

## **Youth Violence Research**

### **Introduction**

Over the past decade, the growing public concern about youth violence has led to a dramatic increase in violence prevention research. This research has shed light on a number of critical questions: How prevalent is youth violence? What are the factors that lead people to engage in violent behavior? And, which strategies and programs are effective in preventing violent behavior and intervening when violent behavior occurs? Research findings are providing a clearer understanding of the root causes of youth violence and also practical knowledge about which preventative approaches and interventions work best, and why. The widespread dissemination of these research findings is encouraging the use of research-driven interventions that have demonstrated efficacy in preventing youth violence in communities.

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### **Overview**

Youth violence research activities include: 1) determining the prevalence of youth violence (surveillance activities); 2) studies to understand causes and precursors of violent behavior and to identify protective factors; 3) evaluation research; and 4) research synthesis and application activities.

### **Surveillance programs**

Federal agencies engage in and support the ongoing and systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data needed to guide violence prevention programs. These data come from sources such as national youth surveys, hospital emergency rooms, police arrest reports, and death certificates. Such data collection not only allows agencies to monitor progress in preventing different types of youth violence, but also provides critical guidance for prevention efforts and resource allocation. For example, an analysis of crimes reported by law enforcement agencies indicated that violent crimes by juveniles peak in the afternoon between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., the hour at the end of the school day.<sup>1</sup> This finding was critical in highlighting the importance of afterschool programs as a youth violence prevention strategy.

### **Research to understand causes and precursors of violent behavior and to identify protective factors**

A key step in preventing violence is to identify the factors that place young people at risk for violent behavior. Federal agencies conduct and support research on precursors of violence, factors associated with violence, protective factors, and strategies for preventing such behavior and for intervening when violent behavior occurs. In recent years, our understanding of the risk factors that shape adolescent antisocial behavior and the protective factors that decrease the likelihood of violent activity has increased dramatically. Researchers have explored the influence of: individual-level

*Stop youth violence before it starts*

factors, such as school success or failure, emotional problems, and substance abuse; family level factors, such as family discipline practices and communication style; community level factors, such as level of neighborhood cohesiveness and community disorganization; and environmental level factors, such as poverty and media exposure. Most studies indicate that no single factor or single defining situation causes an individual to engage in violent behavior. Rather, multiple factors contribute to and shape these behaviors over the course of youth development in the absence of protective factors.<sup>2</sup> This type of research not only advances basic scientific knowledge about the causes or factors contributing to youth violence, but also provides credible information to guide violence prevention policies and the design of new interventions and programs.

### **Evaluation research activities**

Though violence prevention programs and interventions have proliferated in recent years, little information has been readily accessible for policy makers, funders, and practitioners regarding the effectiveness of different interventions and programs. In the past, most programs were unwilling to expend their scarce resources for data collection and evaluation activities when they could be used to support services and interventions. This situation has changed in recent years, as public and private funders have required clear evidence that programs are effective and have begun to provide funding for evaluation activities. Increasingly, programs must be able to show measurable changes in either behavioral patterns, such as fighting or violent behavior, or in the attitudinal or psychosocial factors associated with aggression and violence. As the number of program evaluations has increased over the last decade, answers have begun to emerge about which programs are most successful and which are ineffective. For example, a review of the research literature indicates that peer counseling is not an effective strategy to reduce youth violence and may, in some instances, increase delinquency.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, an evaluation of mentoring programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters has revealed that children with adult mentors are much less likely to engage in drug or alcohol use or to commit violent acts.<sup>4</sup>

### **Research synthesis and application activities**

Youth violence prevention research is of little value unless the information is synthesized and disseminated widely. A number of public and private efforts are now under way to begin to compile and analyze evaluation research. Some are trying to identify and publicize programs that meet a set of evaluation criteria for effectiveness in preventing youth violence, while others are seeking "best practices," strategies with strong track records in preventing and reducing youth violence. Federal agencies are playing an important role in ensuring the widespread dissemination of this information.

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### **Federal Government Research Activities**

Numerous Federal departments and agencies support a wide spectrum of research into why youth violence occurs, how it can be prevented and on effective interventions for violent youth. The agencies collaborate and work synergistically to foster innovative research initiatives. They also support important studies on youth violence by private and nonprofit organizations.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

The USDA mission is to enhance the quality of life for the American people by supporting production of agriculture:

- ensuring a safe, affordable, nutritious, and accessible food supply
  - caring for agricultural, forest, and range lands
  - supporting sound development of rural communities
  - providing economic opportunities for farm and rural residents
  - expanding global markets for agricultural and forest products and services
  - working to reduce hunger in America and throughout the world.
- **[The Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service \(CSREES\)](http://www.reeusda.gov)**  
[www.reeusda.gov](http://www.reeusda.gov)  
The Cooperative Extension System response to pervasive conditions in America which place children and their families at risk for not meeting their basic physical and social needs and not building the basic competencies necessary for successful participation in childhood, adolescent, and adult life is the [Children, Youth, and Families At Risk \(CYFAR\) National Initiative](http://www.reeusda.gov/4h/cyfar/cyfar.htm) ([www.reeusda.gov/4h/cyfar/cyfar.htm](http://www.reeusda.gov/4h/cyfar/cyfar.htm)). With the CYFAR National initiative, the USDA makes a commitment to supporting programs for at risk youth and limited resource families as a part of the educational outreach mission of the Land-Grant University system. One of the goals of CYFAR is to reduce risk factors and increase protective measures that will prevent the use of violence as a way to solve problems or as a response to difficult situations and stressful life events.

A key project of CYFAR is the [Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network \(CYFERNet\)](http://www.cyfernet.org) ([www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org)). CYFERNet is a national network of Land Grant university faculty and county Extension educators working to support community-based educational programs for children, youth, parents and families. Through CYFERNet, partnering institutions merge resources into a "national network of expertise" working collaboratively to assist communities. CYFERNet provides program, evaluation and technology assistance for children, youth and family community-based programs. It provides: access to the latest research, statistical, and demographic information; guidance in locating funding opportunities and grant writing information; resources and instruments for program evaluation; and information on 3000 community-based State Strengthening programs targeting at-risk audiences.

Finally, the Department of Agriculture coordinates the [Partnerships Against Violence Network \(PAVNET\)](http://www.pavnet.org) ([www.pavnet.org](http://www.pavnet.org)), a "virtual library" of information about violence and youth-at-risk, representing data from seven different Federal agencies. The PAVNET Research Database is an online, searchable source of information about current Federally-funded research on violence.

The USDA works to prevent youth violence by promoting economic development and youth training programs in rural and economically depressed communities.

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence for all Americans.

- **[Office of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)**

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/index.html)

The mission of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education is to promote academic excellence, enhance educational opportunities and equity for all of America's children and families, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning by providing leadership, technical assistance and financial support. The OESE's [Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program](#) ([www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html)) is the Federal government's primary vehicle for reducing drug, alcohol and tobacco use, and violence, through education and prevention activities in our nation's schools. This program supports initiatives designed to prevent violence in and around schools, and to strengthen programs that prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, involve parents, and are coordinated with related Federal, State and community efforts and resources. This program supports a number of program evaluation activities, including the National Study on School Violence and Violence Prevention. This study is examining the incidence of violence and disorder in schools nationally and the effectiveness of approaches to preventing violence in schools, including approaches funded by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program. The Department of Education is working with the National Institute of Justice to coordinate this study with the National Study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools, funded under an NIJ grant.

- **[Office of Educational Research and Improvement](#)**

[www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/index.html)

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) provides national leadership for educational research and statistics. OERI strives to promote excellence and equity in American education by: conducting research and demonstration projects funded through grants to help improve education; collecting statistics on the status and progress of schools and education throughout the nation; and distributing information and providing technical assistance to those working to improve education.

OERI's [National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\)](#) (<http://nces.ed.gov>), often in collaboration with a number of other Federal agencies, collects surveillance data needed for school violence prevention. For example, NCES collaborated with the Bureau of Justice Statistics to add a special supplement to the [National Crime Victimization Survey](#) ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm#ncvs](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm#ncvs)) to collect data on aspects of school crime. They also collect data from principals about crimes, violent incidents, and policies in their schools using the [School Survey on Crime and Safety](#) (<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs>).

The OERI also analyzes the results of program evaluations and disseminates the results. For example, OERI, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program (SDFS), has established the [Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools \(SDFS\) Expert Panel](#) ([www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert\\_panel/drug-free.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert_panel/drug-free.html)). The purpose of the Expert Panel is to oversee a process for identifying and designating as promising and exemplary school-based programs that promote safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools. Once programs are designated as exemplary or promising, the Department will disseminate information about the programs and will encourage their use in new sites. The Expert Panel initiative is a way of enhancing prevention programming by making schools aware of alternative programs that have proven their effectiveness when judged against rigorous criteria.

OERI also coordinates the [Educational Resources Information Center \(ERIC\)](http://www.eric.ed.gov) ([www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov)), a national information system designed to provide users with ready access to an extensive body of education-related literature. As part of this service, they have developed a number of research digests summarizing different bodies of youth violence research. These short reports are targeted specifically for teachers, administrators, policymakers, and other practitioners, but are generally useful to the broad educational community.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

[www.dhhs.gov](http://www.dhhs.gov)

The Department of Health and Human Services is the United States government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. DHHS supports a broad spectrum of research and evaluation projects to prevent youth violence. It also helps community groups organize coalitions to combat youth violence and gang activity.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The mission of the CDC is to promote the health and quality of life of the citizenry of the U.S. by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability. In particular, the CDC is committed to reducing and preventing youth violence through a public health approach that focuses on understanding the prevalence of youth violence; identifying risk and protective factors that influence its occurrence; research and program evaluation; and dissemination of information and technical assistance to its constituents.

The CDC supports a number of research activities through its different Centers. These include national surveillance systems that monitor injury and morbidity caused by violence. For example, the [Youth Risk Behavior Survey](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs) ([www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs)) provides surveillance data regarding the prevalence of aggressive and violent behavior among school-aged youth at school and in their communities. In addition to these surveillance activities, CDC supports a number of intramural and extramural research initiatives that focus on risk and protective factors for youth violence. These activities occur in conjunction with research that evaluates the efficacy of different violence prevention programs. Lastly, the agency is involved in a number of programmatic efforts that promotes a "Best Practices" approach to youth violence prevention predicated upon scientific efficacy.

- **Best Practices of Youth Violence Prevention: A Sourcebook for Community Action**  
[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm)  
The sourcebook prepared by the CDC briefly describes four strategies with strong evidence of effectiveness in preventing and reducing youth violence. It also provides concrete, practical information to help schools and community groups implement programs that incorporate these strategies and offer resources for further information.
- **Federal Activities Addressing Violence in Schools**  
[www.safeyouth.org/scripts/school/index.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/school/index.asp)  
Describes research activities by federal agencies to address violence. Includes links and contact information.

- [Measuring Violence-Related Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors Among Youths: A Compendium of Assessment Tools](#)  
[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm)  
This compendium provides researchers and prevention specialists with a set of tools to evaluate programs to prevent youth violence.
  
- [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)  
[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)  
The NIH mission is to uncover new knowledge that will lead to better health for everyone. NIH works toward that mission by: conducting research in its own laboratories; supporting the research of non-Federal scientists in universities, medical schools, hospitals, and research institutions throughout the country and abroad; helping in the training of research investigators; and fostering communication of medical information.  
  
NIH has a consortium of six agencies that have pooled funding for research on the development of interventions for youth violence. The NIH Youth Violence Consortia includes: [National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#) ([www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)), the [Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(OBSSR\)](#) (<http://obssr.od.nih.gov>), the [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development \(NICHD\)](#) ([www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)), the [National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#) ([www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)), the [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\)](#) ([www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)), and the [National Institute on Nursing Research \(NINR\)](#) ([www.nih.gov/ninr](http://www.nih.gov/ninr)). This FY 2000 initiative focuses on innovative research exploring the translation of ideas from basic behavioral and social science into novel interventions for youth.
  
- [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\)](#)  
[www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)  
The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) stimulates, supports, and disseminates a wide range of research studies related to the etiology, treatment and prevention of alcohol-related problems, including a number of specific projects that address aspects of the issue of youth violence as it relates to alcohol use and abuse. Current studies include:
  - basic research on the role and contribution of alcohol consumption to aggressive and violent behavior;
  - epidemiological studies of the prevalence and incidence of alcohol-related family violence and its sequelae;
  - experimental research on the role of males' misperception of females' sexual intentions and alcohol consumption in sexual assault perpetration;
  - secondary analysis of data examining the contribution of child abuse to subsequent alcohol abuse and dependence; and
  - preventive intervention studies exploring strategies to reduce abusive drinking among high risk groups and community-wide interventions to reduce alcohol-related violence across the age range.

As of the beginning of FY2000, NIAAA's portfolio included 12 specific projects that explore aspects of the risk factors for/epidemiology of youth violence as it relates to alcohol use and abuse and one methodological project working on developing a short screening instrument for adolescent alcohol problems. They focus broadly on identifying mediators and moderators of alcohol-related problems among particular high risk groups by addressing:

- biobehavioral mechanisms in alcohol-related youth aggression and/or psychophysiological risk factors (e.g., under- and over-arousal) focusing exclusively on individual factors;
- the interplay of personality traits with situational, social, and environmental risk factors including the family, peer group and/or community; and
- studies of such high risk groups for perpetration and victimization as homeless youth, gang members, and children born with fetal alcohol syndrome.

In addition, NIAA supports studies of interventions to delay the onset of alcohol use and binge drinking which also may reduce violence and delinquency, and studies on treatment of adolescent alcoholism that include tests of drugs and behavioral interventions with delinquent youth who also have alcohol problems.

o **National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)**

[www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)

The NICHD has a broad research mission dedicated to understanding the processes governing the growth and development upon which the health of infants, children, youth, and families depends. Research supported by the NICHD provides a foundation for understanding the antecedents and consequences of violent behavior, as well as for identifying effective prevention and intervention strategies. This includes a range of basic and applied research bridging biological, psychological, behavioral, demographic and sociological concerns, and incorporates animal models, clinical studies and intervention research. The NICHD also supports studies on normal behavioral and emotional development, which provides critical and fundamental knowledge for preventing youth violence.

Additionally, the NICHD supports violence prevention research on the:

- development of aggressive and violent behavior in childhood and adolescence;
- causes and consequences of family (domestic and child abuse) and community violence;
- risk-taking behaviors including sexual behaviors, peer pressure, gang participation, and drug and alcohol use, and their relation to violence in childhood and adolescence; and
- factors within family, social, and school contexts that prevent violence and mitigate the consequences of violence on the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children.

NICHD also supports theory-based prevention and intervention research designed to reduce the risk for violence and/or ameliorate the consequences of violence on individual, family and community development.

In addition, the NICHD also supports a variety of other projects that address critical issues that are broadly related to violence, including neurobiological influences on attachment, moral and prosocial development, social competence, parenting, and out-of-home care.

o **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)**

[www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) supports a wide range of biomedical and behavioral research and training on drug abuse, including specific projects that address the issue of youth violence within the context of drug use. The Institute's current youth violence research portfolio focuses on the following programmatic areas:

- **Epidemiology and Etiology of Youth Violence:** Studies of child and adolescent violence that identify the multiple risk and protective factors that contribute to violence and other problem behavior over the course of development.
- **Psychopharmacology of Aggression and Impulsivity:** Human laboratory studies that investigate the psychopharmacology of aggression and impulsivity using an established laboratory model. Animal studies are evaluating the role of neurotransmitter systems in aggression and the effects of drugs of abuse on aggression.
- **Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of Prevention and Treatment Interventions:** Rigorous outcome evaluations indicate that effective prevention programs for violence and drug abuse are multicomponent and utilize specific interventions, individualized to the family's strengths, which address the needs of the child, family, school, peers, and neighborhood.
- **Ethnographic Studies of Gang Drug-related Violence:** Ethnographic investigations of drug-related violence have shown that there is substantial variation across geographic areas as well as within geographic areas as to the nature of gang formation process and type of activities members engage in (e.g., violence, criminal activities).

o **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

The mission of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is to diminish the burden of mental illness. Basic neuroscience, behavioral science, and genetics research are used to improve our understanding of the fundamental mechanisms underlying thought, emotion, and behavior - and what goes wrong in mental illness - and to translate scientifically-generated information into clinical applications.

The NIMH violence research portfolio includes studies of: basic or fundamental processes in violent and aggressive behavior; perpetrators of youth violence, crime, sexual offenses, intimate partner assaults and violence among the mentally ill; and

victims of interpersonal violence and crime, including child abuse, rape, sexual assault, family violence, and major traumatic events, such as combat and war, mass shootings, and terrorism. Major program areas include:

- Research on the epidemiology of child and adolescent mental disorders that often co-occur with conduct problems and violence.
- Research on biopsychosocial risk and protective factors associated with youth violence including methodological research as well as pilot studies of interventions for child conduct problems, psychopathology, and a host of childhood and adult outcomes, including academic failure, substance abuse, high-risk sexual behavior, and violence.
- Testing the effectiveness of interventions, including controlled trials of approaches to youth violence prevention, treatment, and behavior maintenance (adherence to care, aftercare), including studies of promising and successful interventions to treat and prevent early aggression, antisocial behavior, anxiety disorders, depression, suicidal ideation and underlying cognitive, behavioral and emotional deficits, which often coexist with violent behavior.

Other areas of research include: studies of the implementation of interventions, including fidelity to program model, organizational structure and climate, community mobilization, and provider or trainer training; information dissemination research; policy studies; large-scale community trials; and multi-risk/multi-level intervention approaches.

[Child and Adolescent Violence Research at the NIMH](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm)

[www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm)

- [Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](http://www.samhsa.gov)

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

The SAMHSA's mission within the Nation's health system is to improve the quality and availability of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services in order to reduce illness, death, disability, and cost to society resulting from substance abuse and mental illnesses. SAMHSA works at the intersection of new research-based mental health services, addictions treatment, and substance abuse prevention knowledge and its application in communities Nationwide. Through its Knowledge Development and Application Programs (KDA), SAMHSA serves as a change agent, moving promising evidence-based prevention and treatment interventions from the controlled research environment to the community setting for use, evaluation, adaptation, and adoption.

- [Center for Mental Health Services \(CMHS\)](http://www.mentalhealth.org)

[www.mentalhealth.org](http://www.mentalhealth.org)

CMHS leads Federal efforts to treat mental illnesses by promoting mental health and by preventing the development or worsening of mental illness when possible. CMHS pursues its mission by helping States improve and increase the quality and range of their treatment, rehabilitation, and support services for people with mental illness, their families, and communities. Further, it encourages a range of programs-such as systems of care-to respond to the increasing number of mental, emotional, and behavioral problems among America's

children. CMHS supports outreach and case management programs for the thousands of Americans with severe mental illness who are homeless and supports the development and adoption of "models" for improving services.

The CMHS initiative on school violence focuses on the collective involvement of families, communities, and schools to build resiliency to disruptive behavior disorders (for example, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). It is typically these children who are at risk of violence as perpetrators and victims. Untreated conduct disorders can develop into costly adult mental health and societal problems such as delinquency, substance use, and antisocial personality disorder. CMHS has prepared and disseminated a number of summaries of the research on resilience and on effective strategies and programs for building resiliency.

- [School Violence Prevention Program: Building Resilience](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/buildingresilience.asp)  
[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/buildingresilience.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/buildingresilience.asp)  
Includes summary of evidence-based interventions to promote resiliency in young people, prepared by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), SAMHSA
- [Examples of Exemplary/Promising Programs](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/Irenelis.asp)  
[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/Irenelis.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/Irenelis.asp)  
Chart with numerous programs to promote resiliency and/or prevent youth violence which meet criteria for a designation of "evidence-based". The criteria by which the various organizations deemed them to be evidence-based, exemplary, model or promising are listed under the name of the organization.
- [Resilience: Status of the Research and Research-Based Programs](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp)  
[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp)  
Summarizes research on resilience and protective factors.

## **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

[www.usdoj.gov](http://www.usdoj.gov)

The Department represents the citizens of the United States in enforcing the law in the public interest and plays a key role in protection against criminals; ensuring healthy competition of business; safeguarding the consumer; enforcing drug, immigration, and naturalization laws; and protecting citizens through effective law enforcement.

### **Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising - Department of Justice**

[www.ncjrs.org/works](http://www.ncjrs.org/works)

An independent review of the effectiveness of State and local crime prevention programs, based on a systematic review of more than 500 scientific evaluations of crime prevention practices.

- **Bureau of Justice Statistics**

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs)

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) collects and analyzes statistical data on crime, criminal offenders, crime victims, and the operations of justice systems at all levels of government. It also provides financial and technical support to state statistical agencies and administers special programs that aid state and local governments in improving their criminal history records and information systems and in implementing incident-based reporting systems.

The School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is periodically conducted by BJS, in collaboration with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), on aspects of school crime through a supplement to the NCVS. These data represent about 25 million students. Information was obtained on the availability of drugs at school, existence of street gangs, prevalence of gang fights, presence of guns at school, victimizations, and fear of being attacked or harmed.

BJS collects and analyzes statistical data on the operations of justice systems at all levels of government. The Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP) describes juvenile offenders processed in the Federal criminal justice system, including the number of juveniles charged with acts of delinquency, the offenses for which they were charged, the proportion adjudicated delinquent, and the sanctions imposed. The Corrections Statistics Program (including National Correctional Reporting Program (NCRP), the National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) program, the Survey of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities (SISCF), and the Annual Survey of Jails (ASJ)) collects data on persons released from prison who were admitted under 18, persons under 18 in custody of State prison authorities, and persons under 18 held in local jails. Information includes demographic characteristics, offenses, average sentence length, and expected time served.

[Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2002](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm)

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm)

This joint annual report on school safety by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Justice Statistics is a companion document to the Annual Report on School Safety. This report provides detailed statistical information on the nature of crime in schools, drawn from a number of statistical series supported by the federal government.

- [The National Institute of Justice](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij)

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij)

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the primary research and development arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ works to develop knowledge to reduce crime, enhance public safety, and improve the administration of justice. NIJ conducts and sponsors basic and applied research into the causes, prevention, and detection of crime; sponsors evaluations of major Federal initiatives; develops new approaches, techniques, systems, and technologies; and collects and disseminates both domestic and international criminal justice information. NIJ's research relevant to youth violence focuses on: the initiation, development, and termination of violent criminal careers as part of a broad understanding of criminal activity; understanding individual, family, and community characteristics associated with youth at risk for criminality and criminal victimization, including gang activity and school violence; evaluation of prevention and intervention activities designed to reduce crime and violence, including national evaluations; understanding law enforcement and justice systems responses to juvenile violence, and their effects. NIJ's Office of Science and Technology also conducts research to develop, validate, and evaluate new technologies relevant to school safety, and disseminates information regarding the effective use of technology for school safety.

- [Office of Community Oriented Policing Services \(COPS\)](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)

[www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)

The primary goals of the COPS Office are to (1) increase the number of community policing officers on the beat; (2) promote community policing across the country; help develop an infrastructure to support and sustain community policing after Federal funding has ended; and, (4) demonstrate and evaluate the ability of agencies practicing community policing to significantly reduce the levels of violence, crime, and disorder in their communities. COPS has funded research to evaluate programs that address the prevention of juvenile crime and violence, with community policing principles.

The COPS Office has focused much of its research on the efficacy of school and law enforcement partnerships. COPS supports evaluation research that documents the process of building partnerships between law enforcement and school communities, as well as measuring outcomes of these partnerships.

- **[Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention](#)**

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

The mission of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is to provide national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP accomplishes this by supporting States and local communities in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and improve the juvenile justice system so that it protects the public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to those families and juveniles who need them.

Through its Research and Program Development Division, OJJDP has made significant contributions to preventing youth violence by identifying risk and protective factors. Further, OJJDP translates research into action and strives to promote science-based research by supporting rigorous evaluations of demonstration programs and meaningful statistics. Examples of research on youth violence that OJJDP currently supports include study groups on Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders and Very Young Offenders and the Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency. Through the research, evaluation and statistics activities that OJJDP has conducted over the years, the agency has identified community collaborations as a viable strategic response for addressing juvenile violence at the community, city, State, and national levels. OJJDP is currently conducting national evaluations of programs that address the problem of youth violence through comprehensive community partnerships. In addition, OJJDP evaluates programs aimed at reducing risk factors related to youth violence such as alcohol and drug use.

- **[The OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book](#)**

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html>

Provides basic information on juvenile crime and victimization and on youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Data in the content areas below provide timely and reliable statistical answers to the most frequently asked questions of policymakers, the media, and the general public.

- **[Predictors of Youth Violence](#)**

[www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000\\_04\\_5/contents.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_04_5/contents.html)

Summarizes analysis of the research on risk and protective factors for serious and violent juvenile offending, including predictors of juvenile violence derived from the findings of long-term studies.

- [Strengthening America's Families](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org)  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.org](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org)  
The focus of OJJDP's Family Strengthening Series is to provide assistance to ongoing efforts across the country to strengthen the family unit by discussing family intervention programs with proven effectiveness and providing resources to families and communities.
- [School and Community Interventions To Prevent Serious and Violent Offending](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910-1/contents.html)  
[www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910-1/contents.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910-1/contents.html)  
A major study, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and conducted by its Study Group on Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders, sheds new light on promising strategies to prevent and control serious violent juvenile offending.
- [Prevention of Serious and Violent Juvenile Offending - OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/178898.pdf)  
[www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/178898.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/178898.pdf)  
This bulletin describes some of the developmental precursors to serious juvenile offending and offers effective approaches to its prevention that are family, parent, and child focused.

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## Resources

### **Resources for learning about violence prevention research being conducted or funded by the Federal government**

#### [CRISP \(Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects\)](http://crisp.cit.nih.gov)

<http://crisp.cit.nih.gov>

Searchable database of previous and currently federally funded biomedical research projects conducted at universities, hospitals, and other research institutions. Includes projects funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and Office of Assistant Secretary of Health (OASH).

#### [Federal Activities Addressing Violence in Schools](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/school/index.asp)

[www.safeyouth.org/scripts/school/index.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/school/index.asp)

Describes research activities by federal agencies to address violence. Includes links and contact information.

#### [PAVNET Online](http://www.pavnet.org)

[www.pavnet.org](http://www.pavnet.org)

The PAVNET Research Database is an online, searchable source of information about current Federally-funded research on violence.

## **Resources for violence research articles**

### [National Criminal Justice Reference Service - Juvenile justice publications](http://virlib.ncjrs.org/JuvenileJustice.asp)

<http://virlib.ncjrs.org/JuvenileJustice.asp>

NCJRS is a federally sponsored information clearinghouse for people around the country and the world involved with research, policy, and practice related to criminal and juvenile justice and drug control. It includes abstracts for over 160,000 publications, and many full publications are available online.

### [Youth Violence Prevention Resources from the National Institute of Health's National Library of Medicine](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/cbm/youthviolence.html)

[www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/cbm/youthviolence.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/cbm/youthviolence.html)

Bibliography with over 3500 citations on the topic of youth violence from the past ten years. It also includes links to abstracts of many of the citations and provides links to reports on youth violence available on the Internet.

## **Resources for surveillance data**

### [Health, United States, 2000 With Adolescent Health Chartbook](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus00.pdf)

[www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus00.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus00.pdf)

Performed by the National Center for Health Statistics, provides current national mortality statistics and information and trend data on adolescent risk behaviors.

### [Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2002](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm)

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs02.htm)

This joint annual report on school safety by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Justice Statistics is a companion document to the Annual Report on School Safety. This report provides detailed statistical information on the nature of crime in schools, drawn from a number of statistical series supported by the federal government.

### [Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violvict.html#JOV)

[www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violvict.html#JOV](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violvict.html#JOV)

This report, prepared by the National Center for Juvenile Justice, presents comprehensive information on juvenile crime, violence, and victimization and on the juvenile justice system. It brings together the latest available statistics from a variety of sources and includes numerous tables, graphs, and maps, accompanied by explanations in clear, non-technical language.

### [The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\) Statistical Briefing Book](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html)

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html>

Provides basic information on juvenile crime and victimization and on youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Data in the content areas below provide timely and reliable statistical answers to the most frequently asked questions of policymakers, the media, and the general public.

### [The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs)

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs)

Monitors the health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among young people in the United States. Provides important statistical information and trends.

### [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SAMHDA)

[www.icpsr.umich.edu/SAMHDA](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SAMHDA)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive (SAMHDA) is an initiative of the Office of Applied Studies at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of the archive is to provide ready access to substance abuse and mental health research data and to promote the sharing of these data among researchers, academics, policymakers, service providers, and others, thereby increasing the use of the data in understanding and assessing substance abuse and mental health problems and the impact of related treatment systems.

### **Summaries of research on the causes of youth violence and protective factors**

#### [Child and Adolescent Violence Research at the NIMH - National Institute of Mental Health](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm)

[www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violenceresfact.cfm)

Summarizes research related to child and adolescent violence and outlines specific risk factors that have been linked to aggression.

#### [List of publications summarizing results from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health](http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth)

[www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth](http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth)

#### [Predictors of Youth Violence - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\) Juvenile Justice Bulletin](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_04_5/contents.html)

[www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000\\_04\\_5/contents.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_04_5/contents.html)

Summarizes analysis of the research on risk and protective factors for serious and violent juvenile offending, including predictors of juvenile violence derived from the findings of long-term studies.

#### [Resilience: Status of the Research and Research-Based Programs - Center for Mental Health Services](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp)

[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/5-28resilience.asp)

Summarizes research on resilience and protective factors.

### **Summaries of youth violence evaluation research**

#### [Best Practices to Prevent Violence by Children and Adolescents: A Sourcebook for Community Action - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm)

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm)

The sourcebook prepared by the CDC briefly describes four strategies that have been found to be effective in preventing and reducing youth violence. It also provides concrete, practical information to help schools and community groups implement programs that incorporate these strategies and offer resources for further information.

#### [Blueprints: A Violence Prevention Initiative](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#187079)

[www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#187079](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#187079)

This publication describes prevention and intervention programs that meet scientific standards of proven program effectiveness in preventing youth violence. It was prepared by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

[Examples of Exemplary/Promising Programs - Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA](#)

[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/Irenelis.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/Irenelis.asp)

Chart with numerous programs to promote resiliency and/or prevent youth violence which meet criteria for a designation of "evidence-based". The criteria by which the various organizations deemed them to be evidence-based, exemplary, model or promising are listed under the name of the organization.

[Strengthening America's Families](#)

[www.strengtheningfamilies.org](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org)

The focus of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Family Strengthening Series is to provide assistance to ongoing efforts across the country to strengthen the family unit by discussing family intervention programs with proven effectiveness and providing resources to families and communities.

[Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising - Department of Justice](#)

An independent review of the effectiveness of State and local crime prevention programs, based on a systematic review of more than 500 scientific evaluations of crime prevention practices.

[Prevention of Serious and Violent Juvenile Offending - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\) Juvenile Justice Bulletin](#)

[www.ncjrs.org/works/index.htm](http://www.ncjrs.org/works/index.htm)

This bulletin describes some of the developmental precursors to serious juvenile offending and offers effective approaches to prevention that are family, parent, and child focused.

[A Center for Mental Health Services \(CMHS\) School Violence Prevention Program: Building Resilience](#)

[www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/buildingresilience.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.org/schoolviolence/buildingresilience.asp)

Includes a summary of evidence-based interventions to promote resiliency in young people, prepared by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), SAMHSA

[Research-Based, Empirically-Effective Violence Prevention Curricula: A Review of Resources - National Network for Family Resiliency](#)

[www.agnr.umd.edu/nnfr/violence/yvp\\_litrev.html](http://www.agnr.umd.edu/nnfr/violence/yvp_litrev.html)

This publication identifies quality violence prevention programs and curricula. The descriptions of 23 research-based, empirically-effective resources are provided as a high-quality distillation of over 380 programs found in summary compilations of violence prevention materials.

[School and Community Interventions To Prevent Serious and Violent Offending- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\)](#)

[www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910-1/contents.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910-1/contents.html)

A major study sheds new light on promising strategies to prevent and control serious violent juvenile offending. The program is supported by the OJJDP and conducted by its Study Group on Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders.

## **Tools for violence prevention researchers and evaluators**

### [Bureau of Justice Assistance Evaluation Web Site](http://www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org)

[www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org](http://www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org)

This Web site is designed to provide agency staff, criminal justice planners, researchers and evaluators, as well as local practitioners with a variety of resources for evaluating criminal justice programs.

### [CYFERNET Evaluation page](http://www.cyfernet.org/evaluation.html)

[www.cyfernet.org/evaluation.html](http://www.cyfernet.org/evaluation.html)

This page contains information and links for evaluation research. The Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network (CYFERNet) is a project of the National Children, Youth and Families at Risk Initiative, funded by the Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES).

### [Measuring Violence-Related Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors Among Youths: A Compendium of Assessment Tools -- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm)

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm)

This compendium provides researchers and prevention specialists with a set of tools to evaluate programs to prevent youth violence.

## **Federal funding sources for violence prevention research**

### [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Funding Opportunities](http://www.ahrq.gov/fund)

[www.ahrq.gov/fund](http://www.ahrq.gov/fund)

Provides grant announcements and information on AHRQ funding guidelines and policies and application procedures

### [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control \(NCIPC\) Research Grants and Funding Opportunities](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/res-ops/funding.htm)

[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/res-ops/funding.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/res-ops/funding.htm)

Lists funding opportunities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) and provides information on funding policies and guidelines and links to other resources.

### [Funding Opportunities from the Office of Justice](http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.html)

[www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.html)

Provides information on current funding opportunities from the Office of Justice.

### [Funding Opportunities from the Department of Education](http://www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml)

[www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml](http://www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml)

Provides directory of documents published in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Education and funding guidelines and policies and application procedures.

### [GrantsNet](http://www.hhs.gov/grantsnet)

[www.hhs.gov/grantsnet](http://www.hhs.gov/grantsnet)

GrantsNet is a tool for finding and exchanging information about DHHS and selected other Federal grants programs.

### [National Institutes of Health Funding Opportunities](http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding.htm)

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding.htm>

Provides information on NIH funding guidelines and policies and application procedures.

### [Notices of Funding Availability](http://ocd1.usda.gov/nofa.htm)

<http://ocd1.usda.gov/nofa.htm>

Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs) are announcements that appear in the Federal Register, printed each business day by the United States government, inviting applications for Federal grant programs. This page allows you to generate a customized listing of NOFAs.

### [Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\) Grant Page](http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/funding.html)

[www.samhsa.gov/funding/funding.html](http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/funding.html)

Includes information about SAMHSA funding opportunities, application assistance, and archives of grant information.

### [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\) Grants and Funding](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html)

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html>

Provides information on current funding opportunities, funding guidelines and policies, and application procedures.

## **Other organizations engaging in violence prevention research activities**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Academic Centers for Excellence on Youth Violence The Academic Centers of Excellence will foster collaboration between university researchers and communities to address jointly the pressing public health problem of youth violence.

### [The October Center for the Study and Prevention of Youth Violence](http://www.octobercenter.vcu.edu)

[www.octobercenter.vcu.edu](http://www.octobercenter.vcu.edu)

Virginia Commonwealth University

### [UCSD Academic Center of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention](http://www.sdhealth.org/YVP/YVP.html)

[www.sdhealth.org/YVP/YVP.html](http://www.sdhealth.org/YVP/YVP.html)

University of California at San Diego

### [Southern California Center of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention](http://www.stopyouthviolence.ucr.edu)

[www.stopyouthviolence.ucr.edu](http://www.stopyouthviolence.ucr.edu)

University of California at Riverside

### [Center for Prevention of Violence in Youth](http://www.rcm.upr.edu/PublicHealth/english/index_E.html)

[www.rcm.upr.edu/PublicHealth/english/index\\_E.html](http://www.rcm.upr.edu/PublicHealth/english/index_E.html)

Graduate School of Public Health, University of Puerto Rico

[Youth Violence Prevention Center](http://www.sph.umich.edu/yvpc)

www.sph.umich.edu/yvpc  
School of Public Health, University of Michigan

[Columbia Center for Youth Violence Prevention](http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/sph/ccyvp)

http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/sph/ccyvp  
Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

[Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence](http://www.jhsph.edu/PreventYouthViolence/index.html)

www.jhsph.edu/PreventYouthViolence/index.html  
Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University

[Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/prevention.html)

www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/prevention.html  
Harvard Injury Control Research Center, Harvard University

[Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center](http://www.api-center.org)

www.api-center.org  
University of Hawaii at Manoa

[Comprehensive Youth Violence Center](http://www.uab.edu/youthhealth/cyvc.html)

www.uab.edu/youthhealth/cyvc.html  
Center for the Advancement of Youth Health, University of Alabama at Birmingham

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<sup>4</sup> Muller, J., and Mihalic, S. (1999). Blueprints: A Violence Prevention Initiative. Fact Sheet. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

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