick with that decision with confidence.


Examination of documents from child sexual abuse cases in District Courts (n = 100) and Courts of Appeal (n = 45) revealed some criteria from the Supreme Court frequently used in evaluation of young children’s testimony (i.e., statement length, richness in detail, and spontaneity) do not correspond to current research on children’s witness abilities. Legal implications regarding expectations from child witnesses are discussed.

Eyewitness’s verbal confidence statements are prone to misinterpretation. Authors examined how an evaluator's prior knowledge of suspect position in arrays influences their interpretation of eyewitness confidence about a lineup identification. Participants perceived the identical statement of confidence as meaning a higher and lower level of certainty, respectively, when the eyewitness's selection either matched or mismatched the police's suspect. Stating confidence as a percentage does not eliminate the effect.


The Enhanced Cognitive Interview (ECI) aims to increase the quantity and quality of recall. Authors examined forward and backward visuo-spatial working memory (VSWM) recall using the ECI. Students watched a videotape of a fictional crime and performed a VSWM task. Next, they were interviewed about the tape. High forward VSWM capacity has a role in favoring the total amount of correct information recalled. Maintaining and processing mood-related contents in VSWM may be easier for individuals with high WM skills.


Students (N = 48) aged 14- to 15-years-old were randomly assigned to an 8-week mindfulness program or an active control group before being exposed to a target event during week 7. Immediately after the target event, all children were interviewed using a biasing interview and interviewed a second time, one week later, after the end of their 8-week programs. Those in the mindfulness condition incorrectly reported more false information than those in the control program.


This study explored general and case specific legal understanding of 105 parents involved in ongoing juvenile dependency cases. Parents were asked to define related legal terms, answer questions about a juvenile dependency case vignette, and describe decisions and hearings specific to their own case. Participants indicated only limited or partial understanding of general aspects of the juvenile dependency system. Lower levels of educational attainment and racial minority identity were associated with reduced legal knowledge. Parental annual income was not associated with legal understanding. Mothers showed better understanding of the system than fathers. Implications for improving procedural justice in juvenile dependency cases are discussed in depth.


This mixed methods study investigated the perceptions and experience of LGBQ-affiliated forensic mental health professionals in the work place. This mixed methods design involved the quantitative analysis of a
survey of 37 professionals with qualitative text analysis. Survey results indicate that 81% of respondents experienced some form of workplace discrimination related to their sexual orientation and many reported changing their behaviors or experience in the workplace to influence others’ perceptions of their sexual orientation. Nonetheless, participants reported positive influences of their sexual orientation on their interest in treating LGBQ clients or conducting related research. Implications for the field are discussed.

The purpose of this study was to systematically examine newspaper coverage on child abuse and neglect in Hong Kong in order to assess how child maltreatment is currently presented and framed within public discourse. More guidelines are needed to formulate public messages about child maltreatment that can improve individual, community, and structural capacities to prevent, identify, and respond to children who are victimized by abuse and neglect. This is especially important in jurisdictions where no mandatory reporting framework exists to help identify vulnerable children.

While studies confirm high prevalence of language disorder among justice-involved young people, little is known about the impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) on language among this population. In the highly verbal environments common to justice systems, language disorder/language difference may result in a young person misunderstanding legal information. Results underscore the need for the justice workforce to consider language difference when working with justice-involved youth, as well as language disorder and FASD. The findings also demonstrate the need for speech pathology to be a core service in youth justice systems.

The authors sought to identify developmental trajectories of externalizing behavior from late childhood into adolescence and investigate the distinct influence of parental incarceration on these trajectories. Data was used from 655 youths who were assessed at roughly 10, 12, 14, and 16 years of age. Statistical modeling produced four distinct trajectories: Low-Stable, Mid-Increasing, Borderline-Stable, and Chronic-High. 60% of children of incarcerated parents fell into the low risk Low-Stable group, yet were overrepresented in the Mid-Increasing group. Recommendations are made for future research directions and intervention development.

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an international public health problem. While general practitioners are perhaps ideally positioned to detect CSA, a lack of simple tools and their discomfort in bringing up such a sensitive subject reduce the likelihood of its being brought up and flagged in primary care. However, it may be possible to identify victims of CSA by observing its consequences on student well-being, overall well-being and risk behavior. This study investigates the predictive value of daily life events possibly associated with CSA.

This cross-sectional study aimed to compare the differences in psychopathology of Greek homicide and homicide attempters, patients with schizophrenia, with non-violent individuals suffering from schizophrenia. Three groups of 220 men were compared and several psychometric tools were used. This study suggests that the longer the history of aggressiveness is present, the great the chances are that an individual will commit a violence crime and be found not guilty by reason of insanity (the third group looked at).

The study objective was to examine the likelihood and magnitude of child abuse and neglect (CAN) re-reports for young children with delays in cognitive, language, and adaptive development, compared to typically developing children. In this study, children with multiple developmental delays have elevated rates of CAN re-reports when compared to typically developing children. Allocation of child welfare resources should include strategies for preventing maltreatment risk among children with developmental delays.

In a series of studies, the authors tested whether expressing anger in court makes attorneys more effective and whether this depends on their gender. Both undergraduates and community members completed the experiments. The participants listened to either a male or female attorney presenting their closing argument in either a neutral or angry tone and reported how likely they would be to hire the attorney. Results demonstrated that female attorneys expressing their argument in an angry tone were less effective than female attorneys expressing their argument in a neutral tone.

The authors investigated patterns of education and employment outcomes for justice involved juveniles with and without mental health disorders. Data was examined from 1,261 participants in the Pathways to Desistance study, in which juveniles were followed over a seven-year period. Participants with identified mental disorders began the study with greater risk factors for poorer outcomes (e.g. history of suspension/firing) and compared to their peers were less likely to achieve more than minimal educational attainment (e.g. GED). Recommendations for improving intervention strategies with this population are made.

The influence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which often include childhood exposure to maltreatment and household dysfunction, on health risk behaviors during young adulthood has been widely documented. The present study investigated how different profiles of ACEs influence impulsivity in young adulthood. Results suggest that childhood exposure to multiple ACEs at high levels is particularly related to impulsive self-control in the context of intense negative emotionality.

The study examines whether the form of maltreatment experienced by the child moderates the effects of a parent training program (PTP) on the probability that the child’s case will be closed. Results show that a parent’s participating in a PTP is associated with an increase of the probability that his or her child’s CPS case will be closed and hence with a reduction of the length of time that the child must receive protective services.

This study tested whether specialty probation was associated with lower costs than traditional probation during the two years after placement in probation. A longitudinal, matched study compared costs of behavioral health care and criminal justice contacts among 359 probationers with mental illness at prototypic specialty or traditional agencies. The results indicate that well-implemented specialty probation yielded substantial savings and should be considered in justice reform efforts for people with mental illness.


This study focused on the prevalence of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) and examined its association with risky sexual behaviors and adverse reproductive health outcomes among college students in China. CSA experience may increase the likelihood of risky sexual behaviors and adverse reproductive health outcomes in victims’ early adulthood.


This study developed the Offender Job Search Self-Efficacy Scale (OFJSSE) for the specific job search needs of the criminal justice population. Participants were 249 male inmates. Results indicated that the OFJSSE presents excellent reliability as well as good convergent and discriminant validity by having a strong, positive correlation with another job search scale and having a negative correlation with a scale measuring a different construct (i.e., criminal thinking).


Rates of violence-related traumatic brain injury (TBI) were examined in a sample of 209 justice involved men and women. Comparable proportions of violence-related TBIs were found between genders, although the authors note this evidence was weak and at odds with findings in the literature at large. Women were more likely to have experienced multiple TBIs and multiple TBIs related to violence. Women with violence related TBIs reported greater levels of physical health problems. Implications for clinical screening and future research directions are discussed.


A Canadian Institutes of Health Research-funded team analyzed Twitter use and engagement as a tool for increasing the reach of sexual violence research. Results indicated that active Twitter engagement lead to increases in the number of individuals’ profile views, article downloads, and citations. These findings encourage further research into the utility of social media for disseminating sexual violence research, and that social media has developed as a forum for evidence-based conversation on sensitive topics of public health import.