WORKING ACROSS SYSTEMS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

SHAY BILCHIK, JD

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Risk and Protective Factors

- The work of the Causes and Correlates Study Group is very closely related to a body of research around risk and protective factors and their relationship to delinquency. This work also includes research conducted by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano.
- **Risk factors** are predictors of problem behaviors such as: substance abuse, teen pregnancy, dropping out of school and youth violence.
- **Protective factors** are predictors that counterbalance the effects of risk such as opportunities for pro-social activities and the influence of a positive adult to whom the child or youth has bonded.
- Risk and protective factors are related to the domains in which a child or youth lives their life - family, peer group, school, community and within their own individual characteristics.
- This is the "science" of juvenile delinquency.

Source: Causes and Correlates research conducted by David Huizinga, Ph.D. (Denver), Rolf Loeber, Ph.D. (Pittsburgh) and Terence P. Thornberry, Ph.D (Rochester)

Application of Risk and Protective Factors to Delinquency

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- The Study Group studied the impact of risk and protective factors on middle school age youth in their Rochester site.
- Youth were surveyed on both the risk and protective factors in their lives.
- Delinquency histories were tracked for the same youth. Based on study criteria:
  - Youth with 5 or more risk factors were “high risk.”
  - Youth who had five or more risk factors and who had 5 or fewer protective factors offended at a rate of almost 80%.
  - High-risk youth with 9 or more protective factors offended at a rate of just over 22%.
  - The presence of these 4 additional protective factors reduced offending rates by 75%.

Source: Research from Causes and Correlates Study

The Pathway to Delinquency

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- The average age at which juveniles took their first step toward delinquent behavior was approximately 7.
- Moderately serious behavior began at about age 9.5.
- Serious delinquency began at age 12.
- The average age at which youth first came in contact with the juvenile court was 14.5.
- This means that there is a seven year window of opportunity to intervene and interrupt their pathway to delinquency.
- So how do we take those first steps that many would call prevention or early intervention?

Source: Research from Causes and Correlates Study

Application

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- The Causes and Correlates Study found two key risk factors for delinquency:
  - Child abuse and neglect, and
  - Gang involvement
- In today's presentation, I will focus on child abuse and neglect.

Who Are Crossover Youth?

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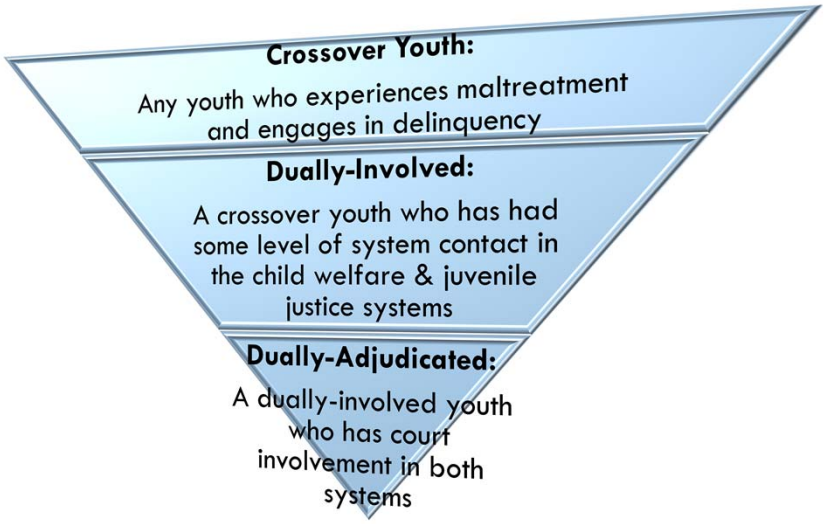

What are the Pathways to Crossing Over?

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1. Youth has an Open Child Welfare Case → Youth is Arrested → Enter the Juvenile Justice System

2. Youth has an open child welfare case → Child welfare case is closed → Youth is arrested → Youth enters the juvenile justice system

3. Youth is victim of maltreatment but it is undetected by CW system → Youth is Arrested → Youth Referred to the Child Welfare System

4. Youth is arrested and put in a correctional facility → Youth is released from the facility but family abandons him/her → Youth referred to the child welfare system

The Research: Prevalence

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- Limited studies that examine prevalence
- Studies estimate between 7 and 30% of child welfare youth also have contact with the juvenile justice system[1]
- Childhood abuse and neglect increased the odds of future delinquency and adult criminality overall by 29 percent[2]

1. Smith, Thornberry, Ireland, & Elwyn, 2008; Johnson, Ereth, & Wagner, 2004; Dennison & Waterson, 2002
2. Widom & Maxfield, 2001

The Research: Prevalence

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- Being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 55% and for a violent crime as a juvenile by 96%[1]
- Being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as an adult by 28% and for a violent crime as an adult by 30%[2]

1. Widom, Tuell, & Wiig, 2003
2. Update on the Cycle of Violence, 2001

The Research: Characteristics of Crossover Youth

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- At least four studies have examined crossover youth characteristics (Herz & Ryan 2008b; Halemba, Siegel, Lord, & Zawacki 2004; Kelley, Thornberry, & Smith 1997; Saeturn & Swain, 2009)
- Although these studies are not identical in their methodology, they all examine characteristics of crossover youth and report a tremendous amount of similarity
- A general profile of these youth is provided next from these studies

How Many Youth in Child Welfare Cross Over into Delinquency

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Between 7% and 30% of Youth Aged 10 or Older in the Care of Child Welfare are Subsequently Arrested

(Note: % is higher when self-reports of maltreatment and delinquency are used)

Experiences with Abuse/Neglect and the System

*Persistent maltreatment and type

*Type of placement

*Placement instability

*Absence of positive attachments

Demographics

*More likely to be male

*Increased likelihood of being female

*More likely to be African-American

*Younger at the age of their first arrest than youth not involved in the child welfare system

How Many Youth in the Delinquency System Have Child Welfare Histories or are Referred to Child Welfare Because of Maltreatment?

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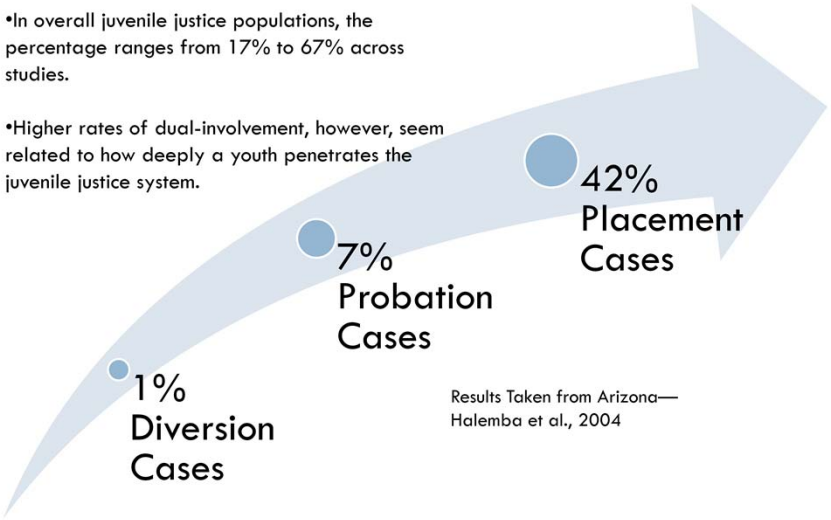
- In overall juvenile justice populations, the percentage ranges from 17% to 67% across studies.
- Higher rates of dual-involvement, however, seem related to how deeply a youth penetrates the juvenile justice system.



Results Taken from Arizona—Halemba et al., 2004

Characteristics of Crossover Youth

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Child Welfare Experiences

- Extended period of care with the child welfare system for a long period of time, entering the system as a young child
- Significantly, high number of placement changes during their time in care of the child welfare system
- Often, they are living in a group home at the time of arrest

Individual Characteristics

- Many youth are not attending school or have attendance problems
- Many have special education issues that may or may not have been identified
- Many come from families that have a history of mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, and/or criminal behavior

Juvenile Justice Experiences

- Slightly less than half of these youth are charged with violent offenses, many of which are assaults (misdemeanor or felony)
- One quarter to one-half were detained at the time of arrest
- Many have had prior contact with the system for previous criminal or status offense charges

Experiences in the Juvenile Justice System

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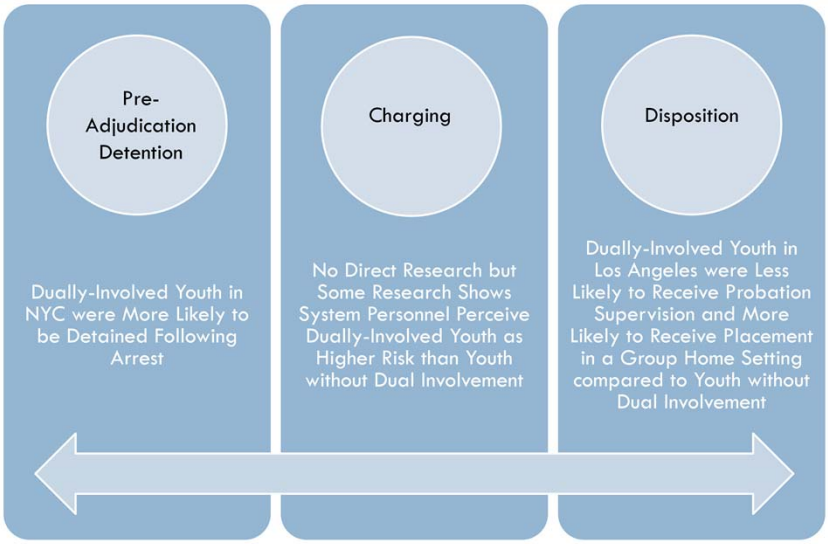

Research Updates on the Characteristics of Crossover Youth

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Missouri's Crossover Youth: Examining the Relationship between their Maltreatment History and their Risk of Violence

Anne Dannerbeck and Jiahui Yan
Office of State Courts Administrator, Jefferson City, Missouri

Anne Dannerbeck, Research Unit, Office of State Courts Administrator, Jefferson City, Missouri; Jiahui Yan, Office of State Courts Administrator, Jefferson City, Missouri

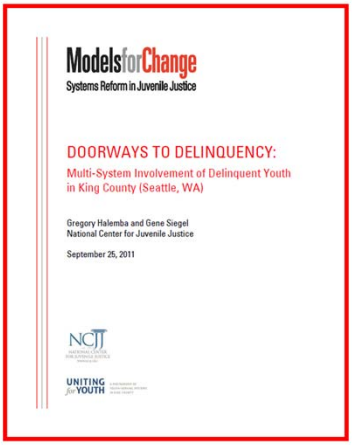
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anne Dannerbeck Janku, Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator, PO Box 104480, Jefferson City, MO 65110. E-mail: Anne.Jankup courts.mo.gov

Key words: maltreatment, violence, delinquency, crossover, trauma

Abstract

State agencies often have multiple opportunities to provide treatment services to child maltreatment victims, yet a significant number of youth still cross over to delinquency. The purpose of this study is to examine how delinquent youth with a maltreatment history may differ from other such youth in their risk factors and to explore the extent to which these risk factors are associated with violent delinquency. We used a developmental pathways model to examine how certain risk factors could be associated with maltreatment and violence. The risk factors included mental health, social environment, and offending history as well as gender and race. Results indicate that crossover youth have more severe risk factors than delinquent youth who do not have a history of maltreatment. In a multivariate model, maltreatment history increased the odds of an assault history (violence indicator) among 79,766 youth with status or delinquency referrals.

According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth violence is widespread and the second leading cause of death for youth in the United States (CDC, 2010). Child maltreatment is associated with youth violence (Gabarino, 1999; Herrenkohl, Herrenkohl, & Egolf, 2003; Stouthamer-Loeber, Loeber, Homish, & Wei, 2001) but the mechanisms that lead youth to cross over from the child welfare system, in which they are treated as victims, to the juvenile justice system, in which they are treated as perpetrators, are not well understood (Bilchik & Nash, 2008; Hollist, Hughes, & Schaible, 2009). Because maltreated youth have multiple system contacts, the child welfare and juvenile justice systems typically have numerous opportunities to impact their lives to deter them from offending. As is true in many states, child welfare and juvenile justice staff in Missouri are becoming increasingly aware of the crossover youth population. The purpose of this study is to examine how Missouri's delinquent youth with a maltreatment history may differ from other delinquent youth in their risk factors for crossing over into delinquency, and to explore the extent to which these risk factors are associated with violent delinquency. This information will help Missouri as well as other states better meet the needs of crossover



ModelsforChange
Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice

DOORWAYS TO DELINQUENCY:
Multi-System Involvement of Delinquent Youth in King County (Seattle, WA)

Gregory Halemba and Gene Siegel
National Center for Juvenile Justice

September 25, 2011

NCJJ
UNITING for YOUTH

www.ncjj.org

Long-Term Outcomes

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- Higher rates of substance abuse
- Higher rates of mental illness
- Higher rates of criminal involvement as adults
- Higher rates of child welfare involvement as parents/perpetrators of maltreatment

Critical Issues to Address

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- Understanding Crossover Youth Experiences and Moving Research Forward
  - Child welfare status appears to impact perceptions of risk and result in result in harsher disposition outcomes.
  - Anecdotal evidence combined with the growing amount of research underscores the important role that situational context may play in the lives of crossover youth and on how systems respond to crossover youth.
  - Although research is contributing to our knowledge in this area, each study prompts even more questions related to the reasons they cross over, their experiences within various systems, and how to improve their outcomes.

Critical Issues to Address

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- Implications for Systems
  - Interagency collaboration is not optional—it is necessary—at a minimum, there must be a nexus between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
  - Interagency collaboration is not limited to child welfare and juvenile justice: Involvement of educational and behavioral health systems is essential
  - Collaboration also includes public defenders and prosecutors—working through confidentiality issues, for instance, requires partnerships characterized by trust
  - Collaborative practices and protocols should be built from both a bottom up and top down approach

The Crossover Youth Practice Model

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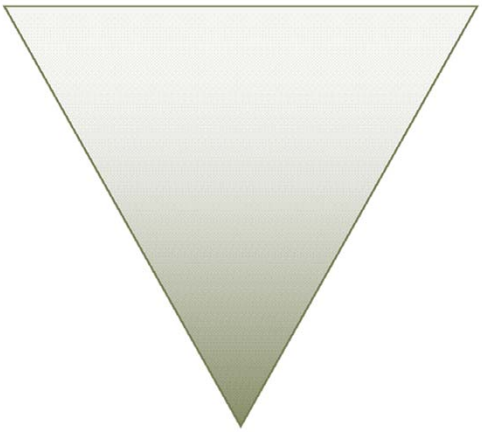

Phase I

Practice Area 1: Arrest, Identification, & Detention

Practice Area 2: Decision Making Regarding Charges

Phase II

Practice Area 3: Case Assignment, Assessment & Planning

Phase III

Practice Area 4: Coordinated Case Management & Ongoing Assessment

Practice Area 5: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition & Case Closure

http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/pm/practicemodel.html

Improvements as a Result of CYPM

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- 20% increase in the early identification of dually-involved youth compared to the pre-CYPM time period.
- 81% of dually-involved youth were handled using some type of promising practice compared to 36% of the comparison group.
- CYPM youth were nearly three times more likely to have their cases handled by a Multidisciplinary team.
- Increased progression of CYPM sites utilizing a joint assessment process. From the first to the last quarter, there was a increase in use from 25% to 59%.
- 30% decrease in the use of detention following arrest compared to the pre-CYPM time period.

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