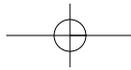


Walking the Tightrope:

Youth Resilience to crime in South Africa

PATRICK BURTON, LEZANNE LEOSCHUT
AND ANGELA BONORA



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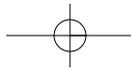
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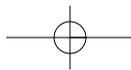
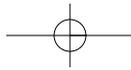
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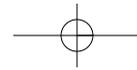
Executive summary

Crime has been identified by the South African government as a priority issue in the country. Of particular concern for policy makers, the police and social crime prevention practitioners is the fact that young people constitute a considerable component of both victims and perpetrators of crime in South Africa. Children and young people comprise a major sector in the country's population: the 2001 census indicated that approximately 26% of South Africa's population is 24 years of age or younger.¹ Research indicates that the ages between 12 and 21 are the peak years for both offending and victimisation.² If we consider that the 12–21 year age groups are the most likely to be involved in crime, then it is clear that a large proportion of South Africa's population falls within this 'high risk' age cohort. Indeed, the number of young people in South Africa indicates that they are likely to be disproportionately perpetrators and victims of crime. The cost to government and to society of not adequately addressing youth offending is significant and should be given the requisite attention.

For young people, the distinction between being a perpetrator and a victim of crime is often blurred. Indeed, young offenders themselves are often exposed to high levels of victimisation and may live under significant adverse social and economic conditions. Youth offending is clearly a social problem; however, discussions around the issue most often concentrate merely on the fact itself and its scale, and tend to ignore the factors that determine the situation.

Research indicates that a young person's decision to commit or refrain from committing crime is based on a range of complex and intersecting social, personal and environmental factors. As such, youth crime prevention programmes need to find ways of addressing this multiplicity. The social and environmental causes of youth offending and resilience need to be identified and addressed if the issue is to be successfully challenged and reduced.

It is important to recognise that the social and environmental situations, as well as the local contexts in which youth operate and develop, need to be considered when planning youth crime prevention and reduction strategies. Circumstances not only of young persons themselves (both offenders and non-offenders) but also



of the lives of their families and the communities in which they live will be improved if the youth can be prevented from offending in the first place – or from re-offending if they have already started – and if a better understanding of both risk and resilience factors that lead to youth involvement in, or deterrence from, criminal activity is acquired.

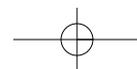
In an attempt to bridge the gap in research identified above, the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) embarked on a research study in 2006. On the whole, the study was intended to yield a more thorough understanding of the resilience factors among young people in the South African context. To do this, the correlates underpinning youth criminality were explored while simultaneously examining the factors that strengthen resilience to crime among the youth. The study juxtaposed two sets of samples, namely: an offender sample (comprising young offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings); and a non-offender sample (comprising young non-offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings). It was presumed that young people who choose not to commit crime are best suited to provide information on the factors that discourage youth criminal behaviour. In both samples each respondent's life history, community context, family and peer networks, access to resources and services, level of education, life opportunities and employment possibilities were explored.

The objectives of the study were threefold, namely:

- to identify factors of resilience to crime and violence among young people in order to better design interventions aimed at enhancing resilience and to inform policy initiatives addressing crime and safety;
- to identify the most influential risk factors for crime and violence within the South African context; and
- to prioritise these factors based on advanced analysis between the offender and non-offender populations.

A specific set of risk factors was explored and tested in the study, covering the broad areas of:

- the individual;
- family or home;
- school;
- community; and
- extra-family relationships (see table, *opposite*).



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Broad area	Specific resilience factors
Individual	Intolerant attitude toward deviance, high IQ, being female, having a sense of purpose, personal belief in a positive future, ability to act independently, feeling a sense of control over one's environment, the ability to empathise with and care for others, problem-solving skills, self-efficacy, an enduring set of values and the ability to be resourceful.
Family or home factors	Warm, supportive relationships with parents or other adults, clear boundaries for behaviour, reasonable disciplinary methods for violation of family rules, parental monitoring, family members who emphasise the importance of school, family cohesion and parents who offer affection.
School factors	Commitment to schooling. Positive teacher influences.
Community factors	Strong community infrastructure, communities that create opportunities for youth to participate in activities where they have choices, decision-making power and shared responsibility.
Extra-family relationships	Interactions with peers who engage in conventional behaviour.

Modelling was undertaken using the comprehensive data collected to identify key resilience factors relevant to the South African context, as well as to control for dependent variables. Nine significant factors were identified, namely:

- education;
- gender;
- non-violent family environments;
- non-exposure to criminal role-models;
- substance abstinence;
- interactions with non-delinquent peers;
- victimisation;
- neighbourhood factors; and
- attitudes intolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour.

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The discussion relevant to each is summarised in the table below.

Education	Three education aspects appear significant in fostering resilience, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing Grade 12, with matriculants six times more likely not to engage in crime; • placing priority on excelling at school and wanting to study further beyond school; and • working hard to obtain good marks.
Gender	Reflecting the trend in international literature, females are significantly more likely to be resilient to crime.
Non-violent family environment	Home environments are particularly influential in moulding the development of young people. The following factors were found to be significant in predicting resilience, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family members hardly ever losing their temper; • caregivers not using physical punishment; and • family members not resorting to physical violence.
Non-exposure to criminal role-models	Not being exposed to criminal role-models – both within the family specifically and less importantly within the community – was found to be a significant predictor of resilience to offending.
Substance abstinence	The absence of substance use – particularly marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine (tik), mandrax, hallucinogens and inhalants – was found to be a significant protective factor against offending. Young people who do not use illegal substances are more than four times more likely than those who consume drugs not to commit criminal offences. The effect of not drinking alcohol was similar, if not as pronounced, as other substances.
Interactions with non-delinquent peers	Interactions with non-delinquent peers was found to be an important predictor of resilience, specifically socialising with peers who had never been arrested, dropped out of school, used illegal drugs, been suspended from school or had stolen or tried to steal.
Victimisation	Young people's resilience is considerably enhanced when they have not been victims of crime and violence. Young people who had not been victimised were six times more likely not to commit a crime than those who had been victims of crime.
Neighbourhood factors	Lack of knowledge of or access to firearms in the neighbourhood was the most significant predictor of resilience among the non-offender group. While access to drugs and exposure to community violence was significantly lower among the non-offenders, when controlled for the influence of mediating variables these factors become less significant.
Attitudes intolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour	Attitudes that generally reflect non-violence and an intolerance of antisocial behaviour were also shown to be significant in predicting resilience. Such norms and values are usually instilled through interaction with and examples set by adults who are respected by young people, as well as community role-models and peers.

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The study allowed for the identification of factors that, based on the four province sample, represent the most significant resilience factors in the South African context. These factors are, of course, particularly relevant to largely violent and serious offenders, and as such constituted the majority of the control sample, thereby influencing the identification and selection of the communities from which the non-offenders were drawn.

The findings also point to the importance of a coherent and integrated policy response that cuts across a range of social sectors – from education to social development, policing, local government as well as local planning initiatives. The distribution of the significant resilience factors which span the individual, home, school and community environments emphasises the need to address interventions across each of these spheres and lends credence to a multi-sector approach.

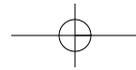
At a programmatic level, emphasis should be placed on fostering safe and positive home and school environments, with interventions that address all key resilience factors rather than isolated, independent initiatives.

Focusing on the school as a context for fostering youth resilience to crime will not only benefit children academically but will also have a ricochet effect on the other factors that have been found to increase youths' vulnerability to crime. The findings of this study reflect those of international research which has consistently found that young people who are strongly committed to their schooling are less likely to interact with deviant peers, use and abuse alcohol and drugs, and engage in violent and other delinquent activities – factors that have long been identified as increasing the likelihood of youth engaging in antisocial behaviour. Hence, fostering a strong attachment to school among children and youth and a commitment to completing their schooling not only increases the employability of young South Africans but has a diminishing effect on the levels of youth crime and violence by increasing the resilience of youth to this social phenomenon.

The study also points to the need to reduce the levels of violence exposure within South African families, since non-violent home environments buffer children against the onset of delinquent and antisocial involvement. Much of the violence within families stems from an inability to resolve conflicts constructively. The study findings point to the need for targeted interventions aimed at raising awareness about appropriate conflict-resolution techniques and alternative methods of discipline, particularly aimed at families since they constitute the primary role-models for children and youth.

Health professionals have consistently drawn attention to the high rate of substance use among young people in South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape. Interventions aimed at addressing the high levels of youth crime should also focus on substance abstinence. Researchers have long identified the link between substance use and abuse, and violent and criminal behaviour. Substance use is common among young people arrested for criminal activity.

Direct victimisation and exposure to violence has also been found to increase vulnerability to engage in antisocial or criminal behaviour, a fact reflected in this

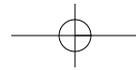
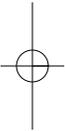


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study. Reducing the levels of violence that young people are exposed to in their families and communities is thus imperative in addressing young South Africans' vulnerability to victimisation, and in this way increasing their resilience to crime.

Finally, the findings also suggest the need for a more comprehensive youth safety strategy that comprises various interventions aimed at increasing the resilience of young people to criminal behaviour. Included in this strategy should be targeted interventions aimed at:

- fostering children's attachment to their schooling;
- addressing and reducing the levels of family violence by educating parents and caregivers about non-physical means of resolving conflict;
- promoting substance abstinence among the youth; and
- discouraging association with deviant peers and lessening young people's vulnerability to the negative influences of their peers.



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Youth and children have become a central theme in the development of policy and in dealing with the developmental challenges facing South Africa. Governments are increasingly recognising the importance of building youth capacity in a way that allows young people to contribute meaningfully to national development.³ At the most fundamental level, this can only be achieved by ensuring that the basic needs of young people and children are met: only once there is a sound foundation can we begin to foster the capacity of young people to engage in nation building. One of the most fundamental rights of children and young people is the right to live in safety, free of abuse and violence. However, for many children and young people in South Africa this is a distant dream – something they might read about in books or be told by teachers, parents or politicians.

The stark reality for many young people in South Africa is that violence and crime is a way of life; it insidiously infiltrates every aspect of their lives, with both direct and indirect effects on their psychological, emotional, developmental and physical well-being. This violent and criminogenic environment is only one of the threats facing young people. There is a wealth of literature that documents the impact of direct victimisation on violence, and indirect victimisation (through exposure) on the developmental paths of children.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Just under half (47.4%) of the South African population is 24 years or younger: this constitutes a total of 25,609,200 children and youth.⁴ The country therefore has a very youthful population, with almost the majority falling within the most at-risk category for engaging in criminal activity. This population cohort is also most vulnerable to individual, violent crime. Youth have thus become a central focus of

contemporary debates on crime and violence in South Africa. International and local literature identifies young people between the ages of 12 and 21 years as the age cohort most at risk of both criminal victimisation and offending.⁵ While youth crime is clearly one of the primary challenges facing contemporary South Africa, research to date has centred largely on the nature and extent of youth offending and has failed to emphasise the factors that influence and give rise to this social phenomenon.

In an attempt to bridge the gap in research identified above, the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) embarked on a research study in 2006. The study mostly intended to yield a more thorough understanding of the resilience factors among young people in the South African context. To do this, the correlates underpinning youth criminality were explored while simultaneously examining the factors that strengthen resilience to crime among the youth.

The study juxtaposed two samples, namely:

- an offender sample, comprising young offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings; and
- a non-offender sample, comprising young non-offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings.

It was presumed that young people who choose not to commit crime are best suited to provide information on the factors that discourage youth criminal behaviour.

In both samples each respondent's life history, community context, family and peer networks, access to resources and services, level of education, life opportunities and employment possibilities were explored.

The rationale behind the study was simple: while in international literature the risk factors for crime and antisocial behaviour, particularly among young people, are well documented, the literature pertaining to risk within the South African context is meagre. A number of theories relating to the causes of crime, and particularly of violence, have dominated the South African discourse over the past two decades, but very little attention has been placed specifically on risk. Similarly, the concept of resilience to crime and criminal behaviour has not been addressed within the South African context. While the concept of protective factors has been gaining some attention internationally, it is contextualised within developed, economically advanced and far more equitable societies than South Africa. Programmes (and to a much lesser degree, policy) in South Africa have consistently been premised on well-catalogued risk factors drawn from established literature formulated primarily in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Discussions on causes of crime and young children at risk locally tend to be focused on factors such as economic deprivation, poor parenting and exposure to

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violence. Such approaches fail to account for the vast majority of young people living under such conditions who never commit crime or engage in violent behaviour. This is not just the case in South Africa. There is much evidence in international literature to suggest that the majority of young people who are most 'at risk' never become involved in such behaviour.⁶ While living in what is indisputably a violent society, the fact remains that most of the violence is committed by a minority of repeat offenders. What then are the factors that inhibit or prevent one youth from engaging in crime while his/her neighbour (or sometimes sibling), having grown up in identical surroundings, does engage in crime? Once these factors are identified then, logically, programmes fostering such factors can be developed to complement those addressing risk, thereby doubling the impact of prevention interventions.

The objectives of the study were threefold, namely:

- to identify factors of resilience to crime and violence among young people in order to better design interventions aimed at enhancing resilience and to inform policy initiatives addressing crime and safety;
- to identify the most influential risk factors for crime and violence within the South African context; and
- to prioritise these factors based on advanced analysis between the offender and non-offender populations.

The outcomes of the study should allow for a more comprehensive approach to preventing offending in South Africa, particularly among young people where criminal and antisocial behaviour is most likely to be learned and entrenched, and persistent life-course offending initiated. Ideally, through the analysis intended in the study the risk and resilience factors relevant to South Africa should be identified. The resilience of young people to crime can then be enhanced through targeted policy and programmes, while the risk factors are reduced.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Definitions of youth vary both between and within countries. The national definition as adopted by the National Youth Commission and most legislation relating to youth, takes youth to refer to young people between the ages of 18 and 34, while children are up to the age of 18. The limitations and problems attached to the application of this definition of youth have been widely recognised by many. One problem in particular applies to the process of enhancing our understanding of crime and violence and their relationship to young people. In the case of understanding and addressing the application of violence, the nature of interventions targeting preventative measures and those applied to the

THEORIES OF OFFENDING

In understanding risk, it is useful to bear in mind some of the more prominent theories of offending:

Biological theories propose that 'criminals' have a different genetic makeup to that of individuals who do not engage in criminal activities.

Learning theories stem from the idea that people 'learn by association'. Accordingly, criminal behaviour is 'learned' in the same way as any other behaviour through the course of an individual's unique life experience.

Social Learning theories take these arguments further by suggesting that criminal behaviour is learned through an individual's interaction with others in the social environments they occupy.

Rational Choice theorists argue that two specific events need to coincide in order for a criminal act to occur: the opportunity for the offence; and the decision by the offender that he/she will in some way benefit from the criminal act. According to this theory, the individual makes the choice to commit a criminal act where the potential gains outweigh the losses.

application of justice are likely to vary somewhat between a young person of, for example, 20 years and a person still categorised as youth but aged 30 years. At the older age, an individual has likely been out of a family environment or away from the influence of caregivers for more than ten years, might have and should ideally be in contact with the job market, and patterns of antisocial and criminal behaviour are likely to be well established. Interventions targeting prevention or rehabilitation in this instance are likely to be dramatically different, and arguably less effective, than interventions with younger people.

The study thus adopted a more defined cohort of youth. This in some part was also necessitated by the design of the study. The initial and control sample was drawn from incarcerated youth. As no children under the age of 14 are incarcerated in an adult facility, this defined the lower cut-off for the sample. Initially set at 24 years of age, the upper limit was refined to 25 years old at the request of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), aligning the study definition of youth with the DCS's definition.

UNDERSTANDING RISK

The concept of risk has dominated much of the literature exploring crime for several decades, and a wealth of literature exists.⁷ Risk factors are generally understood to be the characteristics that predispose, or are associated with, young people's involvement in crime and antisocial behaviour. Simply put, a risk factor is a 'variable that predicts an increased probability of later offending'.⁸

While useful in identifying individuals, families and communities that are

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perhaps best suited for preventative interventions, the exploration and application of the concept of risk and risk factors is not without difficulties. Indeed, risk factors are not applied in a standardised manner or interpreted in a single way. The concept is applied dichotomously (for example, high versus low intelligence), continuously (for example, a scale of intelligence) or as an extreme variable. The complex interplay of different risk factors operating within different social spheres – at the individual level, at a family level or within society more generally – also makes the application of risk more difficult. Just as the causes of crime are many and there is rarely a single ‘cause’, so too is crime most commonly the combination and interaction of a number of different factors, characteristics or experiences that lead an individual to engage in criminal or antisocial behaviour. Research shows that while the vast majority of young people survive exposure to or experience of single risk factors, a combination of or multiple risk factors substantially increase the risk of unfavourable behavioural outcomes.⁹

The application of risk factors can also do more damage than harm as it may lead to labelling and stereotyping, which can exacerbate any pre-existing characteristics. Being termed ‘at risk’ whether at the individual, family or community level may in fact lead to a form of stigmatisation. The fact remains, however, that while risk factors are faced by many children, the vast majority of young people who possess or face these characteristics never become involved in criminal or antisocial behaviour.¹⁰

The most preferred basis on which to develop risk profiles has tended to be longitudinal studies, which have become essential in predicting or identifying pathways to offending.¹¹ The three most commonly known studies in this regard are the:

- Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development – a study of 400 males aged 8–48 years based in the United Kingdom;
- Pittsburgh Youth Study – 1,500 boys (with a sample of mothers and teachers) from Pittsburgh in the United States, assessed over a period of 12 years; and
- Rochester Youth Development Study – 1,000 children assessed from Grade 7 to the age of 32.¹²

While both costly and difficult to administer, such studies provide invaluable data. However, the majority of studies have focused on what are perceived as high-risk male samples, thereby precluding the opportunity to explore gender differentials in the development of offending, antisocial or delinquent behaviour.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, risk has become an important field of study and practice in crime prevention activities targeting young people. The myriad factors identified as significant leads to some form of categorisation. For the purpose of this study a combination of individual, family and community

Table 1: Risk factors explored in the study, by category

Individual	Aggression, early onset of violent and impulsive behaviour, beliefs and attitudes favourable to deviant behaviour, being male, engaging in antisocial acts such as substance abuse and stealing, low intelligence and attainment, personality and temperament, empathy and impulsiveness.
Family	Economically stressed family, child abuse, neglect, lack of parental interaction, poor parental supervision and monitoring, single-parent families, using alcohol and/or drugs, negative relationship with parents, exposure to high levels of family violence or conflict, delinquent or criminal behaviour by siblings, harsh or inconsistent disciplinary practices and parent criminality, teenage parenthood.
School	Lack of education, poor academic performance, school failure, truancy, problems at school, poor schooling, low bonding to the school, disruptive behaviour at school and bullying.
Community	Poverty, neighbourhood with high levels of crime, unemployment, availability of drugs and firearms, gang activity, lack of access to recreational opportunities and facilities, poor housing, neighbourhood adults involved in crime, exposure to community violence and a lack of job opportunities.
Extra-family relationships	Association with deviant peers and gangs, lack of suitable role-models.

categorisation was adopted. While by no means exhaustive, some of the most common risk factors are detailed in Table 1.

Other categorisations do exist. For example, Green et al prefer a classification of demographic (including factors such as race and socio-economic status), birth-related (low birth weight, prenatal substance abuse, maternal characteristics such as mother's educational status, age, marital status, etc.), academic (truancy, reading, educational outcomes, etc.) and behavioural (aggression, inattention, substance abuse, etc).¹³ Farrington and Welsh use a categorisation not dissimilar to the one adopted in this study, using prevention and intervention at different developmental stages and in different social spheres to focus on individual, family, socio-economic, peer, school and community factors.¹⁴

However risk factors are categorised – and notwithstanding their limitations – they provide important areas of focus for any intervention whose objectives promote the social prevention of crime by young people, and which aims to develop pro-social behaviour among children.

A further note should be made regarding the importance of the local environment on these risk factors. While the community, school and social environment may all impact on more individual factors such as educational outcomes, aggression and so on, South Africa has a range of particular

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environmental and contextual factors that are likely to impact on the importance and prioritisation of these risk factors. Such peculiar environmental factors include: high levels of youth unemployment; an education system characterised by low educational attainment; limited job opportunities upon graduating from school or even university, and for those who fall outside the formal schooling system; fragmented families impacted by decades of migrant labour and job-seeking; the economic and social impact of one of the highest HIV/Aids prevalence rates in the world; and what is arguably an environment characterised by normalised violence and normalised 'dysfunction' on a number of levels.

DEFINING RESILIENCE

Protective factors are considered to be those characteristics 'which can counteract risk factors possessed by children who are considered to be at high risk of involvement in anti-social behavior'.¹⁵ Resilience may be defined as 'the process of, capacity for, or outcome of, successful adaptation, despite challenging or threatening circumstances',¹⁶ – as 'health despite adversity'.¹⁷ Resilience factors, therefore, are those factors that diminish the potential to engage in particular behaviours. More specifically, these factors provide a buffer between the exposure to risk factors and the onset of delinquent and criminal involvement.¹⁸

As with risk factors, the concept of resilience and protective factors is not without problems. The understanding of protective and resilience factors is varied and controversial. Most simply (and originating in the initial discourse on protective factors) is the understanding that places resilience and protective factors simply as the converse of risk factors – the opposing end of the scale of any one attribute or characteristic. Conversely, protective factors may be viewed as the non-existence of risk, or alternatively it is considered to be something theoretically different from risk.¹⁹

The first standpoint perceives risk and protective factors as opposite ends of a continuum. Thus, if poor academic performance is a risk factor for criminal behaviour, then outstanding performance in school is a protective factor against such behaviour. The latter view, however, regards protective factors as characteristics or conditions that interact with risk factors to minimise their influence on the initiation of delinquent and criminal activity.²⁰ For example, exposure to community violence is often viewed as a risk factor for offending, but the presence of supportive and involved parents or caregivers may mediate the influence of such exposure, and in so doing reduce the likelihood of a youth engaging in criminal behaviour. This view recognises that it is not just 'individual factors' that count in increasing young people's resilience to crime but the 'process' as a whole. In other words, it is necessary to look at both the way things develop and the contexts in which they develop. Table 2 (*next page*), drawn from the United States surgeon-general's 2001 report on youth violence, provides examples of protective factors.²¹

Table 2: Resilience factors as opposites of risk

Broad area	Specific resilience factors
Individual	Intolerant attitude toward deviance, high IQ, being female, having a sense of purpose, personal belief in a positive future, ability to act independently, feeling a sense of control over one's environment, the ability to empathise with and care for others, problem-solving skills, self-efficacy, an enduring set of values and the ability to be resourceful.
Family or home factors	Warm, supportive relationships with parents or other adults, clear boundaries for behaviour, reasonable disciplinary methods for violation of family rules, parental monitoring, family members who emphasise the importance of school, family cohesion, and parents who offer affection.
School factors	Commitment to schooling. Positive teacher influences.
Community factors	Strong community infrastructure, communities that create opportunities for youth to participate in activities where they have choices, decision-making power and shared responsibility.
Extra-family relationships	Interactions with peers who engage in conventional behaviour.

It is apparent from Table 2 that on the whole, resilient youth are presumed to be autonomous, self-confident, affectionate, resourceful, sociable, optimistic about their future and empathetic towards others. These young people interact positively with their peers and adults, are able to resolve conflicts, engage in recreational activities and have a strong commitment to learning.²² Their home environments are typically characterised by supportive and affectionate parents or caregivers who closely supervise and regulate where and how their children spend their time.²³ If these protective factors are present in an individual's life, he or she is believed to be less likely to engage in criminal activity.²⁴ It needs to be remembered, however, that just as the presence of risk factors do not inevitably lead to youth offending, protective factors also do not guarantee that young people will refrain from committing crimes since these factors merely reduce the possibility of becoming involved in criminal activity.

The understanding of risk and resilience adopted for this study is informed by a combination of the ecological paradigm and to a lesser degree the more post-modern constructionist approach. Whereas the ecological model adopts an understanding of resilience as health despite adversity, a constructionist view places resilience as the outcome of negotiations within specific contexts or environments for the resources to define oneself as healthy amidst adversity.²⁵ Resilience in this study is linked to predetermined behavioural goals or outcomes – specifically, engagement in pro-social and non-criminal behaviour – but

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considers that risk factors are contextually specific, constructed and may be indefinite across different communities or populations.²⁶ Similarly, resilience factors are likely to be multidimensional, context specific and constructed with a plurality of behaviours.

In some studies focusing on resilience, children or young people resilient to the high-risk environment and characteristics may not necessarily be totally immune to those factors. For example, in the resilience and protective factor analysis of the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children undertaken by Bowen et al, a cut-off of no or one self-reported incident was adopted. For the purpose of this study, however, only young people who self-reported NO incidents of antisocial behaviour were included in the non-offender sample.

Researchers are also increasingly viewing resilience as a dynamic process – an ongoing process that is constantly chosen by the individual and in the face of varying circumstances.²⁷

METHODOLOGY

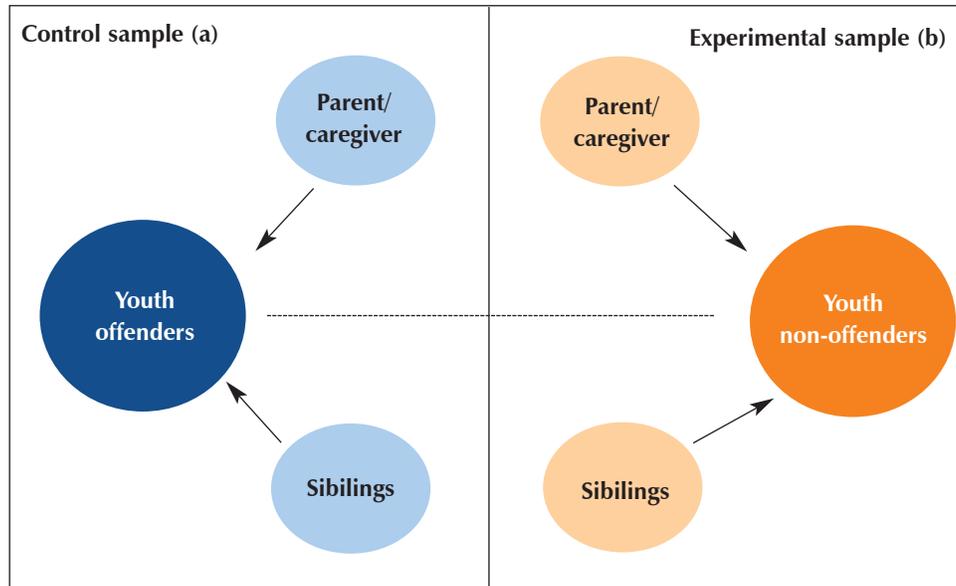
A reference group was established prior to the commencement of the research project in order to advise on the research and questionnaire design. The objective of the reference group was to ensure that the issues and questions most appropriate to the target populations were addressed, thereby ensuring the collection of useful and relevant data. Reference group representatives were drawn from civil society, academic institutions and the government. Draft questionnaires for each of the respective research samples were designed and distributed to members of the reference group for commentary. The questionnaires were then adapted appropriately to incorporate these comments.

As previously stated, the study was intended to yield a more thorough understanding of the resilience factors among young people in the South African context. The aim was to explore the correlates underpinning youth criminality while simultaneously identifying factors that develop and strengthen youth resilience to crime.

To do this, the study juxtaposed two samples, namely:

- an offender sample, comprising young offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings; and
- a non-offender sample, comprising young non-offenders, their parents/primary caregivers and siblings (see Figure 1, *next page*).

Two sets of samples – the offenders and non-offenders – provided what for the purpose of this study constitute an experimental group and a control group. While it might seem natural that the offender and offender-related samples constitute the experimental group as resilience factors are prioritised in the study,

Figure 1: Study population

in fact the non-offender samples become the experimental group and the offenders constitute the control.

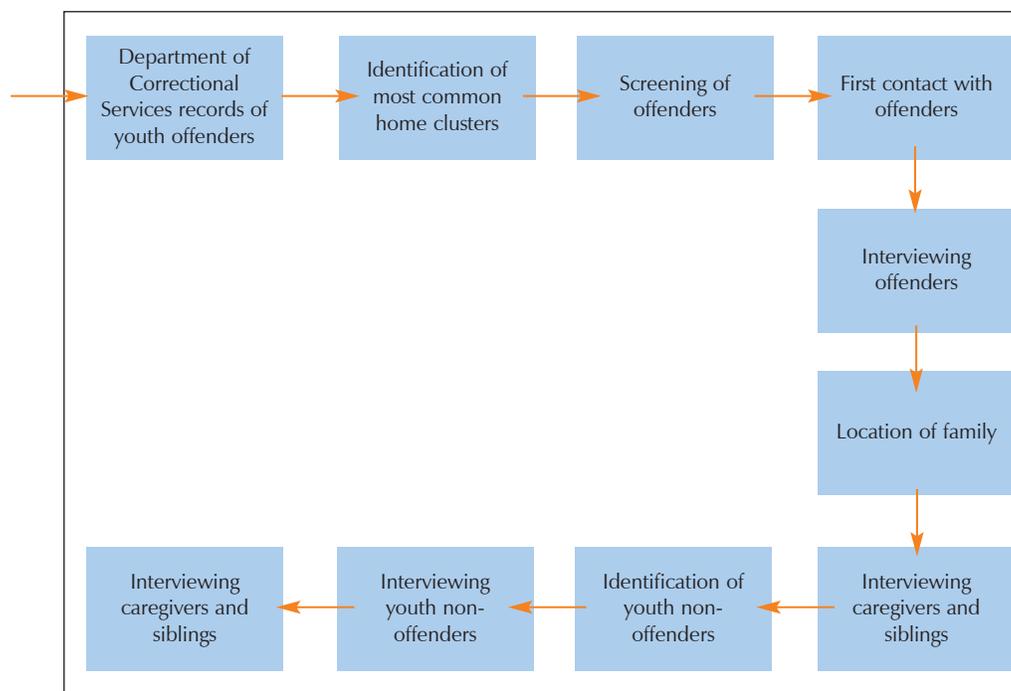
While comparing youth offenders with non-offenders might initially appear to be comparing apples and oranges, much of the value lies in the selection of the experimental group – the non-offenders – from, as much as possible, communities characterised by similar overall socio-economic status or characteristics of inequality, with similar opportunities, available education systems, community and service resources and demographics as the offender group.

The study was conducted in four provinces in South Africa, namely: the Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.²⁸ For the first component of this study, structured interviews were conducted with a small sample of male and female offenders within various prisons and rehabilitation centres identified in the four provinces. The prisons and rehabilitation centres involved were: four urban prisons (Pollsmoore, Johannesburg Correctional Centre Juvenile C,²⁹ Durban Westville and St. Albans); four rural prisons (Mossel Bay, Leeuwkop, Empangeni and Lusikisiki); and two rehabilitation facilities (Bosasa Mogale Youth Centre in Gauteng and Bosasa New Horizon Youth Centre in the Western Cape). Since the focus was on youth, only offenders aged 12–25 years were selected for participation in the study. The offender sample was stratified by urban and rural characteristics/location and by offence type to ensure an accurate representation of both serious and less serious crimes.

Youth offenders were selected according to certain criteria. First, the records of youth offenders within the different prisons and facilities were analysed and the residential areas most common in these records were selected. Following this, the

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Figure 2: The research process



offenders themselves were selected by home location and screened to ensure that adequate and accurate information relating to their parents/primary caregivers and family was available. Only offenders with traceable parents/primary caregivers and at least one sibling were included in the study. Figure 2 indicates the research process involved in the study.

Structured interviews were conducted with each offender. Following completion of the prison interviews, the parents or primary caregivers and siblings of the offenders were traced. A minimum of one sibling and a maximum of three siblings were included. Where a second or more siblings were available, those within the same or similar age cohort as the offender sample were interviewed. Other young people in the same age cohort who had never come into contact with the law were then randomly selected from the communities from which the offenders originated to constitute the youth non-offender sample.

As with the offender sample, the youth non-offenders were selected together with their caregivers and a sibling meeting the same age requirements as the youth themselves. In total, a sample of 395 young, incarcerated offenders were interviewed, while 604 youth non-offenders in the offenders' home communities were interviewed. A mapping exercise of each community included in the study was undertaken, with key landmarks and facilities identified and recorded.

The distribution samples for each **control** group involved in this **component of the** study are reflected in tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3: Distribution of offender sample (n=395)

Province	Site	Type	Total offenders
Western Cape	Pollsmore	Urban	60
	Mossel Bay	Rural	30
	Rehab/div		6
Gauteng	Sun City	Urban	67
	Leeuwkop	Rural	39
	Rehab/div		8
KwaZulu-Natal	Westville	Urban	58
	Empangeni	Rural	31
	Rehab/div		
Eastern Cape	St Albans	Urban	69
	Lusikisiki	Rural	27
	Rehab/div		
Total			395

The quantitative data collection was complemented by a series of focus groups in each of the four facilities. These findings are integrated into the discussion presented herein and have also been written up as a separate chapter in the CJCP monograph, *Someone Stole My Smile: An Exploration into the Causes of Youth Violence in South Africa*.³⁰

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of ethical considerations were observed for the study. These follow standard ethical research operating protocols. A training manual and standard operating protocol was designed for the study, and all research staff familiarised themselves with the document.

Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. While prison officials were in calling distance at all times during the offender interviews, an

Table 4: Distribution of offender sibling sample (n= 297)

Province	Total offender siblings	Percentage
Western Cape	67	22.6
Gauteng	63	21.2
KwaZulu-Natal	99	33.3
Eastern Cape	68	22.9
Total	297	100.0

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Table 5: Distribution of offender parent/caregiver sample (n= 233)

Province	Total offender parent/caregiver	Percentage
Western Cape	60	25.8
Gauteng	58	24.9
KwaZulu-Natal	59	25.3
Eastern Cape	56	24.0
Total	233	100

office was secured at each facility in which the interviews could be conducted, ensuring privacy and confidentiality from prison staff. Identifying data was collected to assist in tracking down offenders' caregivers and siblings, as were contact details for the family members. These identifiers were initially captured into the datasets, allowing for relational variables to be created linking each participant and his/her family. The identifiers were then deleted from the dataset.

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents. In cases where offenders were under the age of consent (16 years old), it was assumed that the institution or facility responsible for their care (i.e. the prison or rehabilitation centre where they were incarcerated) had legal guardianship of the respondents, and permission was secured by the relevant authorities before undertaking interviews.

A challenge in collecting data from incarcerated offenders is the difficulty in verifying information. Offenders may be prone to over- or under-exaggerate responses depending on perceived advantage. One of the benefits of the methodology followed in this study is the ability to triangulate data from family members as well as against official records. Every attempt was made to verify the accuracy of all responses. All data was double captured to eliminate capture error, and each dataset was independently validated before being linked.

The research team specifically comprised researchers fluent in the various vernaculars. All interviews were conducted in the language in which the respondent felt most comfortable conversing.

Contact was made with the correctional facility social worker in the case of the offenders, and with trauma centres or psychologists in the community interviews. A referral system was put in place and detailed in the standard operating protocol.

DIFFICULTIES AND LIMITATIONS

Conducting research within prison settings presents certain challenges. Some limitations are present in the study:

- Research was conducted in only four of the country's provinces. It could therefore be argued that the study is not wholly representative of the youth crime problem on a national basis.

- Interviews were conducted predominantly with young male offenders; only a few young female offenders were involved in the interview process.
- In certain instances researchers had difficulty tracing the families of the selected offenders. While anticipated, this did result in a lengthy data collection process – a total of six months in field.
- Age determination is a significant problem when conducting interviews with ‘juvenile’ prisoners. Youths often lie about their age in court and it is not always possible for a magistrate to establish how old a young person actually is. One of the lessons learned from the study is that official ages of the participants and their reported ages did not always correspond.

Difficulties were not only present in the offender component of the data collection. The youth non-offender sample was selected on the basis of a number of screening questions aimed at determining whether the potential respondent had ever engaged in antisocial or criminal behaviour. As such, the selection of this sample was dependent on the honesty of the respondents in answering the series of questions.

Another difficulty was encountered that is commonly found in interviews with multiple respondents of a single household: in a minority of cases the various members of the household gave differing answers to factual questions regarding access or ownership. For example, if respondents were asked about household ownership of a television, a sibling might answer that the household did not own a television, while a caregiver might answer in the affirmative. While in some cases terms of purchase (such as hire purchase) might account for such differences, in others there is no explanation. However, such instances occurred rarely and tend to be statistically insignificant, as the tabulations that follow reveal.

READING THE MONOGRAPH

This monograph, focusing on the resilience aspects of the study, presents the findings pertaining primarily to the non-offender (or experimental) component – that is, the youth non-offenders, their siblings and their parents or primary caregivers. It is, however, useful for the reader to have some knowledge of the sample of incarcerated offenders and some of the key findings among the incarcerated sample. With this in mind, an overview of the offender sample is presented in the following chapter. Key descriptive variables are given relating to demographics, distribution, arrest and arrest history. Within each subsequent chapter, key findings of the non-offender samples are presented, followed by a discussion of significant comparisons and differences between the offenders, their associated family samples and the non-offender samples, which are important for

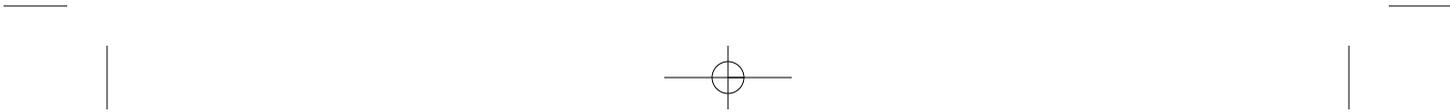
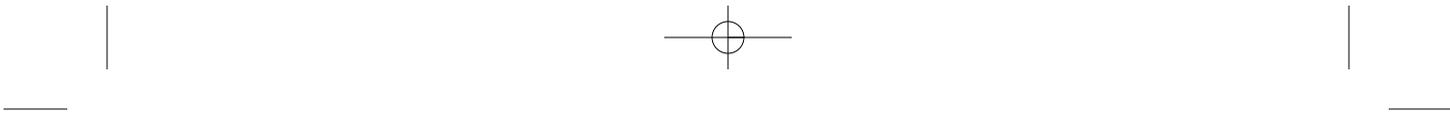
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the identification of resilience factors. **Key differences that are statistically significant are highlighted in bold.** While regression analysis was used to examine more closely and identify significant differences, the detailed presentation of the statistical and modelling results have been kept to endnotes to facilitate the flow of the text.

A note on reading the monograph: the following chapters present relatively detailed descriptive and comparative data. Those most interested in the discussion of the key resilience findings can skip to Chapter 15.

This monograph is in no way intended to be an exhaustive exploration of resilience to crime and violence among young people in South Africa; rather, it was conceived as one in a series of reports drawing on the study data.

Where relationships or differences have been described in the text as significant, these have been tested using a Chi-square test at a significance level of $p < 0.05$ – p-values are usually reflected in the text for reference purposes. This test shows that a relationship exists between two variables while not describing the nature of the relationship.



CHAPTER 2

An overview of the offender samples

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE OFFENDERS

The Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons' annual report indicates that of the total of 157,402 inmates in South African prisons as at 31 December 2005, 2,354 (1.5%) were under the age of 18. Of this total of incarcerated youth, 1,217 (51.7%) were reportedly awaiting trial. It is important to note, however, that this figure is likely a significant under-representation: it does not reflect the full extent of the situation as young individuals who are awaiting trial may also be held in places of safety, police cells, secure care centres, or they may be under the care of their parents/guardians. It is also necessary to point out that juvenile prisoners who are awaiting trial do not have access to rehabilitation, education and other training programmes in prison, or to the various recreational activities that may be available to sentenced juveniles.

The sample employed in this component of the study comprised 395 young offenders from four provinces in South Africa, namely: Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. The majority of participants in the study were concentrated in Gauteng (28.6%), followed by the Western Cape (24.3%), the Eastern Cape (24.3%), and KwaZulu-Natal (22.8%).

Prior research has shown that, worldwide, males are more likely than females

Table 6: Offender sample, by province (n= 395)

Province	Percentage
Gauteng	28.6
Western Cape	24.3
Eastern Cape	24.3
KwaZulu-Natal	22.8

Table 7: Offender sample, by age (n= 395)

Age	Percentage
22–25 years	21.8
19–21 years	53.7
16–18 years	23.5
15 and younger	1.0

to engage in criminal and/or aggressive behaviour. Indeed, gender is widely recognised as a key determinant of violent and/or criminal behaviour. Male respondents constituted the overwhelming majority of the study sample (94.7%), while female offenders accounted for only 4.8% of the total interview sample. This sample is representative of the national inmate gender composition where, according to statistics provided by the South African Department of Correctional Services (DCS), the national male inmate population totals 159,062 and the female population 3,525.

The overwhelming majority of the offender research sample in this study comprised black youth, who accounted for 71.9% of the respondents. Coloured youth constituted 24.8% of the youth interviewed here, white youth 1.8% and Indian youth 1.3%. According to official statistics provided by the DCS, black South Africans constitute the largest component of the country's inmate population: a total 129,808 black individuals are reportedly currently incarcerated in detention facilities around the country. Coloured individuals are the second most commonly represented racial group within South African prisons constituting 28,365 of the country's overall inmate population, followed by white individuals (totalling 2,782 inmates nationally) and Indian inmates (totalling 784 inmates nationally).

Age is also shown to be a significant determinant in criminal and/or violent behaviour. Research has shown that the earlier a child develops an aggressive pattern of behaviour or becomes involved in criminal activity, the more likely he/she is to continue to be aggressive and/or deviant. Since the objective of this component of the study was to examine offending by South African youth, only respondents between the ages of 12 and 25 were included in the sample. The findings pertaining to the age of these respondents revealed that young people aged 19–21 were primarily represented in the study (53.7%), followed by 16–18 year olds (23.5%), 22–25 year olds (21.8%) and youth younger than 15 years of age (1%) (see Table 7).

OFFENDER SIBLING SAMPLE

A total of 297 offender siblings were interviewed from Gauteng (21.2%), the Western Cape (22.6%), the Eastern Cape (22.9%) and KwaZulu-Natal (33.3%) (see Table 4, page 12.)

*Burton, Leoschut & Bonora***Table 8: Offender sibling sample, by age (n= 297)**

Age	Percentage
22–25 years	19.9
19–21 years	19.2
16–18 years	26.6
15 and younger	34.3

As with the offender sample, only those siblings of youth offenders who fell within the requisite age cohort were included in the sample (in other words, only those between the ages of 12 and 25 were interviewed). The findings pertaining to the age of these respondents are reflected in Table 8. This table indicates that young people who were 15 years and younger were primarily represented in the study (34.3%), followed by 16–18 year olds (26.6%), 22–25 year olds (19.9%) and youth between the ages of 19 and 21 years (19.2%).

Unlike the offender sample, the majority of respondents in this component of the study were female. Female participants accounted for 53.5% of the total offender sibling sample, with male respondents accounting for 46.5%. The sample reflected in this study is representative of South Africa's current national gender composition: according to research conducted by Statistics South Africa, the national population as of mid-2007 is estimated at approximately 47.9 million inhabitants, 51% of which (approximately 24.3 million) are female. The overwhelming majority of participants in this component of the study comprised black youth (74.1%), followed by coloured (21.9%), white (3%) and Indian youth (1%).

OFFENDER PARENT/CAREGIVER SAMPLE

A total of 233 primary caregivers from Gauteng, the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were interviewed in this component of the study. Most of the offender parent/caregiver respondents were based in the Western Cape (25.8%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (25.3%), Gauteng (24.9%) and the Eastern Cape (24%) (see Table 5, page 13). The research findings indicated that most households in this sample were headed by females (56.6%). By comparison, 43.4% were male-headed households. Most respondents in this study sample reported that they were either married under common law (45.6%), or were single, divorced or widowed at the time of the interview. When asked about their current occupational status, most participants stated that they were employed full-time (26.8%), were unemployed but seeking work (16.2%), were unemployed but not seeking work (11.8%) or were retired (11%).

OVERVIEW: ARREST HISTORY OF OFFENDERS

The experiences, views and motives of young perpetrators of crime have been

Table 9: Offender sample – what respondents are incarcerated for (n=395)

Crime	Percentage
Armed robbery	30.9
Housebreaking	23.5
Rape	10.6
Murder	9.9
Theft	6.8
Assault	4.6
Attempted rimes	3.8
Car theft	3.5
Possession of illegal substances	3.0
Other	2.3
Fraud	0.8

given limited documentation in research to date. As such, this section explores the arrest histories of youth offenders in the study, looking at the nature of their sentences and unpacking the possible circumstances leading up to their arrest and incarceration. For the purposes of this monograph, offences for which respondents were incarcerated can be classified into five broad categories: attempted offences; economic offences; aggressive offences; sexual offences; and offences related to the possession of illegal substances.

Pollsmoore prison recorded the highest incarceration rates for attempted crimes across the research sample (30.8%), followed by respondents in St. Albans (23.1%). Economic offences included such criminal activities as fraud, theft, car theft and housebreaking. Durban Westville and Empangeni prisons recorded the highest rates for fraud across the research sample (33.3%). Of those participants incarcerated for car theft, most were based in Pollsmoore (26.2%), Sun City (23.5%) and Leeuwkop (17.6%). Mossel Bay recorded the highest percentage of respondents incarcerated for theft (21.9%). St. Albans recorded the highest rates of incarceration for housebreaking (44.3%), followed by Leeuwkop (17.7%) and Mossel Bay (16.5%).

Aggressive offences included such crimes as murder, assault and armed robbery. The highest rates of incarceration for murder were reported in Pollsmoore (26.2%), Sun City and Durban Westville (both 19%), and Empangeni (16.7%). The highest incidence of incarceration for assault was recorded in Lusikisiki (17.4%). Of those respondents incarcerated for armed robbery, most were imprisoned in Durban Westville (24.8%), Sun City (24%) or Mossel Bay (16.7%).

Sun City (30%), Durban Westville (15%) and Empangeni (10%) prisons recorded the highest incarceration rates for rape (sexual offences). The bulk of those respondents incarcerated for offences related to the possession of illegal substances were based in St. Albans (41.7%) and Lusikisiki (16.7%).

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Table 10: Offender sample – respondents' age when first did something that could have got them in trouble with the law (n=395)

Age	Percentage
10–15 years	43.5
16–18 years	35.9
19–25 years	18.7
9 and younger	1.8

The findings indicate that most youth interviewed in the study were arrested and incarcerated for armed robbery/robbery (30.9%), housebreaking (23.5%), rape (10.6%), murder (9.9%) and theft (6.8%) (see Table 9).

Provincially, of the 30.9% respondents who reported currently serving charges of robbery/armed robbery, most were incarcerated in KwaZulu-Natal (39.3%) and Gauteng (31.1%). Participants who stated being incarcerated on the charge of housebreaking were predominantly concentrated in the Eastern Cape (39.8%), Gauteng (29%) and the Western Cape (24.7%). Of those incarcerated for rape, 33.3% were based in Gauteng, 31% in the Western Cape and 21.4% in KwaZulu-Natal. Of those who reported that they were being detained for murder, most (33.3%) were based in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape (30.8%), while 29.6% of participants who were incarcerated for theft were concentrated in the Western Cape and Gauteng respectively. These findings were statistically significant ($p < 0.000$).

Of all the youth interviewed in the study, 49.4% reported having been incarcerated at some stage prior to the offence for which they were currently serving. In other words, they were not first-time offenders at the time of the interview. Of these, most youth (21.3%) reported having been incarcerated twice in total, indicating that a considerable percentage of the sample were multiple offenders.

Respondents were asked at what age they had first done something that could have got them in trouble with the law. Most youths (43.5%) reported being aged 10–15 the first time they committed an act that could have brought them into contact with the law; 35.9% of participants stated being 16–18 years old, 18.7% as being 19–25 years old and 1.8% as being 9 years and younger the first time this occurred (see Table 10). The two most common offences reported by participants here were theft (26.3%) and housebreaking (14.9%).

Some 64.6% of respondents stated that they were not alone but with other youth at the time they committed the offence for which they are incarcerated. More than half the youth interviewed (57.2%) stated that they had been under the influence of either alcohol or drugs at the time they committed the offence that resulted in their current incarceration (see Table 11). In addition, 16.2% of participants admitted to having had further charges laid against them while serving their current sentence.

Table 11: Offender sample – respondents under the influence of alcohol/drugs when they committed the offence for which they are incarcerated (n=395)

	Percentage
Yes	57.2
No	40.5

The majority of youth (66.5%) reported being involved in specific education programmes in their prison facilities or rehabilitation centres at the time of the interview, while 33.7% stated they were not active in any such programmes. Those respondents who answered that they did not participate in any education programmes were asked why this was so. Most (17.7%) stated it was because courses were not available to them at the time (i.e. they had no choice).

CHAPTER 3

Demographics of youth non-offenders and their families

Since this component of the study ultimately consisted of three interconnected groups – the youth, their siblings and their parents or primary caregivers – the demographic profiles of these samples will be described independently in this chapter.

THE YOUTH NON-OFFENDER SAMPLE

The youth non-offender sample comprised 604 young people recruited from KwaZulu-Natal (30.5%), the Western Cape (28.1%), Gauteng (24.5%) and the Eastern Cape (16.9%). The youth were largely resident in urban geographical areas (82.8%), while 17.2% were from rural areas.

Black participants accounted for the overwhelming majority of the sample (88.1%), while youth from other ethnicities comprised the lesser part of the sample (see Table 12, *next page*). Females constituted 53.8% of the youth non-offender group. These findings reflect the general populace of South Africa with regard to ethnicity and gender. Statistics South Africa found that in 2007 blacks constituted approximately 80% of the total South African population, while females accounted for more than half (51%) of the populace.³¹

While the overall sample was between the ages of 12 and 25 years, the 16–18 year age cohort was most represented in the sample, followed by the 12–15 year age category. Conversely, the 22–25 year age group was least represented among the youth non-offenders.

When asked who the youth were living with most of the time, one in three (34.6%) respondents reported living with their mothers only, while 31% identified both their parents as the individuals they were living with most of the time. In addition, one in five (20.9%) participants indicated that they lived with their grandparents most of the time. Although the majority (69.5%) of participants were

Table 12: Demographic information of the youth non-offender sample (%) (n= 604)

Province	KwaZulu-Natal	30.5
	Western Cape	28.1
	Gauteng	24.5
	Eastern Cape	16.9
Age	12–15 years	27.2
	16–18 years	29.6
	19–21 years	24.2
	22–25 years	19.0
Race	Black	88.1
	Coloured	11.1
	White	0.5
	Indian	0.3
Gender	Female	53.8
	Male	46.2

resident in freestanding houses, 14.4% lived in informal dwellings and 11.9% in RDP or low-income housing. IsiXhosa (43.4%) and IsiZulu (35.9%) were the languages most commonly spoken within these households, while one in ten (10.4%) youth identified Afrikaans as their main home language.

Given the ages of these participants, it is fitting that nearly all (99%) of them had reportedly never been married. More than a tenth (15.2%) of the sample had biological children either living with them or deceased. This was predominant in the 19–21 (23.3%) and 22–25 (42.6%) year age categories.

THE YOUTH NON-OFFENDER SIBLING SAMPLE

The demographic information obtained from the sibling sample largely reflects that of the youth non-offender sample. The youth non-offender sibling sample comprised 805 young people also between the ages of 12 and 25 years. As with the youth non-offenders, these siblings were primarily from KwaZulu-Natal (40.1%) and the Western Cape (23.2%).

More than three-quarters (76%) of the siblings were reportedly resident in urban geographical areas while nearly a quarter (24%) of them lived in rural areas. Black siblings accounted for the overwhelming majority of the sample (90.6%), which is consistent with the findings of the youth non-offenders. With regard to gender, there were more female than male siblings (see Table 13).

Table 13: Demographic information of the youth non-offender sibling sample (%) (n= 805)

Province	KwaZulu-Natal	40.1
	Western Cape	23.2
	Gauteng	21.5
	Eastern Cape	15.2
Age	12–15 years	38.0
	16–18 years	30.4
	19–21 years	18.5
	22–25 years	13.0
Race	Black	90.6
	Coloured	9.1
	White	0.4
Gender	Female	57.3
	Male	42.7

The siblings were slightly younger in age than the youth non-offenders. Those between the ages of 12 and 15 years accounted for nearly two-fifths (38%) of the sample, followed by those in the 16–18 year age cohort (30.4%). The 22–25 year age group (13%) was least represented in this component of the study.

When asked who the siblings lived with most of the time, the responses were congruent with those reported by the youth non-offenders. These siblings were also most likely to identify both parents (28.9%), mothers only (28.6%) and grandparents (23%) as the individual/s they lived with most of the time. While many of the siblings interviewed in the study were the biological brothers (29.8%) and sisters (40.7%) of the youth, one in five (22.7%) were the biological cousins of the youth (see Table 14, *next page*).

The overwhelming majority (99.8%) of these young people also had never been married. More than a tenth (14.3%) had biological children either living with them or deceased. These were largely respondents aged 22–25 years (43.5%) and 19–21 years (33.9%).

THE YOUTH NON-OFFENDER PARENT/CAREGIVER SAMPLE

Only one parent or primary caregiver was interviewed for each youth non-offender included in the study. The parent or caregiver sample therefore comprised 604 respondents recruited from KwaZulu-Natal (31.3%), the Western Cape (27.2%), Gauteng (23.7%) and the Eastern Cape (17.9%).

Table 14: Relationship of the 'sibling' to the youth non-offender (n=805)

	Frequency	Percentage
Sister	328	40.7
Brother	240	29.8
Cousin	183	22.7
Nephew	15	1.9
Niece	13	1.6
Aunt	11	1.4
Uncle	10	1.2
Sister-in-law	2	0.2
Friend	2	0.2
Child of a neighbour	1	0.1
Total	805	100.0

Black parents or caregivers (89.6%) accounted for the majority of the sample, followed by coloured respondents who constituted 10.1% of all the caregivers (see Table 15).

More than half (59.4%) of the caregivers interviewed were the youth non-offenders' biological mothers, while grandmothers constituted 15.7% of the sample. Additionally, a tenth (9.9%) of the caregivers were the birth fathers of the youth non-offenders interviewed (see Table 16).

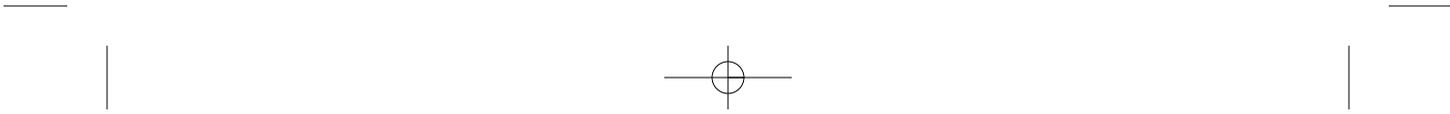
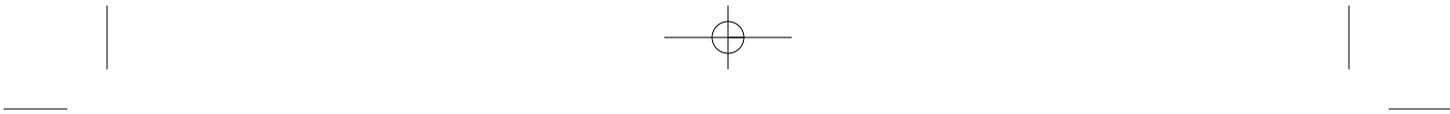
Table 15: Demographic information of the youth non-offender parent/caregiver sample (%) (n= 604)

Province		
	KwaZulu-Natal	31.3
	Western Cape	27.2
	Gauteng	23.7
	Eastern Cape	17.9
Race		
	Black	89.6
	Coloured	10.1
	White	0.2
	Indian	0.2

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Table 16: Relationship of the caregiver to the youth non-offender (n=604)

	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	359	59.4
Grandmother	95	15.7
Father	60	9.9
Aunt	38	6.3
Sister	14	2.3
Uncle	12	2.0
Grandfather	12	2.0
Brother	6	1.0
Mother-in-law	3	0.5
Cousin	2	0.3
Sister-in-law	2	0.3
Great grandmother	1	0.2
Total	604	100.0



CHAPTER 4

Home environment and family

- More than a quarter of non-offender households had no income, reflecting a similar socio-economic status as the offender samples.
- In both samples, the minority of household heads had completed Grade 12 (matric).
- While family violence was common in both non-offender and offender households, levels of violence within the offender households were significantly higher, with family members often losing their tempers (52% in offender compared to 40% in non-offender households), witnessing intentional violence (43% in offender compared to 27% in non-offender households) and reporting that family members hit each other when angry (27% compared to 9%).
- Young offenders were significantly more likely to report that adult household members engaged in crime than non-offenders (37% compared to 10%).
- Offenders were significantly less likely than non-offenders to have received emotional and financial support from their fathers (43% compared to 54%), to have spent a lot of time with their mothers (83% opposed to 88%) and to have received financial support from their birth mothers during the course of their lives (83% compared to 90%).
- Parents of the offenders were significantly more inclined to employ harsh and violent disciplinary methods when the latter had violated family expectations regarding their behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Researchers and criminologists have for many years focused on the family in an attempt to explain criminal behaviour among young people. A range of factors have been identified related to the family that are found to be linked to crime.

More particularly, youth are believed to be less inclined to engage in criminal acts when they are emotionally attached to their parents, constantly supervised, and when they are punished for their wrongdoings in a non-physical and reasonable manner.³² The study therefore sought to obtain a description of the participants' families and their home environments in order to better understand the factors that increase young people's resilience to criminal behaviour despite being raised in social contexts fraught with risk factors that have been known to increase youths' susceptibility to crime.

HOME ENVIRONMENT

While the study did not explicitly attempt to analyse the respondents' socio-economic status, it became apparent from the findings that many of the young people included in the study were from financially deprived households. More than a quarter (27.6%) of these households had no means of income resulting from employment. Two out of five (40.4%) households had at least one individual living in the home who was employed, while 21.5% reported having two household members who were employed at the time of the study (see Table 17).

The households where no members were employed were largely from the Eastern Cape (44.1%) and Gauteng (31.1%), while those from the Western Cape (21.2%), though still high, accounted for the lowest rates of household unemployment. Nearly three-quarters (72.2%) of these households reportedly receive financial support from the government in the form of various social grants, including government pensions (23.7%), child support grants (12.3%) and disability grants (6.6%). Even with the government assistance, more than a tenth (13.4%) of the youth reported that they did not always have enough food to eat in their homes. This was most commonly reported by the youth from Gauteng (18.2%) and the Eastern Cape (16.7%) – the provinces which were found to have the highest levels of household unemployment in the study. This finding was statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

Table 17: Number of employed household members (n=604)

	Frequency	Percentage
No members in the household are employed	167	27.6
1 employed household member	244	40.4
2 employed household members	130	21.5
3 employed household members	36	6.0
4 employed household members	18	3.0
5 employed household members	6	1.0
6 employed household members	3	0.5
Total	604	100.0

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Table 18: Number of employed household members, offenders and non-offenders (%)

	Offenders (n=395)	Non-offenders (n=604)
No members in the household are employed	30.5	27.6
1 employed household member	39.8	40.4
2 employed household members	20.6	21.5
3 employed household members	5.3	6.0
4 employed household members	3.0	3.0
5 employed household members	0.8	1.0
6 employed household members	0.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Although unemployment has long been identified as one of the primary factors believed to put youth at risk of offending, **comparative analysis revealed no significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to levels of household employment.**³³ This may in part be simply a product of the untenably high levels of unemployment that characterise South Africa (see Table 18).

Figure 3: Youth non-offenders' household size (n=604)

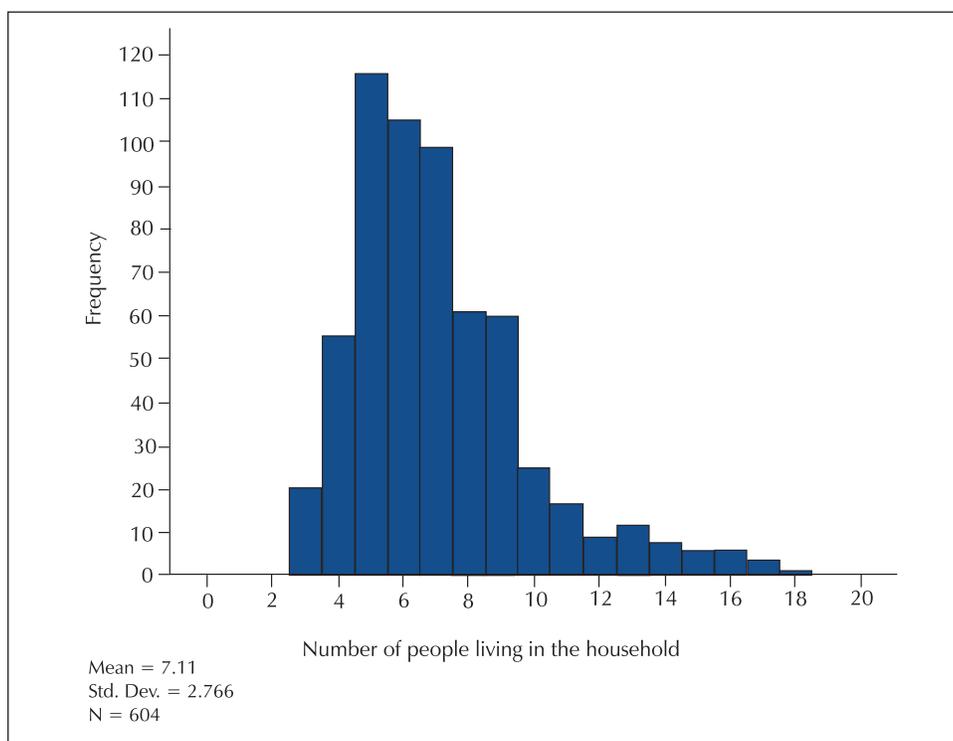


Table 19: Household head's level of education (n=604)

Level of education	Percentage
Grade 5 or less	31.8
Grade 6–8	27.6
Grade 9–10	17.5
Grade 11	7.5
Grade 12	14.6

On the whole, the non-offender households comprised an average of seven members (see Figure 3) and were typically headed by females (57%).

Of the household heads, half were single either as a result of divorce or death (26.7%) or because they had never been married (23.5%). Furthermore, 47% reported being married at the time of the study, while 2.8% of the household heads were living with their partners.

The household heads were generally not well educated. Overall, less than a fifth (14.6%) had completed matric/Grade 12, while more than half had only completed Grade 8 or less before dropping out of school (see Table 19).

Despite the low levels of education among the household heads, very few (7.6%) of them had received any other form of skills training in addition to their schooling.

THE FAMILY

Many of the youth non-offenders interviewed did not live in the same households as their biological parents. Birth fathers were even less likely than mothers to reside in the same home as their children. More than three-quarters (79.7%) of those who reported that their birth mothers were alive reported living in the same household as their mothers, while only half (51.2%) of these youths were resident in the same household as their biological fathers.

Conflict and violence were common occurrences within these families. Arguments were typical (26.5%), family members often lost their tempers with each other (40.4%), and at times even resorted to physical violence (8.9%) when they were angry with each other. One in four (26.8%) youth non-offenders also reported ever having witnessed members of their family intentionally punching, kicking, physically pushing, hitting, slapping or attacking one another with weapons. The prevalence of violence within the home was confirmed by the siblings (see Table 20).

Of those who had ever witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another, more than a third (37.5%) had first been exposed to such violence within the home between the ages of six and ten years. One in three (33.1%) youths had been between the ages of 11 and 15 years when they had first witnessed such violence (see Figure 4).

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Table 20: Exposure to violence in the home – non-offenders and siblings (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)
Family members often lose their tempers	40.4	38.4
Have witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another	26.8	21.7
Argue a lot in the family	26.5	22.0
People in my family sometimes hit each other when they become angry	8.9	8.7

Exposure to family violence was predominant in the Eastern Cape where nearly two out of three (65.7%) youths interviewed in this province reported having witnessed violence between family or household members (see Figure 5, *next page*). This finding was statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

Siblings (45.1%), other relatives (21.6%) or the respondents themselves (17.3%) were typically implicated as the victims in these incidences, while the respondents' mothers (26.5%), siblings (26.5%) and other relatives (26.5%) were most commonly identified as the perpetrators in these attacks. The findings were corroborated by respondents' siblings who also identified siblings (43.3%), other relatives (24%) and themselves (14.9%) as the typical victims in the attacks. The perpetrators, too, were exactly those identified by the youth non-offenders.

Physical assaults within the home often included the use of weapons (35.2%), and the consumption of alcohol and other drugs typically (29%) preceded the

Figure 4: Age at which respondent first witnessed family violence (%) (n=160)

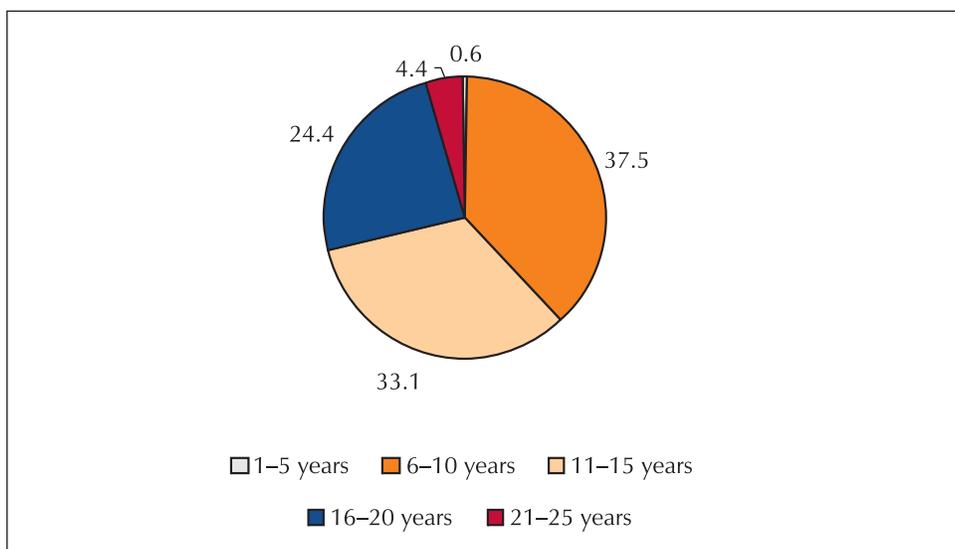
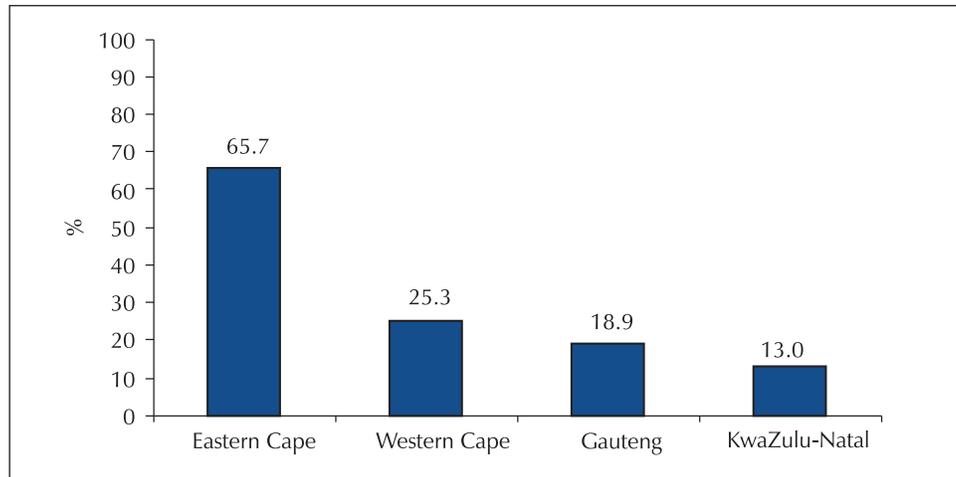


Figure 5: Exposure to family violence, by province (n=604)

attacks. More than a quarter (29.6%) of the assaults resulted in physical injury, of which 14.2% required medical treatment.

Even though family violence took on many forms in the homes of the youth non-offenders interviewed, the domestic environments of the offenders appeared to be much more volatile. Family members of the offenders were significantly more likely to argue a lot,³⁴ lose their tempers³⁵ and resort to physical violence when they were angry.³⁶ Analysis also revealed **significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to them ever having witnessed family members hurting one another** (see Table 21).³⁷

In addition to family violence exposure, the young people in the study were also exposed to criminal role-models within the home. Few of the non-offenders interviewed had adult family members who engaged in illegal activities such as stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging and assaulting others. On the whole, less than a tenth of the youth non-offenders had family members who had in the year prior to the study being conducted dealt or sold any drugs (5.3%) or engaged in

Table 21: Exposure to family violence – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Family members often lose their tempers	40.4	52.3
Have witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another	26.8	43.4
Argue a lot in the family	26.5	34.3
People in my family sometimes hit each other when they become angry	8.9	27.4

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Table 22: Exposure to criminal role-models in the home – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)	Chi-square values
Adult family members have sold or dealt in drugs	5.3	21.1	$X^2 = 58.406$ df = 1, $p < 0.001$
Adult family members have done other things that could have got them in trouble with the law	9.6	36.5	$X^2 = 106.182$ df = 1, $p < 0.001$

any other activities that could have got them in trouble with the law (9.6%). By comparison, the **young offenders were significantly more exposed to adult family members who offend** (see Table 22).

Furthermore, comparative analysis revealed that **young offenders are significantly more likely than their non-offender counterparts to come from families where members had been in prison.**³⁸ While one in ten (13.6%) non-offenders had family members who had been in prison before, two out of five offenders surveyed (41.8%) were from families where members had been in prison. The youth non-offenders typically identified other relatives (41.5%), older siblings (40.2%) and fathers (12.2%) as the individuals in their families who had ever been imprisoned. Although there was no significant difference between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to the particular family members identified as those who had been imprisoned before, the **offenders (17.9%) were slightly more likely than the non-offenders (12.2%) to indicate that their fathers had ever been in prison.**

Despite the frequency of criminal role-models within the family, the overwhelming majority (85.7%) of the youth non-offenders believed that adults and other members of their family set a good example for them to follow. When asked if there was someone in their family who they looked up to, close to three-quarters (74.5%) of the sample responded positively to this question. Mothers (29.8%), older siblings (20.2%) and other relatives (19.4%) were typically identified as the family members who these young people look up to. Interestingly, these were the same individuals implicated as both victims and perpetrators in the assaults that typically take place within these youths' homes.

These findings suggest that **although both offenders and non-offenders are exposed to economically stressed and violent home environments where adult family members have been imprisoned or engage in criminal activities, these risk factors – with the exception of the financial situation – are much more pronounced within the offender sample.** It becomes evident that for many South African youth, and particularly offenders, their home environments constitute a source of danger and negative learning rather than providing the youth with a sense of safety and security.

The family is the primary socialising agent where children are taught about the behaviours that are considered acceptable and unacceptable in the society in which they live. Children who are raised in antagonistic households come to perceive violence as an appropriate and effective means of problem solving. Furthermore, when children are raised in social environments surrounded by antisocial values and role-models, the notion that criminal behaviour is legitimate tends to be fostered.³⁹ These maladaptive beliefs are only reinforced when youth are exposed to similar violence outside of the home.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS/PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

While the family is the primary social context in which a child is socialised, parents or caregivers constitute the primary role-models within this context. Parenting centres largely on suppressing socially unacceptable behaviour, instructing children to be mindful of the repercussions of their actions, and making children sensitive to the needs of others.⁴⁰ Therefore, the interaction between children and their parents or primary caregivers significantly influences the types of behaviour developed during the course of their lives. Good parenting and stable, supportive households and family environments are recognised as being a safeguard to protect young people from involvement in criminal activity. On the whole, a supportive family background has been found to increase an individual's resilience to criminal behaviour.

The youth non-offenders were more inclined to have spent a lot of time with their mothers (87.7%) than with their fathers (42.8%). In fact, more than half (57.2%) of the non-offenders had not spend a lot of time with their fathers during the course of their lives. Mothers (90.2%) rather than fathers (63.1%) also appeared to be the primary source of financial support for these youth. Fathers were less supportive of the youth both financially (63.1%) and emotionally (53.9%). Given the time spent with their mothers, it is not surprising to find that the non-offender participants felt that they related better to their mothers than their fathers (79.3%), and identified their mothers (73%) as the parent who was most knowledgeable about them (see Table 23).

Table 23: Interaction with biological parents – non-offenders, siblings and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Offenders (n=395)
Spent a lot of time with their mothers	87.7	86.2	82.7
Spent a lot of time with their fathers	42.8	44.3	37.2
Received financial support from their biological mothers	90.2	88.9	82.8
Received financial support from their biological fathers	63.1	61.6	55.1
Received emotional support from their biological fathers	53.9	56.0	42.9

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Table 24: Relationship with parents/caregivers – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)		Offenders (n=395)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do your parents want you to let them know if you are going to be home late?	95.0	5.0	83.8	16.2
Do your parents know when you will get home when you go out?	93.9	6.1	80.2	19.8
Do your parents know where you are, and who you are with, when you are not at home?	86.9	13.1	73.1	26.9
Do your parents know what you have been doing when you've been out?	79.8	20.2	57.1	42.9

By comparison, it seemed that the offenders' biological parents played an even less active role in their lives. Analysis revealed that the **offenders were significantly less likely than the non-offenders to have received emotional⁴¹ and financial⁴² support from their fathers, to have spent a lot of time with their mothers,⁴³ and to have received financial support from their birth mothers during the course of their lives.⁴⁴**

The homes of the non-offenders were more likely than those of the youth offenders to be characterised by clear expectations for adolescent behaviour. According to the non-offender participants, there were clear rules in the family (97.8%) and they required their parents' permission to go out (86.7%). When they were out, their parents knew exactly where they were and who they were with when they were not at home. If they were going to be out later than expected, their parents had to be informed that they would be returning home late. In addition to their whereabouts, the parents of the non-offenders also typically (78.4%) knew where the youth got their spending money from. Table 24 shows that the offenders were not as well supervised as their non-offender counterparts.

More than half (58.5%) of the non-offenders reported sometimes being in

It is worth noting here that the views expressed by the young offenders in the focus group sessions with respect to their perceptions of parental relationships and responsibilities were very similar to those expressed by the offenders and their siblings: they stated that one of the primary causal factors of youth criminality was lack of parental involvement in their lives.

'Parents don't spend too much time with their children' (Interview with a 20-year-old youth offender).

As a consequence of this lack of parental involvement and communication, the young people believed that their parents failed to actively support and guide them in their development. In this sense, their parents' disinterest indicated that they did not love or care about them. They expressed the view that parents or caregivers should take a more active role in guiding and educating their children, and in so doing provide them with more positive role-models in their lives.

Table 25: How often the respondents were in trouble with their parents/ caregivers, by age (%) (n=603)

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
12–15 years	4.3	8.5	54.9	32.3
16–18 years	1.7	6.7	61.5	30.2
19–21 years	2.7	13.7	63	20.5
22–25 years	2.6	6.1	53.5	37.7

trouble with their parents, 8.8% indicated that they were usually in trouble with their parents and 2.8% noted that they were always in trouble with their parents. There were no significant differences between the four age cohorts with regard to this issue. More than half of all those in the different age cohorts indicated that they were sometimes in trouble with their parents. Those aged 19–21 (13.7%) and 12–25 (8.5%) years were most likely to report that they were usually in trouble with their parents (see Table 25).

The parents of these youths seemed to employ different means to discipline their children when family rules were violated. The methods included shouting at the respondents (83.6%), physical punishment (27.6%), preventing them from seeing their friends (32.9%), locking them in or out of the house (3.6%), locking them in a room (2.2%) and refusing them food (2.6%). The youth offenders, by comparison, were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to report that their caregivers had employed these disciplinary methods. On the whole, **the parents of the offenders were significantly more inclined to employ harsh and violent disciplinary methods when the youth had violated family expectations regarding their behaviour** (see Table 26).

The respondents and their caregivers typically spend four hours or more (37.1%) each day engaged in activities such as talking, playing games or going out. Nearly a third (31.5%) of the parents stated that they spent at least two hours each day doing this with their children. Table 27 presents the data from both samples,

Table 26: Disciplinary methods utilised by non-offenders and offenders parents (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Did your parents ever shout at you?	83.6	86.7
Did your parents ever stop you from seeing your friends?	32.9	64.3
Did your parents spank, hit or otherwise hurt you when you had done something wrong at home?	27.6	48.4
Did your parents ever lock you in or out of the house?	3.6	17.6
Did your parents ever refuse you food?	2.6	9.9
Did your parents ever lock you in a room?	2.2	8.9

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Table 27: Amount of time spent with their children per day – Non-offender and offender parents (%)

	Non-offender parents (n=604)	Offender parents (n=233)
None	2.8	23.6
1 hour or less	10.9	22.3
At least 1 hour, but less than 2 hours	17.7	16.7
At least 2 hours, but less than 4 hours	31.5	21.0
4 hours or more	37.1	14.6

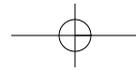
which shows that the **offenders' parents or primary caregivers were less inclined to spend time with them engaging in social and bonding activities.**

Furthermore, one in five (23.6%) offender parents or caregivers reported spending no time with their children during the day participating in recreational and social activities.

The family variables that have been linked to increased resilience among young people mentioned earlier were significantly more common in the homes of the youth non-offenders interviewed in the study. These youth were significantly more likely to be raised in structured home environments where there were clear expectations regarding their behaviour and where their parents or primary caregivers constantly supervised their whereabouts. When family rules were violated, these parents were more inclined than the offenders' caregivers to employ disciplinary methods that were fair and did not include the use of physical violence. The youth non-offenders also spent significantly more time interacting with their parents and engaging in activities such as talking, playing games and going out. These findings therefore lend support to the finding that young people are less inclined to engage in criminal acts when they are emotionally attached to their parents, constantly supervised, and when they are punished for their wrongdoings in a non-physical and reasonable manner.⁴⁵

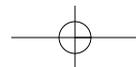
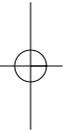
Youth criminal behaviour, however, is not only related to ineffective parental monitoring and supervision; parents (and other family members) can also indirectly teach their children to engage in antisocial activities. According to social learning theory, parents can inadvertently promote antisocial attitudes and behaviours by employing physical means of effecting discipline within the home.⁴⁶ This is further reinforced when youth are raised in home environments where they are exposed to antisocial and criminal role-models – as is the case with significantly more offenders than non-offenders – thus fostering the belief that offending is legitimate and socially acceptable behaviour.⁴⁷ This is explored in more detail later on.

Researchers have found that self-control in children is a consequence of consistent parental monitoring and supervision.⁴⁸ Parents who consistently supervise and monitor their children's whereabouts and activities prevent the



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latter's involvement in antisocial behaviour by promoting self-discipline, minimising the opportunities that young people have to engage in deviant activities, and by broadening the scope of parental control over their children's activities. The non-offender parents' involvement with their children may have contributed to the development of a strong emotional bond between them and their children. According to social bond theory, young people who are emotionally attached to their parents are more conscious of their parents' opinions and reactions and will therefore be less likely to engage in activities that would result in their parents' disapproval of them.⁴⁹



CHAPTER 5

Neighbourhood and community

- There were no significant differences between youth non-offenders' and offenders' attitudes toward their neighbourhood.
- Although knowledge of community members who make a living from crime and who engage in criminal activities was widespread among the non-offenders, such knowledge was significantly higher in the offender sample. Four out of five offenders personally knew community members who engage in criminal activities (84.6%) compared to just over half (57%) of the non-offenders, and who make a living from crime (80.1%) compared to half (51.7%) of the non-offenders.
- Four out of five (89.8%) offenders had witnessed individuals in their community intentionally beating, punching, kicking, physically abusing, hitting, slapping or attacking one another with weapons, compared to 70.9% of the non-offenders.
- Access to marijuana was significantly higher among youth offenders than the non-offenders.
- Offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to have access to drugs, particularly marijuana, and were more aware of people in their community who use, sell or buy any illegal substances. Offenders were also more likely to have family members who engage in drug-related activities.
- Two out of five (41%) offenders reported that it was easy to get a gun in their neighbourhood, compared to less than one in ten non-offenders (8%).

INTRODUCTION

Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber state that 'family factors never operate in a vacuum but take place against a backdrop of other influences'⁵⁰ including the community. These other environments may serve to amplify the effects of family variables on youth crime or it may buffer young people against the onset of delinquent involvement. With this in mind, the youth were asked a series of questions aimed at providing information on their neighbourhoods and their feelings about living there. The term 'neighbourhood' was used to refer specifically to the area in which these young people live.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE COMMUNITY

The respondents and their family members generally shared similar sentiments with regard to the areas in which they live (see Table 28). The respondents typically liked their neighbourhoods and subsequently reported that they would not like to move from their current residential area. Those who indicated that they would like to move (42.7%) were primarily from KwaZulu-Natal (51.6%) and Gauteng (51.4%). Conversely, Western Cape (31.2%) youth were least likely to indicate that they would like to move from their current residential area ($p=0.000$).

The interviewees typically knew their neighbours by name and believed that their neighbours would be willing to help them if they needed assistance of any kind. While many of the respondents maintained that most people in their neighbourhood were trustworthy, more than half of the participants stated that they still had to be alert else others in the community would take advantage of them.

The youth and their siblings were more inclined than their caregivers to have many friends in the neighbourhood. Thus, they generally believed that most

Table 28: Attitude towards their community – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Caregivers (n=604)
I like my neighbourhood	90.4	90.7	91.6
I'd like to move out of my neighbourhood	42.7	43.9	34.1
If I had to move I'd miss my neighbourhood	87.9	87.6	88.6
I know my neighbours by name	93.5	94.8	93.9
Most people in my neighbourhood can be trusted	60.6	63.4	74.5
In my neighbourhood one has to be alert else someone is likely to take advantage of you	58.8	52.7	55.0
Most people in my neighbourhood are willing to help you if you need it	77.8	77.6	82.1
I have many friends in my neighbourhood	66.6	65.6	39.4
Most young people in my neighbourhood trust each other	54.8	58.5	46.4
Most young people in my neighbourhood can be trusted	55.0	56.6	43.5

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OFFENDERS' VIEW OF THEIR COMMUNITY

There was no significant difference between key variables attached to neighbourhood between the offender and non-offender samples. When asked about general perceptions of their neighbourhoods, 89.4% of the youth offender sample, 88.2% of the offender sibling sample and 88% of the offender parent/caregiver sample agreed that they liked their neighbourhood. Furthermore, 61.3% of offenders, 59.3% of offender siblings and 68.7% of offender parent/caregivers stated that they would *not* like to move out of their neighbourhood. In addition, 80.3% of the total offender sample reported that they would like to return to their neighbourhood when released from their prison or rehabilitation facility.

Similarly, most participants within each of the three sample groups (90.1% of offenders, 92.9% of offender siblings and 90.6% of offender parent/caregivers) stated that they knew their neighbours by name. In addition 63.8% of youth offender, 68.4% of their siblings and 79% of their parent/caregivers reported that they felt the people living in their neighbourhood could generally be trusted.

Table 29: Attitude towards their neighbourhood - offender, offender sibling and offender parent/caregiver (%)

	Offender (n=395)		Offender sibling (n=297)		Offender parent/caregiver (n=233)	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
I like my neighbourhood	89.4	10.6	88.2	11.8	88.0	12.0
I'd like to move out of my neighbourhood	38.5	61.3	40.7	59.8	31.3	68.7
I know my neighbours by name	90.1	9.9	92.9	7.1	90.6	9.4
Most people in my neighbourhood can be trusted	63.8	36.2	68.4	31.3	79.0	20.6

young people in their neighbourhood trusted each other and most youth in their community could be trusted. When asked whether there were a lot of people in their neighbourhood who they could speak to about something that was important to them, three out of five youth (61.8%) reported that there were. Youth in the 16–18 year age cohort (67%) were most likely to report having access to many supportive individuals in their community, followed by those in the 22–25 year age group (59.1%). Males (64.9%) were slightly more likely than females (59.1%) to report that there were many individuals in their community who they could confide in about issues that were important to them.

Significant differences also emerged between the four provinces with regard to this question. Young people from the Western Cape (74.1%) were most likely to have access to supportive individuals in their community, followed by Eastern Cape (65.7%) and Gauteng (65.5%) youth. Conversely, KwaZulu-Natal participants accounted for the majority (54.9%) of those who reported that they

Table 30: Prevalence of crime and violence in the neighbourhood – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Caregivers (n=604)
Lots of crime in the neighbourhood	63.0	63.9	63.5
Lots of fights in the neighbourhood	57.9	51.3	45.6

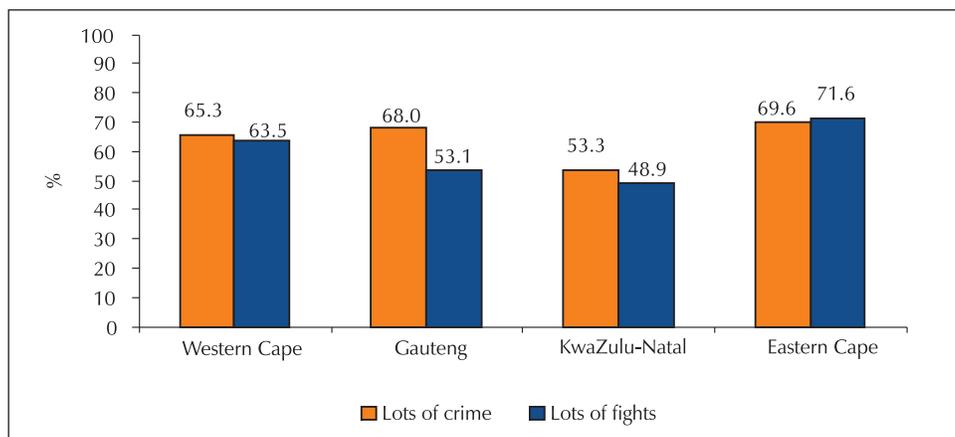
did not have access to individuals in their community who they could speak to about important issues. These findings were statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

Crime and violence were widespread in the respondents' neighbourhoods. All three non-offender samples consistently described their neighbourhoods as violent and characterised by lots of crime (see Table 30). The Eastern Cape was the province with the highest reported levels of community crime (69.6%) and violence (71.6%) (see Figure 6).

The youth expressed different opinions when asked whether the levels of crime in their neighbourhood had increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years. While more than a third (38.9%) stated that crime had increased, 37.6% felt that it had decreased, and 22.5% reported that crime levels in their community had remained steady over the past three years.

Given the prevalence of crime in these communities, it was not surprising to find that one in two (51.7%) youth non-offenders interviewed personally knew individuals in their neighbourhood who make a living from crime. Gauteng (58.8%) and Western Cape (57.1%) respondents were significantly more likely than those from the other two provinces to report familiarity with community

Figure 6: Prevalence of crime and violence in the neighbourhood, by province (n=603)

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Table 31: Crimes committed by community members who make a living from crime, by provinces (%) (n=312)

	Theft	Robbery	Assault	House breaking	Vehicular crimes	Drug-related crimes
Eastern Cape	32.7	43.6	0.0	16.4	5.5	0.0
KwaZulu-Natal	27.4	34.2	1.4	28.8	4.1	0.0
Gauteng	17.4	25.6	0.0	32.6	2.3	1.2
Western Cape	11.5	62.5	3.1	14.6	6.3	0.0

members who make a living from crime ($p=0.001$). Female respondents (52.6%) and those aged 19–21 (56.8%) and 16–18 years (55.3%) were most likely to report such knowledge. Overall, the crimes committed by these community members were typically robbery (42%), housebreaking (23.1%) and theft (20.5%). Differences, however, emerged within the individual provinces. In all provinces excluding Gauteng, community members were most likely to make a living by robbing others than any other criminal activity. In Gauteng, housebreaking (32.6%) was the primary source of income for people in their communities who make a living from crime (see Table 31).

In addition, personal knowledge of community members who engage in activities that could get them in trouble with the law – such as stealing, mugging, selling stolen goods or assaulting others – was also common among the youth non-offenders (57.1%) and their siblings (51.1%). Eastern Cape respondents (72.5%) were significantly more likely than those from the other three provinces to report personally knowing individuals in their community who were involved in illegal/criminal activities ($p=0.000$) (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Knowledge of community members engaged in criminal activities, by province (n=604)

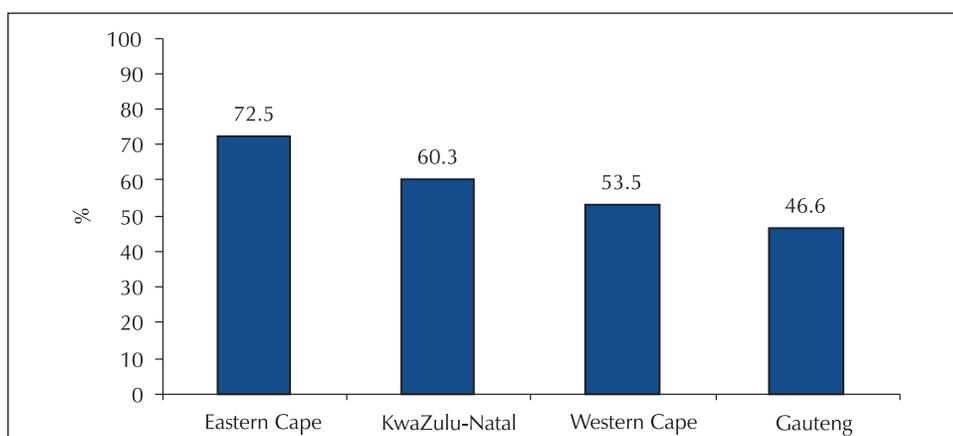
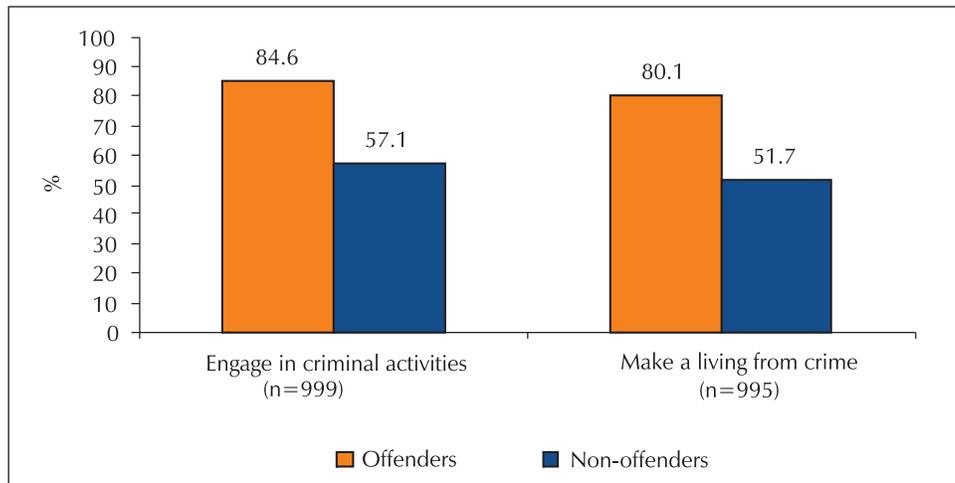


Figure 8: Knowledge of community members who engage in criminal activities and make a living from crime – non-offenders and offenders



There were no significant differences between male (57.3%) and female (56.9%) respondents and those in the different age cohorts with regard to their knowledge of community members who make a living from crime.

Although knowledge of community members who make a living from crime and who engage in criminal activities was widespread among the youth non-offenders, such knowledge was significantly higher in the offender sample ($p=0.000$). Four out of five offenders personally knew community members who engage in criminal activities (84.6%) and who make a living from crime (80.1%).

The non-offender samples tended to be exposed to high levels of violence within their neighbourhoods. While all three samples had personally witnessed individuals in their community physically assaulting one another, the youth (70.9%) were more likely than their siblings (65.1%) or caregivers (58.1%) to have been exposed to such violence. Both the victims and the perpetrators in the

assaults witnessed tended to be known to the respondents. In a tenth of these attacks, the victims were reportedly related to the respondents (see Table 32).

These victims were commonly friends (37.2%), neighbours (27.9%) and other relatives (18.6%). Other individuals (71.3%) from the same community as the youth were typically implicated as the perpetrators in these assaults. As with family violence exposure, exposure to community violence generally occurred at an early age. One in three (33.6%)

Some offenders noted that since crime and violence were so pervasive within their social environments, the violent perpetrators came to constitute the primary role-models that were available to them in their lives. Significantly, they stated that the apparent 'success' of these criminal/violent perpetrators served to motivate them to emulate the behaviours they observed.

'I can say that people who do crime prosper by doing it, get value' (interview with a 20-year-old youth offender).

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Table 32: Respondents who knew the victims and perpetrators in the incidents of community violence witnessed – non-offender youth, siblings and caregivers

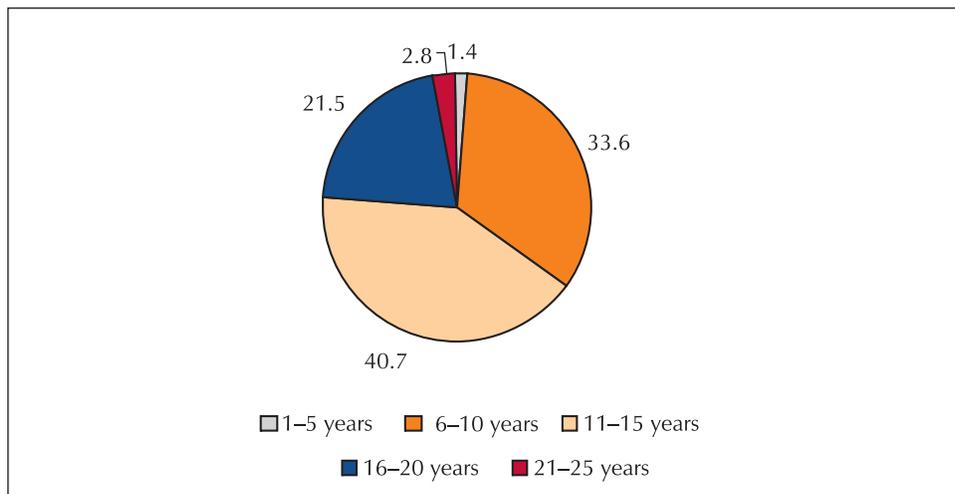
	Non-offender youth (n=428)	Siblings (n=524)	Caregivers (n=351)
Victims	60.3	57.4	55.3
Perpetrators	57.2	53.1	47.6
Victim was related	10.0	12.0	10.5

youth who had ever witnessed assaults in their community had first been exposed to such violence between the ages of six and ten years, while two out of five (40.7%) respondents had first witnessed such violence between the ages of 11 and 15 years (see Figure 9).

Young people between the ages of 12 and 22 years are in the process of developing their unique identities and look to a range of sources for guidance in this process. Family members, peers, school mates and other known individuals who live in their community typically constitute significant role-models for them.⁵¹ When the role-models available to young people consistently model violent and aggressive behaviours, it becomes difficult for the youth to envision that conflict can be resolved any other way. This contributes to the validation of violence as a socially approved conflict-resolution technique and normalises aggression within South African communities.

Witnessing interpersonal violence between community members was often not a one-off experience. When asked to indicate how often they had witnessed such violence in their community (excluding the incident that they had initially reported on) more than a quarter (30.4%) had seen such violence two to five times,

Figure 9: Age at which respondent first witnessed community violence (n=428)



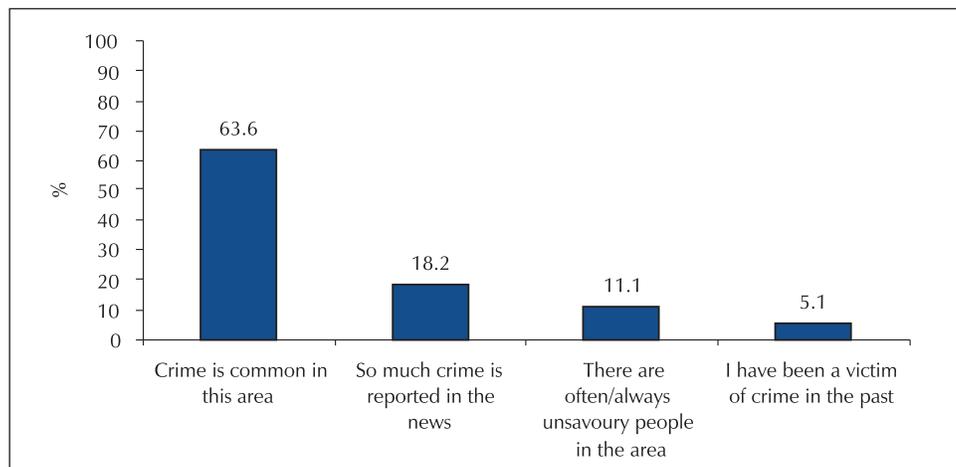
25.7% had witnessed it six to ten times, and 28% had seen such violence more than ten times.

Older youth in the 19–21 (74%) and 22–25 (76.5%) year age groupings were most likely to have been exposed to violence in their communities. These findings are reflective of the type of lifestyle that older youth are likely to lead. They are more likely than their younger counterparts to interact with delinquent peers and to engage in antisocial and delinquent activities since most of their time is spent away from parents and other adults who would normally supervise and monitor their activities. While exposure to community violence was high in all four provinces, nearly all (96.1%) of those resident in the Eastern Cape had witnessed community members intentionally hurting one another. This finding was statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

Community violence exposure was even higher in the offender sample despite living in the same communities as their non-offender counterparts. Four out of five (89.8%) offenders had witnessed individuals in their community intentionally beating, punching, kicking, physically abusing, hitting, slapping or attacking one another with weapons.

Given the high levels of crime and violence exposure in their communities, it was interesting to find that only 17.5% of the youth non-offenders reported feeling somewhat unsafe, while 7.1% felt very unsafe in their neighbourhoods. Participants from KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape were significantly more likely than those from the other two provinces to report feeling somewhat unsafe (21.7% and 23.5% respectively) and very unsafe (10.3% and 7.1% respectively). The Western Cape was the province with the second highest rates of community violence exposure, while KwaZulu-Natal had the lowest rate of such exposure. Even so, nearly two-thirds of all respondents in this province had witnessed individuals in their communities intentionally hurting each other. Feelings of fear

Figure 10: Reasons for feeling somewhat/very unsafe in the neighbourhood (n=144)



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were largely attributed to the prevalence of crime in their community (63.6%) and the high levels of crime reported in the media (18.2%) (see Figure 10).

Young people's feelings of fear in their communities were also evident in their tendency (53.1%) to avoid certain places in their neighbourhoods because of fear. This was most common among the female participants (59.1%, $p=0.002$) and those aged 19–21 (58.9%) and 22–25 years (55.7%). Respondents from the Western Cape (54.1%) were slightly more likely than the other youth to report doing this. Of all the crimes that normally occurred in their communities, the respondents were most fearful of robbery (26.3%), murder (18.2%) and rape/sexual assault (14.8%). The crimes were identical to those identified by the respondents' siblings.

Both people from outside (28.8%) and inside their communities (23.3%) as well as unemployed individuals (26.2%) were primarily responsible for the crimes being committed in the respondents' areas. The non-offender samples believed that unemployment (20.7%), drugs (16.4%), poverty (16%) and peer pressure (11.6%) were the primary reasons for people's involvement in crime.

ACCESS TO ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Given the prevalence of crime and violence within the youths' communities, the easy accessibility to alcohol and drugs within these areas was to be expected. The youth were asked how easy or difficult it would be for them to obtain various substances within their communities. Overall, alcohol was easily accessible to the respondents. While more than half (54%) of the youth non-offender sample reported that it would be very easy for them to obtain alcohol in their community if they wanted to, more than a quarter (28.8%) indicated that it would be easy for them to access alcohol in the neighbourhood. Although the siblings were slightly younger than the youth sample, they too were inclined to report very easy access (48%) to alcohol in their neighbourhood. The findings revealed significant differences between the various provinces and access to alcohol among the respondents (see Table 33).

Gauteng and Western Cape youth had the easiest access to beer and other hard liquor in the communities in which they live. Those from KwaZulu-Natal were most likely to report that it would be hard for them to access these substances in their residential areas ($p=0.000$).

Table 33: How easy is it to obtain alcohol, by province? (%) (n=604)

	Hard	Easy
Western Cape	10.6	89.4
Gauteng	7.4	92.6
KwaZulu-Natal	27.7	72.3
Eastern Cape	23.5	76.5

Table 34: How easy is it to obtain alcohol in the neighbourhood, by age? (%) (n=604)

	Hard	Easy
12–15 years	28.7	71.3
16–18 years	16.8	83.2
19–21 years	11.6	88.4
22–25 years	8.7	91.3

Significant differences also emerged between the four age groups with regard to access to alcohol in their residential areas. Alcohol was most accessible to older youth aged 19–21 and 22–25 years ($p=0.000$). Since the older youths' accessibility to alcohol could be influenced by the fact that they are legally allowed to purchase alcohol from a shop, emphasis should be shifted to the younger participants' access to alcohol. Even when excluding the older respondents from the analysis, the study found that alcohol was easily accessible to individuals younger than 18 years of age (see Table 34).

The youths' access to dagga was also explored. Nearly half (49.4%) of the youth non-offenders reported that it would be easy for them to obtain marijuana/dagga in their residential areas (see Table 35).

Significant differences emerged within the four provinces with regard to youths' access to marijuana/dagga in their communities. Gauteng and Western Cape respondents were significantly more likely than those from the other provinces to report easy access to marijuana ($p=0.000$) (see Table 36).

There were no significant differences between the four age cohorts with regard

Table 35: How easy is it to obtain marijuana/dagga in your community? (n=604)

	Hard	Percentage
Very Hard	143	24.2
Hard	156	26.4
Easy	142	24.0
Very Easy	150	25.4
Total	591	100.0

Table 36: How easy is it to obtain marijuana/dagga in your community, by province? (%) (n=591)

	Hard	Easy
Western Cape	49.4	50.6
Gauteng	39.2	60.8
KwaZulu-Natal	50.6	49.4
Eastern Cape	68.6	31.4

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Table 37: How easy is it to obtain marijuana/dagga in your community, by age? (%) (n=591)

	Hard	Easy
12–25 years	58.0	42.0
16–18 years	50.0	50.0
19–21 years	42.1	57.9
22–25 years	51.3	48.7

to access to marijuana/dagga in their communities. Even so, easy access to marijuana was most common in the 16–18 and 19–21 year age groups. While the younger participants were more likely to report that they would experience difficulty accessing this substance in their communities, it is important to note that two out of five young people aged 12–15 years reported easy access to marijuana within their residential areas (see Table 37).

Males (51.1%) were slightly more inclined than females (47.9%) to indicate that it would be easy for them to obtain marijuana/dagga in their neighbourhoods.

When comparing the offender and non-offender data, no significant differences emerged between the two samples with regard to access to alcohol in the communities in which they live. **Access to dagga, however, was significantly greater in the offender sample.** The offenders were significantly more likely to indicate that it would be very easy (48.5%) or easy (27.8%) for them to access dagga in their residential areas. These findings were statistically significant ($p=0.000$) (see Table 38).

The young people interviewed in the study also appeared to be knowledgeable about places in their communities where they would be able to buy drugs. Although this knowledge was common among both the youth non-offenders and their siblings, the youth were slightly more likely to be aware of such places within their neighbourhoods. Even though there were no statistically significant differences between the respondents from the various provinces with regard to this, those from Gauteng (24.5%), the Eastern Cape (23.5%) and Western Cape (21.9%) were most likely to report that they knew of such places in their neighbourhoods. Less than a fifth (14.7%) of those from KwaZulu-Natal were familiar with places in their communities where they could purchase drugs. Males (21.9%) were more likely to report knowing where to buy drugs in their communities than females (19.4%). Furthermore, knowledge of places in the

Table 38: How easy is it to access marijuana in your community – non-offenders and offenders? (%) (n=979)

	Very hard	Hard	Easy	Very easy
Offenders	11.3	12.4	27.8	48.5
Non-offenders	24.2	26.4	24	25.4

Table 39: Knowledge of community members who use, sell or buy drugs – non-offenders and siblings (%)

	Youth non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)
Know people in neighbourhood who smoke dagga	68.9	64.0
Know people in neighbourhood who buy drugs	22.7	19.9
Know people in neighbourhood who sell/deal in drugs	22.0	17.7

community where one could purchase drugs was predominant in the 19–21 (26.7%) year age cohort, while 20% of the 22–25 year olds and 18.6% of the 16–18 year old youth were familiar with such places in their neighbourhoods. Nearly a fifth (17.7%) of respondents between the ages of 12 and 15 years reported knowing where to buy drugs in their community.

These young people also personally knew people in their community who used (68.9%), sold (22%) or bought (22.7%) drugs. The respondents' siblings were also familiar with such individuals in their community, although to a lesser extent (see Table 39).

Comparative analysis revealed that **knowledge of community members who smoke dagga (89.6%), sell or deal in drugs (63.5%) and who buy drugs (66.5%) was significantly more frequent in the offender sample (p=0.000). Offenders were nearly three times more likely than the non-offenders to know people in their communities who sell or deal in drugs and who buy drugs (see Table 40).**

Overall, these findings suggest that although the youth live in the same communities, **the offenders are significantly more likely to have access to drugs, particularly marijuana, and are more aware of people in their community who use, sell or buy any illegal substances than the youth non-offenders.** Furthermore, **the young offenders were more likely to have family members who engage in drug-related activities.**

ACCESS TO WEAPONS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Generally, weapons were more difficult than illegal substances to access within the respondents' neighbourhoods. However – and perhaps not surprisingly given

Table 40: Knowledge of community members who smoke dagga, sell or buy drugs – non-offenders and offenders (%) (n=999)

	Offenders	Non-offenders
Smoke marijuana/dagga	89.6	68.9
Sell or deal in drugs (other than dagga)	63.5	22.0
Buy any drugs (other than dagga)	66.5	22.7

*Burton, Leoschut & Bonora***Table 41: How easy is it to obtain a gun, by province? (%) (n=596)**

	Easy	Difficult
Western Cape	8.3	91.7
Gauteng	6.9	93.1
KwaZulu-Natal	8.3	91.7
Eastern Cape	9.8	90.2

Table 42: How easy is it to obtain a gun, by age (%) (n=596)

	Easy	Difficult
12–15 years	3.7	96.3
16–18 years	6.9	93.1
19–21 years	9.0	91.0
22–25 years	15.8	84.2

that most of the offenders were incarcerated for violent or serious crimes – non-offenders were significantly less likely to know where to get a firearm in their community.

Most (91.8%) of the non-offender respondents reported that it would be difficult for them to access firearms in the areas in which they live. Those who reported easy access to firearms were largely from the Eastern Cape (9.8%), Western Cape (8.3%) and KwaZulu-Natal (8.3%) (see Table 41).

With reference to age, young people in the oldest age cohort had the easiest access to firearms in the areas in which they live (see Table 42).

When exploring the respondents' general attitudes towards weapons, two out of five (43.2%) youth non-offenders felt that it was important to have a gun in their neighbourhood. Protecting themselves (32.5%) and others in their families (10.8%) were the most common reasons provided for this stance. This perception was predominant in the 19–21 (52.1%) and 22–25 (46.1%) year age cohorts. Furthermore, Western Cape (51.2%) and Eastern Cape (46.1%) youth were most likely to report that it was important to have a gun in the neighbourhood in which they live. Similarly, nearly half (49.7%) of the parents or primary caregivers of these young people also felt that it was important to have a firearm in the community in which they live.

Table 43: How easy is it to obtain firearms – non-offenders and offenders? (%)

	Easy	Hard
Offenders (n=387)	8.2	91.8
Non-offenders (n=596)	41.1	58.9

Firearms appeared to be much more accessible to the young offenders. Two out of five (41.1%) offenders interviewed reported that it would be easy for them to obtain a firearm in their neighbourhood (see Table 43). This could partly be attributed to the offenders' increased knowledge of individuals in their community who engage in criminal activity.

ACCESS TO SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The study also sought to explore the youths' use of a range of services and facilities both within their own communities and outside of the areas in which they live. This was done in order to obtain a description of the services and facilities that young people have at their disposal. Respondents were given a list and asked to identify which services and facilities they made use of within and outside of their community.

The findings revealed that the respondents had utilised a wide variety of services and facilities both within and outside of the areas in which they live. The services most commonly utilised in their communities were shops (98%), health care centres (85%) and religious institutions such as a mosque/church (79.4%). More than half of the respondents had access to community halls (59.2%), sports grounds (55.1%) and libraries (56.3%) within their residential areas. These findings were consistent across the sibling and caregiver samples (see Table 44).

Table 44: Facilities used in and outside of the respondents' communities – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=604)		Siblings (n=805)		Caregivers (n=604)	
	<i>In</i>	<i>Outside</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Outside</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Outside</i>
Sports grounds	55.1	51.8	59.0	48.6	13.2	13.7
Community hall	59.2	48.4	60.5	46.8	60.1	47.0
Shops	98.0	95.7	98.0	91.8	94.4	91.4
Malls	46.6	87.6	43.5	81.5	41.4	78.1
Cinemas	20.7	53.2	18.1	45.2	7.0	14.4
Mosque/church	79.4	66.3	80.4	58.9	86.8	75.5
Library	56.3	56.9	52.2	54.0	12.9	13.4
Training college/facility	11.5	13.2	9.4	10.2	5.8	6.6
Support services	10.6	12.5	7.6	8.8	–	–
Health centre/clinic	85.0	78.4	82.0	73.8	90.2	85.6
Telecentre	43.7	38.1	42.0	33.9	30.8	28.0
Shebeens/pubs/bars	24.8	20.2	15.8	13.0	13.6	10.1
Crèche/play school	20.6	14.3	25.1	17.3	21.7	14.2
Any other facilities	0.6	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5
Any other skills development centre	–	–	–	–	5.0	6.0

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Table 45: Access to facilities within their area – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Sports grounds	55.1	90.8
Community hall	59.2	70.9
Shops	98	95.4
Malls	46.6	56.4
Cinemas	20.7	34.3
Mosque/church	79.4	80.7
Library	56.3	55.5
Training college/facility	11.5	13.2
Support services (family support, welfare)	10.6	23.3
Health centre/clinic	85	85.8
Telecentre	43.7	52.2
Shebeens/pubs/bars	24.8	81.8
Crèche/play school	20.6	50.6
Any other facilities	0.6	2.8

The youth were least likely to make use of support services (10.6%) and training colleges (11.5%) within their communities. The low levels of use of these facilities are partly influenced by the lack of such services, particularly training colleges, within the areas in which these young people reside.

Facilities commonly accessed outside of their areas were shops (95.7%), malls (87.6%) and health centres or clinics (78.4%). The higher percentages of youth who access services such as cinemas (53.2%), training colleges (13.2%) and malls (87.6%) outside of their areas are indicative of the lack of these facilities within the respondents' residential areas.

Interestingly, the offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to use these facilities both inside and outside of their communities. This may be in part as a result of greater income through criminal activities that would allow usage of services which require payment or some form of income, such as shops, cinemas, malls, telecentres and shebeens (see Table 45).

The findings revealed that the offenders were significantly more likely to make use of sports grounds (90.8%), community halls (70.9%), cinemas (34.3%), training colleges (23.3%), telecentres (52.2%), shebeens (81.8%) and crèches (50.6%) within the areas in which they lived ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, the respondents were more likely to make use of these facilities outside of the areas in which they lived ($p=0.000$) (see Table 46).

The differences in the use of the facilities within communities by the offenders can also be attributed to the fact that offenders typically use recreational facilities such as sports grounds as their hang-out spots. In an earlier study conducted by the CJCP where young people in the Northern Cape were asked about the availability and their use of social and recreational facilities in their communities,

Table 46: Access to facilities outside of their area – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Sports grounds	51.8	75.4
Community hall	48.4	59.4
Shops	95.7	93.8
Malls	87.6	88.5
Cinemas	53.2	72.7
Mosque/church	66.3	71.9
Library	56.9	56.3
Training college/facility	13.2	21.5
Support services (family support, welfare)	12.5	24.1
Health centre/clinic	78.4	66.6
Telecentre	38.1	47.1
Shebeens/pubs/bars	20.2	72.7
Crèche/play school	14.3	30.6
Any other facilities	1.2	4.8

it was found that young people often do not make use of facilities at their disposal because of fear for their safety. Many of the facilities in their communities were used by the delinquent youth as hang-out spots.⁵²

ACCESS TO SERVICES AND INFORMATION

This section posed questions aimed at exploring what sorts of services and information the youth involved in this study had access to, either within their households or their communities.

A quarter (25.7%) of all those interviewed had access to a working and fixed-line telephone in their households. Access to fixed-line telephones was found to be greater outside of the respondents' homes (71.9%). By and large, access to working mobile phones both within (88.7%) and outside (81.4%) the home was readily available.

While a tenth (10.4%) of the youth had access to a functional computer within their household, more than a third (39%) of those interviewed had access to a computer within their community. Most of the youth who had a computer at home did not have access to the internet (97.8%); however, greater internet access was found in their communities (30.8%).

The vast majority of the respondents had access to a television (92.2%) and radio (93.2%) within their homes, while slightly fewer youth reported having access to these services outside of their homes (85.4% and 84.3% respectively).

More than half (57.6%) of the youth had access to a primus cooker or hot plate within their home and four out of five respondents reportedly had access to an electric/gas stove (82.5%) and a fridge (86.6%) within their home. Significantly

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Table 47: Access to services and information within the home – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=604)		Siblings (n=805)		Caregivers (n=604)	
	In	Outside	In	Outside	In	Outside
Fixed-line phone	25.7	71.9	23.9	67.3	25.3	70.0
Mobile phone	88.7	81.4	89.4	82.2	85.8	83.9
Functional computer	10.4	39.0	8.9	36.6	6.6	31.8
Internet	2.2	30.8	1.7	27.0	1.7	28.0
Television	92.2	85.4	89.4	86.6	90.1	80.5
Radio	93.2	84.3	92.9	86.5	92.4	81.1
Primus cooker/hot plate	57.6		57.1		60.1	
Electric/gas stove	82.5		75.8		63.2	
Fridge	86.6		85.1		82.9	
Standalone freezer	36.4		30.9		28.0	

fewer youth had access to a standalone freezer (36.4%) within their households. These findings were corroborated by the sibling and caregiver findings (see Table 47).

Generally, there were no significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to many of the facilities explored. While the non-offenders had greater access to mobile phones (88.7%), televisions (92.2%) and fridges (86.6%) within their homes, the youth offenders were significantly more likely to report having access to fixed and connected telephone lines (39.7%, $p=0.000$) (see Table 48).

When asked what was their most important source for information about the government, the majority of youth identified the television (67.8%) followed by the radio (17.4%) (see Table 49).

Table 48: Access to services and information within the home – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Offenders (n=395)	Non-offenders (n=604)
Connected and fixed-line phone	39.7	25.7
Working mobile phone	73.9	88.7
Working computer	12.9	10.4
The internet	6.6	92.2
Working television	84.3	92.2
Working radio	94.4	93.2
Primus cooker or hot plate	56.7	57.6
Electric or gas stove	77.2	82.5
Fridge	75.7	36.4
Standalone freezer	37.7	36.4

Table 49: Respondents' most important source for information about the government (n=603)

	Frequency	Percentage
Television	409	67.8
Radio	105	17.4
National newspaper	32	5.3
Relatives, friends & neighbours	28	4.6
Groups or associations	7	1.2
Community bulletin board	5	0.8
Community newspaper	5	0.8
Local markets or shops	3	0.5
Community leaders	3	0.5
Internet	3	0.5
NGOs	2	0.3
Political associations	1	0.2
Total	603	100.0

Studies focusing on the factors that put young people at risk of offending commonly identify high levels of community crime, availability of drugs and firearms, neighbourhood adults involved in crime and exposure to community violence as the variables that are known to heighten susceptibility to crime. The findings revealed that both the offenders and non-offenders are exposed to the same risk factors, although this was much more pronounced in the offender sample. This is not surprising given that the communities were selected, in part, on the basis of the risk characteristics assumed to exist based on the frequency of incarcerated offenders' origin within those communities.

Many theorists have proposed that risk factors for crime existing simultaneously in individuals' social contexts may intensify their effects on each other.⁵³ In other words, a particular risk factor will have an even greater effect on a young person's propensity to commit crime when it exists in conjunction with other causes.

The findings of this study also call into question the emphasis placed on the provision of social and recreational resources in an attempt to foster resilience among young people. According to these findings, many young people in South Africa do in fact have access to a range of social and recreational facilities both within and outside of the areas in which they live. Focus should rather be placed on increasing the safety and security measures at these facilities as well as ensuring that the resources are well maintained and utilised for their intended purposes.

CHAPTER 6

Schooling and education

- Completion of schooling was significantly higher among non-offenders: only 3.8% of the offenders interviewed reported having completed matric/Grade 12, compared to 12.3% of non-offenders.
- Significantly higher percentages of the offenders interviewed had ever been scared, harmed or threatened at school (25.6% of offenders compared to 10.9% of non-offenders); had been forced to do something they felt was wrong when at school (13.4% compared to 4.3%); and had been stigmatised or threatened with being stigmatised (20.2% compared to 6.3%).

Researchers have identified a range of school-related factors that have been found to increase the likelihood of young people engaging in criminal behaviour. These include a lack of education, truancy, problems at school, poor schooling, low bonding to the school, disruptive behaviour at school, as well as poor academic performance, school failure and school drop-out.⁵⁴

All (100%) of the youth non-offenders and their siblings had reportedly attended school. Those who were still at school at the time of the interview reported that grades 9–10 (31.1%) and grades 6–8 (23%) were the highest grades they had completed. The siblings were more inclined to report lower grades as their highest level of education. These findings were, however, consistent with the age differences between the youth and their siblings (see Table 50).

Since the respondents' mothers were largely financially responsible for their needs, it was fitting that the youth most frequently identified their mothers (44.5%) as the individual who was responsible for paying school fees, followed by

Table 50: Highest grade completed – non-offenders and siblings (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)
Grade 5/less	6.3	11.7
Grade 6–8	23.0	28.8
Grade 9–10	31.1	30.8
Grade 11	19.0	13.8
Grade 12	18.7	12.3
Still attending school	1.8	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0

both parents (18.9%), fathers only (18.4%) and grandparents (10.9%). At the time of the study nearly a fifth (18.7%) of all the youth non-offenders had already completed Grade 12. More than half (57.5%) of those indicated that they had no post-school qualifications. Those who had received any form of training following Grade 12 were most likely to have completed a certificate (15%) other than a trade certificate (see Table 51).

More than three-quarters (78.9%) of all the youth non-offenders who had not completed Grade 12 were still attending school at the time of the study. Respondents who had left school prematurely attributed their decision to do so to their academic failure at school (6.2%), an inability to afford school fees (4.2%), pregnancy (4%) and a dislike of school (3%).

By comparison, the offender sample was less likely to have completed Grade 12. Although the overwhelming majority of respondents (99.2%) had at some point in their lives attended school outside prison, **only 3.8% of offenders interviewed reported having completed Grade 12 compared to the 12.3% of non-offenders**. Furthermore, only 11.5% had completed Grade 11, just over a quarter (27.6%) had only reached grades 9–10 before dropping out of school, and 14.3% had only completed Grade 5 or less. Two out of five (42.6%) offenders had

Table 51: Post-school training received (n=113)

	Frequency	Percentage
No post-school qualification	65	57.5
Other certificate	17	15.0
Missing value	8	7.1
Undergraduate degree	8	7.1
Post-graduate diploma	7	6.2
Trade certificate	7	6.2
Post-graduate degree	1	0.9
Total	113	100.0

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Table 52: Highest school grade completed – offenders (n= 395)

	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 5 or less	56	14.3
Grade 6-8	167	42.6
Grade 9-10	108	27.6
Grade 11	45	11.5
Grade 12	15	3.8
Total	395	100.0

reportedly only completed grades 6–8, indicating a **high drop-out rate among young offenders in South Africa** (see Table 52).

All the participants – whether they had completed Grade 12 or not, or were still attending school at the time of the study – were asked whether they had received any form of skills training other than their schooling. On the whole, one in ten (11.4%) youth non-offenders indicated that they had been the recipients of such training. Older youth aged 22–25 years (28.7%) were significantly more likely than their younger counterparts to have received additional skills training ($p=0.000$). These youths were typically trained in computer literacy (55.1%) and trade skills such as carpentry and panel work (15.9%). Fewer siblings (7.6%) had received any training other than their schooling.

More than a tenth (14.4%) of these young people indicated that they felt unsafe at their school. This perception was most common among youth from KwaZulu-Natal (20.1%), the Western Cape (13.8%) and the Eastern Cape (11.9%). Gauteng (9.7%) participants were least likely to report feeling unsafe at school. Furthermore, these feelings were most prevalent among females (15.9%) and the 16–18 (18.8%) and 19–21 (17.8%) year old youths. Feelings of apprehension at school were commonly attributed to fear of criminals (52.3%) and fear of being hurt (21.1%).

A total of 14.8% of the youth were fearful when travelling to or from school. This was most common among female respondents (15.3%) and those from KwaZulu-Natal (19.1%) and the Western Cape (18.1%). Youth from Gauteng (3.4%) were significantly less likely to express this sentiment ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, participants in the 19–21 (18.3%) and 16–18 (15.8%) year age groups were more likely than those from the other age categories to report this.

Nearly a fifth (14.6%) of the sample indicated that there was a particular place at school they were afraid of. Toilets (48.9%), playing fields/sports areas (12.5%) and classrooms (9.1%) were most frequently identified by the youth as places at school they were scared of.

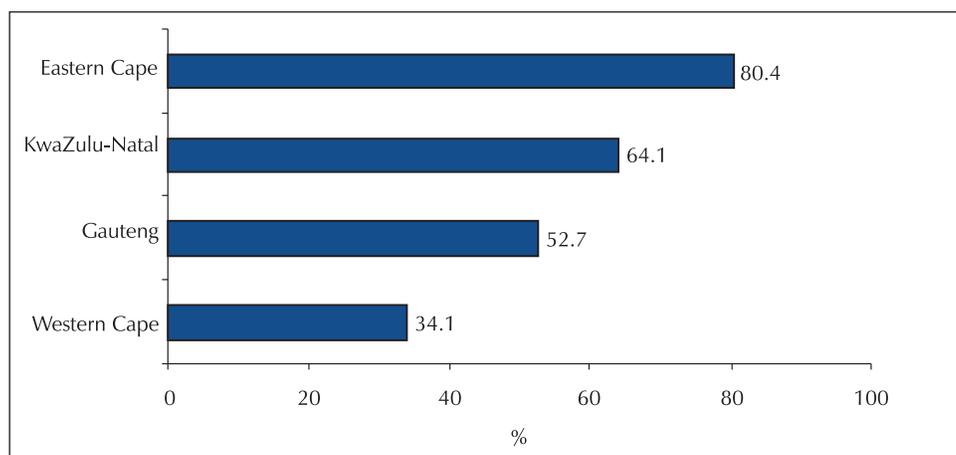
Table 53 (*next page*) reveals significant information about the potential relationship between victimisation and antisocial behaviour. Young offenders clearly report being significantly more likely to be punished at school – this could relate to undesirable behaviour within the school environment. However,

Table 53: Victimisation at school – Non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Ever been physically punished by teachers or principal for your wrongdoings	55.6	72.9
Did you know anyone at your school who carried a gun with them while at school	12.1	24.1
Ever been threatened, scared, harmed or hurt at school	10.9	25.6
Ever been forced to do something that you felt was wrong	4.3	13.4
Someone at school ever threatened to say something about you that would stigmatise you	6.3	20.3

significantly higher percentages of the offenders interviewed had ever been scared, harmed or threatened at school (25.6% of offenders compared to 10.9% of non-offenders); had been forced to do something that they felt was wrong while at school (13.4% compared to 4.3%); and had been stigmatised or threatened with being stigmatised (20.2% compared to 6.3%). This suggests a close relationship between school victimisation and offending or antisocial behaviour.

The findings also revealed that South African schools continue to employ physical punishment as a means of effecting discipline despite corporal punishment being banned in the country. This reflects findings from a number of recent CJCP studies. More than half (55.6%) of all those interviewed had been physically hurt or punished at school for their wrongdoings. There was a significant difference between the four provinces with regard to the prevalence of corporal punishment at school. According to the findings, corporal punishment was most common in the Eastern Cape, with more than three-quarters (80.4%) of

Figure 11: Corporal punishment in schools, by province (n=604)

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all those in the province indicating that they had been physically punished at school ($p=0.000$) (see Figure 11).

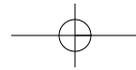
One in ten youth non-offenders (12.1%) knew individuals at their school who had carried a gun with them while on school premises, while 10.9% had ever been threatened with harm or physically hurt while at school. This was predominant among the youth from Gauteng (13.6%), KwaZulu-Natal (12%) and the Eastern Cape (9.8%), while those from the Western Cape (8.3%) were least likely to report having been physically hurt or threatened with harm by someone at school. Experiences of physical harm or threat of harm were more prevalent among the male (14%) respondents. Other learners at school (59.1%) and classmates (25.8%) were typically identified as the perpetrators in these instances. For the most part (57.6%), the incidences had occurred only once, while more than a quarter (30.3%) of those who had been physically hurt or threatened with harm at school indicated that this had happened two to five times.

When asked about their academic experiences at school, the youth were inclined to agree (36.8%) and strongly agree (29.8%) that they generally achieved better marks than their classmates. More than half (57.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they tried to work hard at school, while two-fifths (41.4%) agreed with the statement. Furthermore, more than two-thirds (69.9%) of the sample strongly agreed that they want to go to university once they complete Grade 12.

Although the majority (75.3%) of the participants had never been employed, more than a tenth (14.7%) reported that they had worked before as a casual or temporary labourer and 6.1% had been employed on a part-time basis. At the time

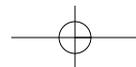
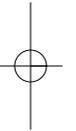
Table 54: Sources of money – non-offenders and siblings (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)
Mother only	34.0	34.4
Both parents	18.6	16.5
Other relatives	9.3	11.4
Grandparents	8.9	11.8
Older siblings	8.9	8.6
Father only	8.0	8.6
Employment	6.4	4.5
Partner	2.7	2.6
Other	1.3	0.6
Friends	0.9	0.5
Handouts	0.3	0.2
Allowances	0.3	0.1
Step-parent	0.3	0.1
Non-relatives	0.1	0.2



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of the study, less than a tenth (6.6%) were employed, but it is important to remember that close to two-thirds (63.4%) of the sample were not employed because they were still attending school. Furthermore, 9.1% of the respondents indicated that they were not looking for employment even though they were unemployed at the time of the study, while 20.9% of the sample were actively looking for work. Mothers only (34%), both parents (18.6%) and other relatives (9.3%) were found to be the youths' primary sources of income for essential goods such as clothes and shoes. These findings were consistent with those reported by the siblings who also identified these individuals as their primary sources of income for essential goods such as clothes and shoes (see Table 54).



CHAPTER 7

Exploring substance usage further

- There was a significant difference between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to their substance usage. Overall, the offenders were significantly more likely to have ever used cannabis/marijuana, alcohol, methamphetamine (tik), mandrax, cocaine, inhalants and hallucinogens.

While there has already been some discussion in the previous chapter around access to illegal substances, this chapter examines more closely the usage patterns of various substances by the non-offender and offender samples.

Research indicates that individuals under the influence of either alcohol or drugs often act in ways they would not ordinarily act when sober. Some drugs diminish inhibitions or change individuals' moods and perceptions, which could result in those individuals committing acts they would not normally think to commit. Substance use is associated with both violent and income-generating crime by youth. For this reason, the respondents were questioned on their use of a number of substances including alcohol, marijuana/dagga and drugs other than marijuana/dagga.

According to the findings, substance use by the three samples was relatively low. Alcohol was the substance most commonly used by the youth, their siblings, as well as their parents or primary caregivers. One in four (25.5%) parents interviewed reported ever using alcohol in their lives, less than a third (31%) of the

Table 55: Substance use – youth, sibling and parent (%)

	Youth (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Parent (n=604)
Alcohol	31.0	18.3	25.5
Cannabis/ marijuana	4.6	2.4	1.0
Cocaine	0.3	0.0	0.0
Amphetamines	0.0	0.0	0.0
Inhalants	0.8	0.6	1.0
Over-the-counter substances	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hallucinogens	0.0	0.0	0.0
Opiates	0.2	0.0	0.0
Mandrax	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tik	0.0	0.0	0.0
Any other illegal substances	0.2	0.0	0.0

youth had ever consumed alcohol, and less than a fifth (18.3%) of the siblings reported ever using alcohol (see Table 55).

Since the youths' reported substance usage was so low, only the findings pertaining to alcohol use will be described in more detail in this chapter. On the whole, nearly a third (31%) of all the youth surveyed had used alcohol at some point in their lives. Alcohol use was predominant among respondents from the Eastern Cape (43.1%), Gauteng (34.5%) and KwaZulu-Natal (29.9%), while those from the Western Cape (21.8%) had the lowest rates of alcohol use ($p=0.002$).

There were significant differences between the four age groups and their reported use of alcohol. Overall, alcohol use was most prevalent among the older respondents. Those aged 22–25 years (49.6%) were significantly more likely than those from the other age cohorts to have ever used alcohol in their lives ($p=0.000$), followed by the 19–21 year olds (43.8%). The respondents from the two younger age cohorts were least likely to report ever having used alcohol (see Table 56).

In an attempt to obtain information on the frequency of alcohol consumption during weekdays and at the weekends, the youth were asked to indicate how many drinks they generally had on these days. The majority (76.5%) of those who reported ever using alcohol reported that they did not drink during the week.

Table 56: Alcohol use, by age (%) (n=604)

Age cohort	Yes
12–15 years	6.1
16–18 years	31.3
19–21 years	43.8
22–25 years	49.6

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Table 57: Age at which alcohol was first tried (n=187)

	Frequency	Percentage
Younger than 9 years	2	1.1
9–13 years	21	11.2
14–18 years	122	65.2
19–23 years	40	21.4
Older than 23 years	2	1.1
Total	187	100.0

Instead, the findings revealed that these young people were more inclined to consume alcohol at the weekend. One in five (20.9%) of these youths consumed five or more drinks per day at the weekend, while nearly a fifth (17.6%) had three to four drinks a day at the weekend. Furthermore, 16% indicated that they had less than one drink a day at the weekend.

Those who reported having ever used alcohol were asked to indicate how old they were when they first tried alcohol. According to the findings, the youngest age of first use of alcohol for this sample was younger than nine years (see Table 57).

Table 57 indicates that for these youths, initial use of alcohol tended to occur between the ages of 14 and 18 years (65.2%). Alarmingly, more than a tenth (11.2%) of these youths had first tried alcohol between the ages of nine and 13 years. While both males (66.7%) and females (63.6%) were inclined to try alcohol for the first time between the ages of 14 and 18 years, the male respondents (14.1%) were more likely than their female counterparts (8%) to have had their initial use of alcohol before the age of 14 (see Table 58).

Alcohol consumption in the 12 months preceding the study was also explored. Nearly half (46.3%) of those who had ever used alcohol reported that they had only consumed alcohol once or twice in the past year. Nearly a fifth (19%) had used alcohol once a month, while 17% had consumed alcohol on a weekly basis. Furthermore, 17.7% indicated that they had not used any alcohol in the year prior to the study (see Table 59).

Half (49.7%) of those who had used alcohol reported having a strong desire to use alcohol once or twice in the year prior to the study, while 18.2% had no strong desire to use the substance.

Table 58: Age at which alcohol was first tried, by gender (n=187)

	Younger than 9	9–13 years	14–18 years	19–23 years	Older than 23
Male	2.0	14.1	66.7	17.2	0.0
Female	0.0	8.0	63.6	26.1	2.3

Table 59: Frequency of alcohol use in the 12 months preceding the study (n=187)

	Frequency	Percentage
Never	34	18.2
Once/twice	93	49.7
Monthly	34	18.2
Weekly	25	13.4
Total	187	100.0

For the most part, these youths had never (80.2%) experienced any health, social, legal or financial problems resulting from their use of alcohol, while a tenth (9.6%) had experienced such problems once or twice during the 12 months preceding the study. Furthermore, while the majority (75.9%) of these respondents had never failed to do what was expected of them because of their use of alcohol, 11.2% had failed to do so once or twice in the past year.

The study also questioned whether the respondents' use of alcohol had ever led to them engaging in wrong or unlawful activities. Although the majority (82.9%) responded negatively to this question, 5.9% of the respondents reported that their consumption of alcohol had resulted in them engaging in criminal activities once or twice in the year preceding the study. Male (10.1%) respondents who had used alcohol were more likely than females (1.1%) to report that their alcohol use had led to criminal activity. This tendency was also more common among the older youth aged 16–18 (8.9%) and 22–25 (5.3%) years. While the study did not explore which activities in particular these youths engaged in, the youth were asked whether they had ever used a firearm while under the influence of alcohol: 2.1% of the young people reported having done so.

More than two-fifths (47.6%) of those who had used alcohol reported that they had used this substance in the month prior to the study. Of these, two-thirds (67.6%) had also used alcohol on the seven days prior to being interviewed. On the whole, 44.9% of these young people spent R50–100 on alcohol during the past week, while 40.6% spent less than R50 on alcohol in the week preceding the interview (see Table 60).

Nearly half (48.1%) of those who had ever consumed alcohol stated that a

Table 60: Amount spent on alcohol in the seven days preceding the study (n=69)

	Frequency	Percentage
R0	2	2.9
Less than R50	28	40.6
R50-R100	31	44.9
More than R100	8	11.6
Total	69	100.0

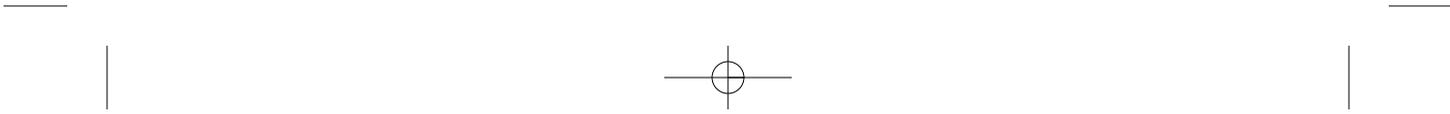
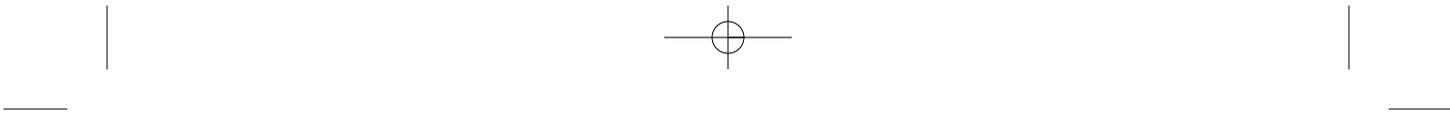
*Burton, Leoschut & Bonora***Table 61: Substance usage – non-offenders and offenders (%) (n=999)**

	Non-offenders	Offenders
Alcohol	31	81.5
Cannabis/marijuana	4.6	61
Cocaine	0.3	13.6
Amphetamines	0.0	4.1
Inhalants	0.8	11.8
Over-the-counter substances	0.0	5.4
Hallucinogens	0.0	12.6
Opiates	0.2	3.8
Mandrax	0.0	29.2
Tik	0.0	10.8
Any other illegal substances	0.2	3.1

family member or a friend had expressed concern about their alcohol use in the past year. Furthermore, more than a third (36.4%) of the participants had reportedly tried and failed to control, cut down or stop their use of alcohol in the past year.

When asked whether they had sold any drugs, the participants responded negatively to all drugs except to the selling of cannabis (0.7%). However, this percentage was miniscule.

There was a significant difference between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to their substance usage. Overall, the offenders were significantly more likely to have ever used all of the substances explored in the study (p=0.000) (see Table 61). Almost two-thirds (61%) of the offenders reported cannabis use, while over a tenth (13.6%) had used cocaine, inhalants (11.8%), tik (10.8%) or hallucinogens (12.6%). Three out of ten offenders reported using mandrax.



CHAPTER 8

Personal and household experiences of victimisation and crime

- Personal experience of crime and household members' experiences of crime were significantly more prevalent among the youth offender than the non-offender sample.
- The high levels of victimisation among the offenders support the established link between prior victimisation and subsequent offending and delinquent behaviour – a fact of particular concern in a country with a high rate of interpersonal crime.

The link between exposure to various forms of crime and violence and victimisation, and later antisocial or criminal behaviour is well established.⁵⁵ This is of particular concern in the South African context since together with deprivation, high levels of poverty and inequality and high unemployment, crime and violence are pervasive in South African society. According to the 2008 Youth Lifestyle Study, young people remain significantly more susceptible to crime than adults, with rates in excess of one in four young people falling victim to crime.⁵⁶

This trend is further supported by the study's findings. More than a quarter (28.3%) of the youth had personally been the victims of any crime. Criminal victimisation was not limited to them since their siblings (23.6%) and parents (28%) had also commonly been the victims of robbery, assault, theft, home burglary, rape or sexual assault, hijacking or deliberate damage to property.⁵⁷ Of all the crimes explored, robbery (a violent and traumatising offence) was the one crime most commonly experienced by all three sub-samples (i.e. the youth, siblings and caregivers) (see Table 62, *next page*).

Table 62: Respondents' personal experiences of crime – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=171)	Siblings (n=190)	Caregivers (n=233)
Any crime	28.3	23.6	28.0
Robbery	67.3	55.3	43.4
Assault	22.8	21.1	16.8
Theft of personal property, crops or livestock	15.8	16.3	22.1
Home burglary	14.0	12.6	39.3
Rape/sexual assault	4.1	6.3	3.8
Theft of a vehicle or bicycle	2.9	2.1	3.2
Hijacking of a vehicle or bicycle	1.2	0.5	2.5
Deliberate damage to property	1.2	0.5	1.9

Youth from KwaZulu-Natal (34.2%) and Gauteng (29.1%) were most likely to report ever having been criminally victimised. Conversely, respondents from the Western Cape (24.1%) and Eastern Cape (23.5%) provinces reported considerably lower rates of personal victimisation. Male respondents (33.7%) and those aged 22–25 years (35.7%) were most likely to have been the victim of some crime ever in their lives.

The crimes experienced by the youth were most likely to have occurred in the three years prior to the study and the victim's own community was predominantly the location where these incidences occurred (see Table 63).

Provincial trends revealed that robbery was most common among respondents from the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces. Assault was highest in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape. Experiences of theft of personal property and housebreaking were most prevalent among interviewees from KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Furthermore, home burglary was

Table 63: Crimes experienced (n=171)

	Percentage experienced	Percentage occurred in the past three years	Percentage occurred in the community
Robbery	67.3	88.9	70.4
Assault	22.8	94.9	76.9
Theft of personal property, crops / livestock	15.8	85.2	74.1
Home burglary	14	70.8	100
Rape/sexual assault	4.1	57.1	42.9
Theft of a vehicle or bicycle	2.9	80	100
Hijacking of a vehicle or bicycle	1.2	100	100
Deliberate damage to property	1.2	100	100

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most frequently experienced by participants resident in Gauteng.

With regard to age, assault was most common in the 12–15 (28.6%) and 22–25 (29.3%) year age cohorts. Robbery was primarily experienced by those aged 16–18 (66.7%) and 22–25 (75.6%) years. The experience of theft of personal property was predominant in the 16–18 (16.7%) and 19–21 (21.3%) year age cohorts. Rape/sexual assault was predominant in the 19–21 (6.4%) and 16–18 (6.3%) year age categories. Gender analysis revealed that robbery (75.5%), assault (25.5%) and theft of personal property (16%) were most common among the male respondents. More females (7.8%) reported having ever been raped/sexually assaulted.

In addition to the youths' experiences of crime, the study also sought to ascertain whether anyone else in the youths' household had ever experienced a crime. More than a third (35.3%) of the youth had individuals in their household who had ever been the victim of some crime. There was a significant difference between the four provinces with regard to this question. KwaZulu-Natal (49.5%) youth were significantly more likely than those from the other three provinces to indicate that someone else in their household had ever been the victim of crime ($p=0.000$).

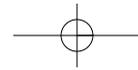
Personal experience of crime and household members' experiences of crime were more prevalent among the offender than the non-offender samples ($p=0.000$) (see Table 64).

Table 64 illustrates that while more than a quarter (28.3%) of the non-offenders had ever been the victim of crime, **this rate was significantly higher among the offender samples** with more than three-quarters (76.8%) of the offenders having fallen victim to crime. Similarly, significantly more family members of offenders (56.6%) had ever experienced any crime ($p=0.000$). Bearing in mind that these offenders and their families are located within the same geographical communities as the non-offender samples, this provides some evidence for the importance of lifestyle factors in exposing one to crime and violence and impacting on vulnerability to crime. It reinforces the need to focus on additional

Of all those who had been the victim of crime, more than a third (33.9%) reported that they wanted to take revenge on the perpetrator. Of these, more than a quarter (26.7%) indicated that they had acted on their feelings: 62.5% of those who acted on their feelings of revenge had reported the matter to the police, while more than a tenth (12.5%) had tried to defend themselves.

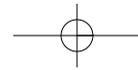
Table 64: Experience of crime – non-offenders and offenders (%) (n=999)

	Personal experience of crime	Family members' experiences of crime
Offenders	76.8	56.6
Non-offenders	28.3	35.3



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variables such as peers and social networks in determining the likelihood of exposure to crime. **The high levels of victimisation among the youth offenders support the established link between prior victimisation and subsequent offending and delinquent behaviour.**



CHAPTER 9

Social capital

- An unexpected relationship between traditional social capital activities and the non-offender and offender samples was established: participation in what are often thought of as traditional, positive social capital activities was greater in the offender sample for all activities explored.

The fostering of a young person's connection with their community through involvement in community activities is an important aspect in curbing youth offending. Being involved in activities such as sports groups, youth groups, choirs, church groups, etc. can lead to a sense of 'social belonging': where young people feel that they have a genuine stake in their families, schools and communities, they are less likely to commit antisocial or criminal acts.

The respondents were asked about their participation in a range of activities, specifically youth groups, *stokvels* (informal saving schemes), burial societies, sports groups/teams, drama/

There is no single definition of social capital. It is generally considered to be multidimensional and will often reflect the nuances of the particular discipline in which it is being applied. Generally the term social capital might be used to define the way in which people interact with each other. One usable understanding refers to social capital as the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging gaps between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity.

Table 65: Respondents' participation in social groups – youth, siblings and caregivers (%)

	Youth (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Caregivers (n=604)
Sports teams	33.8	32.9	3.5
Youth groups	14.2	14.2	–
Choir/singing groups	14.1	12.9	6.6
Burial society	10.6	8.2	57.9
Drama/theatre groups	4.5	3.7	1.7
<i>Stokvels</i>	2.6	2.2	17.4
Community safety projects	0.8	0.2	4.3
Social groups	–	–	11.4

theatre groups, choirs/singing groups and community safety projects. The study found that these young people and their siblings were most likely to participate in sports teams, youth groups and choirs or singing groups. Their parents/caregivers were more inclined to belong to burial societies and *stokvels*, and to participate in other social groups (see Table 65).

Of the youth non-offenders who participated in sports, nearly half (49%) reported weekly participation while more than a fifth (44.6%) of the respondents indicated daily involvement in this activity. Participation in sports teams was most frequently reported by young people from the Eastern Cape (40.2%), followed by those from KwaZulu-Natal (37.5%) and Gauteng (33.8%). A quarter (25.9%) of all those in the Western Cape reported involvement in any sports teams. Furthermore, the 12–15 year old (42.1%) and 16–18 year old youths (40.8%) were significantly more likely than the older youths to report participating in any sports teams ($p=0.000$).

Participation in a youth group (14.2%) was the second most commonly cited activity for the youth. For the most part, the respondents met on a weekly basis (68.6%), while more than a tenth (12.8%) met every day. Involvement in a youth group was most frequently reported by the Gauteng (23.6%) respondents, followed by those in the Eastern Cape (17.6%). Youth from KwaZulu-Natal (8.7%) were least likely to report such participation ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, participation in a youth group was most common among the younger participants aged 12–15 (18.9%) and 16–18 (17.3%) years.

Youth also typically reported involvement in a choir or other singing group (14.1%). For the most part, these youths participated in a choir on a weekly (64.7%) and daily (29.4%) basis. Such participation was predominant in the Eastern Cape (22.5%) and among the 12–15 year old respondents (15.9%).

The two less commonly reported activities among youth in the study were *stokvels* (2.6%) and community safety projects (0.8%).

By comparison, participation in what are often thought of as traditional, positive social capital activities was greater in the offender sample for all

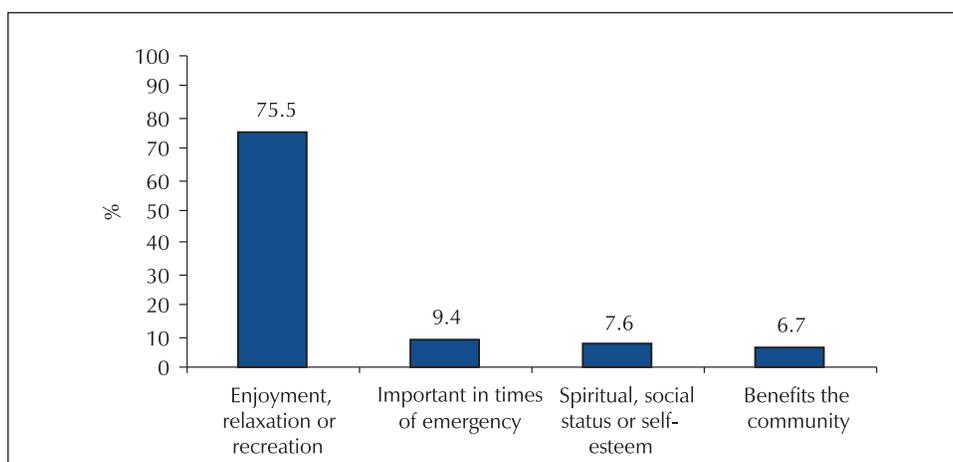
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Table 66: Participation in social groups – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Youth group	14.2	32.5
<i>Stokvel</i>	2.6	8.1
Burial society	10.6	21.8
Sports teams	33.8	80.0
Drama/theatre group	4.5	18.3
Choir/singing group	14.1	28.1
Community safety projects	0.8	3.8

activities explored. These findings were statistically significant ($p=0.000$) (see Table 66). As previously mentioned, the differences between the two groups with regard to their participation in various activities may be attributed to the fact that offenders often make use of sporting facilities for reasons other than what they are intended for. Many of the activities offer opportunities to meet and create networks that may not necessarily be positive (simply put, negative social capital – similar to the relationships and investments made in gangs). These places may also often be used as locations for consuming illegal substances and for locating and stalking out potential victims.

All respondents who reported involvement in any of the activities explored were then asked to identify the main benefit they felt they derived from such participation. More than three-quarters (75.5%) of all the non-offenders who had participated in any activity reported that their participation in such activities provided them with enjoyment, relaxation or recreation. Nearly a tenth (9.4%) reported that their participation was important in times of emergency (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Respondents' main benefit from participation in social groups (n=330)

Those who did not participate in any community activities (45.5%) were asked why they did not do so. The primary reasons for non-participation were a lack of interest in participation (67.3%) and a lack of time (25.1%) to participate in any activities.

Participants were asked, if they could, what they would ask the government to spend money on in their area to make it safer to live in. The respondents were inclined to suggest that money be spent on social development (53.8%) and crime prevention and law enforcement (38.6%) to improve the levels of safety in their communities.

Significant differences were evident between the four provinces with regard to this question. Western Cape (42%) and Gauteng (41.9%) respondents were significantly more likely to identify crime prevention and law enforcement as an area that the government should spend money on in order to make their communities safer ($p=0.000$). Those from the Eastern Cape (68.6%) were most likely to suggest that money should be spent on social development to improve the levels of safety in their neighbourhoods.

In addition to improving levels of safety, the respondents were asked what they would ask the government to spend money on in their area, in general, to improve living conditions for all in the area. Education (35.3%), crime prevention/justice (16.2%) and housing (16.2%) were most frequently identified as the areas most in need of intervention in the respondents' residential areas.

The youth were asked a range of questions to shed light on their connection with their community and community members. Specifically, youth were asked whether they ever prepared/gave food to others in their community, ran errands for people in their neighbourhood, or worked for or fixed things for others in their neighbourhood (see Table 67).

Table 67 illustrates that the youth included in this study were more inclined to run errands and care for children in their household or neighbourhood than to prepare food, assist with housework or make/fix things. Given that the majority of respondents were male, this may relate to the gendered division of duties and responsibilities within households.

Table 67: Respondents' interaction in the community (%) (n=604)

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Care for children in household/area	29.3	39.9	30.8
Prepare/give food to people in the area	57.0	36.9	6.0
Run errands for people in the area	34.6	56.5	8.8
Do unpaid housework for people in the area	68.5	26.0	4.3
Make/fix things for people in the area	74.7	20.5	3.8

CHAPTER 10

Self-efficacy and identity

- Almost four-fifths (77.6%) of the non-offender sample agreed that people who did not work turned to crime, compared to half (51.5%) of the offender sample.
- By contrast, the youth offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to believe that they could cope with difficult life situations (83.3%) and manage difficult problems themselves (72.3%). **Most youth offenders believed** they were able to depend on themselves more than others (83%) and could be by themselves if they have to (85.3%).

Self-efficacy can be described as an individual's belief in his or her own ability to overcome challenging situations. As such, it is a concept that is closely tied to resilience, and certainly to protective factors. These beliefs subsequently determine the individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviours. For this reason, the youth were asked a series of questions aimed at exploring their perceptions of themselves, their personal abilities, as well as their perceptions of their ability to overcome challenging situations.

First, youth were asked about their perceptions of work ethic. On the whole, most of the youth **non-offenders** perceived work as an essential part of their lives. More than two-fifths agreed (47.4%) or strongly agreed (45.1%) with the statement that work is a duty towards society and one's family (see Table 68, *next page*).

Furthermore, the youth **non-offenders** were inclined to agree (35%) and strongly agree (24.4%) with the view that it is humiliating to receive money without having worked for it. Slightly fewer interviewees disagreed (26.9%) or

Table 68: Work is a duty towards family and society (n=603)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	272	45.1
Agree	286	47.4
Disagree	39	6.5
Strongly Disagree	6	1.0
Total	603	100.0

strongly disagreed (13.8%) that there was something wrong with receiving money that had not been worked for (see Table 69).

Most of the youth disagreed (43%) or strongly disagreed (22.9%) with the statement that people should not have to work if they do not want to. This idea was reinforced by the finding that most youth agreed (34.8%) and strongly agreed (46.1%) with the view that work should always come first, even if it meant having less free time.

The non-offender samples also tended to agree (39.7%) and strongly agree (38.1%) with the view that people who do not work turn to crime. By comparison, the youth offenders were significantly more likely to agree (51.5%) with this statement (p=0.000).

The youth were also asked a range of questions aimed at shedding light on their perceptions of their own ability to overcome potentially challenging situations. For the most part, these young people believed that they would be able to cope with difficult life situations (73.5%), solve problems by themselves (61.6%) and depend on themselves to decide whether a risk is worth taking (79.1%). These findings were consistent with the youths' siblings who also had confidence in their ability to deal with any situation they might be confronted with (see Table 70).

On the whole, most (91.9%) of the caregivers stated that they could cope with difficult situations that present themselves in life: 87.1% believed that they were able to solve difficult problems by themselves, while 88.7% maintained that they were able to depend on themselves more than on others. Furthermore, 92.7% were proud that they had accomplished things in their lives (see Table 70).

Table 69: It is humiliating to receive money without having worked for it (n=603)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	147	24.4
Agree	211	35.0
Disagree	162	26.9
Strongly Disagree	83	13.8
Total	603	100.0

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Table 70: Perceptions of their abilities – youth, siblings, caregivers (%)

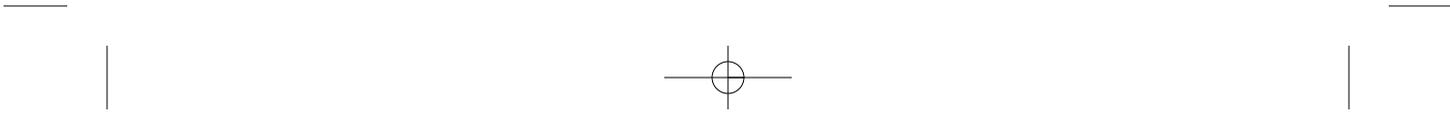
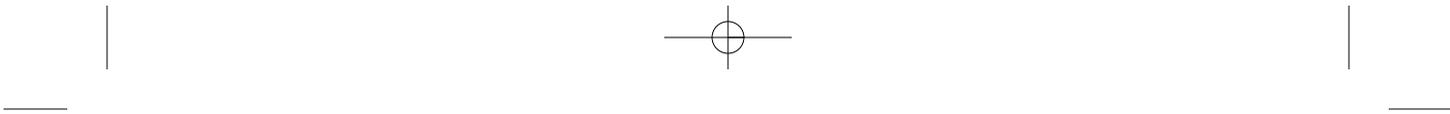
	Youth (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Caregivers (n=604)
You can cope with difficult life situations	73.5	71.3	91.9
You always manage to solve difficult problems by yourself	61.6	59.4	87.1
You are able to depend on yourself more than on other people	64.4	65.1	88.7
You can be on your own if you have to	70.2	69.1	87.4
You are good at deciding if a risk is worth taking	79.1	74.5	83.4
Your own actions determine your future	96.8	96.6	95.9

By comparison, the **youth offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to believe that they could cope with difficult life situations (83.3%), could manage difficult problems themselves (72.3%), were able to depend on themselves more than others (83%) and could be by themselves if they have to (85.3%)** ($p=0.000$) (see Table 71).

For the most part (98.3%), the youth **non-offenders** reported that people in their area think they are good people. Nearly all the respondents (99.7%) described themselves as being a good influence on their friends and family. Similarly, the participants described those around them as being a good influence on them.

Table 71: Perceptions of their abilities – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
You can cope with difficult life situations	73.5	83.3
You always manage to solve difficult problems by yourself	61.6	72.3
You are able to depend on yourself more than on other people	64.4	83
You can be on your own if you have to	70.2	85.3
You are good at deciding if a risk is worth taking	79.1	72.5
Your own actions determine your future	96.8	97.5



CHAPTER 11

Values and morality

- Less than half of the youth non-offenders thought that people who did bad things to them deserve to have bad things happen to them, compared to almost four-fifths (78.9%) of the youth offenders.
- Similarly, 96% of the non-offenders thought there were times when it was acceptable to scare, hurt or intimidate someone, compared to 89.6% of the offenders.
- Overall, youth offenders are significantly more likely than non-offenders to have attitudes that are tolerant of violent behaviour.

The study explored how important certain factors such as work, family, friends, religion and schooling were to the respondents. All these factors have been identified as mediating factors on risk as well as resilience, and thus it is useful to understand how young people who do not offend view the factors compared to young offenders' perceptions.

On the whole, work (96.9%), family (97%), spare time (49.8%), religion (81%), spirituality (80.6%) and education (99%) were reported to be very important to the youth **non-offenders** interviewed. In comparison, the participants were more inclined to report that friends (51.8%) and spending time with friends (53.1%) were quite important to them. The majority (77.2%) of the sample believed that there was a personal God, while more than a tenth (14%) believed there is some sort of spirit or life force. **There were no significant differences between the offender and non-offender samples with regard to these issues except for the importance of friends and the importance of spending time with their friends.**

In this regard the youth offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to indicate that friends were not (33.7%) important in their lives nor was spending time with their friends (27.8%).

When asked whether they would report a crime they saw being committed, 17.1% of youth non-offenders stated that they would not report what they had witnessed to the police. **The tendency to not report crimes that they witnessed was even higher among the youth offenders (35.4%) (p=0.000).** Reasons for not wanting to report were primarily feelings of fear (60.2%) and a belief that it was none of their business (15.5%). Furthermore, a tenth (10.7%) of those who stated that they would not report a crime if they saw one being committed said they did not trust the police. The participants were more inclined to inform family members or neighbours (94.5%) about incidences of crime they had witnessed.

More than a third (38.1%) of the sample stated that it would be okay to beat someone if they had attacked the respondent first. There was no significant difference between the offender and non-offender samples with regard to this question. More than a tenth (12%) of the non-offenders indicated that they had thought about taking something from someone that did not belong to them. Those who said they had thought about this were asked whether they had acted on their thoughts. The research showed that most (62.5%) of those who had thought about taking something that did not belong to them did not act on their thoughts. The reasons provided for this were knowledge that it would be wrong to do so (28.9%), feelings of guilt (20%) and feelings of fear (20%).

Attributing the tendency or likelihood of offending to factors that are outside the direct control of individuals may deny those individuals any sense of agency in their actions. However, the majority of the youth non-offenders surveyed disagreed (43.7%) and strongly disagreed (22.2%) with the statement that people do bad things because others make them do it. **Furthermore, they also expressed disagreement (55.8%) with the view that people who hurt or upset them deserve to have bad things happen to them. Agreement with this view was predominant in the offender sample (21.1%).** Additionally, when asked whether there are times when it would be acceptable to scare, intimidate, or physically hurt

Table 72: Respondents' attitudes towards sex – non-offenders, siblings, offenders (% agree)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Offenders (n=395)
If a woman wears revealing clothing, then it is her fault if a man forces her to have sex with him	16.4	20.6	30.5
When a young man gets an erection, it is a sign that he must have sex with someone	9.1	5.8	19.8
If I buy somebody a drink or take them on a date, then it is my right to have sex with them	2.5	3.1	11.3

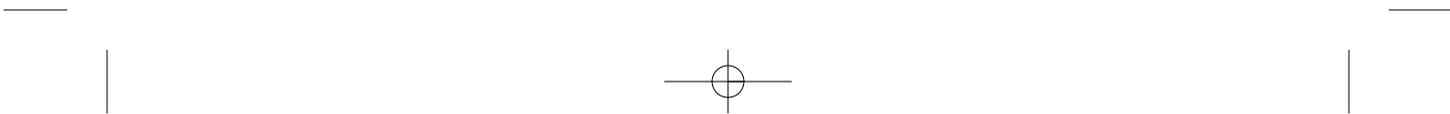
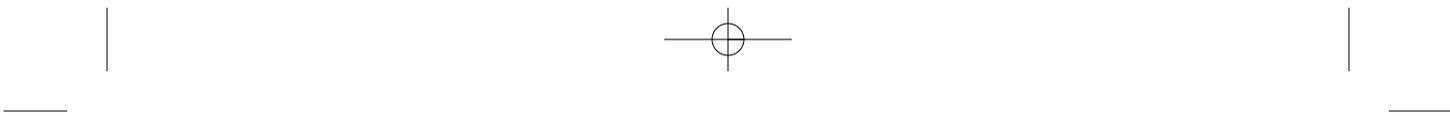
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someone, most (96.2%) of the youth **non-offenders** disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, **while** 89.6% of the offenders disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Interesting findings emerged when the youth were questioned on various sex-related issues. Although the vast majority of the interviewees expressed disagreement with the scenarios presented to them, the number of respondents who agreed with the statements is cause for concern.

As Table 72 reflects, the offenders were significantly more inclined to agree with the three statements ($p=0.000$).

This chapter reveals that youth non-offenders are significantly more likely to have attitudes that are tolerant of violent behaviour. However, it is important to bear in mind that an individual risk factor does not predict offending; instead it is often a multitude of factors which coalesce to heighten the susceptibility to delinquent behaviour among young people exposed to these factors. What has been demonstrated thus far in the monograph is that the youth offenders, though they were recruited from the same communities as their non-offender counterparts, were subjected to significantly more risk factors for offending.



CHAPTER 12

Gang membership and other antisocial activities

- Clearly discernible differences in patterns of antisocial behaviour exist between the offender and non-offender samples, and at statistically significant levels. This includes both serious behaviour (such as using violence to steal or carrying a weapon) and non-serious behaviour (such as riding public transport without paying for it).

Involvement in various antisocial activities other than those recorded in the offenders' files and in the screening of the non-offenders, was also explored. These activities included not serious, non-violent incidents as well as more violent acts, and may refer to a single incident or multiple incidents.

None (100%) of the youth **non-offenders** or their siblings who participated in this phase of the study reported that they belonged to a gang. Their involvement in criminal activity was also miniscule. In contrast, involvement in criminal activities was significantly higher in the offender sample ($p=0.000$). This is not surprising given that the non-offender sample was screened on the basis of any criminal activity and the offender sample was, by definition, interviewed on the basis of their criminal activity.

Table 73 (*next page*) shows that **clearly discernible differences in patterns of antisocial behaviour exist between the offender and non-offender samples at statistically significant levels. This includes both serious behaviour (such as using violence to steal or carrying a weapon) and non-serious behaviour (such as riding public transport without paying for it).**

Table 73: Respondents' involvement in criminal activities – non-offenders, siblings and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Siblings (n=805)	Offenders (n=395)
Travelled on public transport without paying/ paying enough money	7.5	8.0	38.2
Hit, kicked or punched a sibling on purpose	7.3	8.1	23.0
Hit, kicked or punched someone else on purpose	4.5	8.9	51.1
Stolen money or something else from another person	3.5	3.4	61.8
Stolen something from a shop or store	2.0	1.5	49.9
Carried a gun, knife or other weapon for protection	2.0	0.7	59.2
Bought something you knew or suspected was stolen	1.3	2.4	41.8
Ridden in a car/van or a motorbike that you knew was stolen	0.7	1.0	28.2
Got into or broke into a house or building to try to steal something	0.3	0.0	53.2
Used force, threats or a weapon to steal money or something else from somebody	0.2	0.1	48.1
Damaged or destroyed property on purpose	0.2	0.5	37.5
Set fire to or tried to set fire to something on purpose	0.2	0.2	8.9
Sold or bought an illegal substance (drug) from someone	0.2	0.1	42.8
Forced anyone to engage in sexual activity with you when they did not want to	0.0	0.0	16.0

CHAPTER 13

Peer–individual relationships

- Young offenders in South Africa are significantly more likely than their non-offender counterparts to be involved with delinquent peers.
- More than a tenth (13.3%) of the non-offenders indicated that they liked to see how much they could get away with, compared to more than a quarter (27.4%) of the youth offenders.
- Only 4.6% of non-offenders reported that they do the opposite of what people tell them just to make them angry, compared to 17.8% of the offenders.

The youth **non-offenders** were also asked about their involvement, if any, in a range of more specific antisocial and criminal behaviours and were asked to indicate how old they were the first time they had done so. On the whole, the findings showed that the vast majority of these youth had never been suspended from school (91.1%), been arrested (100%), carried a knife or other weapon (97.7%), attacked someone with the idea of hurting them (98.3%) or stolen any goods (98.8%).

Information on the respondents' closest friends' antisocial and criminal behaviour was also collected in the study. The findings generally revealed that the vast majority of the youth **non-offenders** reported that none of their best friends had ever been suspended from school (77%), sold illegal drugs (97.5%), stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle (98.2%), been arrested (91.1%), taken a knife to school (91.9%), taken a gun to school (97.2%) or used illegal drugs (95%). Conversely, Table 74 suggests that **young offenders in South Africa are significantly more likely than their non-offender counterparts to be involved with delinquent peers – a known risk factor for offending.** The youth offenders were significantly

Table 74: Friends' antisocial or criminal behaviour – non- offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Dropped out of school	23.5	66.3
Been suspended from school	23.0	46.6
Been arrested	8.9	68.4
Taken a knife to school	8.1	40.8
Used illegal drugs	5.0	53.4
Taken a gun to school	2.8	25.6
Sold illegal drugs	2.5	30.1
Stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle	1.8	37.7

more likely to report that one or more of their best friends had ever been suspended from school, sold illegal drugs, stolen or tried to steal a vehicle, been arrested, taken a knife to school, taken a gun to school, dropped out of school or used illegal drugs. These findings were all statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

When asked whether they do the opposite of what people tell them just to make others angry, the majority of the study participants were inclined to disagree (38.8%) and strongly disagree (56.6%) with the question. Conversely, the offenders tended to agree (17.8%) with the question. The non-offenders also generally expressed disagreement (39.3%) and strongly disagreed (48.4%) when asked whether they ignored rules that got in their way. Even so, one in ten (10.1%) participants reported that they did ignore rules that got in their way. Again, the offenders were significantly more likely to express agreement (25.6%) with the question ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, while more than a tenth (13.3%) of the non-offenders indicated that they liked to see how much they could get away with, more than a quarter (27.4%) of the youth offenders expressed this sentiment ($p=0.000$).

These findings point to a clear difference in the way young non-offenders and young offenders interact with adults and their peers, as well as their attitudes toward authority. Young offenders' relationships with peers and others are significantly more likely to be conflictual than those of their non-offender counterparts'.

CHAPTER 14

View of the future

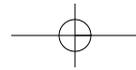
Respondents were asked what they felt about their future in South Africa. In response to this question, the majority of youth non-offenders reported that they felt optimistic (76.7%), while more than a tenth (12.8%) reported that they felt bad about their futures (see Figure 75).

There were significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to their view of the future.⁵⁹ **The youth non-offenders appeared to be significantly more positive about their futures, while their offender counterparts were more likely to report feeling bad or indifferent about their futures in South Africa.** Hopelessness or negative feelings about one's future may play a significant role in determining behaviour, as negative outcomes of actions are considered irrelevant. Simply, if one believes that the future holds only negative outcomes regardless – unemployment, pain, trouble with the law – there might be little incentive to refrain from antisocial or other negative behaviour, which might further result in negative outcomes. It is difficult to ascertain from the current study whether this trend is a product of offending behaviour, and should perhaps be explored further in subsequent studies of this nature.

All (99.5%) the youth non-offenders reported that they had particular goals and ambitions which they wanted to achieve. Most (94%) of the sample believed

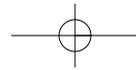
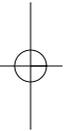
Table 75: View of the future – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Good/optimistic	76.7	68.2
Bad	12.8	16.5
Indifferent	10.5	15.3



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that they would be able to meet these goals despite their current life situations. There was no significant difference between the youth non-offenders who reported they had particular goals and ambitions and the offender group (97%), although a slightly smaller percentage (87.3%) of offenders reported that they believed they would be able to meet these goals. However, what these goals might be, and whether they might be considered pro-social or antisocial goals, was not explored in the study.



CHAPTER 15

Discussion of key resilience factors

Youth criminal and antisocial behaviour is generally viewed as a consequence of the interactions between a range of factors stemming from the individual and the different social contexts in which he or she lives. What is less well understood is why certain young people remain resilient to crime despite being raised in environments fraught with the risk factors for offending.

Since one of the main objectives of the National Youth Offending and Resilience Study was to identify why young people from high-risk environments are able to refrain from engaging in antisocial and criminal behaviour, a logistic regression analysis was used to further analyse the data. Logistic regression is used to predict a categorical variable from a set of predictors. For this study, the independent variables were used to predict membership in the non-offender category. This section is reproduced in the Appendix with more detailed analysis and discussion of the models.

RESILIENCE FACTORS

EDUCATION

The education system plays a crucial role in the lives of children and young people, especially since children spend the majority of their time away from home and at school. Although researchers have largely focused on the school as a risk factor for offending, recent evidence suggests the existence of factors related to the school that can act as a buffer for children who are considered high risk for offending.⁶⁰ This assertion was confirmed by our findings.

Education appeared to be one of the significant protective factors against offending in this study. Matriculants are nearly six times more likely than non-matriculants to be resilient to engaging in crime.

Table 76: Schooling experiences – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Completed matric	18.7	3.8
Do (did) not want to go to university or technikon after completing school	2.6	13.4
It was not important for me to get good marks at school	0.3	12.7

In addition to having completed Grade 12, one's attitude towards one's schooling was also found to be a significant resilience factor in youth offending. **Regarding schooling as personally important, wanting to obtain good marks at school and wanting to go to university or technikon after school were found to significantly predict membership in the non-offender category.** Thus, young people who intend obtaining a tertiary education after completing school are nearly four times more likely than those who do not have such aspirations to refrain from committing an offence. Also, **youth who show an interest in their schooling by working hard to obtain good marks are 31 times more likely than those who do not show an interest in their schooling to abstain from engaging in criminal behaviour** (see Table 76).

The regression model also found that **young people who knew anyone at their school who carried a gun with them while at school were significantly more likely to refrain from committing offences** than those who did not know of such individuals. Young people who knew of such individuals at their schools were 2.2 times more likely to **refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour** than those who did not know of such individuals.

Hirschi's (1969) social control theory is a mainstream theory that has been consistently used to explain the link between school experiences and delinquent behaviour. This theory purports that the school itself and an individual's experiences within school act as social bonds that control participation in antisocial activities.⁶¹ There are four components associated with the social bond, namely: attachment; commitment; involvement; and belief. Thus, young people who demonstrate a strong commitment to their education, who actively participate in school activities, and who accept and obey the rules and regulations of the school are less inclined to engage in delinquent behaviour.

When considering the South African context it becomes important to question the factors underpinning young people's commitment to their schooling given that young people are at constant threat of danger at school, even from the teachers and principals. This is underscored by the recent spate of attacks in schools that have claimed the lives of both educators and learners. Since it was outside the scope of this study to explore the issue in depth, future studies should focus on the school context as a resilience factor. In other words, we need to identify the factors underlying children's educational motivation and their

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unrelenting desire to excel academically and to further their education after school despite being taught in schools that commonly experience problems with vandalism, bullying, hostile relationships between educators and pupils, and lack parental involvement – which is often the case at many South African schools.

Resilience does not only stem from individuals but also develops and is maintained within particular contexts. The identification of the school environment as a context which gives rise to factors that have a diminishing effect on children's potential to commit crime is important for the development of more effective intervention strategies aimed at combating and reducing the levels of youth delinquency in South African schools. A focus on the school environment as a context that facilitates youth resilience to crime will be of particular importance for the reduction of youth crime since it will have a ricochet effect on other risk factors present in this environment. Earlier researchers have consistently found that young people who are strongly committed to their schooling are less likely to interact with deviant peers,⁶² use and abuse alcohol and drugs,⁶³ and engage in violent and other delinquent activities⁶⁴ – factors that have long been identified as increasing the likelihood of youth to engage in antisocial behaviour. Hence, fostering a strong attachment to schools in children and youth and a commitment to completing their schooling not only increases the employability of young South Africans, but will have a diminishing effect on the levels of youth crime and violence by increasing the resilience of youth to this social phenomenon.

GENDER

It has consistently been found that males commit more crimes than females. In this study, too, gender was found to be a significant protective factor against offending. More particularly, being female significantly predicts membership in the non-offender category. It was found that **females are 15 times more likely than males to be non-offenders**. This variable remained significant in the model even when controlled for other factors (see Table 77).

In an attempt to explain the relationship between gender and crime, researchers have been inclined to explore the socialisation processes of males and females within the home. Socialisation can be described as 'the process by which children, adolescents, and adults learn what is expected of them through their

Table 77: Respondents' gender – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Male	46.2	95.2
Female	53.8	4.8

interactions with other individuals'.⁶⁵ Hirschi's social control theory has also been used in this context to explain the differences in offending by males and females. Control theories are premised on the idea that certain factors – one of which is the family – restrain people from offending.⁶⁶ Young people who are more attached to their caregivers and who accept and abide by their expectations and regulations are more inclined to accept and conform to conventional society. These social bonds are therefore believed to limit involvement in antisocial activities.⁶⁷

Sigelman and Shaffer⁶⁸ assert that during the socialisation processes, males and females are taught about the roles that are considered socially acceptable for them. As a result of these gender roles, societies are inclined to form stereotypes which say that males and females possess characteristics that are conventionally associated with these roles.⁶⁹ Therefore, while males are typically expected to be independent, goal-oriented and aggressive, females are expected to be caring, kind, gentle and sensitive to the needs of others. As a result, females often develop stronger emotional attachments to their parents or primary caregivers. Females also tend to have more access to same-sex positive role-models within the families, as single headed families are more often headed by females than males.⁷⁰ Females are therefore generally more controlled and monitored by their parents when compared to their male counterparts. The difference in the socialisation processes of girls may explain their lower rates of delinquency.

Researchers have also found that males are more likely than their female counterparts to have friends who engage in delinquent activities. Studies have found that males are more vulnerable than females to the negative influences of their deviant friends.⁷¹

NON-VIOLENT FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

International research indicates that the social environments in which children are raised, and particularly the family context, significantly influence their behavioural development over the years. In this study, **being raised in homes where family members hardly ever lose their tempers, do not resort to physical violence when they become angry, and where parents/caregivers do not employ physical punishment as a means of effecting discipline significantly predicts membership in the non-offender category.**

Young people who are raised in homes where disputes are resolved without violence are 6.8 times more likely than those who are raised in violent homes to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour. Furthermore, those who are not physically punished for their wrongdoings are twice as likely to not offend as young people whose caregivers physically hit them as punishment for their transgressions (see Table 78).

Arguing in the family also seemed to be a protective factor against offending. Frequent arguments in the family might be an indication of the alternative disciplinary methods employed by parents/primary caregivers who

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Table 78: Violence in the family – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Family members do NOT hit each other when they become angry	91.1	72.6
Parents/caregivers DO NOT physically hit them when they have done something wrong	72.4	51.6
People in my family HARDLY EVER lose their tempers	59.6	47.7
We argue a lot in the family	26.5	34.3

opt not to physically punish their children when they have violated family rules and expectations.

Although both offenders and non-offenders were exposed to various forms of violence within their homes, the offenders were significantly more likely to be exposed to more violent family relations. These findings were consistent with data presented earlier in the monograph. Protective factors against offending commonly identified have included warm, supportive family relationships, reasonable disciplinary methods and family cohesion. These factors seem to act as a buffer for young people at risk of offending.

Research has also identified the link between family violence exposure and subsequent criminal victimisation – which is also a risk factor for offending.⁷² Particularly concerning is that family violence exposure heightens the susceptibility of young people to violent crimes such as assault and robbery. The family is the primary socialising agent where children are taught about the behaviours that are considered acceptable and unacceptable in the societies in which they live.

Children who are constantly exposed to violence within the home, as is the case with the offenders surveyed in this study, come to perceive violence as an appropriate means of conflict resolution and are likely to adopt these maladaptive problem-solving techniques. Since non-violent family environments have been found to predict resilience to crime, these findings point to the need for targeted interventions aimed at raising awareness about appropriate conflict-resolution techniques. Alternative methods of discipline are also required, particularly aimed at families since they constitute the primary role-models for children and youth.

While earlier researchers have highlighted the association between offending and absentee parents, this link was not supported in our study. The model also controlled for the presence of biological parents in the household, time spent with parents during the course of the youth's lifetime, time spent per day with parents/caregivers doing things such as talking, playing and going out, and the influence of emotional support received from fathers on the dependent variable. None of these variables remained significant when added to the model.

NON-EXPOSURE TO CRIMINAL ROLE-MODELS

Non-exposure to criminal role-models was found to be a significant predictor of membership in the non-offender category. In other words, young people who are not exposed to antisocial role-models within their family environments are more likely to refrain from criminal behaviour than those who are exposed to such role-models.

Even though analysis revealed that the youth offenders (7.6%) were five times more likely than the youth non-offenders (1.7%) to report that their fathers had ever been in prison, this predictor became insignificant when included in the model. However, **not having family members who had in the past year engaged in any activities that could have got them in trouble with the law – such as stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging and assaulting others – remained significant** in the model even after controlling for other factors. In other words, young people who do not have adult family members who engage in criminal behaviour are nearly three times more likely than those who do have criminals within the family not to engage in offending behaviour.

These findings are consistent with mainstream theories which propose that children and youth learn to become offenders when they are raised in environments surrounded by antisocial role-models. The family is the primary context in which children learn about the behaviours that are considered appropriate and inappropriate in their society. When family members engage in criminal behaviour and have attitudes conducive to offending, children may come to adopt these anti-establishment attitudes and may come to believe that offending is legitimate behaviour.⁷³

The model also controlled for exposure to violent role-models within the broader communities in which these young people live. Youth were asked whether they personally knew of people in their neighbourhoods who smoke marijuana, sell, deal or buy drugs, or do any other things that might get them in trouble with the law. Although analysis revealed significant differences between the two youth samples with regard to these questions, the variables became insignificant when added to the model. **The findings point to the considerable influence that family environments have on subsequent child and adolescent behaviour.**

SUBSTANCE ABSTINENCE

The study also sought to ascertain whether the respondents had ever used any illegal substances. In particular, they were asked about their use of alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, inhalants, over-the-counter substances, hallucinogens, opiates, mandrax, tik and any other illegal substances not included in the questionnaire. **The absence of substance use was found to be a significant protective factor against offending.** In other words, **young people who do not use substances are 4.4 times more likely than those who consume alcohol and other drugs not to commit criminal offences.**

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Analysis found that the youth offenders (87.1%) were significantly more likely than the non-offenders (31.1%) to have ever used any of the drugs in question. The offenders (64.8%) remained that sample significantly more likely to consume addictive substances even when the use of illegal substances only (excluding alcohol) was taken into consideration.

Substance use and abuse have consistently been linked to violent and criminal behaviour.⁷⁴ Research indicates that individuals under the influence of either alcohol or drugs often do things they would not ordinarily do when sober. Some drugs diminish inhibitions or change one's mood and perception, which could result in the individual committing acts he/she would not normally think to commit. Substance use among youth is associated with both violent and income-generating crime. While it may be difficult to ascertain whether substance use precedes or follows the delinquent act, researchers have found that these two factors usually co-occur.⁷⁵ If young people refrain from consuming substances, this should limit and even prevent their involvement in antisocial activities.

INTERACTION WITH NON-DELINQUENT PEERS

Adolescence is a developmental period characterised by the need for independence from parents and caregivers. Friends and peers become particularly influential during this time as young people look to various sources for guidance in the process of identity development. Relationships with peers who engage in conventional behaviour have been found to increase young people's resilience to crime.⁷⁶ This finding was supported by our findings.

Interaction with non-delinquent peers was found to be one of the important predictors of being a non-offender. Having best friends who had *never* been arrested, dropped out of school, used illegal drugs, been suspended from school or had stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle significantly predicts membership in the non-offender category. Therefore, **young people who have best friends who have never been arrested are 5.7 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than those who do interact with peers who have been arrested.** Similarly, **those whose best friends have never dropped out of school are twice as likely not to commit an offence than those young people whose best friends have dropped out of school.** Furthermore, **youth who have best friends who have never been suspended from school are 2.7 times more likely not to offend than young people whose closest friends have ever been suspended from school** (see Table 79).

Young people whose closest friends do not consume illegal substances are 2.5 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than youth who do engage with peers who use illegal drugs.

The model also controlled for interactions with peers who had taken weapons to school and sold drugs. Although the analysis revealed significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to these questions, the two

Table 79: Interaction with delinquent peers – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Best friends ever dropped out of school	23.5	66.3
Best friends ever suspended from school	23.0	46.6
Best friends ever been arrested	8.9	68.4
Best friends ever taken a knife to school	8.1	40.8
Best friends ever used illegal drugs	5.0	53.4
Best friends ever taken a gun to school	2.8	25.6
Best friends ever sold illegal drugs	2.5	30.1
Best friends ever tried to or had stolen a motor vehicle	1.8	37.7

variables became insignificant in the model. Young people's interaction with peers who engage in delinquent and antisocial behaviour increases youths' exposure to antisocial role-models and hence reinforces the belief that criminal behaviour is legitimate, especially when the youth are already exposed to such role-models within their own families.

Even though the youth non-offenders were significantly less inclined to interact with peers who engage in delinquent behaviour, there were a few of them who despite having friends who had engaged in deviant acts continued to abstain from engaging in criminal activities themselves. Erickson maintains that this could be attributed to the youths' strong social bonds.⁷⁷ As demonstrated in earlier chapters of the monograph, youth non-offenders were significantly more likely than their offender counterparts to be committed to their schooling and to have warm and supportive relationships with their parents and caregivers – factors that indicate strong social bonds. According to Erickson, these strong social bonds would discourage association with deviant peers and lessen vulnerability to their negative influences.

VICTIMISATION

Having never been the victim of any crime has also been found to be a significant protective factor against offending. **Young people who had never been the victim of crime were six times more likely not to commit a criminal offence than those who had ever been robbed, assaulted, raped/sexually assaulted, hijacked, had their home burgled or their property stolen.**

As demonstrated earlier, family (and community) violence exposure heightens the susceptibility of young people to crime, including violent crime such as assault and robbery. Since the offenders interviewed in the study experienced significantly higher levels of family violence exposure and were also more likely to have ever been the victim of crime, our findings lend support to the association between violence exposure and subsequent victimisation. Attempts to reduce the

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Table 80: Community disorganisation variables – non-offenders and offenders (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Witnessed community members intentionally hurting one another	70.9	89.1
Easy access to beer, wine or hard liquor	82.8	82.3
Easy access to marijuana	48.3	74.9
Easy access to firearms	8.1	40.3

levels of violence within the family may therefore reduce young people's vulnerability to crime and hence increase their resilience to deviant behaviour.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FACTORS

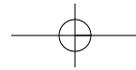
Not having access to firearms within the neighbourhood was found to be a significant predictor for membership in the non-offender category even when other variables were controlled for. **Young people who did not have access to weapons in the areas in which they lived were 2.7 times more likely to refrain from becoming involved in criminal activity than those for whom it was easy to obtain a firearm in their residential areas** (see Table 80).

The model also controlled for other variables such as community violence exposure and access to drugs in the community. Although analysis revealed significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to these questions, the variables were not significant in predicting non-offending when included in the model.

The availability of firearms increases youths' susceptibility to crime by increasing their immediate opportunities to offend. The offenders' greater access to firearms could be reflective of the type of lifestyle they are likely to lead. As demonstrated earlier, young offenders are generally more knowledgeable than their non-offender counterparts about individuals in their communities who engage in criminal activities and who make a living from crime. They are also more likely to be involved with peers who engage in deviant acts such as taking knives (40.8%) and guns (25.6%) to school. Thus, it becomes easier for them to access firearms in their communities.

ATTITUDES INTOLERANT OF VIOLENCE AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

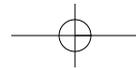
Intolerant attitudes toward violence and antisocial behaviour significantly predict membership in the non-offender category. While the participants were asked to respond to a number of questions aimed at eliciting their attitudes toward antisocial behaviour, only one remained significant when included in the model. That is, young people who do not believe that people who hurt them deserve to



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have bad things happen to them are significantly more likely to refrain from committing criminal offences than those who feel that people who hurt them deserve to have bad things happen to them. Specifically, **young people who do not believe that people who have hurt them deserve to have bad things happen to them are twice as likely not to offend as those who hold the opposite opinion.**

To reiterate, children who are constantly exposed to violence within the home may come to perceive violence as an appropriate means of conflict resolution and are likely to adopt these maladaptive problem-solving techniques. In this way, family violence may foster attitudes that are tolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour. This is further reinforced when children are exposed to similar violence outside of the home, for example in their community and school environments.



CHAPTER 16

Conclusion and recommendations

A proper understanding of risk and resilience among children to violence is essential in the design of appropriate policy, and for the implementation of both policy and programmes that attempt to mitigate the effects of community violence, poverty, family violence, poor educational outcomes and substance abuse.⁷⁸ Resilience does not only stem from individuals but also develops and is maintained within particular contexts. Individual factors such as even temperament, intelligence and, to some degree, empathy are constructs that are very difficult to influence positively (with inconclusive arguments as to whether they can be influenced at all by external forces). The focus of resilience interventions, therefore, should ideally be on those factors that can reasonably be positively influenced.

The identification of the school environment as a context that gives rise to factors that have a diminishing effect on children's potential to commit crime is an important finding emerging from the study. Violence within schools, in particular, has emerged as a cause for serious concern given the recent spate of attacks within South African schools that have claimed the lives of both pupils and educators.

Violent victimisation has serious implications for the physical and emotional well-being of children and youth, especially since young people spend most of their time away from home and at school. The prevalence of violence within South African schools indicates that the learning process of young people in this country is compromised since the youth are compelled to be taught in environments where both learners and educators provoke feelings of threat.

Many intervention strategies aimed at reducing and preventing youth delinquency have so far had little impact on the levels of youth violence and crime at South African schools. These interventions have largely been founded on the identification of factors that put young people at risk of offending. What is required, however, are more detailed analyses of the reasons why many young

South Africans are able to desist from becoming involved in delinquent and criminal behaviour despite being subjected to myriad factors that are known to heighten their susceptibility to offending. This knowledge will be useful in informing crime prevention strategies that are geared toward developing resilience in youth, and in this way diminish young people's involvement in criminal activity.

Focusing on the school as a context for fostering youth resilience to crime will not only benefit children academically but will also have a ricochet effect on the other factors that have been found to increase youths' vulnerability to crime. Earlier researchers have consistently found that young people who are strongly committed to their schooling are less likely to interact with deviant peers,⁷⁹ use and abuse alcohol and drugs,⁸⁰ and engage in violent and other delinquent activity⁸¹ – factors that have long been identified as increasing the likelihood of youth to engage in antisocial behaviour. Hence, fostering a strong attachment to schools among children and youth and a commitment to completing their schooling will not only increase the employability of young South Africans, but will also have a diminishing effect on the levels of youth crime and violence by increasing the resilience of youth to this social phenomenon.

The study also points to the need to reduce the levels of violence exposure within South African families since non-violent home environments buffer children against the onset of delinquent and antisocial involvement. Much of the violence within families stems from an inability to resolve conflicts constructively. These findings point to the need for targeted interventions aimed at raising awareness about appropriate conflict-resolution techniques. Alternative methods of discipline are also required, particularly aimed at families since the latter constitute the primary role-models for children and youth.

Violence exposure has also been found to heighten youths' susceptibility to criminal victimisation – a known risk factor for offending. Thus, reducing the levels of violence that young people are exposed to in their families and communities will diminish their vulnerability to victimisation, and in this way increase their resilience to crime.

Interventions aimed at addressing the high levels of youth crime should, in addition, focus on substance abstinence. Researchers have long identified the link between substance use and abuse, and violent and criminal behaviour.⁸² Substance use is common among young people arrested for criminal activity.⁸³ Health professionals have consistently drawn attention to the high rates of substance use among young people in South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape. Dr Charles Parry – speaking at the 50th anniversary AGM of the Western Cape branch of the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – noted that between 1996 and 2003 there had been an upward trend in Cape Town in the demand for treatment by young people, even as young as ten years old.⁸⁴

Resilience factors interact with each other to increase young people's resilience to criminal behaviour. Thus, increasing protection in one domain will often

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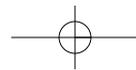
impact resilience in other aspects of young people's lives. For example, if attempts are made to enhance the school environment as a context for fostering youth resilience to crime, this will have a diminishing effect on youths' tendency to engage with deviant peers, use and abuse alcohol and other illegal substances, as well as reduce their involvement in violent and other antisocial behaviour. Similarly, when intervention strategies are geared toward reducing the levels of violence within family environments, this reduction may decrease youths' susceptibility to subsequent criminal victimisation, and hence provide a buffer against the onset of criminal involvement. In addition, non-violent family environments may influence the development of attitudes intolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour.

What is needed, therefore, is a more comprehensive youth strategy that comprises various interventions aimed at increasing the resilience of young people to criminal behaviour. Included in this strategy should be targeted interventions aimed at:

- fostering children's attachment to their schooling;
- addressing and reducing levels of family violence by educating parents and caregivers about non-physical means of resolving conflict;
- promoting substance abstinence among the youth;
- discouraging association with deviant peers; and
- lessening young people's vulnerability to the negative influences of their peers.

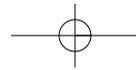
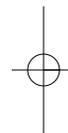
The findings also point to the importance of a coherent, inter-sectoral and multifaceted approach to building resilience to crime in South Africa. While interventions targeting the education sector may indirectly have some positive impact on the home and school environments, without targeted interventions and support provided to homes and to those factors influencing crime at a community level, the impact on crime and enhancing safety at an individual and community level is likely to be piecemeal at best, and ineffective at worst. Rather, we argue for the importance of identifying priority areas and focusing on a number of specific, tailored and responsive interventions that address the complete gamut of vulnerabilities through which the resilience of young people can be developed.

The findings documented in the monograph provide a basis for further exploration of this important field of research within the South African context. By focusing on young people's resilience to crime, government and civil society practitioners can maximise the impact of policy and programmes that are designed not only to make South Africa safer but to improve the quality of life of young people and their families. By neglecting resilience and focusing solely on risk, one is in danger of never achieving the goal of a safer society and of perpetuating the tendency to focus on individual and fragmented service delivery and interventions that fail to address the key correlates and factors of crime and violence in their entirety.



Walking the Tightrope: Youth Resilience to Crime in South Africa

This publication has focused primarily on the relationship between young non-offenders and young offenders; further analysis is needed to expand on the relationships between all six sub-samples included in the study, thereby enhancing the understanding of resilience and protective factors for South African children and youth.



APPENDIX

Detailed discussion of the resilience factors with models

Youth criminal and antisocial behaviour is generally viewed as a consequence of the interaction between a range of factors stemming from the individual and the different social contexts in which he or she lives. What is less well understood is why certain young people remain resilient to crime despite being raised in environments fraught with the risk factors for offending. Since one of the main objectives of the National Youth Offending and Resilience Study was to identify why young people from high-risk environments are able to refrain from engaging in antisocial and criminal behaviour, a logistic regression analysis was used to further analyse the data. Logistic regression is used to predict a categorical variable from a set of predictors. For this study, the independent variables were used to predict membership in the non-offender category. The predictor variables used were:

- gender;
- family conflict;
- community violence exposure;
- exposure to violent role-models within the home and the community;
- interaction with peers;
- attitudes intolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour;
- personal victimisation;
- substance usage;
- access to alcohol and drugs in the community;
- access to firearms in the community;
- parental monitoring and supervision;
- interactions with parents or primary caregivers; and
- education.

The selection of these variables was based primarily on the dominant literature on protective factors and resilience drawn from the international arena, and selected for anticipated relevance to the South African environment.⁸⁵ Employing a .05 criterion of statistical significance, the independent variables used were found to have significant partial effects. The predictor variables that remained significant even when controlling for other factors were those related to education, gender, family environment and relationships, substance use (including alcohol), interactions with delinquent peers, personal victimisation and attitudes intolerant of antisocial behaviour.

THE RESILIENCE FACTORS

EDUCATION

The education system plays a crucial role in the lives of children and young people, especially since children spend most of their time away from home and at school. Although researchers have largely focused on the school as a risk factor for offending, recent evidence suggests the existence of factors related to the school that can act as a buffer for children who are considered high risk for offending.⁸⁶ This assertion was confirmed by our findings.

Education appeared to be one of the significant protective factors against offending in this study. In the model, matriculation significantly ($p < 0.001$, OR 5.800 CI 2.194 -15.332) predicts membership in the non-offender category. More particularly, matriculants are nearly six times more likely than non-matriculants to be on the right side of the law.

In addition to having completed Grade 12, one's attitude towards one's schooling was found to be a significant resilience factor in youth offending. Regarding it as personally important to obtain good marks at school ($p < 0.05$, OR 31.324, CI 2.450 - 400.544) and wanting to go to university or technikon after school ($p < 0.05$, OR 3.854, CI 1.202 - 12.361) were found to significantly predict membership in the non-offender category. Thus, young people who intend obtaining a tertiary education after completing their schooling are nearly four times more likely to refrain from committing an offence than those who do not have such aspirations. Also, youth who show an interest in their schooling by working hard to obtain good marks are 31 times more likely to abstain from engaging in criminal behaviour than those who do not show an interest in their schooling.

Analysis revealed that the non-offenders interviewed in this study were significantly more likely than the youth offenders to have completed Grade 12 ($X^2 = 47.533$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the youth offenders were significantly more likely than their non-offender counterparts to report that it was not important for them to obtain good marks at school ($X^2 = 73.548$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$) and they did not want to go to university or technikon after completing their schooling ($X^2 = 43.072$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$) (see Table A).

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Table A: Schooling experiences (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Completed matric/Grade 12	18.7	3.8
Do (did) not want to go to university or technikon after completing school	2.6	13.4
It was not important for me to get good marks at school	0.3	12.7

In addition, the regression model found that young people who knew anyone at their school who carried a gun with them while at school were significantly more likely to refrain from committing offences than those who did not know of such individuals ($p < 0.05$, OR 2.238, CI 1.040 – 4.816). Therefore, young people who knew of such individuals at their school were 2.2 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than those who did not know of such individuals.

Hirschi's (1969) social control theory is one of the mainstream theories that have been used consistently to explain the link between school experiences and delinquent behaviour. This theory purports that the school itself and an individual's experiences within school act as social bonds that control participation in antisocial activities.⁸⁷ There are four components associated with the social bond, namely: attachment; commitment; involvement; and belief. Thus, young people who demonstrate a strong commitment to their education, who actively participate in school activities, and who accept and obey the rules and regulations of the school are less inclined to engage in delinquent behaviour.

When considering the South African context, it becomes important to question the factors underpinning young people's commitment to their schooling given that youth are at constant threat of danger at school, even from the teachers and principals. This is underscored by the recent spate of attacks in schools that have claimed the lives of both educators and learners. Since it was outside the scope of the study to explore this issue in depth, future studies should explore in more detail the school context as a resilience factor. That is, to identify the factors underlying children's educational motivation and their unrelenting desire to excel academically and to further their education after school, despite being taught in schools that commonly experience problems with vandalism, bullying, hostile relationships between educators and pupils, and lack parental involvement – which is often the case at many South African schools.

Resilience does not only stem from individuals but also develops and is maintained within particular contexts. The identification of the school environment as a context that gives rise to factors which have a diminishing effect on children's potential to commit crime is important for the development of more effective intervention strategies aimed at combating and reducing the levels of youth delinquency at South African schools. A focus on the school environment

as a context that facilitates youth resilience to crime will be of particular importance for the reduction of youth crime since it will have a ricochet effect on other risk factors present in this environment.

Earlier researchers consistently found that young people who are strongly committed to their schooling are less likely to interact with deviant peers,⁸⁸ use and abuse alcohol and drugs,⁸⁹ and engage in violent and other delinquent activity⁹⁰ – factors that have long been identified as increasing the likelihood of youth to engage in antisocial behaviour. Hence, fostering a strong attachment to schools among children and youth and a commitment to completing their schooling will increase the employability of young South Africans, as well as having a diminishing effect on the levels of youth crime and violence by increasing the resilience of youth to this social phenomenon.

GENDER

It has consistently been found that males commit more crimes than females. In this study, too, gender was found to be a significant protective factor against offending. More particularly, being female significantly ($p < 0.001$, OR 15.431, CI 6.826 – 34.886) predicts membership in the non-offender category. It was found that females are 15 times more likely than males to be non-offenders. This variable remained significant in the model even when controlling for other factors.

Analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to their gender ($X^2 = 253.953$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). That is, young offenders were significantly more likely to be males (95.2%) than females (4.8%) (see Table B).

In an attempt to explain the relationship between gender and crime, researchers have been inclined to explore the socialisation processes of males and females within the home. Socialisation can be described as ‘the process by which children, adolescents, and adults learn what is expected of them through their interactions with other individuals’.⁹¹

Hirschi’s social control theory has also been used in this context to explain the differences in offending by males and females. Control theories are premised on the idea that certain factors – one of which is the family – restrain people from offending.⁹² Young people who are more attached to their caregivers and who accept and abide by their expectations and regulations are more inclined to accept

Table B: Gender of respondents (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Male	46.2	95.2
Female	53.8	4.8

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and conform to conventional society. Therefore, these social bonds are believed to limit involvement in antisocial activities.⁹³

Sigelman and Shaffer⁹⁴ assert that during the socialisation processes, males and females are taught about the roles that are considered socially acceptable for them. As a result of these gender roles, societies are inclined to form stereotypes which say that males and females possess characteristics that are conventionally associated with these roles.⁹⁵ Therefore, while males are typically expected to be independent, goal oriented and aggressive, females are expected to be caring, kind, gentle and sensitive to the needs of others. As a result, females often develop stronger emotional attachments to their parents or primary caregivers. Subsequently, they are generally more controlled and monitored by their parents compared to their male counterparts. The differences in the socialisation processes of girls may explain their lower rates of delinquency.

Researchers have found that males are more likely than their female counterparts to have friends who engage in delinquent activities. Studies have also found that males are more vulnerable to the negative influences of their deviant friends.⁹⁶

NON-VIOLENT FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Research indicates that the social environments in which children are raised, and particularly their family context, significantly influence their behavioural development over the years. In the model, being raised in homes where family members hardly ever lose their tempers ($p=0.001$, OR 2.588, CI 1.458 – 4.596), do not resort to physical violence when they become angry ($p<0.001$, OR 6.840, CI 3.004 – 15.577), and where parents/caregivers do not employ physical punishment as a means of effecting discipline ($p<0.05$, OR 2.064, CI 1.182 – 3.603) significantly predicts membership in the non-offender category. So, young people who are raised in homes where disputes are resolved without violence are 6.8 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than those who are raised in violent homes.

Furthermore, those who are not physically punished for their wrongdoings are twice as likely not to offend as young people whose caregivers physically hit them as punishment for their transgressions.

Analysis revealed significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to the prevalence of violence within the home. As mentioned earlier, the youth offenders were significantly more likely than the non-offenders to report that they argued a lot in their family ($X^2 = 6.921$, $df = 1$, $p<0.05$). Contrary to this, the non-offenders were significantly more likely than their offender counterparts to report that people in their family hardly ever lose their tempers ($X^2 = 13.608$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$), do not resort to physical violence when they become angry ($X^2 = 59.829$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$) and are not physically punished for their wrongdoings ($X^2 = 44.527$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$) (see Table C).

Table C: Violence in the family (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Family members do NOT hit each other when they become angry	91.1	72.6
Parents/caregivers DO NOT physically hit them when they have done something wrong	72.4	51.6
People in my family HARDLY EVER lose their tempers	59.6	47.7
We argue a lot in the family	26.5	34.3

Arguing in the family also seemed to be a protective factor against offending ($p < 0.001$, OR 3.564, CI 1.850 – 6.866). Frequent arguments in the family might be an indication of alternative disciplinary methods being employed by parents/primary caregivers who opt not to punish their children physically when they have violated family rules and expectations.

Although both offenders and non-offenders were exposed to various forms of violence within the home, the offenders were significantly more likely to be exposed to more violent family relations. These findings were consistent with data presented earlier in the monograph. Protective factors against offending commonly identified have included warm, supportive family relationships, reasonable disciplinary methods and family cohesion. These factors seem to act as a buffer for young people at risk of offending.

Research has also identified the link between family violence exposure and subsequent criminal victimisation – which is also a risk factor for offending.⁹⁷ Particularly concerning is that family violence exposure heightens the susceptibility of young people to violent crimes such as assault and robbery. The family is the primary socialising agent where children are taught about which behaviours are considered acceptable and unacceptable in the society in which they live.

Children who are constantly exposed to violence within the home – as is the case with the offenders surveyed in this study – come to perceive violence as an appropriate means of conflict resolution and are likely to adopt these maladaptive problem-solving techniques. Since non-violent family environments have been found to predict resilience to crime, these findings point to the need for targeted interventions aimed at raising awareness about appropriate conflict-resolution techniques. Alternative methods of discipline are also required, particularly aimed at families since the latter constitute the primary role-models for children and youth.

While earlier researchers have highlighted the association between offending and absentee parents, this link was not supported in our study. The model also controlled for the presence of biological parents in the household, time spent with parents during the course of the youth's lifetime, time spent per day with parents/caregivers doing things such as talking, playing and going out, and the

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influence of emotional support received from fathers on the dependent variable. None of these variables remained significant when added to the model.

NON-EXPOSURE TO CRIMINAL ROLE-MODELS

Non-exposure to criminal role-models was also found to be a significant predictor of membership in the non-offender category. In other words, young people who are not exposed to antisocial role-models within their family environments are more likely to refrain from criminal behaviour than those who are exposed to such role-models.

Even though analysis revealed that the offenders (7.6%) were five times more likely than the non-offenders (1.7%) to report that their fathers had ever been in prison ($X^2 = 21.918$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), this predictor became insignificant when included in the model. However, not having family members who in the past year had engaged in any activities that could have got them in trouble with the law – such as stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging and assaulting others – remained significant in the model even after controlling for other factors ($p < 0.05$, $OR = 2.841$, $CI 1.279 - 6.309$). So, young people who do not have adult family members who engage in criminal behaviours are nearly three times more likely not to engage in offending or criminal behaviour than those who do have criminals within the family.

These findings are consistent with mainstream theories which propose that children and youth learn to become offenders when they are raised in environments surrounded by antisocial role-models. As mentioned, the family is the primary context in which children learn about which behaviours are considered appropriate and inappropriate in their society. When family members engage in criminal behaviour and have attitudes conducive to offending, children may come to adopt these anti-establishment attitudes and thus may come to believe that offending is legitimate behaviour.⁹⁸

The model also controlled for exposure to violent role-models within the broader communities in which these young people live. Youth were asked whether they personally knew of people in their neighbourhoods who smoke marijuana, sell, deal or buy drugs, or do any other things that might get them in trouble with the law. Although analysis revealed significant differences between the two youth groups with regard to these questions, the variables became insignificant when added to the model. The findings point to the considerable influence that family environments have on subsequent child and adolescent behaviour.

SUBSTANCE ABSTINENCE

The study also sought to ascertain whether the respondents had ever used any illegal substances. In particular, they were asked about their use of alcohol,

marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, inhalants, over-the-counter substances, hallucinogens, opiates, mandrax, tik and any other illegal substances not included in the questionnaire. The absence of substance use was found to be a significant protective factor against offending ($p < 0.001$, OR 4.496, CI 2.515 – 8.036). In other words, young people who do not use substances are 4.4 times more likely than those who consume alcohol and other drugs not to commit criminal offences.

Analysis found that the youth offenders (87.1%) were significantly more likely than the non-offenders (31.1%) to have ever used any of the drugs in question ($X^2 = 300.448$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$). The offenders (64.8%) remained the sample significantly more likely to consume addictive substances even when the use of illegal substances only (excluding alcohol) was taken into consideration ($X^2 = 415.395$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$).

Substance use and abuse have consistently been linked to violent and criminal behaviour.⁹⁹ Research indicates that individuals under the influence of either alcohol or drugs often act in ways they would not ordinarily do when sober. Some drugs diminish inhibitions or change individuals' moods and perceptions, which could result in them committing acts they would not normally think to commit. Substance use is associated with both violent and income-generating crime by youth. While it may be difficult to ascertain whether substance use precedes or follows the delinquent act, researchers have found that these two factors usually co-occur.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, if young people refrain from consuming substances, this should limit and even prevent their involvement in antisocial activities.

INTERACTION WITH NON-DELINQUENT PEERS

Adolescence is a developmental period characterised by the need for independence from parents and caregivers. Friends and peers become particularly influential during this time as young people look to various sources for guidance in the process of identity development. Relationships with peers who engage in conventional behaviour have been found to increase young people's resilience to crime.¹⁰¹ This finding was supported by our findings.

Interaction with non-delinquent peers was found to be one of the important predictors of being a non-offender. Having best friends who had *never* been arrested ($p < 0.001$, OR 5.675, CI 2.901 – 11.103), dropped out of school ($p < 0.05$, OR 1.909, CI 1.021 – 3.567), used illegal drugs ($p < 0.05$, OR 2.495, CI 1.184 – 5.256), been suspended from school ($p = 0.005$, OR 2.695, CI 1.344 – 5.405) or had stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle ($p < 0.005$, OR 4.550, CI 1.616 – 12.812) significantly predicts membership in the non-offender category. Therefore, young people who have best friends who have never been arrested are 5.7 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than those who do interact with peers who have been arrested. Similarly, those whose best friends have never dropped out of school are twice as likely not to commit an offence as those young people whose best friends have dropped out of school. Furthermore, youth who have best friends

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Table D: Interactions with delinquent peers (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)
Best friends ever dropped out of school	23.5	66.3
Best friends ever suspended from school	23.0	46.6
Best friends ever been arrested	8.9	68.4
Best friends ever taken a knife to school	8.1	40.8
Best friends ever used illegal drugs	5.0	53.4
Best friends ever taken a gun to school	2.8	25.6
Best friends ever sold illegal drugs	2.5	30.1
Best friends ever tried to or had stolen a motor vehicle	1.8	37.7

who have never been suspended from school are 2.7 times more likely to not offend than young people whose closest friends have ever been suspended from school.

Young people whose closest friends do not consume illegal substances are 2.5 times more likely to refrain from engaging in criminal behaviour than youth who do engage with peers who use illegal drugs.

Analysis revealed that the youth offenders were significantly more likely than their non-offender counterparts to report that any of their best friends had ever dropped out of school ($X^2 = 181.793$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), been suspended from school ($X^2 = 60.636$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), been arrested ($X^2 = 384.706$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), used illegal drugs ($X^2 = 306.278$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), sold illegal drugs ($X^2 = 157.128$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$) and stolen or tried to steal a vehicle ($X^2 = 228.831$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$) (see Table D).

The model also controlled for interaction with peers who had taken weapons to school and who had sold drugs. Although analysis revealed significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to these questions, the two variables became insignificant in the model. The interaction of young people with peers who engage in delinquent and antisocial behaviour increases youths' exposure to antisocial role-models and hence reinforces the belief that criminal behaviour is legitimate, especially when the youth are already exposed to such role-models within their own families.

Even though the youth non-offenders were significantly less inclined to interact with peers who engage in delinquent behaviour, there were a few who despite having friends who had engaged in deviant acts continued to abstain from engaging in criminal activities themselves. Erickson maintains that this could be attributed to the youths' strong social bonds.¹⁰² As demonstrated earlier in the monograph, the youth non-offenders were significantly more likely than their offender counterparts to be committed to their schooling and to have warm and supportive relationships with their parents and caregivers – factors that indicate strong social bonds. According to Erickson, these strong social bonds would discourage association with deviant peers and lessen vulnerability to the latter's negative influences.

VICTIMISATION

Having never been the victim of any crime has also been found to be a significant protective factor against offending ($p < 0.001$, OR 5.896, CI 3.354 – 10.363). Young people who had never been the victim of crime were six times more likely not to commit a criminal offence than those who had ever been robbed, assaulted, raped/sexually assaulted, hijacked, had their home burgled or their property stolen.

As demonstrated earlier, family (and community) violence exposure heightens the susceptibility of young people to crime, including violent crimes such as assault and robbery. Since the offenders interviewed in this study experienced significantly higher levels of family violence exposure and were also more likely to have ever been the victim of crime, our findings lend support to the association between violence exposure and subsequent victimisation. Therefore, attempts to reduce the levels of violence within the family may reduce young people's vulnerability to crime, and hence increase their resilience to deviant behaviour.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FACTORS

No access to firearms within the neighbourhood was found to be a significant predictor for membership in the non-offender category even when other variables were controlled for ($p < 0.05$, OR 2.738, CI 1.307 – 5.737). Young people who did not have access to weapons in the area in which they lived were 2.7 times more likely to refrain from becoming involved in criminal activities than those for whom it was easy to obtain a firearm in their residential area.

The model also controlled for other variables such as community violence exposure and access to drugs in the community. Although analysis revealed

Table E: Community disorganisation variables (%)

	Non-offenders (n=604)	Offenders (n=395)	Chi-square value
Witnessed community members intentionally hurting one another	70.9	89.1	$X^2 = 46.487$ df = 1 $p < 0.01$
Easy access to beer, wine or hard liquor	82.8	82.3	$X^2 = 0.042$ df = 1 $p = 0.838$
Easy access to marijuana	48.3	74.9	$X^2 = 69.742$ df = 1 $p < 0.01$
Easy access to firearms	8.1	40.3	$X^2 = 149.647$ df = 1 $p < 0.01$

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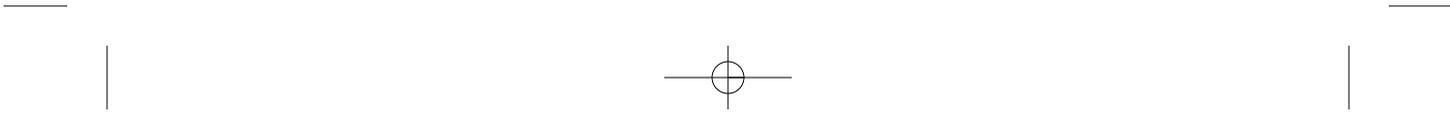
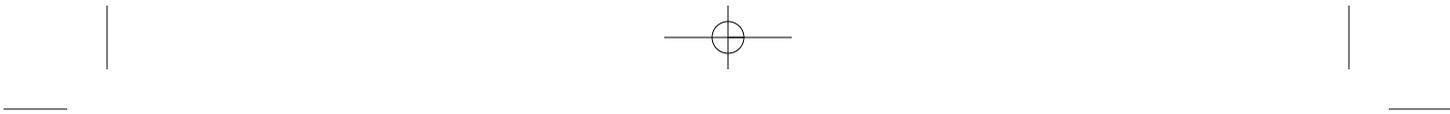
significant differences between the offenders and non-offenders with regard to these questions, the variables were not significant in predicting non-offending when included in the model (see Table E).

The availability of firearms increases youths' susceptibility to crime by increasing their immediate opportunities to offend. The offenders' greater access to firearms could be reflective of the type of lifestyle they are likely to lead. As demonstrated earlier, young offenders are generally more knowledgeable than their non-offender counterparts about individuals in their community who engage in criminal activity and who make a living from crime, and are also more likely to be involved with peers who engage in deviant acts such as taking knives (40.8%) and guns (25.6%) to school. Thus, it becomes easier for them to access firearms in their community.

ATTITUDES INTOLERANT OF VIOLENCE AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Intolerant attitudes toward violence and antisocial behaviour significantly predict membership in the non-offender category. While the participants were asked to respond to a number of questions aimed at eliciting their attitudes toward antisocial behaviour, only one remained significant when included in the model: that is, young people who do not believe that people who hurt them deserve to have bad things happen to them are significantly more likely to refrain from committing criminal offences than those who feel that people who hurt them deserve to have bad things happen to them ($p < 0.05$, OR 1.963, CI 1.002 – 3.844). Specifically, young people who do not believe that people who have hurt them deserve to have bad things happen to them are twice as likely not to offend as those who hold the opposite opinion.

To reiterate, children who are constantly exposed to violence within the home may come to perceive violence as an appropriate means of conflict resolution and are likely to adopt these maladaptive problem-solving techniques. In this way, family violence may foster attitudes that are tolerant of violence and antisocial behaviour. This is further reinforced when children are exposed to similar violence outside the homes, for example in their community and their school environments.



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 - 35 $X^2 = 13.606$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$
 - 36 $X^2 = 59.829$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$
 - 37 $X^2 = 29.482$, $df = 1$, $p<0.001$
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 - 42 $X^2 = 5.534$, $df = 1$, $p<0.05$
 - 43 $X^2 = 4.857$, $df = 1$, $p<0.05$
 - 44 $X^2 = 11.625$, $df = 1$, $p=0.001$

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