



Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Section – 2005

I10 Intellectual Deficits Detected by Psychometric Testing (WISC-IV) in Fifty Adolescents Referred, for a Pre-pleading Evaluation, to the New York Criminal Court's Forensic Psychiatry Clinic After Committing a Violent Crime

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn that intellectual functioning is a major risk factor in adolescents who commit violent crimes. The attendees will consider screening for cognitive deficits (i.e., low I.Q.) in this population in hopes of preventing future violent crimes by referring them to appropriate treatment.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by making forensic scientists who deal with adolescents and their behaviors more mindful about cognitive deficits as a predisposing factor in teenage-violence. The presentation may motivate the audience to consider testing the cognitive functioning of this population, and by doing so, appropriate treatment can be recommended and future violent acts avoided.

Deficient intellectual functioning plays a major role in teenagers who are involved in violent crimes. The purpose of this study is to analyze the data provided by psychometric testing (WISCIV) done in adolescents who committed violent crimes. In general, standardized psychometric testing, specifically testing that yields an intellectual coefficient (i.e. WISC IV) is not routinely performed as part of the initial forensic evaluation in juveniles who commit violent crimes. If teenagers are identified with borderline cognitive limitations, mild retardation, and perhaps even, subtle intellectual deficits, in this population, future violence may be avoided. The method used for this study is a retrospective chart revision of 50 patients between the ages of 15 and 17 who were referred by a single judge from the New York City Criminal Court to the Forensic Psychiatry Clinic for a forensic evaluation to determine fitness to stand trial, and who received the WISC-IV as part of the evaluation. The data is currently in the process of being collected and analyzed. Once the data is obtained and results produced, we might conclude that psychometric testing should be routinely administered to juveniles who committed violent crimes.

Cognitive Deficits, Adolescents, Violent Crimes