

Crime Prevention - Developmental

1. Developmental crime prevention can be described in the following fashion:
 - a. "Developmental prevention involves the organised provision of resources in some fashion to individuals, families, schools or communities to forestall the later development of crime or other problems ... The twin challenges, of course, are to identify exactly what it is in individuals, families, schools and communities that increases the odds of involvement in crime and then to do something useful about the identified conditions as early as possible" (Homel, R. (2005) 'Developmental Crime Prevention', in Tilley, N. (ed.) **Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety**, Willan Publishing, Devon, page 71).

2. A key study influencing thinking in regards to developmental crime prevention was the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development. Some aspects of this study include:
 - a. 411 males in South London were first contacted in 1961-62 when the boys were aged 8-9 years. The most recent interviews took place when the boys (now men) were 48 years of age. There was some slight attrition over time (394 still alive at age 48).
 - b. 87% of the boys were "White and of British origin". The majority of boys were living in conventional two-parent families.
 - c. Multiple data sources were compiled including: personal interviews, criminal records, school tests, social workers interviewed parents on home visits, teachers completed questionnaires, peer assessment during primary school.
 - d. Key findings include:
 - i. "Of 123 males who were convicted at ages 10-12, 70 (57%), were reconvicted at ages 12-50; they are termed as the persistent offenders (P)... The 53 males who were convicted at ages 10-20 are termed as the adolescence-limited (AL) offenders. Of 275 males who were not convicted at ages 10-20, 38 (14%) were convicted at ages 21-50; they are termed as the late-onset (LO) offenders, leaving 237 nonoffenders (NO)" (Farrington, D. P.; Ttofi, M.M.; and Coid, J. W. (2009) 'Development of Adolescent-Limited, Late-Onset, and Persistent Offenders From Age 8 to 48', Aggressive Behaviour, Vol. 35, p 156)

3. Key risk factors for offending identified through longitudinal research of this type include:
 - a. **Individual factors**
 - i. Low intelligence and attainment
 - ii. Personality and temperament
 - iii. Empathy and impulsiveness

 - b. **Family factors**
 - i. Criminal or antisocial parents
 - ii. Large family size
 - iii. Poor parental supervision
 - iv. Parental conflict and disrupted families

- c. **Environmental factors**
 - i. Growing up in a low socio-economic status household
 - ii. Associating with delinquent peers
 - iii. Attending high-delinquency-rate schools
 - iv. Living in deprived areas (Farrington, D. and Welsh, B. (2007) **Saving Children From a Life of Crime**, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 159)
4. Risk can also be conceptualised in terms of distal (background) and proximate (close) impact on crime and dynamic (able to be manipulated) and static (unable to be manipulated) variables.
 5. Protective factors are generally considered to be the opposite of risk factors. They serve to reduce the likelihood of involvement in offending or later criminality.
 6. Programs and interventions can operate at different levels, including the following:
 - a. *Universal* – general population
 - b. *Selected* – directed at groups judged to be at increased risk
 - c. *Indicated* – directed at individuals already manifesting a problem such as disruptive behaviour (Homel, R. (2005) ‘Developmental Crime Prevention’, in Tilley, N. (ed.) **Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety**, Willan Publishing, Devon).
 7. Not all theorists and commentators have warmed to the merits of developmental crime prevention:
 - a. “Developmental psychologists and psychiatrists are generally considered to be the ‘experts’ on early childhood socialisation and family violence. Most of their large-scale, multimillion-dollar, cross-generational epidemiological surveys of ‘children at risk’ conclude that the bulk of a adult’s character is determined in infancy ... an individualistic, psychological-determinist approach misses the larger political economic and cultural context. It ignores historical processes and the effects of unequal power relations around class, ethnic, or gender and sexual categories. Developmental psychologists tend to focus only on the epiphenomenon of individual neuroses. Their data and analytical tools are also limited by the cultural and class biases of their survey methods. White middle-class families are overrepresented in their epidemiological samples because of the very logistics of collecting reliable statistics” (Bourgois, P. (1995) **In Search of Respect – selling crack in El Barrio**, Cambridge Uni Press, pp 259-260).
 - b. “The *Pathways to Prevention* report is symptomatic of a particular way of *thinking* about crime and its management ... The ‘framing’ of this problem in the lexicon of current crime prevention discourse means that white collar or corporate crime and/or the injustices meted out via governmental mismanagement are, at best, subsumed under a welter of ‘background’ conditions ... The report makes no effort to theorise their connection [i.e. poverty and disadvantage] to ‘extraneous’ considerations like globalisation and economic realignment” (Hil, R. (2000) ‘Governing through risk’, *Children Australia*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp28-32).