

Sex differences in predictors of violent and non-violent juvenile offending.

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Sex differences in predictors of violent and non-violent juvenile offending.

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Source

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Abstract

In response to concerns regarding the rise in female juvenile violent crime and the dearth of gender-specific research, this study aimed to identify predictors of violent offending in female offenders. Data were extracted from risk assessments of 586 male and female juvenile offenders (aged 11-17 years) conducted between 2005 and 2009 by the Youth Offending Service in Gloucestershire, an English county. Information regarding the young people's living arrangements, family and personal relationships, education, emotional/mental health, thinking and behavior, and attitudes to offending was recorded. Comparisons were made between the violent male offenders (N=185), the violent female offenders (N=113), the non-violent male offenders (N=150), and the non-violent female offenders (N=138) for these variables. These were followed by a multinomial logistic regression analysis. The findings indicated that engaging in self-harm was the best predictor of being a female violent offender, with the predictors of giving into pressure from others and attempted suicide nearing significance. Furthermore, non-violent females were significantly less likely to lose control of their temper and more likely to give in to pressure from others than their violent counterparts. Non-violent males were significantly less likely to lose control of their temper and more likely to self-harm and give in to pressure from others than violent males. Although many similarities existed between sexes for predictors of violent offending, the findings of this study indicate that more attention needs to be paid to the mental health of female offenders. *Aggr. Behav.* 9999:XX-XX, 2013. © 2013 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

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