

Reppucci, Dickon N. (1999). Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice. American Journal of Community Psychology. 27(3), 307-326.

Purpose:

- Examined if children's crimes make them adults.
- Examined the philosophy and development of the System of Juvenile Justice.

Literature Review: Reppucci & Saunders (1974) researched real shooting events that were instigated by adolescents. Rosenberg & Reppucci (1983) began researching child abuse and neglect with intentions to start interventions, which would prevent some of these problems. Haugaard & Reppucci (1988), Reppucci & Haugaard (1989), and Haugaard, Reppucci, Laid, & Naufield (1991) did research based on the McMartin Day Care sexual abuse case in Los Angeles. They were examining what effects child abuse would put on children in the future.

Methods:

- Samples: Males in juvenile detention centers, 100 age 15 and under delinquents, 100 age 16-17, and 100 adults age 19-35. All participants from local jails.
- Variables: impact of peers, time perspective, temporal perspective, and risk perception.
- Procedure: Two-hour assessment sessions with each participant. Accused youth participants had a chance to talk to a police officer and an attorney considering the issue of plea bargain. The youth were able to watch a five-minute clip from the movie "Sleepers" which contained a misdemeanor that turned ugly. The adolescents were asked to comment from what they saw on the movie and what factors were involved for the misdemeanor to take place.

Results/Conclusions:

- Youth who commit crimes do not make them adults, no matter what crime they commit.
- Reppucci states, "Youth need to be held accountable for their crimes, but policy regarding criminals should not be isolated from other legal policies concerning youths."
- "A youth can become eligible for the death penalty five years before he or she is old enough to purchase alcohol, two years before the age of majority in every state in every area of non-penal law, and, in Virginia, two years before he or she can get a tattoo," Reppucci reports. The juvenile justice system is wrong somewhere and needs to be corrected before it gets too out of control.