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Personal and Social Factors Related to Adolescent Recidivism

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Personal and Social Factors Related to Adolescent Recidivism

By

Edgar Young, Jr.

**A Thesis Submitted To The Graduate Faculty
of
Augsburg College
in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Social Work**

**Minneapolis, Minnesota
November, 1996**

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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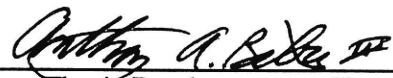
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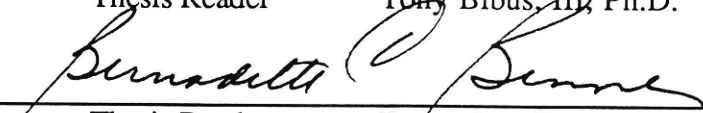
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Personal and Social Factors Related to Adolescent Recidivism

Acknowledgments

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I would like to thank my Thesis Advisor, Dr. Michael Schock and all of the faculty at Augsburg College who taught me for the last two years. I would also like to thank my readers Bernadette Benner and Dr. Tony Bibus.

I want to thank the seven professionals who allowed me to interview them for this study. Thank you for your time and cooperation and the information you offered.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all individuals who care about the young people who are caught up in the system of juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, this is dedicated to those people who are working to find solutions to the problems facing adolescents and their families.

Abstract

More than 45,000 Minnesota juveniles were arrested for all types of offenses in 1993, and 8.3 out of every 100 Minnesota juveniles arrested were between the ages of 10 and 17 (MN State Legislative Auditor, 1995). This exploratory research is a study using face to face interviews with seven professionals working directly with adolescent males who have been arrested and convicted of illegal activity (including status offenses). Six social service professionals from Minneapolis/St. Paul and surrounding metro counties were interviewed. Participants shared their perspective on the personal and social forces they think influence adolescent recidivism. Recidivism in this study is defined as adolescents habitually returning to crime after being released from incarceration. Some of the social forces identified were negative peer pressure, family structure, family problems, family instability, lack of parenting skills, poor communication skills, and poverty. They also offered solutions to those problems presented. The solutions included giving the adolescents more support, more mentorship programs, involvement of community and churches, and employment opportunities for the adolescents. Implications for social work practice are discussed.

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Chapter 1

History of Juvenile Court

The juvenile court was created during the late 19th century in recognition that youths were developmentally different from adults and that their welfare and misbehaviors required different responses from society (Edward, 1995). The operation of juvenile court was premised on the principle of *parens patriae*, an approach to delinquency that focuses on why youths act out and how to rehabilitate them (Edwards). Most states still consider juvenile court as acting in the interest of the child, but with the increase of repeat juvenile offenders the movement is more toward punishment. An example is Arizona's PIC Act that was passed a few years back, and required juvenile courts to impose Progressively Increase Consequences on repeat offenders (Hurst & McHardy, 1991).

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how selected professionals working directly with adjudicated adolescent males make sense of why adolescents re-offend. The study only addressed recidivism in males because of time constraints in conducting the study. In this study recidivism is defined as adolescents habitually returning to crime after being released from incarceration.

The research question asks, What are the intrapersonal and interpersonal social forces that explain why adolescent males re-offend? This question has implications for social worker because of the increase in crimes committed by kids. Social workers are a

good choice to provide intervention services to these adolescents.

Research Problem

Although millions of young people go through the juvenile courts each year in the United States, about half are for status offenses (behaviors that are illegal for minors but not adults, such as running away) (Edwards, 1995). However, serious juvenile crimes are on the increase. Between 1984 and 1992 violent crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) among adolescents increased 45.4 percent for males totaling 80,627 arrests (Edwards). Arrests for serious violent crimes made up 16 percent of all juvenile arrests in 1990. Reports from 7,937 law enforcement agencies indicated that 1.6 million persons under the age of 18 were arrested in 1992, an increase of 11.5 percent over the 1988 figures (Edwards). A total of 1.25 million (more than 75%) were males (Edwards). A small number (5 percent to 15 percent) of juvenile offenders are responsible for the majority (two-thirds to three-fourth) of the serious and violent juvenile crimes (Edwards). In 1992, the U. S. Department of Justice reported that approximately 1.5 percent of all new admissions to state prisons were juveniles (Edwards). Juvenile crime represents high costs to society in damage to property and persons, as well as the cost of treatment for delinquents and their victims (Swenson & Kennedy, 1995).

More than 45,000 Minnesota juveniles were arrested for all types of offenses in 1993, and 8.3 out of every 100 Minnesota juveniles arrested were between the ages of 10 and 17 (MN State Legislative Auditor, 1995). Juvenile offenders released from residential facilities in Minnesota have tended to re-offend within a short period of time, according to

a study by the Legislative Auditor in 1995. The study found that between 53 and 77 percent of male offenders had either re-offended as a juveniles or were arrested for crimes as adults in the two years immediately following their 1991 release from juvenile facilities.

Delinquency or juvenile delinquency is a legal term referring to illegal acts committed by individuals under the age of 18. Children under 8 who commit such acts are not considered delinquents, because it is assumed that they are too young to understand the significance and consequences of their actions (Carson, Butcher, & Coleman, 1988).

The actual incidence of juvenile delinquency is difficult to determine because many delinquent acts are not reported. Newspaper headlines constantly tell us that juvenile crime is on the increase. But the fact is that official police and court records do not paint an accurate picture about the extent of delinquent behavior, as many offenses are not reported to or detected by the police (McQuoid, 1996). Traditionally, researchers have suggested that delinquency is caused by either biological or social factors. In recent years, the trend has been to view these two factors as interrelated (Calabrese & Adams, 1990). In either case, delinquent behavior is seen as a form of alienation, meaning a rejection of traditional societal values and social organizations such as schools, churches, and fraternal organizations (Calabrese & Adams).

In general, the public believes that children who live in violent homes are likely to become juvenile delinquents, or else perpetrators/victims of violence as adults (Pagelow, 1984). It is true that delinquency tends to be much more frequent in adolescents coming

from homes where there is abuse or neglect (Widom, 1989). For example, children who live in homes where fathers beat their mothers are affected by an environment of violence (Pagelow). Children learn to be aggressive through observing aggression in their families and surrounding society (Widom). When a child is severely disciplined, he/she tends to exhibit more aggressive behavior. Also, abused children tend to show more self destructive behavior than nonabused children (Paperny and Deisher, 1983).

The literature reviewed for this study makes connections between juvenile delinquency and alienation, family structure, peer pressure, abuse and neglect, and alcohol and drug abuse. While reviewing the literature on adolescent recidivism I discovered studies whose primary subjects were adolescents and parents of adolescents. I did not find any studies that interviewed professionals and asked the same questions my study asked.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

There are many theories that attempt to explain delinquent behavior, but this study will consider only a number of them for the theoretical framework of this adolescent recidivism research. Control, containment, cultural deviance/differential association, structure/opportunity, and labeling theories are accepted sociological theories of delinquency (Hawkins & Fraser, 1981).

Control Theory

Control theory assumes that socialization is a process by which people become bonded to family, school, and the law (Hawkins and Fraser, 1981). Prosocial behavior is a direct result of becoming bonded to conventional society. This theory views delinquency as unregulated behavior, because when an individual is not bonded to conventional society, he/she does not adhere to the customary societal values (Hawkins & Fraser).

Containment Theory

Containment theory is based upon assumptions similar to assumptions within control theory. Containment theory assumes that the tendency to commit acts which are contrary to societal norms is inherent within everyone (Thompson & Dodder, 1986). This creates the assumption that every juvenile is a potential delinquent (Thompson & Dodder). According to this theory, the determining factor in both conformity and deviance is the extent to which a person is prohibited from committing delinquent acts (Thompson &

Dodder).

Thompson and Dodder have identified the self, which is the inner containment, and the immediate social world within which the person lives (outer containment) as the two sources of control. These authors defined the inner containment as the ability of a person to follow expected norms through self-control. The four basic components of inner containment are favorable self-concept, goal orientation, frustration tolerance, and retention of norms (Thompson and Dodder, 1986). Thompson and Dodder (1986) defined outer containment as the ability of society to confine individual behavior within acceptable ranges of norms. Outer containment consists of three components: (a) internalization of rules, (b) availability of meaningful roles, and (c) reinforcement. Internalization of rules is having an understanding of rules set forth by parents and the broader society and applying them to themselves and following them. Availability of meaningful roles is feeling like they have a contribution to make and are being heard. Reinforcement is receiving praise and support from parents and others (Thompson & Dodder).

Cultural Deviance Theory

Cultural deviance theory views delinquency as coming from subcultures whose values are contrary to those of the dominant social order (Hawkins and Fraser, 1981). This theory describes delinquency as conformity to deviant, subculture values (Hawkins and Fraser). Differential association theory specifies that individuals learn subculture

values by their interaction with peers who encourage delinquent values (Hawkins & Fraser).

Structural/opportunity Theory

Structural/opportunity theory assumes that delinquency happens when youths face obstacles that hinder them from obtaining the rewards of the larger society (Hawkins & Fraser, 1981). This theory also places emphasis on poverty or oppressive economic conditions as a cause of delinquency (Hawkins & Fraser). A lack of job opportunities as a result of institutionalized racism is an example of the powerful in society controlling those with less power (Hawkins & Fraser). Some adolescents learn to want the things that seem to appeal to everyone else in society, but because of built-in structures like racism, are unable to obtain them due to being denied employment opportunities. They will often turn to illegal behaviors to obtain the things they desire. Adolescents are also affected when their parents are denied opportunities because of the power structure and are unable to provide for them.

Labeling Theory

Labeling theory focuses mainly on the societal response to a person's behavior and the result of this response. Labeling theorists contend that most youths commit acts that would constitute processing through the juvenile justice system and being labeled delinquent (Flowers, 1990). The delinquent labeling of youths is unfairly applied by lawmakers, law enforcement and others who control social power. This results in more arrests, harsher sentences, and delinquent labeling for lower class juveniles than their

middle and upper class counterparts (Flowers, 1990). The theories discussed in this section will be used for the purpose of laying a foundation for the problems being investigated in this study.

Causes of illegal behavior

A great deal of social science research looking at the causes of illegal behavior among adolescent males has been produced in the past several decades. Studies have made connections between juvenile delinquency and family violence, alienation, peer pressure, family instability, poverty, abuse and neglect, and family structure. The literature reviewed for this study includes studies looking at the impact of; (a) alienation, (b) family violence, (c) witnessing violence, (d) family structure, (e) abuse and neglect, (f) peer relationship, (g) drug and alcohol abuse, and (h) school on the influence of adolescent delinquency.

Alienation.

A study by Calabrese and Adam (1990) defined alienation as an emotional state brought about by environmental and/or economic conditions that has been long used by social scientists to explain deviant behavior. Alienation, more specifically defined, is the feeling of apartness or strangeness experienced in cultures or social settings that seem unfamiliar, unacceptable, or unpredictable (Barker, 1995). Their study sought to establish an empirical link between alienation and delinquency.

Calabrese and Adams administered the Dean Alienation Scale to 157 male adolescents who were incarcerated in a Midwestern State. The incarcerated adolescents

were ages 16 to 17 and had a documented history of problems with authority. The Dean Alienation Scale is a global measure of alienation (Calabrese & Adams, 1990).

Incarcerated adolescents, when compared with non-incarcerated adolescents, had significantly higher levels of Total Alienation (Calabrese & Adams). They concluded that specific social forces alienate the family and cause a high level of stress, which in turn has a negative impact on the children (Calabrese & Adams). Home environment and economic factors are the major influences of alienation in families (Calabrese).

Incarcerated adolescents came from homes where they experienced rejection by their parents, they had poor conflict resolution skills, and there was a lack of trust in the family.

Not trusting was a survival skill employed by the adolescents (Calabrese & Adams).

Some economic factors were unemployment and lack of money to acquire material objects. These economic factors could produce a criminal response such as robbery (Calabrese & Adams). Also, if adolescents leave incarceration more alienated than when they entered, recidivism may be a primary result (Calabrese and Adams).

Family.

The relationship between family and delinquent behavior is a topic frequently discussed by both lay persons and social scientists (Leflore, 1988). In his study, Leflore investigates the relationship of demographic, family structure and family environmental variables to delinquent behavior. Family structure was defined by the number of siblings in house, family intactness, birth rank, and the total number of persons in household. Family environment was defined by family relationships, personal growth, and family

system maintenance. The sample was composed of 198 youths. This study used official repetitive/serious delinquent offenders (n=68) and statistically matched group of official nondelinquent (n=130). Average age was 15.4 years, and the families were from various racial backgrounds and represented two SES categories, lower-lower and lower-middle (LeFlore, 1988). LeFlore's study revealed that there was a distinction between repetitive/serious delinquents and nondelinquents who came from lower socioeconomic families. Personal growth was found to have the most discriminating power, followed by number of siblings, race, and sex.

Personal growth is when family members are encouraged to be assertive, self-sufficient, to make their own decisions and to think things out for themselves (Leflore, 1988). If the family is effective in helping youths achieve personal growth, their chances of remaining nondelinquent are increased; but if the family is not effective, the youths may become delinquent in behavior (Leflore). Youths from lower SES or working -class families may have problems "measuring-up" to the "middle-class measuring rod." In an attempt to cope, they may experience decreased achievement and loss of self-esteem, blocked opportunities, and sense of injustice, which may result in delinquent behavior (Leflore).

Efforts to explain the development of problem behaviors among urban African American adolescent males have also focused on family structure (Zimmerman, Salem, & Maton, 1995). According to research literature, living in single-mother households has been suggested as a contributing factor in the development of adolescent problem behaviors

(Zimmerman, et al). Zimmerman reports that research on the effects of father absent families on adolescent development has used white middle-class samples. Zimmerman examined the relations between adolescent psychosocial and behavioral variables (substance use and delinquency, psychological well-being, and social support) and five family constellations (single-mother, stepparent, both parents, mother with extended family, and extended family only households). The study sample consisted of 254

African American male adolescents from an inner city on the eastern coast of the United States. The study found that African American youth living in single-mother households reported more parental support than youth living with both parents. Single mothers tended to compensate for the absence of the father by being diligent in the support they provided for their sons (Zimmerman, et al). Youths who said they received emotional support from their fathers reported spending more time with their fathers than youth who did not receive emotional support (Zimmerman, et al). Also about two-thirds of the youth not living with their father identified their father as their male role model (Zimmerman, et al). Adolescent males in this study who lived in single-mother households did not differ from youth living in other family constellations in their alcohol and substance use, self-reported delinquency, school dropout, or psychological distress (Zimmerman, Salem, & et al).

Parents and Peers.

Research shows that there is a strong connection between peer relations and adolescent problem behaviors such as delinquency and substance abuse (Pabon, Rodriguez, & Gurin, 1992).

Adolescents in the U.S. live their daily lives in two social worlds with two different masters (Warr, 1993). At school and other outside activities, they are influenced by their peer culture. This peer culture has its own rules of dress, music, speech, and behavior. The peer culture also places emphasis on popularity, physical attractiveness, and athletic success (Warr). According to differential association theory and control theory, peers are regarded as potential instigators of delinquency and parents as potential barriers (Warr). Closeness to father is the better predictor of delinquent behavior, especially among male adolescents (Johnson, 1987). Parents may counteract peer influence by restricting adolescents' exposure or access to delinquency peers when they themselves spend more time with their children. This in turn reduces the likelihood of delinquent behavior, either by reducing opportunities for delinquency or by maximizing their effect as positive (law-abiding) role models (Warr). Warr reported that adolescents with strong bonds to their parents may be less prone than others to acquire delinquent friends and hence may be less motivated to engage in delinquency.

Warr concluded that both peers and parents clearly exert considerable influence on adolescent behavior. However, they do not operate independently from one another (Warr, 1993). Warr also concluded that the quantity of time that adolescents spend with their family has moderate to strong effects in counteracting peer influence, and in certain instances is capable of completely negating it (Warr, 1993).

It is commonly agreed that close ties to parents are correlated with low self-reported involvement in juvenile crime (Johnson, 1987). Johnson examined parent-child relationships.

The researchers examined self-reported delinquent behavior in a sample of over 700 adolescents. Data were gathered from 734 high school sophomores in Seattle, Washington. The sample consisted of 71% whites, 16% Asian-Americans, 8% blacks, and 5% others, with a mixture of social classes.

The results indicated that males are more delinquent than females, that the gender of the adolescent is not related to the strength of parental attachment, that both males and females are closer to their mothers than their fathers. However, closeness to their father is a better predictor of delinquent behavior, especially among males (Johnson, 1987).

Researchers in England examined the family and social context of 74 young people, most of whom were males, who were being arrested frequently by the police (Lyon, 1996). While adolescents' offending behavior in England is widespread, frequent persistent offending is much rarer (Lyon). The researchers found high levels of family disruption, and the adolescents interviewed were not involved in any constructive day to day activities (Lyons).

Studies on the general population, such as the Cambridge Study of Delinquency, have consistently shown the relevance of economic deprivation and family factors in predicting offending (Hagell & Newburn, 1996). The authors of the Cambridge study claimed that chronic offenders have more problematic family backgrounds than non-chronic offenders (Hagell and Newburn). They had high levels of family disruptions and disadvantages such as spending time in care of local authorities and being economically deprived. For adolescents with detached or chaotic family ties, peers are likely to become very important and perhaps play a greater role in supporting offending behavior (Hagell and Newburn).

Peer group popularity .

The importance of adolescents' attachment to the peer group as evidenced by their popularity among peers has been well established, "acceptance by peers generally, and especially having one or more close friends, may be of crucial importance in a young person's life" (Tatar, 1995). In a study of 742 parents in Israel, parents were asked what they thought were the most important factors determining popularity in your son's/daughter's school. Parents were asked to identify the three leading factors that cause the most pressure for their child. A large portion of parents' responses ascribed popularity to personal qualities such as, being friendly and having a strong personality. Parents also singled out academic performance as a major factor affecting both stress and popularity. Some parents also admitted to being a source of adolescent stress themselves (Tatar). This may be due to the inherent conflict in the parent-adolescent relationship during a period when the adolescent is struggling to find individuation and autonomy (Tatar). They are trying to find an identity separate from their parents. Parents are likely to experience a decreasing of their role regarding their adolescents (Tatar). The first -order developments of adolescence require the parents' recognition of their adolescent's growing intellectual capacity and their acceptance of the development importance of independent strivings, peer friendships, dating, and activities away from the family (Germain, 1991). They must gradually relinquish the kind of parental control exerted during childhood (Germain). Tatar's findings show that parents of older adolescents (16-17-year-old) of both sexes emphasize personality factors, whereas parents of younger adolescents (12-13-year-old) focused on social settings and family background regardless of adolescent

gender.

Alcohol and Drugs

The use of alcohol and drugs among school children has been reported to be on the increase (Hagell & Newburn, 1996). The Cambridge Study of Delinquency suggested that offenders drank more beer and got drunk more often than non-offenders (Hagell & Newburn).

Kang, Magara, & Shapiro (1994) examined the correlates of cocaine or crack use by adolescent to violent crimes. Four hundred and twenty-seven male adolescents 16-19 years old in the New York Department of Corrections were interviewed (Kang, Magara, & Shapiro). Thirty-nine percent of the adolescent males had been charged with a violent crime at least once in their lifetime. They found that the type of crime whether violent or not was not related either to cocaine/crack use.

Frequent use and abuse of drugs is more common among youths who are involved in chronic delinquent behavior than among other adolescents (Hawkins, Jenson, Catalano, & Lishner (1988). Hawkins, et al, examined the evidence linking adolescent drug use and delinquency. Using the 1980 National Youth Study, they found that nearly 50 percent of serious juvenile offenders were also multiple, illicit drug users. Serious juvenile offenders here means those who admitted having committed three or more index offenses in the past year (Hawkins, et al). In the same sample, alcohol use among serious delinquents were four to nine times those of non-offenders, rates of marijuana use were 14 times those of non-offenders, and rates of use of other drugs were six to 36 times those of non-offenders, depending on the drug (Hawkins, et al). Criminal behavior and drug use often occur

simultaneously (individuals who committed crimes were using drugs just prior to their offense) (Hawkins, et al).

There are several schools of thought about the causal relationship between drug use and crime. Some researchers argued that drug use causes or increases crime, others suggest that individuals with criminal tendencies are inclined to become drug abusers (Hawkins, et al, 1988). Still there are those who argued that delinquency and drug abuse are different and independent behaviors that result from the same type of mind-set (Hawkins, et al). Participation in delinquent behavior generally precedes drug use chronologically and delinquent behavior peaks between ages 15 and 17, while drug involvement increases during the years and peaks in the early 20's (Hawkins, et al). In their final analysis, Hawkins, et al, concluded that it is difficult to fully understand the relationship between delinquency and drug use because both minor delinquency and the occasional use of alcohol and marijuana are so widespread among all American adolescents.

School.

Hartnagel and Tanner (1982) examined the impact that high school and adolescent experiences in high school have upon the relationship between social class and delinquency. Some researchers regard the high schools as a more important source of delinquency than social class and others view the high school as the mediating variable between social class and delinquency (Hartnagel & Tanner).

Hartnagel and Tanner's study (1982) consisted of 733 students from three junior and two senior high schools in Edmonton Public School System. Three of the schools were from

working class neighborhoods and two were from middle class neighborhood. Delinquency was measured by self-reporting of such behaviors as theft, violence, vandalism, drinking and rebellious behavior in school (Hartnagel & Tanner). Hartnagel and Tanner found more support for the school status model of delinquency than for the class background model.

Unofficial Crime Rate

Although we hear through newspaper headlines and research studies that juvenile crime is on the increase, many crimes go unreported. In northern Ireland in 1992-93, as part of the International Self-Reported Delinquency Study, researchers found explanations for delinquency and solved the methodological problem of such research (McQuoid, 1996). Eight hundred and eighty-three 14-21 year old were questioned face-to face as to whether they had committed any of 33 status, youth-related, property, violent and drug offenses. The sample consisted 52 percent males and 48 percent females. The results were three-quarter of the main sample reported having committed at least one delinquent act some time in their lives, and almost half had committed a delinquent act in the previous year. The most prevalent offenses were vandalism, bus fare evasion and spray graffiti. Marijuana use was reported by 19% last year and more than one-tenth had committed vandalism or brought stolen goods. Almost one tenth reported offending more than 50 times a year (McQuoid). In this study it can be seen that occasional rule/law-breaking of a not too serious nature is very widespread in Belfast (McQuoid). Self reported delinquency in this study is associated with males in their late teens from lower educational and socio-economic groups, who either dislike or have left school and have no job, have a large circle of close friends, little parental

supervision and who do not see the importance of working hard (McQuoid).

After a review of the literature, I found strong support for family environment, poverty, parental and peer influence as predictors of adolescent delinquency. Some researchers believe that interaction with family is the major predictor of delinquency as well as nondelinquency in some cases. The relationship to the father in males coming from single-parent homes is crucial to preventing delinquency. Rejection by parents and a lack of encouragement for personal growth within the family can lead to decreased achievement and low self-worth for adolescents, thus leading to delinquent behaviors. Researchers agree that both parents and peers have an influence on adolescent behavior. Peers are regarded by some as contributors to delinquency while parents are regarded as barriers. Some adolescents are influenced by their peers when they are outside of the home and controlled by their parents within the home.

The literature produced evidence that alcohol and drug abuse among adolescents is on the increase. However, there was not clear evidence whether alcohol and drug use caused adolescents to commit crime or if adolescents who commit crime use drugs. If adolescents leave incarceration more alienated than when they entered there is a good chance they will re-offend.

Research Question

What are the intrapersonal and interpersonal social forces that explain why adolescent males re-offend?

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter I will be discussing the steps that were taken to collect the data and answer the research question for this study. The research design is an exploratory study using key informant interviews. I will also discuss the instrument design, procedures used, and limitation of the study design.

Face to face interviews were conducted with seven professionals who were identified as key informants. They were selected as key informants for this study because of their experience working with male adolescent offenders. The sample consisted of one female and six males. Three were African American and the remaining four interviewed were Caucasian. The interviewer used a 15 question open-ended questionnaire. The interviews last for thirty to ninety minutes each. All interviews were conducted within a one month period of time. The interviews were audiotaped and were transcribed for the purpose of comparing the answers in search of common themes. The study findings were limited to a small sample that could not be used to generalize to all programs serving adolescent male offenders.

Research Design

Informants were recruited from several juvenile programs in the Minneapolis/St. Paul and surrounding metro areas. These agencies were chosen because of their work with adolescent male offenders and because their location made easy access to conduct the

research. Three informants were from public and county juvenile facilities, one from a police department adolescents program. One informant worked as a social work therapist in a day treatment program sponsored by a private community development agency. Another was a psychologist in private practice, and both had previously worked in a county juvenile facility.

Instrument Design

The data collection for this qualitative study was done through interviews utilizing a fifteen question open-ended questionnaire (see appendix D). No formal pretest was conducted, but the researcher consulted with several professionals who worked with adolescents about the questions. The questions addressed domains of peers, family, school, and the juvenile justice system as they relate to adolescent recidivism. The questionnaire was designed to solicit information about the role peers, family, school, and the juvenile justice system play in adolescent recidivism. The questionnaire consisted of three sets of questions in each domain. The interviews were designed to last for sixty minutes. At the beginning of each interview the researcher explained the purpose of the study more in-depth than when the interviewees were first contacted.

Procedures

Recruitment for this study began by first securing the official consent of program directors and other persons responsible for permitting access to the various agencies staff. The directors identified potential participants from their agencies. The researcher then contacted the recommended professionals by telephone and invited them to participate in

the study. Consent forms were given to the key informant before each interview. Any questions regarding the study were explained before the consent was signed (see appendix B).

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted at each respondent's agency. This was done in a private place chosen by the interviewee in order to maintain confidentiality of the informants. Four interviews were conducted in the informants' offices, and three informants were interviewed in conference rooms. The data collection for this qualitative study was done through in-depth interviews utilizing an interview guide. The questions for the interview were predetermined. Interviews lasted from thirty to ninety minutes. At the beginning of each interview the author explained the purpose of the study more in-depth than when the interviewees were first contacted. The interviews were audiotaped and the complete typed transcripts were made to facilitate coding. At times the interview deviated from the questions, usually for clarification.

Data Analysis

The key informants were asked questions to help determine their expertise in working with adjudicated adolescents. Some of the themes sought were peers' connections to adolescent recidivism, the role of the school in adolescent recidivism, and the family's role in adolescent recidivism. Finally, informants were asked about the available supports and solutions to prevent recidivism. The audiotaped interviews were transcribed into type-written form. The answers to the questions in each of the

transcribed interviews were compared to identify major recurring themes, both common and different.

Among the common themes identified was that peers do play a major role in adolescent recidivism, and the school labels some students as troublemakers leaving some students feeling devalued and alienated. There were disagreements about the available resources in the school. Some respondents felt the schools had the necessary resources, but are not utilizing them to serve all students, and other felt that the schools are doing a good job. Another common themes identified was that the families themselves are experiencing problems such poverty, isolation, chemical health issues, poor parenting skills. There were different opinions about the level of parental involvement while the adolescents are incarcerated.

Limitation of Study Design

The study used a small sample that could not be used to generalize to all agencies working with adolescent male offenders.

Chapter 4

Findings

In this chapter I will present my findings for this study. I will discuss the role of the social forces in the lives of the adolescent offenders. I will also discuss the common and disagreeing themes drawn from the analysis of the seven interviews. All informants interviewed for this study currently had direct contact with adolescent male offenders. The informants had an average of fourteen years providing services to adolescent offenders in the juvenile justice system.

Peers

I asked the key informants to describe the role they see the adolescents' peers playing in adolescents re-offending. The responses to this question were overwhelmingly that peers play a major role in recidivism. Some of the participants believe that adolescents are greatly influenced by their peer culture and that having to return to their same peer group after leaving incarceration makes it difficult for the adolescents not to re-offend. One of the respondents cautioned that while peer pressure influences how adolescents make their decisions, it should not be considered a cause of juvenile delinquency. The respondent stated, "Well, I don't think there's any question that peers have a great deal to do with how kids act these days in general, but at the same time I don't think peers can be considered the cause of juvenile delinquency and why kids get into trouble."

When they were asked what do they see adolescents peers doing to prevent their

friends from re-offending, some informants reported not seeing positive peer influence happening at all. Most responses had to do with the fact that adolescents, as most people do, choose friends who are like themselves and with whom they are comfortable. One response given was, "whether a group of peers is one way or the other, I think it depends on the youth choosing to be with people that they like or are comfortable with." According to some, peers are often involved in negative activities themselves. One respondent talked about how their program worked to develop a positive peer culture to improve the communication process among peers, whereby adolescents would change and hopefully influence their friends to change also. It was evidently clear that adolescents are greatly influenced by their peers, whether negatively or positively. I asked the key informants to speculate on what the adolescents' peers should be doing to keep them from reoffending? Several participants indicated that peers need to be more confrontational about influencing positive behavior. Being supportive and positive role models were also a common theme. Some suggested a need for more family and community involvement to help the adolescents by providing meaningful activities.

Two responses presented other points as well; " I think it would have to be a total re-alignment of their thinking, values, and thought patterns where the positive things will have to become important to them, but the group that I deal with that's not prevalent. Positive things aren't valuable to the kids." Here, the informant talked about how some kids don't value going to school, getting a job, or following normal societal rules. This respondent also believed that in order to facilitate change school, job, and societal rules

would have to become more valuable to the adolescents. This response is based on the adolescents in a particular program.

One respondent stated, "I don't think peers are going to keep someone from re-offending." However, this participant goes on to say that if someone is involved with peers who are doing positive activities, it leaves less time for delinquent involvement.

School

A lot of the same problems in the broader society are found in the school. The respondents were asked to talk about what they thought the problems are in the school that contribute to adolescent recidivism. Drugs, weapons, intimidation, and shortage of resources were among the problems stated. More adolescents are involved with the use and sale of illegal drugs and they are bringing weapons to school to intimidate other students. Another respondent suggested that the schools lack the ability and are sometimes unwilling to meet the unique cultural and social needs of the individual student. One respondent believes resources are not a problem. Others suggested that the school's labeling some kids as troublemakers and rejecting them is a problem which often leaves students feeling devalued and alienated. "When you feel devalued then you don't really care about who you devalue and who you offend." Some believe that teachers and schools are faced with a difficult task and could do better, but that some teachers are doing a decent job.

Schools were seen as reactive rather than proactive. "Teachers are not able to address the needs of some of the kids that come with real problems and in the past kids

have had to grow up and get in trouble with the law before any interventions can happen."

The informants were asked what they thought the school was doing to keep adolescents from reoffending. Some see school as becoming more aware of the need to involve parents and utilize them as resources. Other responses to this question make mention of new programs implemented by schools such as the truancy rule, school clubs(African American club, Gay/Lesbian club, or support groups), and after hours activities including computer labs. Most participants were satisfied with the efforts of the school, but indicated a need for outside collaboration.

At least two of the participants didn't feel like the school was doing enough. One respondent stated, "The tendency is for kids in the correctional system to get lost." That same respondent also said, "They created alternative schools yet they won't take our kids in because they have Independent Education Plans (IEP's)." A second respondent stated, "I think schools are struggling with these issues... I am not critical of what school aren't doing. I think they are doing a lot of good things, but I think they have got to do a little more."

This section of questions was concluded by asking the informants what they thought the school could have done to keep some adolescents from reoffending. Some of the responses to this question were that schools need to provide a more structure setting, more cooperative learning, more family involvement, expand the programs that are working so that more kids can be served. At least two participants indicated a need for more acceptance of the kids from their programs. Three of the participants suggested

teachers involvement outside of the role of teaching and building rapport with kids and families.

Family

The role of the family in delinquency is an important variable to look at. The informants were asked about the amount of involvement of the families while the adolescents are locked up. The responses ranged from somewhat involved to not enough. Several respondents felt that the system doesn't allow parents enough involvement, because many professionals consider themselves the only experts. Some answered that parents often become frustrated with their child and leave the responsibility of corrections to the juvenile system. The answers clearly suggest that for the most part some parents do care, but have limitations such as other children to care for, and conflicting work schedules.

In another question the informants were asked about some of the problems with the families that contribute to adolescents reoffending. Five of the participants responded with societal issues as a major problem facing families. These were economic factors, poverty, racism, classism, and jobs. At least three of the participants cited parents own personal problems such as being involved in illegal activities, and chemical health issues. Other problems mentioned were struggling single parent female-headed households, poor parenting skills, and poor communication skills. Also many families are isolated from extended family and neighbors. Some parents were seen as unsatisfactory role models for their kids. One participant stated, "when parents speak of the authority with negative

attitudes it doesn't take very long before the child picks up the same kind of negative approaches."

When asked what they thought the families could be doing to keep adolescents from reoffending, two responded; "They could support the positives in their kids lives." "Make sure their needs are met from a physical perspective." One respondent said that parents need to hold kids accountable and quit making excuses for them. Another respondent felt that the families sometimes become defensive when you point out their problems. "The services are there and we can make the referrals, but we can't make the parents go." One common theme was the significance of a positive relationship with an adult, like getting adolescents involved with their grandparents, aunts, and uncles. One respondent talked about how people are often isolated from their neighbors, meaning that they do not know their neighbors. Another respondent suggested as a solution to isolation that mentorship program that have waiting lists should cultivate partnerships with churches and institutions who have resources, men and women who have a vested interest in the community as well as in the lives of the children. One respondent talked about building bridges among professions. "I like the idea that the whole community is talking about violence as an epidemic and a public health problem...doctors and nurses included." Parents need to know the whereabouts of their children and enforce curfews. Another respondent suggested that parents need to get involved in the schools, in the programs, get to know their kids friends, call up their kids friends' parents, and spend more time with their kids. Parents are an important influence in the lives of their adolescents and should

become more involved in making a positive change.

Support to Prevent Recidivism

I asked the informants what they thought were the biggest challenges adolescents face after leaving incarceration. Most of the answers had to do with adolescents returning to the same environment of peers and family. The responses were consistent in that the old environment doesn't change and the adolescents inability to say no contributes to them reoffending. One participant refers to the failure of someone to follow-up on the aftercare plan. Another participant points to the fact that a lot of kids lack the skills necessary to get jobs. Also some of them parents themselves.

The informants were asked to make the researcher aware of anything about the social forces in the lives of the adolescents that may have not been addressed in any of the other questions asked. It was clearly indicated here that troubled kids come from all walks of life. Kids are forced to grow up much faster and make decisions they are not prepared to make. One respondent indicated sexuality as being part of how adolescent view themselves. "That's a very powerful force with adolescents...sex or sexuality is part of how they look at themselves when they groom themselves and how they prepare themselves for dating." This respondent went on to say that, "dating is a social expectation that many of our adolescents either have forced upon them and when they engage are ill-equipped to handle." It was suggested that a lot more education about sex needed to be done, like talking about the spiritual implications behind losing one's virginity. Another respondent points out that it's not just information that kids are given

that's going to change them, but rather it is the interaction they have with an adult figure. When they are released from custody, they don't have the necessary supports is what one of the participants saw as a big issue. One respondent summed it up with the following statements: "There are probably many of us that wouldn't do very well with those social forces. Some of the kids live in a war zone and their parents have been helpless to provide a safe and secure environment." "I think the lack of hope and being able to see that there is a place for them in the world to belong and succeed."

Solutions to Prevent Recidivism

The final question of the interview guide was designed to elicit solutions to juvenile delinquency and recidivism and the problems mentioned? Several respondents felt that provision should be made so that adolescents have the opportunity to succeed. Some of these opportunities included, employment, to have mentors, to be involved with sports, music, and other extracurricular activities. These opportunities were viewed as self-esteem builders. More community involvement was another common theme. "We got to come together as a large community and get everyone involved from the churches to education to neighborhoods to figure out how to deal with kids."

There are a lot of adolescents with special needs. One respondent said, "I like the idea of the schools working together with the social workers to identify kids early that may special needs, special education needs, organic needs." One respondent didn't think that the adults had the answers, but rather he felt that the adolescents have the solutions. " I think we can select from the group some very articulate, motivated youth that have not

lost faith in the community." "Well, I think as adults we don't have the answers."

Chapter 5

Discussion

The key informants who participated in this study were cooperative and supportive of the study. They seemed enthusiastic about the opportunity to share their insight on a subject in which they are very knowledgeable, juvenile delinquency. All participants had contact with incarcerated adolescent males and their family systems.

Social Forces That Support Recidivism

Results of responses to the questions indicate that the various social forces play a vital role in adolescent recidivism. The findings in this study are consistent with the review of the literature which indicated the predictors of juvenile delinquency as peer pressure, family structure, family problems, and family instability. Other recurring themes identified in this study were problems in the schools, low self-esteem, not enough interaction with adults, poor employment skills, not enough family involvement while the adolescents are locked up, and illegal behavior of other family members. Control theory takes the position that all persons have potential and opportunities to commit delinquent or criminal acts, but fear and social constraints keep most people law abiding (Flowers, 1990).

Peers.

When asking the informants to discuss the role of peers in adolescents recidivism, I discovered the following themes: peers do play a major role in recidivism; having to return to their same peer culture after incarceration makes it difficult for adolescents not

to reoffend. While incarcerated adolescents might learn conflict resolution, communication skills, how to interact with others, and about choices and consequences, but once they are reunited with their old peer group, they fail to apply their newly acquired skills. Cultural deviant theory and differential association theory both view delinquency in the context of subculture whose values are contrary to those of the dominant social order (Hawkins & Fraser, 1981). The other theme is adolescents choose friends who are like themselves and with whom they are comfortable, and these peers are often involved in negative activities themselves. In my opinion it is difficult for adolescents to not reoffend when they choose peers who are themselves involved in negative activities. Sometimes they are involved in gang related behaviors. According to cultural and differential association theories individuals learn subculture values by their interaction with other individuals who encourage delinquent values (Hawkins & Fraser). If most of an adolescent's interaction is with individuals who regularly break the law and attempt to justify their behavior, the adolescent's chances of reoffending are greater than if she or he interacts with individuals who are not breaking the law. The opinions of whether peers can be the cause of juvenile delinquency varied among study participants, but all agreed that peers play a role. Peers have a major influence on delinquent behavior because adolescents like to impress their friends, and they have a difficult time saying no.

School.

When asking the informants to discuss the role of the school in adolescent recidivism, I discovered several themes. One theme was that there is a shortage of

resources to provide support for special needs students. Another theme was the school's labeling of some students as troublemakers. According to labeling theorists social responses to behavior create delinquency (Hawkins and Fraser, 1981). " Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infractions constitute deviance and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders" (Hawkins and Fraser, 1981). Many of the adolescents who have a history of incarceration also have difficulty with school. Some of the participants in this study felt that the schools don't accept their students back after incarceration. These offenders are seen as troublemakers and singled out and isolated. Some believed that labeling kids troublemaker is detrimental to their learning and often leads them back into delinquent activities. Others in the study believed that schools and teachers are doing a good job considering the problems that some adolescents bring with them to school. Also, some students feel devalued by and alienated from their school. Some experts felt that the schools are too lenient on disciplining and that students, especially those coming from incarceration, need more structure. They felt that schools should have a zero tolerance for harassment, guns, and other negative behaviors. The informants also agreed that the schools are finding new ways to support adolescents, such as establishing new programs and encouraging more parent collaboration.

Family.

Based on the responses given, if given the necessary support and encouragement from their families, some adolescents will not reoffend. Responses also indicated that

support from community and family is not always present. Control theory assumes that socialization is a process by which people become bonded to family, school and the law (Hawkins & Fraser, 1981). Many families work hard to keep their children from reoffending while others are involved in illegal activities themselves. Some families might be involved in illegal behaviors themselves and yet try to keep their children from reoffending. The problems facing the families are poverty, chemical dependency, isolation, teenagers having children, and poor parenting skills. After being in a structured treatment program that has rewards for good behavior and consequences for negative behavior, adolescents often return to the same environment where they got into trouble in the first place. Many parents are not involved when their kids are incarcerated either because of personal problems or they've become so frustrated with their child's behavior they leave them to the system to fix. There are services such as counseling, available to families, but the difficulty is getting the families to use them.

Social Forces That Inhibit Recidivism

Peers.

Whether or not peers can prevent their friends from offending depends on the peer group itself. Some experts believe that adolescents can also choose peers who are not going to be involved in delinquency. Rather they are involved in healthy activities, such as education, sports, working, and spirituality. In order for peers to have a positive affect on their friends, they have to be encouraging and sometimes confrontational. This is often referred to as positive peer pressure.

Schools.

It was suggested that effective teachers need to go beyond the classroom and develop relationships with parents and students. This was not without recognizing the boundaries that prevent them from reaching out. Schools have made some progress with new programming such truancy rules, teaching conflict resolution, and implementing cultural specific clubs. Still more alternative style learning programs are needed to address the various learning styles of kids. It was concluded that the schools need the support of the community in working with adolescent offenders.

Family.

Adolescents need the support of a positive adult in their lives. Parents should be involve in cultivating relationships between their children and other extended family members. It is important that parents spend time with their children and get to know their friends, and their friends' parents.

Recommendations For Change

Results of this study indicate that there are many solutions to the problem of adolescent recidivism. The solutions include giving the kids support, more mentorship programs (some programs often have a long waiting list), involvement of community and churches, and employment opportunities. One participant summed it up with this statement, "I think that solutions are that we are going to have to get together and decide that children are more important than anything and that raising them is everybody's responsibility." A common theme was coming together as a large community to solve the problem.

Limitations

As with any research study, this study has limitations. The study sample was small. A larger sample would have made it difficult to analyze the data within the time limitations. Out of the seven participants interviewed only one was female. The study focused only on male adolescent offenders. Findings were limited to the seven participants involved in this study whose opinions varied, so this study cannot be generalized to the entire population of professionals working with adolescent offenders.

In summary, the information that is presented in this study is relevant to the field of social work. However, it cannot be generalized to the entire population of professionals who work with adolescent offenders.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Social Workers can use the information in this study to improve their service delivery to families. The school social workers should become part of the bridge between schools and communities. Social Workers all over should take the results of this study and be inspired to help train teachers and other professionals how to work more effectively with adolescent offenders. The evaluation of the mental health of children before they become delinquents must be of primary concern to social workers, because the troubles of most adolescent offenders go well beyond crime. Epidemiological studies have indicated that more than 50% of juvenile delinquents exhibit prior evidence of specific learning disabilities (Meltzer, Roditi, & Fenton, 1986). They tend to exhibit a higher prevalence of hyperactivity, attention-deficit disorders, mental retardation, and substance

abuse problems, and they are less skilled in problem-solving than the general adolescent population (Swenson & Kennedy, 1995). Programs that address the specific needs of students with learning disabilities should be implemented. Since we know that some students have different learning styles these programs should be non threatening for those students who probably already have a low self-esteem or lack self-confident. Early school failure might lead to low self-esteem, which in turn, provokes antisocial behavior (Meltzer, et al).

A systems approach must be applied when attempting to reform adolescents or prevent delinquency. A systems approach would consist of working with the whole family rather than trying to treat the adolescent, because we know that if he returns to an environment that is dysfunctional there is a high possibility that he will reoffend. Treating the family gives supports to the adolescent. The family might not necessary be dysfunctional, but just may lack the ability and resources to deal with a delinquent adolescent. Adolescence is not only a difficult period for the child, but can also be a difficult period for the parents as well. Whether dysfunctional or not, the family can learn how to support, nurture, and provide for the adolescent.

On a macro-level, social workers should advocate for early prevention programs for children and families. They should advocate for better housing, better jobs, and better schools for disadvantaged children and families.

Recommendation For Further Research

All areas concerning Juvenile delinquency and recidivism could not be addressed in

this study. This study could be enhanced even further if adolescents were interviewed about the issues that involved them. One of the participants believes that adults do not have the answers, but rather adolescents should be sought after as having the answers to their own problems. However, adults relationships with adolescents are crucial to solving the problems of juvenile delinquency. Another possible area of study is research based on a specific racial population. An example of this would be with African American adolescent males since this population is over represented in the penal system. Young black men are more likely to be in prison or under some type of justice system supervision than to be enrolled in a college or university (Edwards, 1995). This study addressed the social forces that adolescent male offenders face from the viewpoint of professionals who work with them.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to extract from the minds of professionals working with adjudicated adolescent males how they make sense of adolescent recidivism.

The findings of this study appear to answer the research question asked. The key informants who were interviewed identified some of the social forces in the lives of adolescents that are indicators of adolescent recidivism.

This exploratory study is only an introduction to future investigations which may elaborate this study. The goal of this research is to not only look at the problems of recidivism but also find solutions to the problems. Any future research should seek to do the same.

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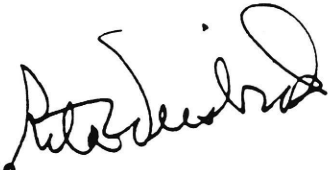
Appendix A

AUGSBURGC • O • L • L • E • G • E

DATE: 5/9/96

TO: Edgar Young, Jr.
1112 Cumberland Street
St. Paul MN 55117

FROM: Rita Weisbrod, Chair
Institutional Review Board
(612) 330-1227 or FAX (612) 330-1649



RE: Your IRB application: "Personal and social factors related to recidivism"

Your application falls under category 9 for expedited review. Hence, I have reviewed it along with one additional member of the IRB and we approve it with the following conditions with must be met before final approval can be granted:

In your cover letter:

1. Your cover letter needs to be clear about the use of direct quotes from the transcribed interview. I assume that you will not identify anyone's comments with their name but that you may use some direct quotes in your thesis. This point needs to be clarified under your "confidentiality" paragraph. For example, you might say ""In any report we might publish, we may use some direct quotes from the transcribed tapes, but the source of these quotes will not be identified."
2. Under "procedures" and voluntary nature of the study": You need to give the respondent an opportunity to decline to be tape recorded and still continue with the interview. You should indicate "WE ASK THAT THE INTERVIEW BE TAPE-RECORDED.. HOWEVER, YOU MAY DECLINE TO BE TAPE-RECORDED AND STILL PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY."
3. Also under "voluntary nature of the study", | you need to say that declining to participate "will not affect your current or future relationship with Augsburg College, YOUR OWN AGENCY or the criminal justice system." (Change in caps.)

Please reply to me in writing by mail/FAX/ or E-mail with your changes. You are not authorized to begin work until final approval and an IRB approval number has been given to you.

I will be happy to assist you in meeting any deadlines you have for beginning work. I wish you well in your project!

Copy: Michael Schock, Thesis Advisor

Appendix B

Juvenile Delinquency and Recidivism Consent Form

You are invited to be in a research study about juvenile delinquency and recidivism. This study is being conducted by Edgar Young, Masters in Social Work student at Augsburg College. His thesis advisor is Michael Schock, PhD., a professor in the Social Work department at Augsburg. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you work with adolescents who are recidivists. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in this study.

Purpose of this study:

The purpose of this study is to learn from the viewpoint of professionals who have direct contact with juveniles, why adolescents reoffend.

Procedures

If you agree to participate, we are asking you to meet with the researcher for a 60 minutes interview to be held in private. The interview will be tape recorded. You will be asked questions about what you have observed about adolescents in general who cycle in and out of the juvenile court system. You will also be asked about what has worked and what has not worked to keep adolescents from becoming repeat offenders.

You will not be paid any money for participating in this study. Because of your knowledge in the subject matter, your participation is greatly appreciated.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records including tape recordings will be kept in a locked file in the home of the researcher, where only the researcher and his advisor will have access to them. The researcher will transcribe all audiotape material.

Voluntary nature of the study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with Augsburg College, the criminal justice system, or this researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. You are free to refuse to answer any questions.

Contacts and Questions

Please ask any questions you have about the study now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at 374-4342 or you may contact my advisor, Michael Schock, Ph.D. at 330-1725 at Augsburg College.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I agree to have this interview tape-recorded.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Dear

I am a graduate student in the Master's of Social Work Program at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. As partial requirement for graduation I am responsible for writing and presenting a research thesis.

The thesis I am proposing is an examination of the causes of recidivism in adjudicated adolescent males beyond what is written in the scientific literature. The purpose of my research is to explore how professionals working with adolescents make sense of recidivism among adjudicated adolescent males.

I am requesting your permission to interview someone from your staff. The participants will be asked to engage in a face to face interview with me that will last no more than 60 minutes.

Please respond to me in writing or my telephone as soon as possible.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Edgar Young, Jr.

Appendix D

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Could you begin by telling me your job title?
2. How long have you or did you work as a professional with adolescents in the juvenile justice system?
3. Describe the role that you see their peers playing in adolescents reoffending.
4. In your opinion, what do you see adolescent peers doing to prevent their friends from reoffending?
5. In your opinion, what should their peers be doing to keep them from reoffending?
6. In your opinion, what do you think the problems are in the school that contribute to adolescent recidivism?
7. In your opinion, what do you think the school could have done to keep some adolescents from reoffending?
8. In your opinion, what do you think the school was doing to keep adolescents from reoffending?
9. Tell me from your point of view how much are the families involved while the adolescents are locked up?
10. What do you think some of the problems are with the families that contribute to adolescents reoffending?
11. In your opinion, what do you think the families could be doing to keep adolescents from reoffending?
12. Do the adolescents get connected with any support activity after leaving incarceration? Examples: community programs, aftercare, family, religious institutions, counseling, mentoring.
13. What do you think are the biggest challenges adolescents face after leaving incarceration?
14. Is there anything else you would want me to know about the social forces in the lives of these adjudicated adolescents?
15. What solutions could you suggest to the problems mentioned?

Appendix E

Glossary

Adjudicated-determined a delinquent, status offender or dependent in criminal or juvenile proceedings. Crime Dictionary. Copyright 1982. Ralph De Sola.

Adolescence- a period in the life cycle between childhood and adulthood. Encyclopedia of social Work. 19 ed. NASW Press, Washington, DC 1987

Adolescent- a person growing up from childhood to manhood or womanhood. The World Book Dictionary. World Book, Inc.

Alienation-The feeling of apartness or strangeness experienced in cultural or social settings that seem unfamiliar, unacceptable, or unpredictable. The Social Work Dictionary. 3rd Ed. Robert Barker. NASW Press, Washington, D. C. 1995

Juvenile delinquency- In a jurisdiction, a pattern of antisocial behavior by juveniles that would be regarded as criminal in nature if committed by adults. The Social Work Dictionary. 3rd Ed. Robert Barker. NASW Press. Washington, D. C. 1995

Juvenile offenders- Young people, usually under the age of legal responsibility (age 18 in most states) who have been convicted of legal violations, including felony, misdemeanor, and any other form of delinquency. The Social Work Dictionary. 3rd ed. Robert Barker. NASW Press. Washington, D.C. 1995

Recidivist- one who return to an institution because of recurrence of the behavior or condition that led to the original incarceration. The Social Work Dictionary. 3rd. Robert Barker. NASW Press. Washington, D. C. 1995

Status Offense- Misdemeanor committed by a juvenile. Crime Dictionary. copyright 1982. Ralph De Sola.

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