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# The Relationship Between Juvenile Delinquency and Family Unit Structure

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND  
FAMILY UNIT STRUCTURE

Thesis submitted to  
The Graduate College of  
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In partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Arts Program  
Psychology

by

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## ABSTRACT

### “THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND FAMILY UNIT STRUCTURE”

By Angela D. Mullens

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parental absence and juvenile delinquency and to determine if a link exists between the two variables. Data was collected from male juveniles who were alleged to have committed status or delinquent offenses between 1996 and 2004. Each offense was categorized according to the family unit (e.g., intact, father only, mother only, etc.), offense type (e.g., underage consumption, petit larceny, breaking and entering, etc.), offense level (e.g., status misdemeanor, and felony), the victim (e.g., crimes against the person, crimes against property, etc.) and the juvenile's age at the time the alleged offense occurred. This study examined whether a child living in a non-intact household is more susceptible to becoming a delinquent youth. The overall model was found to be statistically significant; however, the father only household was the sole individual family type to produce a statistically significant effect.

## DEDICATION

To my mom and dad who have set the standard for what a fine parent should be. I would like to thank you for not allowing me to become a statistic worthy of this study.

To Stephen, thank you for your patience and love and for never allowing this process to become too overwhelming. I am grateful for your help in finding the humor in our lives and for always believing in me and the Mullens family motto, “another day, another A”.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### The Relationship between Juvenile Delinquency and Family Unit Structure

By definition, an intact home is a two-parent (one male, one female) structure. Any deviation from this, regardless of reason (e.g., death, divorce, separation or desertions) is classified as broken (Wilkinson, 1974). An intact home is one of the most influential institutions on children. Although various changes in the religious and political climates have eroded and distorted the morals and principles of the family over the years, society continues to dictate the ideal portrait of a family (Wilkinson, 1974). The father, who obtains out of home employment, has been designated as the bread-winner and the mother assumes the role of the in home caregiver (Popenoe, 1995). The family serves as a natural support system and a barrier against outside forces attempting to negatively influence children (Stern et. al., 1984). The absence of a father figure in a home has received the bulk of the blame for undermining a child's ability to adjust and fend off the social pressures of adolescence. Koziy and Davies (1982) found that the circumstances surrounding the loss of one parent are not the main issue, but the mere absence of one parent from the home affects the child's adjustment and socialization.

The broken home issue has been a key component in the theories surrounding delinquency since the onset of criminology in the nineteenth century (Wells & Rankin, 1991). Although various reasons such as poor marriages, lack of parental controls, ineffective parental behavior and failure to provide a natural and loving environment, have been attributed to the rise in delinquency, most of the literature returns to the ultimate



breakdown of the family as the main causative factor (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1987). For generations, a disruption in the home has been viewed as a threat to the well-being and very existence of a child, based in part, on the biological make-up of humans.

Although the young of many species are born helpless, their maturity level is rapid and far surpasses that of humans who need years of protection and nurturance to achieve physical and emotional independence (Whitehead, 1993). When the family is unable to provide this much needed guidance and support, a child will not develop properly, with juvenile misconduct becoming a potential consequence (Wilkinson, 1974).

Factors found to insulate children from delinquency are stable, unbroken homes with a supportive parent-child relationship, as well as a set of parents who provide both a positive role model and the financial assistance needed to sustain an adequate household (Smith & Walters, 1978). Based on these essential elements, it is obvious that every effort must be made to strengthen the family, in hopes of combating delinquency and bringing about a more stable environment for children to learn and grow.

A child's home and family are the center of development. One of the most important functions of this matrix is to provide structure and guidance in an effort to encourage and aid children in their socialization and identity development (Stern et. al., 1984). The family is also charged with transmitting values held by society as a whole, and must also attempt to create a barrier against society's influence of deviant patterns (Toby, 1957). It has been reported that family dynamics and structure are causal variables in discussing delinquency because they have a critical role in both the socialization and control of juveniles (Norland et al., 1979). Data has shown that an intact home with a

mother and father (emphasis on the father) has a stabilizing effect and may act as a deterrent in certain areas of juvenile delinquency (Stern et al., 1984). An intact family structure has been found to influence a child's susceptibility to peer pressure (Steinberg, 1987), contribute to offspring development and capabilities in adapting to society (Smith, & Walters, 1978) and is linked to fewer incidences of delinquency related issues (McCarthy et al., 1982).

Children from broken homes have been found to be involved in a significantly higher amount of delinquent acts than children from intact homes (Canter, 1982). Both male and female children from broken homes were found to be negatively effected by parental absence. For instance, girls from a single parent household (emphasis on paternal absence) have been associated with delinquency issues related to vandalism and auto trespassing (Austin, 1978), run away, incorrigibility and sexual deviancy (Weeks, 1940). Male children from broken homes have been found to be involved in higher rates of alcohol and drug usage, promiscuity (Stern et al., 1984), property offenses and traffic violation (Weeks, 1940). Children from a broken home have been found to be two to three times more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems, when compared to children from intact homes (Popenoe, 1995).

Many parents do not fully grasp their role as a teacher nor do they realize the influence they exert as parents on their children. When these vital lessons are not taught by the family, a child may collapse under the pressures of the outside world, with juvenile delinquency being an almost certain fate. "The relationship is so strong that if ways could be found to do it, a strengthening and preserving of family life, among the

groups which need it most, could probably accomplish more in the amelioration and prevention of delinquency and other problems than any other single program yet devised” (Monahan, p. 258, 1957). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of a broken home on juvenile delinquency in an effort to prove that more children involved in misconduct are the result of a broken home. The hypotheses of this study are:

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) #1: Juvenile males residing with both biological parents will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) #1: Juvenile males residing with both biological parents will produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) #2: Juvenile males residing in a father only household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) #2: Juvenile males residing in a father only household will produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) #3: Juvenile males residing in a mother only household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) #3: Juvenile males residing in a mother only household will produce a statistically significant

effect on the level of criminal activity.

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) #4: Juvenile males residing in a step-parent household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) #4: Juvenile males residing in a step-parent household will produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) #5: Juvenile males residing in a non-parental household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) #5: Juvenile males residing in a non-parental household will produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Literature

The review of literature will discuss various aspects of parental absence and its impact on delinquency. All of the data presented encompass the core belief that a broken home is detrimental to a child's socialization and personality adjustment. As a result, a child may be more susceptible to negative peer pressure and may ultimately commit acts of delinquency not committed by children from intact homes. The literature will also reflect the influence a broken home has on certain types of delinquency.

The family has provided economic success and social order over the years and the current problem facing American families is the decline in the nuclear family and the surge in a new individualistic culture. The nuclear family is defined as a husband who works during the day and a wife who remains in the home caring for the children. The primary focus of this family type, which began in the 1800's, was to care for and nurture the children. Although the father's main role is to be the breadwinner, he does have an important role in the child's upbringing (Popenoe, 1995).

The change from a collectivistic society to an individualistic one has caused a negative influence on the family--especially the children. These societies tend to have high rates of individual deviance, juvenile delinquency, crime and loneliness. The study also reported that children from single parent homes are two to three times more likely to have behavioral and emotional problems than a child from a two-parent home. Children who live with only one parent are twice as likely to drop out of school, 1.4 times as likely to be idle and 2.5 times as likely to become teenage parents than a child with both

biological parents in the home, (Popenoe, 1995).

Children from broken homes have the personality characteristics associated with an incomplete socialized person and exhibit characteristics indicative of poor adjustment and social knowledge. The study added that there is an indication of the extent of impact the loss of a parent can have on the personality of a child from a broken home regardless of the reason of loss (Koziey and Davies, 1982).

Fathers are a significant contributor to offspring development and capabilities in adapting to society. The study found that fathers who are involved in a positive relationship with their children are important in the prevention of delinquency. The presence of a functioning father in the home is associated with positive adjustment in children. His presence is influential in a child's identity and adjustment with others as well as the child's inclination toward delinquency (Smith & Walters, 1978).

Proportionately more juveniles who are referred to police agencies and the juvenile courts for delinquency charges live in disrupted families when compared to the general population. The study also suggests that juveniles who are charged with more serious acts of delinquency are from incomplete homes than juveniles charged with lesser acts of misconduct (Chilton & Markle, 1972).

Family structure does exert influence on a child's susceptibility to peer pressure (after controlling for demographic factors). Among three of the groups studied (ninth-grade boys, sixth and eighth-grade girls) kids from these intact homes were less susceptible to antisocial peer pressure than those from non-intact households.

Children from biologically intact homes have a lower incidence of illegal behavior that is paralleled by their lower rate of susceptibility to peer pressure to commit deviant acts. The study suggests that there is a link between juvenile deviance and family structure. The family is shown to have a direct influence on negative peer pressure that may in turn affect a juvenile's involvement in delinquent activity (Steinberg 1987).

A broken home is a factor in personality mal-adjustment. For males, the largest proportion of crimes brought to the attention of the court were property offenses. The commission of traffic violations and misdemeanors were ranked second and third. The female delinquents were referred for running away, being ungovernable and committing some type of sexual deviancy. Of these individuals referred to the court, the greatest percentage of offenses influenced by broken homes was truancy, runaway, and ungovernability (Weeks, 1940).

Certain types of delinquency are related to broken homes (e.g. runaway, truancy and fighting). Juveniles from broken homes are 2.7 times more likely to runaway from their family than children living in intact homes. Upon further examination, Rankin compared various broken homes and runaway offenses and found that children from a single parent home (no step-parent) are 1.8 times as likely to run than a child living in an intact home. The odds increase to 2.7 for children living with one biological parent and a step-parent and increase to 4.0 for a child living with neither biological parent regardless of the sex or age of the child (Rankin, 1983).

An intact home is essential in developing a balanced and socially adjusted personality. His study reported various findings regarding broken homes and

delinquency. Between 1899 and 1909, 34 percent of delinquents studied were from a broken home. In 1936, 35 percent of boys and 50 percent of girls referred to the court system were from broken homes. In 1923, the Census reported that 56 percent of children institutionalized were from broken homes (Shulman, 1949).

Children from broken homes might be expected to have a more difficult time adjusting to society's norms because the home is thought to be the center of a child's development. The study found that over 50 percent of the males they surveyed from broken homes fit into the most "delinquent-type" categories. This was in comparison to only 40 percent of the boys from an intact home (Slocum & Stone, 1963).

Among the cross-sectional group studies, children who are living with their natural fathers show significantly fewer incidences of fighting, delusions-hallucinations, delinquency, late development and isolation, and benefit from living in an intact home. The study also found that children living with a surrogate father (broken home) manifest a greater number of behavioral issues (McCarthy et al., 1982).

The study by Austin (1978) found that there is a significant relationship between white girls from single parent homes (father absent) and vandalism and auto trespassing. Austin also found that there is a stronger effect on white girls who have committed assault from a father-absent home than for white boys.

Children from broken homes are involved in significantly more acts of delinquency than children from intact homes. Boys from broken homes had significantly greater involvement in all types of delinquent acts except for minor theft (stealing between five and fifty dollars), joyriding, home delinquency (damaging property owned



by the family) and running away when compared to girls from broken homes. She also compared male means from broken homes versus intact homes with female means and found that broken homes have as great an impact on the boys as it does on girls, possibly even a greater influence Canter (1982).

According to the Census tract in the Washington, D.C. area, the rate of delinquency tended to rise as the percentage of broken homes increased. In white, affluent homes, the absences of one or both parents tended to be associated with a higher rate of delinquency than in non-white homes. The study also found that among poor white families, an intact home tended to be associated with a lower rate of delinquency (Willie 1967).

Family structure and dynamics are causal variables in discussing delinquency due to their critical role in the socialization and control of children. The study looked at whether or not family conflict had a direct relationship in producing delinquency. It found that for status offenses, family conflict had a direct and indirect effect (variables such as supervision, identification with parents, belief in laws and social support) on females and a direct effect on males. For property offenses, the study found a direct relationship for males and an indirect relationship for females. Finally, a direct effect was found with both males and females in the aggressive offenses category when compared to family conflict (Norland et al., 1979).

The absence of a male parent significantly affects the behavior of juveniles, especially males. Their results showed that this absence has the greatest influence in three areas: alcohol, marihuana usage and sexual activity. They found that males whose

fathers were absent had the highest rate of any group studied. They concluded that this data fails to reflect the true significance of the father and his role in transmitting values and being a role model. Their data suggests that the father has a stabilizing effect and his presence may act as a deterrent in the three problem areas studied (Stern, Northman & Van Slyck, 1984).

## CHAPTER III

### Methods

#### Subjects

Six hundred twenty-nine charges filed against 121 male juveniles were selected for use in this study. Each juvenile had a written status or criminal allegation filed against him by a law enforcement officer, school official, parent or probation officer. Plea negotiations and trial outcome were not accounted for during this stage of the study and the innocence of each child was assumed until adjudication. This study was directed at determining a juvenile's susceptibility toward delinquency. The alleged offense was selected as the primary focus instead of the child's alleged culpability in each individual allegation. Each alleged incident occurred within Lewis County, West Virginia, with no bearing given to the residential status of the juvenile. The subjects ranged from 9 to 17 years of age ( $m = 15.59$ ). The targeted length of time used for this study was from January 1996 to August 2004.

#### Instrumentation

The Juvenile Justice Data Base (JJDB) form (see Appendix A) was used to gather the data for this study. It is provided to each West Virginia Supreme Court Probation Officer who supervises a juvenile caseload. The form is used by the West Virginia Division of Criminal Justice Services (WVDCJS) as a means of tracking juvenile crime throughout the state of West Virginia. It requires that a signed, written complaint alleging an act, constituting a status offense or delinquent offense under West Virginia law, be on file for review and audit prior to its completion.

Chapter 49, Article 1, Section 4, Subsection 14 (A), (B), (C), and (D) of the West Virginia Code sets forth juvenile proceedings and defines a status offender as:

...a juvenile who has been adjudicated as one: (A) Who habitually and continually refuses to respond to the lawful supervision by his or her parents, guardian or legal custodian such that the child's behavior substantially endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the juvenile or any other person; (B) Who has left the care of his or her parents, guardian or custodian without the consent of such person or without good cause; (C) Who is habitually absent from school without good cause, or (D) Who violated any West Virginia municipal, county, or state law regarding use of alcoholic beverages by minors;...(West Virginia Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, 2004, p. 567).

Chapter 49, Article 1, Section 4, Subsection 8 of the West Virginia Code also defines a juvenile delinquent as "...a juvenile who has been adjudicated as one who commits an act which would be a crime under state law or a municipal ordinance if committed by an adult..." (West Virginia Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, 2004, p. 567).

Each probation officer is provided written instructions, an individualized reporting number, and a contact person in case of questions. The JJDB form has two versions: one is a four-page carbon copy and the other is a modified computer form provided to each officer on a computer program. It has evolved since the beginning of this study but the demographic information remained consistent. Both forms contain multiple parts.

Part A is the Intake Information (questions 1 through 13) and is processed during

the child's initial appearance before the probation officer with the parent or guardian present. The child's full name, home county and state are recorded, as well as other demographic information (e.g. sex, race, educational placement, prior history, etc.). Questions 6 and 11 are the main topic of this study. The child's living situation at the time of the offense is recorded. For the purposes of this study, only the children who live with both biological parents at the time of the crime are considered to live in an intact home; all others are classified according to their adult custodians. Question 11 deals with the status or delinquent offense allegedly committed by the juvenile.

The date the crime was committed is recorded, as well as the offense. A number is assigned to each offense by WVDCJS and is used for completion of the JJDB form (see Appendix B). The severity of the crime is divided into four distinct categories: probation violations (offenses that are specific only to a child under the supervision of the court, i.e., curfew violation), status offenses (an offense that if committed by an adult would not be a violation of the West Virginia code), misdemeanors (an offense that is punishable by one year or less in a correctional facility), and felonies (an offense that is punishable by one or more years in a correctional institution). The remaining three questions calculate the total number of offenses committed on the specific day, the informal disposition (i.e., informal probation, referral to community resources) and the date the disposition was imposed.

Part B deals with the disposition or outcome of the current offense (questions 14 through 20). This information is recorded after the child has been formally charged in Circuit Court in a juvenile petition. The formal disposition is recorded once the child has

appeared before the Circuit Judge. The date of the adjudication and dispositional hearings are identified and recorded as well as the trial outcome and placement imposed by the court.

Part C (questions 21 and 22) deals with the discharge of the child from the probation office's supervision. The exit type and date the supervision ended are recorded. Any reports associated with the case are also listed for calculation and reference. After the completion of each section, the form is sent to WVDCJS for processing and tabulation. A copy of the form is also lodged in the file of each juvenile for future reference.

A review of each paper file was conducted to ensure accuracy and to determine the living arrangements of each juvenile during the commission of each crime. In some cases, the JJDB was not filed due to probation officer error or time constraints.

### Procedure

Confidentiality was maintained in each case by assigning each subject a random number. The children were initially divided into five family categories: intact homes (children living with both biological parents, N=37), father only households (N=16), mother only households (N=39), step-parent households (children living with one biological parent and an opposite sex significant other, N=29) and other (children living in a non-parental household, N=16). Once a separation was made, each group was broken down further by offense category (N=53). Each criminal offense was given a random number in order of occurrence and will be used throughout the study (see Table 1). Each offense was further separated by level (e.g., status, misdemeanor and felony) (see Table

2). The victim of the crime was also collected. The victim was determined by the offense classification in the West Virginia Criminal Code (see Table 3). Finally, the age of each juvenile at the time of the offense was gathered. The goal was to compare the family type with the offense type and produce data in support of the hypothesis.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

The family type (intact, father only, mother only, step-parent and other) and offense level (status, misdemeanor, and felony) were used as the research variables. The chart below illustrates the breakdown of the data.

	Status	Misdemeanor	Felony	Row Totals
Intact	26	76	14	116
Father Only	14	26	20	60
Mother Only	105	123	36	264
Step-parent	59	44	8	111
Other	30	44	4	78
Column Totals	234	313	82	629

Logistic Regression was utilized in this study. It was found to be the most appropriate statistical procedure due to its ability to show the influence of multiple variables on one designated dependent variable. The independent variables were the multiple family units: intact, father only, mother only, step-parent and other. The dependent variable was the crime level: misdemeanor and felony. The alpha level was designated as  $p < .01$  indicating a significant result. The Statistical Procedure for Social Sciences (SPSS) 12.0 was used to analyze the data collected.

#### Hypothesis #1

The Null Hypothesis #1 predicted that juvenile males residing with both biological parents will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of



criminal activity. The results confirmed this hypothesis. The data did not yield a statistically significant score in this category; therefore, the null hypothesis # 1 was accepted.

Additional information gathered from the intact family unit included percentages and a breakdown in the crime, level and victim categories. Thirty-seven juveniles made up this category accounting for 116 total offenses and 18.4% of the overall crime. Misdemeanors in this category were correctly identified 84.4% of the time, while 0% of the felonies were correctly identified. Destruction of property (23) and battery (15) accounted for the two highest crime areas. The three level percentages: status, misdemeanor and felony were 22.4%, 65.5% and 12.1%, respectively. Crimes against property (51/44%) and child welfare (26/22.4%) received the majority of offenses in the victim category. Finally, the average age of the intact family unit was 14.67.

#### Hypothesis #2

The Null Hypothesis #2 predicted that juvenile males residing in a father only household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity. The results did not confirm this hypothesis. The data did yield a statistically significant score (.378) in this category; therefore, according to this study, juvenile males living in father only household does affect the level of criminal activity. The null hypothesis #2 was rejected.

Additional information gathered from the father only family included percentages and a breakdown in the crime, level and victim categories. Sixteen juveniles made up this category accounting for 60 total crimes and 9.5% of the overall crime distribution.

This model accurately predicted 56.5% of the misdemeanor offense correctly. School violations (9) and manufacturing/delivery of a controlled substance (7) saw the highest rate of criminal activity. The three level percentages: status, misdemeanor and felony were 23.3%, 43.3% and 33.3%, respectively. Property crimes (20/33.3%) and child welfare (14/23.3%) also accounted for the majority of the victim category. Finally the average age of the father only household was 15.91%.

### Hypothesis #3

The Null Hypothesis #3 predicted that juvenile males residing in a mother only household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity. The results confirmed this hypothesis. The data did not yield a statistically significant score in this category; therefore, the null hypothesis #3 was accepted.

Additional information gathered from the mother only family unit included percentages and a breakdown in the crime, level and victim categories. Thirty-nine juveniles made up this category accounting for 264 total crimes or 42% of the overall crime distribution. This model accurately predicted 77.4% of the misdemeanor offense correctly. The majority of criminal activity was concentrated in the school violations (114) and underage consumption (38) categories. The status, misdemeanor and felony levels broke down as follows: 39.8%, 46.6%, and 13.6%, respectively. Like the two previous family units, the mother only family saw crimes against property (20/33.3%) and child welfare (14/23.3%) as the two highest categories. The average age of the mother only household was 15.27.

### Hypothesis #4

The Null Hypothesis #4 predicted that juvenile males residing within a step-parent household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity. The results did not confirm this hypothesis. The data did not yield a statistically significant score in this category; therefore, this null hypothesis was accepted.

Additional information gathered from the step-parent household included percentages and a breakdown in the crime, level and victim categories. Twenty-nine juveniles made up this category accounting for 111 total crimes or 17.6% of the overall crime distribution. According to the statistics, 84.6% of misdemeanor offenses were correctly identified in this mode. The status offenses accounted for the majority of the crimes with 53.2% of the offenses falling in this category. Misdemeanor and felony offenses rounded out the category with 39.6% and 17.2%, respectively. In conjunction with the crime area, school violations (28) and curfew violations (9) were the two categories with the most offenses. The child welfare (58/52.3%) victim category recorded the highest percentages of offenses. The juveniles who comprised this step-parent family unit had an average age of 15.88.

#### Hypothesis #5

The Null Hypothesis #5 predicted that juvenile males residing in a non-parental household will not produce a statistically significant effect on the level of criminal activity. The results confirmed this hypothesis. The data did not yield a statistically significant score in this category; therefore, the null hypothesis #5 was accepted.

Additional information gathered from the other family category included

percentages and a breakdown in the crime, level and victim categories. Sixteen juveniles made up this category accounting for 78 total crimes or 12.4% of the overall crime distribution. The other family unit depicted 91.7% of misdemeanor offenses correctly. The two highest scoring categories of the crime unit were school violations (19) and Division of Natural Resources violations (10). The three percentages for status, misdemeanor and felony offenses were 38.5%, 56.4% and 5.1%. Child welfare (30/38.5%) and property crimes (11/141%) accounted for the majority of the victim category. Finally, the average age of the other family unit was 16.02.

## CHAPTER V

### Summary and Conclusion

Although the overall model was found to be statistically significant (.123), the only individual family unit showed similar results was the father only structure. During the calculation of the entire data sets, misdemeanor offenses were correctly depicted in 79.2% of the cases; however, the felony offenses were not correctly identified in any category. The overall percentage of criminal activity broke down as follows: status offenses accounted for 37.2 % or 234 total crimes, misdemeanor offenses accounted for 49.8% or 313 total crimes and felony offenses accounted for 13% or 82 total crimes. All of the family categories except the step-parent unit displayed the highest percentage of crimes in the misdemeanor category. The step-parent family showed the status offenses as receiving the majority of the crime distribution. In the felony category, all family units exhibited it as the lowest percentage of crimes except the father only unit.

The victim category also resulted in a similar fashion. The overall highest percentage was found in the child welfare category with 36.7% of the allegations falling within this section. The step-parent (52.3%), the mother only (39.0%) and the other family (38.5%) units also showed the highest percentage of crime in this category, while the intact family (44.0%), and father only family (33.3%) were highest in the crimes against the public category.

The highest percentage of crime was found to be in the school violation section at 18.1% with destruction of property (9.2%) in second. All of the individual categories mirrored the overall findings except the intact family which revealed a higher percentage

in the destruction of property category.

Although the results of this study add some weight to the premise of this research, other equally important factors were not accounted for in this analysis. Variables such as the parent-child relationship, economic status and ineffective parental controls were not incorporated or tested. Additional limitations include the exclusion of female subjects and the lack of racial diversity in the test subjects. A non-delinquent control group was also not utilized in this study. Further research should focus on a statewide replication that incorporates a cross section of both genders and multiple races. The uneven data in the family, crime and level units were also a limitation. Additional focus should be placed on incorporating a wide range of variables to produce a more significant study which could be generalized to a larger population.

Research had found that parental absence has been linked to a child's susceptibility toward juvenile delinquency for years. The data from this study, although minimal, adds weight to this specific theory by finding that a statistically significant relationship exists between the variables. It was quite interesting that none of the individual models produced a significant effect except the father only household. Much of the research has been focused on the father's absence, but in this study apparently a father's presence is also statistically significant in a juvenile's susceptibility toward delinquency. This study's findings did not end the debate over the cause of juvenile misconduct but only added to the confusion that will surely continue for decades to come.

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Appendix A

## 2001 Juvenile Probation Database Form

<p><b>Intake</b> Reporter# _____ - _____ Month _____ Year _____</p>	<p><b>Disposition</b> Reporter# _____ - _____ Month _____ Year _____</p>																																																																		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part A - Intake - White Sheet</b></p> <p>1. _____ First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name</p> <p>2. _____ Home County &amp; State</p> <p>3. _____ Gender 1 Male 2 Female</p> <p>4. ____/____/____ Date of Birth</p> <p>5. _____ Race              1 White 3 Asian/Pacific Islander 5 Multiracial              2 Black 4 Native American 6 Unknown</p> <p>6. _____ Living Situation (At time of offense)              1 Both Parents 4 Other Relative 7 Transient              2 One Parent 5 DHHR Approved 8 Other _____              3 Parent/Step-Parent 6 Detention Center 9 Unknown</p> <p>7. _____ Educational Placement (At time of offense)              1 Mainstream 4 Drop-Out 7 Other _____              2 Special Ed. 5 GED 8 Unknown              3 Alternative 6 Graduated</p> <p>8. ____/____/____ Date Complaint/Petition Signed</p> <p>9. _____ Predispositional Detention              1 None 4 Staff Secure 7 Unknown              2 Home Confinement 5 Detention Center              3 Non-Secure 6 Other _____</p> <p>10. <b>Complaint History</b> (Please check all that apply.)  <input type="checkbox"/> No Prior Delinquency or Status Offender Complaints  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Status Offender Complaints, No Adjudication  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Delinquency Complaints, No Adjudication  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Adjudication for Status Offense  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Adjudication for Delinquency  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Arrest  <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Probation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part B - Formal Disposition - Yellow Sheet</b></p> <p>14. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Adjudication</b> (Choose the most serious.)              1 No Adjudication 6 Adjudicated NOT Delinquent By Trial              2 Dismissed At Preliminary Hearing 7 Adjudicated Status Offender              3 Dismissed W/O Prejudice (Can't Refile) 8 Adjudicated Delinquent by Plea              4 Dismissed With Prejudice (Can't Refile) 9 Adjudicated Delinquent by Trial              5 Adjudicated NOT Status Offender</p> <p>15. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Formal Disposition</b> (Choose the most serious &amp; circle all others that apply. #1 is the least serious &amp; #13 is the most serious.)              1 Case Dismissed 8 DHHR Custody              2 Monitor Compliance 9 DHHR Custody &amp; Probation              3 Community Service 10 Home Confinement &amp; Probation              4 Fine/Restitution 11 DJS Custody              5 Improvement Period 12 Mental Health Proceeding              6 Referred to DHHR 13 Transferred to Adult Court              7 Probation, Noncustodial 14 Other _____</p> <p><b>Fill out #16 only IF case disposition involves commitment to a facility.</b></p> <p>16. <b>Commitment Facility Ordered at Disposition</b>              Code # &amp; Name &amp; Location: (Please Refer to Facility Code Sheet.)</p>																																																																		
<p>11. <b>Offense(s) Date &amp; Name</b> (List all charges.)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Offense Date</th> <th>Offense Name &amp; Code</th> <th>Complainant*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>8 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>9 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>10 / /</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>12. _____ Total # of Offenses Charged</p>	Offense Date	Offense Name & Code	Complainant*	1 / /			2 / /			3 / /			4 / /			5 / /			6 / /			7 / /			8 / /			9 / /			10 / /			<p>17. <b>Disposition</b> (List all dispositions using code choices in #15)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Offense Reduced to &amp; Code</th> <th>Disposition Date</th> <th>Code</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Offense Reduced to & Code	Disposition Date	Code																														
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<p>13. _____ Informal Disposition &amp; Date ____/____/____              (Please choose the most serious &amp; circle all others that apply.)              1 Case Closed or Complaint Withdrawn              2 Complaint Resolved and/or Juvenile Counseled              3 Held Open Without Further Action              4 Referred to Community Agency              5 Referred to DHHR              6 Referred to Diversion Program Through Probation              7 Informal Supervision By Probation              8 Other _____</p>	<p>18. <b>Investigations</b> (Please circle one.)</p> <p>1 Predisposition Report              2 Violation Report</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> <p><b>*Complainant Codes</b></p> <p>1 Parent              2 School              3 Law Enforcement              4 Probation              5 Victim              6 Unknown              7 DHHR</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Revised Fall 2000</p>																																																																		

## Appendix B

### Offense Code Sheet for 2003 Juvenile Probation Database Forms

**\*For Use January 1-December 31, 2003**

**\*If an offense is not listed on this code sheet, please write it on the database form in the offense(s) & cite the section of the WV Code that identifies it as an offense.**

**\* If a juvenile is predispositionally detained after violating probation, also list the original offense on the form.**

Offense	Code	WV Code Citation
Abduction	1161	
Alcohol: Open Container	7895	
Alcohol: Public Intoxication	7882	
Alcohol: Underage Consumption/Possession (STATUS OFFENSE)	7893	
Animals, Cruelty to (Misd.)	11012	
Animals, Killing	2401	
Arson, 1st Degree	2261	
Arson, 2nd Degree	2281	
Arson, 3rd Degree	2411	
Arson, 4th Degree	2421	
Assault, Malicious (Felony)	1111 A	*See WV Code §61-2-9a
Assault, Unlawful (Felony)	1111 B	*See WV Code §61-2-9a
Assault (Misd.)	1111 C	*See WV Code §61-2-9b
Assault, Domestic: 1st or 2nd Offense (Misd.)	3474 A	*See WV Code §61-2-28b
Assault, Domestic: 3rd Offense (Felony)	3474 B	*See WV Code §61-2-28c
Assault, Officer*: (Misd.)----Includes police, probation, conservation, humane officers; emergency medical personnel, firefighters; state fire marshal or employee; county or state correctional employee; urban mass transportation system employees.	3563 A	*See WV Code §61-2-10b
Assault, Officer*: Malicious (Felony)	3563 B	*See WV Code §61-2-10b
Assault, Officer*: Unlawful (Felony)	3563 C	*See WV Code §61-2-10b
Assault, School Employee (Misd.)	3564	*See WV Code §61-2-15a
Auto Tampering	2322	
Battery (Misd.)	3472	*See WV Code §61-2-9c
Battery, Domestic: 1st or 2nd Offense (Misd.)	3474 A	*See WV Code §61-2-28a
Battery, Domestic: 3rd Offense (Felony)	3474 B	*See WV Code §61-2-28c
Battery, Police Officer*: 1st Offense (Misd.)	3473 A	*See WV Code §61-2-10b
Battery, Police Officer*: 2nd Offense (Felony)	3473 B	*See WV Code §61-2-10b
Battery, School Employee (Misd.)	3475	*See WV Code §61-2-15b
Bomb Threat: 1st Offense (Misd.)	5782	
Bomb Threat: 2nd Offense or Bodily Injury (Felony)	5781	
Entering Without Breaking: Daytime*	2291 A	*See WV Code §61-3-11b
Breaking & Entering OR Entering W/O Breaking: Auto (Misd.)	4652	*See WV Code §61-3-12
Breaking & Entering OR Entering W/O Breaking: Non-Dwelling	2301 A	*See WV Code §61-3-12
Burglary: Daytime or Nighttime B&E OR Nighttime Entering W/O Breaking: Dwelling	2271 A	*See WV Code §61-3-11a
Burning Insured Property	2391	
Casting Away Boat (Felony)	3623	
Child Abuse: Injurious	1101	
Child Neglect: Injurious	1141	
Child Sexual Abuse	1081	
Civil Rights Violation	13025	*See WV Code §61-6-21
Computer Crime	16000	
Conspiracy (Felony)	12060 A	*See WV Code §61-6-7
Conspiracy ( Misdemeanor)	12070 A	*See WV Code §61-6-7
Contempt of Court	4683	
Contempt of Domestic Violence Order	13025	
Contributing To The Delinquency Of A Minor	12050	
Controlled Substance: Obtaining By Fraud	1192	
Controlled Substance: Possession	17000	

Controlled Substance: Manufacture/ Deliver Counterfeit Schedule I-IV (F)	17001
Controlled Substance: Manufacture/ Deliver Counterfeit Schedule V (Misd.)	17002
Controlled Substance: Manufacture/ Deliver Schedule I,II,III,IV (Felony)	17003
Controlled Substance: Manufacture/ Deliver Schedule V (Misd.)	17004
Counterfeiting	2352
Credit Card Fraud	4673
Curfew Violation (STATUS OFFENSE)	8963
Destruction Of Property	4622
Disordedy Conduct	5832
Disturbance Of Schools, Etc.	5812
DUI: 1st Offense	3572
DUI: 2nd Offense	3482
DUI: 3rd Offense	1251
DUI: Causing Death W/O Reckless Disregard	3502
DUI: Causing Death With Reckless Disregard (Felony)	1151
DUI: Personal Injury	3522
Embezzlement	4675
Escape	5761
Escape: Aiding In	5771
Explosives, Possession of	12021
Explosives, Possession/Placing of	2381
Extortion (Felony)	1231
Extortion, Attempted (Misd.)	3512
Failed Informal Disposition-Original Offense Was a Status Offense	10001
Failed Informal Disposition-Original Offense Was a Misdemeanor	10002
Failed Informal Disposition-Original Offense Was a Felony	10003
Failure To Appear In Court/Capias	12080
Fake ID (Misd.)	11003
False Information- Providing	11002
Fires- Setting To Land	2371
Fleeing From Police Officer (Felony)	11021
Fleeing From Police Officer (Misd.)	11022
Forgery	2351
Fraud, Obtaining By	2331
Fraudulent Schemes	4674
Fugitive	11023
Harrassment or Bullying	19025
Hate Crimes	12100
Hindering	5794
Hit & Run: Personal Injury	3542
Hit & Run: Property Damage	4702
Improvement Period, Violation of/ Revoked*	15000
Incest	1091
Incorrigible-Excluding Runaway (STATUS OFFENSE)	8923
Indecent Exposure	3612
Interstate Transporting Stolen Property	12032
Intimidation of Witness	3533
Joyriding	4682
Kidnapping	1021
Larceny- Grand	2311
Larceny- Grand Attempted	2323
Larceny- Grand Auto	2321
Larceny, Petit: 1st Offense	4632 A
Larceny, Petit: 2nd Offense	4632 B
Leaving Scene Of Accident: Hit & Run w/ Death (Felony)	5791 A
Leaving Scene Of Accident: Hit & Run w/ Personal Injury (Misd.)	5791 B
Littering (Misd.)	12110
Loitering On School Property	5822

\*See WV Code §49-5-9

Manslaughter- Involuntary	3442
Manslaughter- Voluntary	1241
Murder, 1st Degree	1001
Murder, 2nd Degree	1071
Murder, Attempted	1002
Natural Resource Violations	10000
Negligent Homicide: Vehicular	3452
Obstructing a Firefighter (Felony)	5792 B
Obstructing An Officer	5792 A
Obstructing Emergency Personnel (Misd.)	5792 C
Probation Violation: Original Offense Was A FELONY	9001
Probation Violation: Original Offense Was A MISDEMEANOR	9002
Probation Violation: Original Offense Was A STATUS OFFENSE	9003
Prostitution	12042
Reckless Driving: 1st Offense	3602
Reckless Driving: 2nd & Subsequent Offense	3552
Reporting False Emergency	5802
Resisting Arrest	5793
Robbery: 1st Degree*	1051
Robbery: 2nd Degree*	1061
Runaway (STATUS OFFENSE)	8933
Safe School Act Violation	5823
Sexual Abuse: 1st Degree	1201
Sexual Abuse: 2nd Degree	3462
Sexual Abuse: 3rd Degree	3592
Sexual Assault: 1st Degree	1031
Sexual Assault: 2nd Degree	1041
Sexual Assault: 3rd Degree	1211
Sexual Offenses, Other	1222
Sexual Procurement- Child Under 16	1221
Shooting Across Roads, Etc.	5752
Shooting, Negligent	3582
Shooting, Unlawful	3432
Shoplifting: 1st Offense	4732
Shoplifting: 2nd Offense	4692
Shoplifting: 3rd & Subsequent Offense	2341
Stalking: 1st Offense (Misd.)	3531 A
Stalking: 2nd Offense (Felony)	3531 B
Stolen Property: Transferring and/or Receiving (Felony)	11063
Stolen Property: Transferring and/or Receiving (Misd.)	4642
Stolen Vehicle, Possession Of	11031
Telephone Harassment (Misd.)	3532
Tobacco, Possession Of By Minor (Misd.)	11052
Traffic Violations	3622
Treason: Crimes Against Government	5833
Trespassing	4712
Truancy (STATUS OFFENSE)	8943
Uttering	2361
Vandalism	4623
Wanton Endangerment	11071
Weapon, Brandishing	3492
Weapon, Carrying Concealed Deadly	5742
Weapon, Possession of by a Minor	5743
Weapon, Possession of on School Property	5744
White Cane Laws	13000
Worthless Checks	4672
Can't Find Code for Offense Charged	9999

\* See WV Code §61-2-12 a

\* See WV Code §61-2-12 b

## Table 1

### List of Offenses

1. Petit Larceny
2. Entering without Breaking-automobile
3. Underage Consumption
4. Possession of Marihuana
5. Fleeing
6. Driving under the Influence of Alcohol
7. Traffic Violations (Reckless Driving, Driving without a license, Speeding, Following too closely, Failure to Maintain Control of a Vehicle, Improper Insurance, Failure to provide Proper Registration, Driving on a Suspended License, and Improper Inspection)
8. Possession of Tobacco
9. Destruction of Property
10. Battery
11. Shoplifting
12. School Violations
13. Breaking and Entering-automobile
14. Breaking and Entering
15. Assault
16. Domestic Battery
17. False Bomb Threat-Felony
18. Curfew Violations
19. Positive Drug Screen
20. Desecration of a Cemetery
21. Conspiracy
22. Failure to Pay Restitution
23. Trespassing
24. Joyriding
25. Violation of No Contact
26. Runaway
27. Grand Larceny
28. Battery on a School Employee
29. Assault on a School Employee
30. Battery on a Police Officer
31. Burglary
32. Receiving/Transferring Stolen Property
33. Incurigibility
34. Tampering with a Vehicle
35. Public Intoxication
36. Manufacturing/Delivery of a Controlled Substance
37. Providing False Information to a Law Enforcement Officer



38. Indecent Exposure
39. Carrying a Concealed Weapon
40. Violation of Home Confinement
41. Domestic Assault
42. Obstructing an Officer
43. Failure to report to Probation Officer
44. Left the State without permission
45. Possession of Alcohol
46. Failure to Provide a Urine Screen
47. Forgery
48. False Bomb Threat-Misdemeanor
49. Malicious Assault
50. Sexual Assault-Third Degree
51. Division of Natural Resources Violation
52. Sexual Assault-First Degree
53. Sexual Abuse-First Degree

## Table 2

List of Levels and Offenses associated with each category

### **Status Offenses**

Underage Consumption, School Violations, Curfew Violations, Positive Drug Screen, Failure to Pay Restitution, Violation of No Contact, Runaway, Incurability, Violation of Home Confinement, Failure to report to Probation Officer, Left the State without permission, Possession of Alcohol, and Failure to Provide a Urine Screen

### **Misdemeanor Offenses**

Petit Larceny, Entering without Breaking-automobile, Possession of Marihuana, Fleeing, Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol, Traffic Violations, Possession of Tobacco, Destruction of Property, Battery, Shoplifting, Breaking and Entering-automobile, Assault, Domestic Battery, Desecration of Cemetery, Trespassing, Joyriding, Battery on a School Employee, Assault on a School Employee, Battery on a Police Officer, Tampering with a Vehicle, Public Intoxication, Providing False Information to a Law Enforcement Officer, Indecent Exposure, Carrying a Concealed Weapon, Domestic Assault, Obstructing an Officer, False Bomb Threat-M, Malicious Assault, and Division of Natural Resources Violations

### **Felony Offenses**

Breaking and Entering, False Bomb Threat-F, Conspiracy, Grand Larceny, Burglary, Transferring Stolen Property, Manufacturing/Delivery of a Controlled Substance, Forgery, Sexual Assault-Third Degree, Sexual Assault-First Degree, and Sexual Abuse-First Degree

## Table 3

### Victims

1. **Crimes Against the Person** (Chapter 61 Article 2 of the West Virginia Code): Battery, Assault, Domestic Battery, Battery on a School Employee, Assault on a School Employee, Battery on a Police Officer, Domestic Assault, and Malicious Assault
2. **Crimes Against Property** (Chapter 61 Article 3 of the West Virginia Code): Petit Larceny, Entering without Breaking-automobile, Destruction of Property, Shoplifting, Breaking and Entering-automobile, Breaking and Entering. Trespassing, Grand Larceny, Burglary, and Transferring/Receiving Stolen Property
3. **Forgery and Crimes Against the Currency** (Chapter 61 Article 4 of the West Virginia Code): Forgery
4. **Crimes Against Public Justice** (Chapter 61 Article 5 of the West Virginia Code): Fleeing, Providing False Information to a Law Enforcement Officer, and Obstructing
5. **Crimes Against the Peace** (Chapter 61 Article 6 of the West Virginia Code): False Bomb Threat-F, Conspiracy, Public Intoxication, and False Bomb Threat-M
6. **Dangerous Weapons** (Chapter 61 Article 7 of the West Virginia Code): Carrying a Concealed Weapon
7. **Crimes Against Chastity, Morality and Decency** (Chapter 61 Article 8 of the West Virginia Code): Desecration of a Cemetery, Indecent Exposure, Sexual Assault-3<sup>rd</sup> Degree, Sexual Assault-1<sup>st</sup> Degree, and Sexual Abuse-3<sup>rd</sup> Degree
8. **Public Health** (Chapter 16 of the West Virginia Code): Possession of Tobacco
9. **Roads and Highways** (Chapter 17 of the West Virginia Code): Traffic Violations, Joyriding, and Tampering with a Vehicle
10. **Natural Resources** (Chapter 20 of the West Virginia Code): DNR Violations
11. **Child Welfare** (Chapter 49 of the West Virginia Code): Underage Consumption, School Violations, Curfew Violations, Positive Drug Screens, Failure to Pay Restitution, Violation of No Contact, Runaway, Incurigibility, Failure to Report to Probation Officer, Left the State without permission, and Failure to Provide a drug screen
12. **State Control of Alcoholic Liquors** (Chapter 60 of the West Virginia Code): Possession of Marihuana, Manufacturing/Delivery of a Controlled Substance, and Possession of Alcohol
13. **Criminal Procedure** (Chapter 62 of the West Virginia Code): Violation of Home Confinement

Angela D. Mullens  
49 Island Avenue  
Buckhannon, West Virginia 26201  
304-473-0698

OBJECTIVE: To further my career opportunities

EDUCATION: 1995 Bachelor of Science  
Criminal Justice – Major/Sociology - Minor  
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OCCUPATION: West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeal Probation Officer  
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