SECTION

3

The Social Context of Delinquency

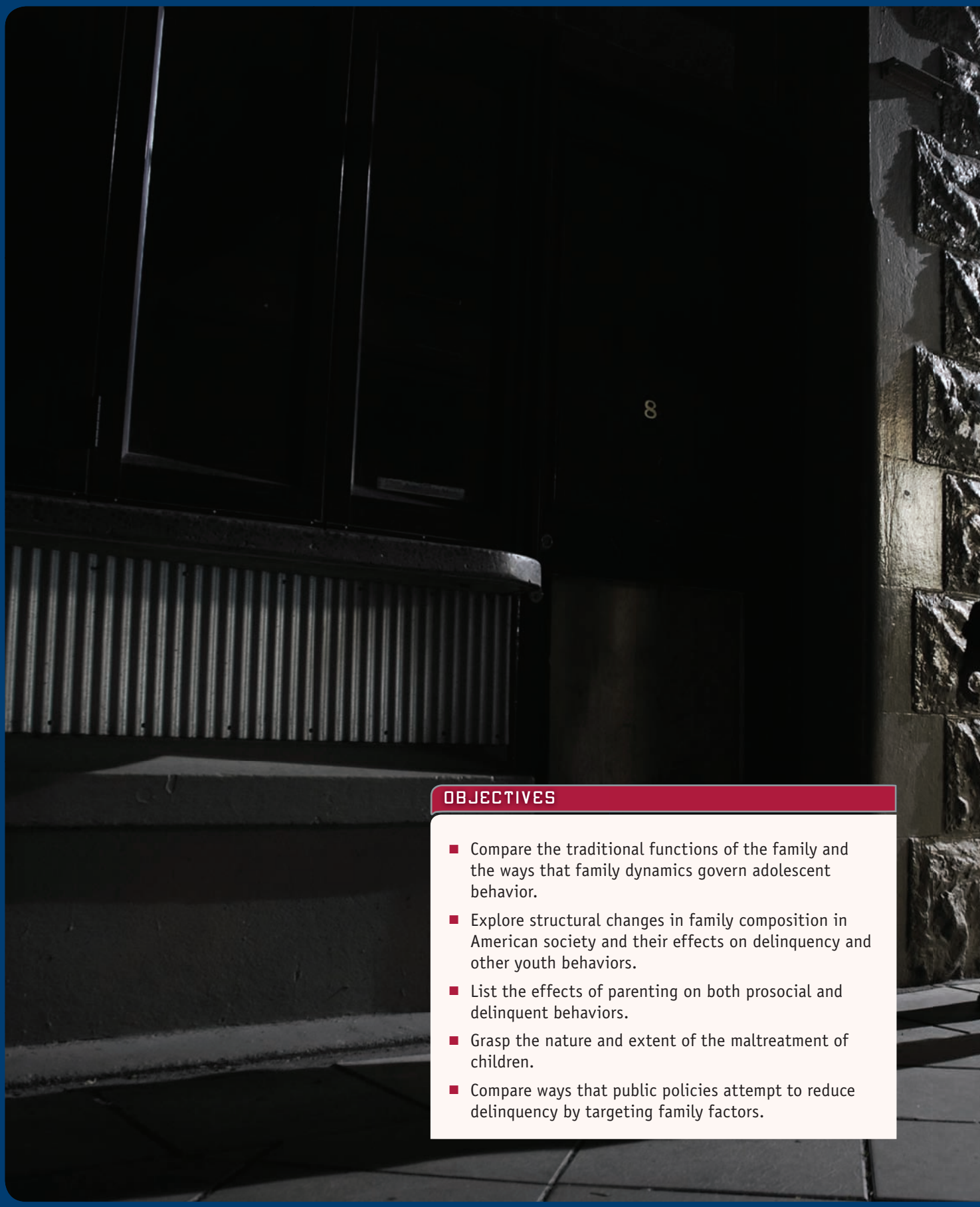
Previous sections of the text examined the nature of juvenile delinquency as it has come to be defined, measured, and explained. How delinquency is defined and measured largely determines how criminologists explain it. The theories and explanations that have evolved, however, must also be connected to the social reality of delinquency. This section examines juvenile delinquency within its societal context.

Juvenile delinquency is closely tied to those social groupings or institutions where children spend most of their time: with the family, in school, and with friends. It is here, in these contexts, that the groundwork for delinquency, drug use, and violence is laid. Chapter 7 examines conditions in the family that directly or indirectly contribute to a child's delinquency. The traditional functions of the family—socializing of children, inculcating moral values, regulating sexual activity, and providing material, physical, and emotional security—as well as the traditional structure of the family, have undergone substantial change during the past 50 years. Many of the changes have increased tension, anxiety, and conflict levels within the family. Single-parent families, working mothers, and inadequate parenting skills have been identified as contributing in one way or another to delinquency. So, too, have the problems of divorce, including custody battles, forced visitation, and failure to pay court-ordered support for noncustodial children. Compared to whatever extent basic parenting skills and structural change within families influence the likelihood of delinquency; current research rather consistently suggests that familial maltreatment of children has even greater effects.

Children spend close to half of their waking hours in school. Chapter 8 explores how schools not only are locations of adolescent crime, but also may directly or indirectly contribute to the problem of youth crime. Although rates of violent crime in schools have declined in recent years, students and teachers are still victimized in the educational setting. Bullying has recently gained national attention as a possible correlate—if not a cause—of school violence. Schools continue to grapple with the problems associated with high rates of both dropouts and troublesome students who stay in school. To what extent do the built-in stresses and conflicts of the schooling process, the temptations and pressures of peers, and the enforcement of school rules with sanctions ranging from suspensions to corporal punishment contribute to disruptive behaviors and more serious delinquencies?

Chapter 9 explores two of the most troubling aspects of delinquent behavior: drug use and violence. Both types of delinquency exist on a wide continuum ranging from less serious forms of drug use and violence, such as experimenting with alcohol or marijuana and getting into fist fights, to severe forms, such as narcotics use, addiction, drug selling, and crimes such as murder, rape, and armed robbery. Chapter 9 explores the ways that adolescents commit drug and violent crimes and examines the linkages between these behaviors and more general forms of delinquency.

Chapter 10 looks at juvenile delinquency within the context of peer groups and gangs. Are children more likely to violate norms and laws when with their friends? Are juvenile gangs simply more formal and violent expressions of more normal school and neighborhood peer groups? Why do juveniles form gangs? How do the cultural experiences of various racial and ethnic groups affect the development of juvenile gangs? Whereas criminologists may ponder the difficulties in defining gangs, local law enforcement and politicians often draw upon statutory definitions to support get-tough approaches to gang suppression. Might intervention and prevention policies provide a more effective long-term solution to the gang problem?



OBJECTIVES

- Compare the traditional functions of the family and the ways that family dynamics govern adolescent behavior.
- Explore structural changes in family composition in American society and their effects on delinquency and other youth behaviors.
- List the effects of parenting on both prosocial and delinquent behaviors.
- Grasp the nature and extent of the maltreatment of children.
- Compare ways that public policies attempt to reduce delinquency by targeting family factors.

CHAPTER

The Family and Delinquency

7

FEATURES

A WINDOW ON DELINQUENCY

DELINQUENCY **CONTROVERSY**

The family is the most important social institution. The earliest and most critical stages of a child's socialization occur within the family. The family is largely responsible for instilling in children important moral and religious values and understanding about right and wrong. However, as a Chinese proverb states, "No family is perfect." No family can claim that it does not have problems. Family problems, however, vary greatly in both type and magnitude (see the "A Window on Delinquency" feature). The problems of some families may be minor and produce only small consequences for family members. By comparison, other families may experience greater problems whose impact on the family members may be significant. One consequence families often face is juvenile delinquency.

A WINDOW ON DELINQUENCY

Family Violence in the United States

Family violence is a troubling public health problem that produces many negative consequences for children, including increased school-related problems, alcohol and substance abuse, delinquency, and mental health problems (e.g., depression). Witnessing, perpetrating, or being the victim of family violence during childhood or adolescence also significantly increases the likelihood that a child will himself or herself use violence against partners and family members.

How prevalent is family violence? The following snapshot highlights some of the national data from surveys conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and databases maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation:

- The rate of family violence is 2 victims per 1000 U.S. residents age 12 or older.
- Between 1998 and 2002, approximately 4 million violent family crimes were committed, accounting for 11 percent of all violent victimizations in this country.
- Approximately 49 percent of all family violence is perpetrated against a spouse.
- Simple assault is the most common form of family violence.
- Between 1998 and 2002, 0.5 percent incidents of family violence were murders.
- Approximately 75 percent of family violence occurs in or near the victim's residence.
- Women represent 73 percent of family violence victims, including 84 percent of spousal assault victimizations.
- Approximately 75 percent of the perpetrators of family violence are men.
- Most family violence victims are white (74 percent) and between the ages of 25 and 54 (66 percent). Most family violence offenders are also white (79 percent) and age 30 or older (62 percent).
- Approximately 60 percent of family violence victimizations are reported to police.
- Of the 2 million incidents of family violence reported to police from 1998 to 2002, 36 percent resulted in an arrest.
- Approximately 75,000 offenders are currently serving time in state prisons for family violence convictions.

Modified from: Matthew Durose, Caroline Wolf Harlow, Patrick Langan, Mark Motivans, Ramona Rantala, and Erica Smith, *Family Violence Statistics* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2005); Kathleen Sternberg, Michael Lamb, Eva Guterman, and Craig Abbott, "The Effects of Early and Later Family Violence on Behavior Problems and Depression," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 30 (2006): 283–306; Rochelle Hanson, Shannon Self-Brown, Adrienne Fricker-Elhai, Dean Kilpatrick, Benjamin Saunders, and Heidi Resnick, "Relations Between Family Environment and Violence Exposure Among Youth: Findings from the National Survey of Adolescents," *Child Maltreatment* 11 (2006): 3–15.

The family has long been considered to play an important role in producing or reducing delinquency. For example, in 1915 Douglas Morrison wrote that "among social circumstances which have a hand in determining the future of the individual it is enough for our present purpose to recognize that the family is chief."[1] Nearly a century later, we are bombarded in the news with appalling cases of delinquency and violence occurring by and within families:

- In California, a mother doused herself and her two children, ages 4 years and 18 months, with gasoline and set her family on fire because she was stressed about her marriage. All parties died in the blaze.[2]
- In Ohio, a mother was convicted of killing her 1-month-old daughter by incinerating her in a microwave oven.[3]
- In Texas, a 25-year-old woman and her boyfriend were arrested by FBI agents for attempting to sell her 5-year-old daughter on the Internet to a child molester.[4]
- A mother in California was convicted of several crimes for driving her son and his friends to a rival gang member's house to take part in a drive-by shooting.[5]
- In Florida, a 12-year-old boy who was left to babysit his 17-month-old cousin was charged with murder after killing the toddler with a baseball bat when he became enraged that she cried and interrupted his cartoon show.[6]
- In 2009, a report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 1 in 50 infants suffers some form of abuse or neglect.[7]

Based on these reports, it is no wonder that the family is related in some way to antisocial behaviors.

At the same time, we are also bombarded daily with the truly wonderful effects that come from parents loving and investing in their children. This is an important point to consider. Just as many negative parental behaviors create harm for children and place them at risk for delinquency, so too many positive parental behaviors protect and insulate children from an assortment of risks, including delinquency and victimization.[8] For instance, Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew and her colleagues used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study–Birth Cohort to examine how father involvement is positively associated with infant cognitive outcomes including language development, such as babbling and exploring objects with a purpose. These researchers found that various types of father involvement, such as cognitively stimulating activities, physical care, paternal warmth, and caregiving activities, are associated with a reduced likelihood of infant cognitive delay. Interestingly, father involvement is related to greater reductions in infant cognitive delay for male infants than for female infants and for infants with disabilities than for infants without such challenges. These findings point to the importance of considering fathers' roles in early infant outcomes, which, of course, have implications for outcomes occurring later in life.[9]

How do families contribute to the delinquent behavior of their children? In this chapter, after discussing traditional functions of the family, we explore the effects of varying family structures, family dynamics, and parenting styles on delinquency.

Traditional Functions of the Family

Traditionally, the family has performed four principal functions: the socialization of children, the inculcation of moral values, the reproduction and regulation of sexual activity, and the provision of material, physical, and emotional security.

Socialization occurs throughout a child's development and the long-term effects of good parenting are many.

Socialization of Children

The family is the first and most important social unit to affect children; it is the first social world the child encounters. **Socialization** is the process through which children learn the ways of a particular society or social group so that they can function within it. Individuals learn the attitudes, behaviors, and social roles considered appropriate for them from already-socialized individuals—typically parents and other family members. Through the socialization process in families, the personalities, values, and beliefs of children are initially shaped. Families aid in the development of stable and emotionally secure individuals and enhance the cognitive and language development of children by providing a variety of intellectually rich and stimulating experiences. Parents and older family members also serve as role models, transmitting educational values and providing environments in which children can safely develop a sense of autonomy.[10]

Of course, families are not isolated groups, but rather exist within a larger social and cultural context. As a consequence, they will reflect the family's particular class, ethnic, racial, religious, political, and regional characteristics. In turn, the child's socialization is somewhat selective, depending on the background and contextual experiences of his or her particular family.[11]

The socialization of children also entails guidance about the proper ways to act and to avoid improper—delinquent—behavior. It appears that the traditional or "nuclear" family is best at insulating children from delinquency: Evidence shows that delinquency levels are 15 percent lower on average among youths from intact families compared to youths from non-intact families. Robert Apel and Catherine Kaukinen used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and found youths in two-biological-parent or intact families committed the fewest kinds of antisocial behaviors. They also found that youths in *blended families* (in which the child lives with both of his or her biological parents, but has half- and step-siblings who may or may not reside in the household) and in *intact cohabiting families* (in which the child's unmarried biological parents live together) were significantly more antisocial than their counterparts in *nuclear households* (defined as two married biological parents plus their children, with no half- or step-siblings). The difference between blended and nuclear households is accounted for by a variety of structural and experiential factors, the most important of which include disadvantage related to family income, government aid, teenage motherhood, grade repetition, scholastic performance, antisocial peers, and prior antisocial behavior. Apel and Kaukinen also reported that youths who live in one-biological-parent families have the highest risk of antisocial behavior when the biological father is the custodian.[12]

Of course, a major reason for this finding is that two parents are better able to supervise and monitor children than one parent. This consideration is particularly important when it comes to parental monitoring of peers. Keeping children away from delinquent peers goes a long way toward preventing one's own child from becoming delinquent. For instance, recent research by Frank Dillon and his colleagues found that parental monitoring of peers can significantly reduce a host of adolescent delinquencies, including drug use, externalizing behaviors, and risky sexual behaviors.[13]

At a theoretical level, families are also the primary locus for teaching children self-control, which is a major inhibitor of delinquency. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Gottfredson and Hirschi argue that adolescents who have low self-control are more likely to participate in delinquency than are youth with greater self-control, and the primary "'cause'" of low self-control is ineffective child rearing."[14] While we will discuss

A WINDOW ON DELINQUENCY

The Effects of Having Prisoner Parents

Children who grow up to be well-functioning adults experience security and stability as they develop and are effectively socialized to take on conventional roles in society. In contrast, children who grow up in families in which a parent is incarcerated may have experiences that do not promote their development into a well-functioning adult. In other words, having a mom or a dad in prison is not normal and probably will result in many negative outcomes for children. What are these outcomes?

Anne Dannerbeck examined 1112 juvenile offenders in Missouri, 31 percent of whom had a parental history of incarceration. She found that parents who had previously been imprisoned had the following characteristics:

- They exhibited lower levels of effective parenting.
- They exhibited higher levels of ineffective parenting.
- They exhibited more substance abuse problems.
- They exhibited more psychiatric problems.
- They were more likely to physically abuse their children.
- They were more likely to lose their children to out of home placement.
- They were significantly more likely to have children with serious delinquent histories.

The multifaceted negative effects of prisoner parents on children are not limited to the United States. For instance, Joseph Murray and David Farrington evaluated the effects of parental imprisonment on a cohort of London boys during the first 10 years of life. The results were dramatic: Boys whose mother or father had been imprisoned were significantly more delinquent than their peers who had more normal upbringings. In fact, the independent effect of parental imprisonment continued to predict antisocial behavior and crime when the boys were 32 years old. In short, prisoner parents inflict a variety of serious risks on their children, many of which continue to cause problems into adulthood.

Modified from: Anne Dannerbeck, "Differences in Parenting Attributes, Experiences, and Behaviors of Delinquent Youth with and Without a Parental History of Incarceration," *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 3 (2005): 199–213; Joseph Murray and David Farrington, "Parental Imprisonment: Effects on Boys' Antisocial Behavior and Delinquency Through the Life-Course," *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 46 (2005): 1269–1278.

parenting or child-rearing practices at greater length later in this chapter, note that a key ingredient in the socialization of children is the development of an appropriate level of self-control. Unfortunately, one's own family and family structure can contribute to delinquency. Recently economists who study birth order discovered that merely having an older sibling increases the likelihood that younger brothers and sisters will misbehave. Younger siblings were 3 to 7 percent more likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, smoke marijuana, and be sexually active if they had an older brother or sister. While the purpose of the family is to socialize children for positive behaviors, sometimes that socialization also has negative consequences (see the "A Window on Delinquency" feature).[15]

Inculcation of Moral Values

One of the most critical aspects of socialization is the development of moral values in children. Moral education, or the training of the individual to be inclined toward the good, involves a number of things, including learning the rules of society and the

In families, children learn the ways of society. They learn attitudes, behaviors, and social roles. The child in this family is learning about the importance of education.

development of good habits.[16] Youth who have developed higher levels of prosocial moral reasoning, such as operating according to empathetic motives and internalizing values that would lead youth to act in ways to benefit others and society, are less likely to engage in aggressive behavior and delinquency.[17] Although the church and school complement the family in both teaching and setting examples of moral behavior, it is in the family where the development of moral virtue or good character is effectively formed or left unformed.[18]

Psychologist Robert Coles puts it this way:

> Good children are boys and girls who in the first place have learned to take seriously the very notion, the desirability, of goodness—a living up to the Golden Rule, a respect for others, a commitment of mind, heart, soul to one's family, neighborhood, nation—and have also learned that the issue of goodness is not an abstract one, but rather a concrete, expressive one: how to turn the rhetoric of goodness into action, moments that affirm the presence of goodness in a particular lived life.[19]

Similarly, the Children's Defense Fund advocates that every child deserves a *moral start* in life, meaning that he or she should be taught the enduring values of honesty, hard work, discipline, respect for self and others, responsibility, and of doing unto others as they would have done to themselves.[20]

The nineteenth-century French sociologist Emile Durkheim believed that the integrative function of religion was crucial for maintaining social order. Social cohesion was enhanced through shared values and norms generally originating from religious practice. When parents view religion as important, communicate religious values and practices to their children, and involve their children in religious activities, inclinations toward delinquency are reduced. Religious beliefs, according to Bruce Chadwick and Brent Top, have long been understood to be the foundation for moral behavior; thus, "the more religious a person is, the less likely he or she will be to participate in delinquent or criminal behaviors."[21]

There is much evidence that an adolescent's religiosity—typically measured by religious participation, including church attendance, private prayer, Bible study, discussion of one's belief in God with others, belief in this-world or other-worldly sanctions, and attitudes and behaviors reflecting an individual's commitment to the religious teachings of his or her faith—is negatively related to delinquency. A recent analysis of 60 published studies conducted over the last 30 years examining the relationship between religion and delinquency concluded that "religious behavior and beliefs exert a significant, moderate deterrent effect on individuals' criminal behavior."[22] Byron Johnson and his colleagues examined the impact of religiosity on more than 2300 at-risk African American juveniles living in poverty tracts in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. They found that church attendance—even after controlling for background and other nonreligious variables, such as secular bonding and informal social controls through the family and school—has an independent effect on nondrug crime, drug use, and drug dealing among the disadvantaged youth.[23]

Other studies have also found religion to have a deterrent impact on delinquency. In one investigation, Brent Benda and Robert Corwyn looked at random samples of youth from two public schools in the inner city of a large, East Coast city and from three rural public schools in the South. They concluded that religion is inversely related to crime among adolescents in both urban and rural public schools, although it did not appear

to affect rates of illicit drug use among the youths. Benda and Corwyn speculate that drug use may have reached a widely "normalized" level of acceptable behavior within teen culture.[24]

Interestingly, the most frequently cited work on the topic of religiosity and delinquency is an article titled "Hellfire and Delinquency," written by Travis Hirschi and Rodney Stark. These authors reported that there was *no* link between religiosity, which in their study was based on church and Sunday school attendance, and belief in hell and delinquent behavior. The popularity of the study's findings "that religion fails to guide teenagers along the straight and narrow was soon enshrined in undergraduate textbooks."[25] Subsequent research, however, consistently has found strong negative initial effects of religion on delinquency. Stark accounts for the relative uniqueness of their findings as a product of his and Hirschi's study being done on the West Coast, where there is very low religious involvement compared to other regions of the country. By comparison, studies conducted in the East, South, Midwest, and Rocky Mountain states have consistently found an adolescent's religiosity, especially when reinforced by family and peer religiousness, to have a preventative effect on delinquency.[26] Today, Stark does not hesitate to state, "Other things being equal, religious individuals will be less likely than those who are not religious to commit deviant acts."[27]

Reproduction and Regulation of Sexual Activity

The family is the traditional social unit for sexual reproduction. The family teaches children society's norms about sexual conduct, including what is acceptable and what is unacceptable. In the family, children learn at what age, with whom, and under which circumstances they may engage in sexual relationships. Children also learn in the family about the consequences of sexual activity—that is, if pregnancy occurs, who is responsible for the care and maintenance of the infant and how such care should be provided.[28]

Jennifer Manlove and her colleagues assessed the link between religiosity and risky sexual behaviors among a large sample of more than 6000 youths from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Their findings are summarized here:

- Family religiosity led to stronger parent–child relationships, higher parental monitoring and awareness of where the child is, and more routine family activities, such as eating dinner together regularly.
- These elements of family cohesion reduce risky teen sexual behavior regardless of family religiosity.
- Sexually active male teens from more religious families are less likely to use contraceptives consistently—a finding that conveys the importance of abstaining from sex for these youths, but also highlights the need for contraception once they become sexually active.
- For girls, being from a more religious family is indirectly linked with having fewer sexual partners and greater contraceptive consistency through a later age at first sex, more positive peer environments, and higher levels of parental monitoring and awareness.
- The benefits of delaying sex include reduced exposure to the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and greater contraceptive use.[29]

Provision of Material, Physical, and Emotional Security

Families are the primary providers of the material well-being of their members. Put simply, the family clothes, feeds, and provides shelter for its members. Parents or older siblings provide supervision and monitoring of younger children to ensure their safety

The n umber o f child ren's books in a child's room has been shown to influence his or her test scores in subsequent years. What other benefits may come from owning books and reading to a child?

and obedience. In addition, the family provides for the physical security of its members, and the mere presence of family members in the home functions to protect the family from potential thieves, vandals, and burglars.[30] Finally, the family provides emotional security to its members through giving encouragement, support, and unconditional love.

The elements that families—and especially parents—provide to children are cumulative. In many ways, some of the best predictors of a child's life outcomes are his or her parents' backgrounds. In their landmark book *Freakonomics*, Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner suggest that "who" your parents are is more meaningful in explaining children's success or failure than those individuals' parenting ability. Similarly, Levitt and Dubner found that a child with at least 50 children's books in his or her room scores about five percentile points higher on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test than a child with no books, and a child with 100 books scores another five percentile points higher than a child with 50 books. Highly educated, well-paid parents who waited until age 30 to start families had children with the highest test scores. Other important parenting factors, such as TV watching, whether the mother worked, whether children went to museums, and whether the child attended a Head Start program, did not affect test scores nearly as much. Levitt and Dubner suggest that parenting techniques are highly overrated when it comes to assessing the material and human resources available to children. By the time most parents pick up a book on parenting techniques, it's too late: Many of the things that matter most were decided long before that point, such as how much education the parents had, how hard they worked to build careers, who they married, and how long they waited to have children.[31]

The world is not perfect, however, and many families fail at achieving one or more of these goals. Unfortunately, some families transmit values that promote violence or criminality and undermine the development of positive self-concepts among children. All too often, families fail to inculcate moral values or virtues in their young. Likewise, too many families fail to provide adequate material, physical, and emotional security to their members when parents divorce or fail to marry in the first place or when they engage in disreputable or criminal behavior, thereby ignoring the primary needs of the children.

The Changing Family

A number of changes in the American family during the past few decades have engendered controversy and prompted much debate over the meaning and implications of the trends. In 1970, 85 percent of children younger than age 18 lived with both mother and father; 35 years later, only 67 percent of children lived with both parents. Approximately 20 million children live with one parent—17 million with their mother and 3 million with their father. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, demographers suggest that a majority of U.S. children will spend a portion of their childhood in families with only one parent.[32] In 2006, for the first time in American history, the majority of households (50.2 percent) were composed of unmarried couples.

In the same year, nearly 40 percent of babies born in the United States were out of wedlock. Whereas out-of-wedlock births used to be considered shameful (and referred to as "illegitimate births"), today they are so commonplace that they are statistically almost the norm. In fact, approximately 17 percent of fathers aged 16 to 45 have had children with more than one woman, and one-third of these fathers have children with

multiple women across a series of nonmarital relationships.[33] This trend is troubling. According to James Q. Wilson:

> Compared to children who are raised by their biological father and mother, those raised by mothers, black or white, who have never married are more likely to be poor, to acquire less schooling, to be expelled or suspended from school, to experience emotional or behavioral problems, to display antisocial behavior, to have trouble getting along with their peers, and to start their own single-parent families. These unhappy outcomes afflict both girls and boys, but they have a more adverse effect on boys.[34]

Changes in the American family produce many unintended consequences, including the most serious forms of delinquency. For example, Jennifer Schwartz has shown that family structure influences the murder rate. Counties with greater levels of family disruption, defined as single-parent, female-headed households, have higher murder rates than counties where traditional family structures dominate. Schwartz found that a 1 percent increase in a community's level of family disruption increased homicides by women 11 percent and by men 25 percent. In places where at least 20 percent of the households are female headed, the male homicide rate is 125 percent higher and the female homicide rate is 55 percent higher.[35]

Many other changes have occurred in the American family in recent decades. Some of these changes are good, some bad, and some just different. For example, the United States is becoming a more adult-focused society after being a child-centered society for decades. Longer life expectancy, delayed marriage and child rearing, and more childlessness equate to a longer life without children. In a way, raising children—an activity that was once central to most adults' lives—has become a niche in the life course.[36] At the same time, other research indicates that both married and single parents are spending more time with their children, almost as much as they did 40 years ago. Also, men perform more housework than ever before.[37]

How do these changes affect satisfaction with family life? The Pew Research Center conducted a poll of 3000 Americans and found that family ties are as strong as ever. Approximately 42 percent of U.S. adults see or talk to a parent daily, an increase of 10 percent from 1989. Nearly 80 percent of adults have daily contact with distant relatives each day, usually through email or telephone. Overall, 72 percent of adults indicated that they were very satisfied with their family life.[38]

Perhaps because of these changing trends, persons in other countries hold conflicting opinions of the American family. According to family researchers, persons living in certain Asian, African, and South American countries consider the American nuclear family of husband, wife, and children (and not extended relatives and in-laws) to be the ideal family composition. American families are also lauded for marriages based on love and companionship (rather than arranged marriages), material comfort, and independence. On the downside, American families are criticized for placing too much emphasis on work and not enough emphasis on children as well as for being selfish and overly individualistic.[39] The central point of opinion surveys is that family structure directly affects quality of life and other social indicators.

Single-Parent Families

What might account for the increase in **single-parent families**? Linda Gordon and Sara McLanahan point out that in 1900 only about 5 percent of all children in single-parent homes were living with a parent who was divorced or had never married. Most of the parents in these homes were widowed.[40] However, by the early twenty-first century, only about 5 percent of all female-headed households with children had experienced

the death of the father; about 37 percent had experienced parental divorce; and in 36 percent of these homes, the parents had never married. The remaining 22 percent of the households were classified as "married, spouse absent."[41]

Nearly 1 million American teenagers become pregnant each year, with approximately 40 percent aborting their pregnancies. The birth rate for teenagers ages 15–18 is 42 births per 1000 females, although the rates vary by race. For example, the birth rate for white, non-Latino teenagers is 27 per 1000 females, for African American teenagers is 64 per 1000 females, and for Hispanic teenagers it is 82 per 1000 females.

Teen birth rates also vary by location. For example, the teen birth rate in Miami (174 births per 1000 females) is six times the rates in San Francisco and Seattle (28 per 1000). In fact, teen birth rates in most large U.S. cities are well above the national average; 41 of the 50 largest cities have birth rates above the national average. Most teenage births are to *unmarried teenagers*. Although the birth rate for unmarried teenagers has fallen since 1991, births to unmarried girls ages 15–17 accounted for 88 percent of these births, while about 97 percent of births to girls younger than 15 years involved unmarried mothers.[42]

Single-parent families are not evenly distributed across racial and ethnic groups. Today, approximately 23 percent of white children, 35 percent of Hispanic children, and 64 percent of African American children are being raised by a single parent. Single-parent families also are disproportionately at or near the poverty level: The poverty rate for single-parent families is approximately five times higher than that for two-parent families. Eight percent of children in two-parent families live in poverty, while 42 percent of children in female-headed families are at or below the poverty level. Although race and ethnicity are related to poverty, such dramatic differences in family poverty rates are not solely a function of race or ethnicity: Only 12 percent of African American children living with their married parents live in poverty, while nearly 50 percent of African American children living in female-headed households live below the poverty level.[43]

Teenage mothers are three times more likely than other teenagers to drop out of school, and they typically earn less money than unmarried mothers who do not have their first child until they are in their twenties. They are also more likely to spend longer periods of time living in poverty. In one study, Sara Jaffee and her colleagues examined the effects of teenage motherhood on the children 20 years later. Approximately 40 percent of the negative life outcomes that these youths experienced (e.g., delinquency, unemployment, school failure, adult crime) were directly and independently explained by their mothers having given birth as teenagers.[44] Overall, teenage childbearing is costly to taxpayers, with the federal government spending nearly $40 billion each year to assist families that began with a teenage birth.[45]

As Travis Hirschi points out, the teenage mother herself should not be targeted as the primary problem. According to Hirschi, "the teenage mother is not the problem. . . . The problem is the mother without a husband. Her children are likely to be delinquent, and she is likely to have more of them." He argues there should be two parents for every child and that delinquency can be reduced by improving the quality of child-rearing practices. This means strengthening the bonds not only between parents and children, but also between husbands and wives.[46] Indeed, father absence creates a host of problems for girls. Compared to girls who reside with both parents, girls who live without fathers are more likely to be diagnosed with conduct disorder (see Chapter 3), to be diagnosed with mood and anxiety disorders, to attempt suicide, to drop out of school, and to commit violent forms of delinquency.[47]

What about teenage fathers? What are the consequences of fatherhood for adolescent boys? Somewhere between 2 and 7 percent of male teenagers are fathers. Teen fatherhood is associated with growing up in poverty and hanging out with friends who engage in

delinquency and other problem behaviors. Like teenage mothers, teenage fathers experience many negative educational, financial, social, health, and other developmental consequences. They are more likely to drop out of school and to enter the workplace earlier than their peers and to earn less money than their peers when they reach their mid-twenties. Interestingly, boys who become teenage fathers are also likely to engage in a variety of other problem behaviors, such as status offenses, disruptive school behavior, and illicit drug use. According to Terence Thornberry and his colleagues:

> Young fathers tended to be troubled young men who were significantly more likely than their matched controls to have engaged in varied serious acts of delinquency in the year of fatherhood and in the year after. . . . They were more likely than nonfathers to have had a court petition alleging delinquency, to be drinking alcohol frequently, to be involved in drug dealing, or to have dropped out of school.[48]

Unfortunately, teen fathers are unlikely to be in a position to provide financial, emotional, or other parental support for their children; as a consequence, they are likely to be poor role models for those youths. As Thornberry and his associates note, "Their legacy to their children is likely to be one of socioeconomic disadvantage, poorer health, and poorer education, among other hardships."[49]

There is also an interesting relationship between teenage fatherhood and serious delinquent behavior. That is, chronic delinquents are significantly more likely to father children than are less seriously delinquents and nondelinquents. Evelyn Wei and her colleagues' analysis of a sample of youth in the Pittsburgh Youth Study found that by age 19, nearly half of the serious repeat offenders had caused at least one pregnancy and approximately one-third had fathered at least one child. These researchers also reported that "repeat serious delinquents were not only more likely to father children during adolescence; many had fathered multiple children, accounting for 65 percent of the offspring produced by teenage fathers. And although these youth produced many children, they were less likely to be living with or to spend time with their children."[50]

Children in poor, single-parent families—especially those headed by teenage mothers—clearly face special difficulties. They are more likely to experience chronic psychological distress, to engage in health-compromising behaviors (including drug and alcohol use, cigarette smoking, and unprotected sex), to perform less well academically, to be expelled or suspended from school, to drop out of school, to suffer from mental illness, to commit suicide, to have trouble getting along with their peers, and to start their own single-parent families.[51] Jeffrey Grogger reports that the sons of adolescent mothers are nearly three times more likely to be incarcerated at some point in their twenties than the sons of mothers who delay childbearing until they are in their early twenties.[52]

Economic and emotional supports are critical for single-parent families; unfortunately, relatively few noncustodial fathers provide them. For example, about one-third of families with children receive none of the financial support awarded by courts; families who do receive support typically receive only 60 percent of the amount awarded. Furthermore, noncustodial fathers are unlikely to have much, if any, contact with their children. According to a National Survey of Children report, approximately 26 percent of noncustodial divorced fathers manage a visitation with their children on just a bimonthly basis, and 23 percent had no contact with their children ages 11 to 16 in the previous five-year period. Fathers who were never married to the mothers of their children had much less contact with their children.[53]

Of course, not all children being raised in single-parent homes live in poverty, and not all are born to unmarried or teenage mothers. Many children are being raised by a divorced parent. The process and consequences of divorce on children may have

negative effects independent of the mother's age or economic status. It is not unusual for intact families to be fraught with conflict between husbands and wives or for a pervasive silence to be cast over the members as each attempts to avoid provoking outbursts in others. Frequently, relations improve after divorce or separation. Even so, much current research suggests that both the structural reality of single parenting as a consequence of divorce and the very process of going through divorce produce adverse consequences for the children in the family.[54] These adverse consequences are often long-lasting. Frances Rice and her colleagues report that family conflict increased the likelihood of children experiencing clinical depression during childhood and adolescence.[55]

Each year approximately 2 percent of all married couples (nearly 2 million families) get divorced, and more than half of these families include children younger than age 18. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 12 percent of U.S. couples

A WINDOW ON DELINQUENCY

Marriage Benefits

How Marriage Benefits Children

- Children living with married parents are safer than children living with single parents, because they are less likely to be abused or neglected.
- Compared to children in single-parent families, children raised in married-parent homes have better emotional and physical health and engage in fewer risky behaviors, such as premarital sex, substance abuse, delinquency, and suicide.
- Children with married parents do better academically and fare better economically.
- Children raised in intact homes are less likely to cohabit and more likely to view marriage positively and maintain lifelong marriages.

How Marriage Benefits Adults

- Married people have better emotional and physical health and live longer than do unmarried people.
- Married couples have higher incomes than do single adults, and the longer they stay married, the more wealth they accumulate.
- Married couples enjoy greater sexual satisfaction than do unmarried people.
- Married women enjoy greater safety compared to unmarried women. Never-married, cohabiting, separated, and divorced women experience higher rates of domestic violence than do married women.

How Marriage Benefits Society

- Marriage helps ensure that human life is protected and cherished, because married women are less likely to abort their children than are unmarried women.
- Marriage makes homes safer places to live, because it curbs social problems such as domestic violence and child abuse.
- Communities with more married-parent families are safer and more attractive places to live, because they are less likely to have substance abuse and crime among young people.
- Married people are more likely to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens, benefiting businesses and, ultimately, the economy.

Modified from: Bridget Maher, *The Benefits of Marriage* (Washington, DC: Family Research Council, 2004); James Q. Wilson, *The Marriage Problem: How Our Culture Has Weakened Families* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

divorce within 3 years of getting married, 20 percent within 5 years, and 33 percent within 10 years.[56] Those who divorce and then remarry are even more likely to find the subsequent marriage falling apart, and multiple divorces are even harder on the children. Children who have experienced multiple divorces are more likely to report higher levels of anxiety and depression, to fail in school, and eventually to have more troubled marriages of their own, compared with children who have experienced a single divorce and children whose families remain intact. Frank Furstenberg and Andrew Cherlin estimate that 15 percent of all children in divorced families will see the parent they live with remarry and re-divorce before they reach age 18.[57] The Family Research Council has long believed that marriage and keeping a family intact provides numerous benefits to family members, both adults and children, and to society (See the "A Window on Delinquency" feature).

Single Parents, Divorce, and Delinquency

The relationship between single-parent families and delinquency has been widely studied. Much research reports that children from single-parent families are more likely to become delinquent than children from two-parent families.[58] For example, Ann Goetting found that only 30 percent of the children arrested for homicide in Detroit over an 8-year span lived with both parents.[59] Edward Wells and Joseph Rankin's analysis of 50 studies led them to conclude that the effect of the single-parent family on delinquency is real and consistent, but of relatively low magnitude; the effect is greater for minor offenses, weaker for serious offenses.[60] Furthermore, Michelle Miller and her colleagues surveyed about 500 students in 11 public schools and reported that adolescents in single-parent families are more likely to engage in both serious and minor delinquencies than are youths in two-parent families.[61] Finally, William Comandor and Llad Philip analyzed the effect of family structure on a youth's involvement with the criminal justice system using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. They concluded that "the most critical factor affecting the prospect that a male youth will encounter the criminal justice system is the presence of his father in the home. All other factors, including family income, are much less important."[62]

Explanations offered to explain the greater likelihood of delinquency for children from single-parent families include the following hypotheses:

- Single parents can less-effectively supervise their children, simply because one person can do less than two.
- Children in single-parent families grow up too fast.
- Single mothers give adolescents greater say in what they can do or give too early autonomy, thereby reducing their control over youths.
- Children from single-parent families are more susceptible to peer pressure.
- Children in single-parent families experience lower levels of parental attachment.[63]

Of course, many single-parent families are the result of divorce. According to Constance Ahrons, divorce produces the "binuclear family"—one that spans two households while continuing to meet the needs of the children. If the divorce is managed correctly, the divorcing parents and children will be able to emerge as emotionally healthy as they were prior to the divorce.[64] Divorce can also be portrayed as a positive event if it reduces the incidence of family strife and arguing to which children are exposed. For instance, Patrick Davies and his colleagues found that children whose parents frequently argue and experience conflict have impaired ability to pay attention in school and are more likely to experience school problems than children whose parents have a good relationship.[65] Household-based stress and conflict affect both parents and children, and

the results are reciprocally negative. For instance, Henrik Larsson and his colleagues found that childhood antisocial behavior increases parents' negativity or feelings of stress, anger, and impatience toward their children. These negative feelings, in turn, contribute to increased antisocial behavior among children and adolescents.[66]

Remarrying after divorce does not necessarily eliminate the negative effects of the divorce. Children raised in stepfamilies do less well in school, experience higher levels of family conflict, have more adjustment problems, and are more likely to engage in delinquency than are children in two-parent, never divorced families. Children in stepfamilies are two to three times more likely to engage in delinquency. There is evidence that while the presence of a stepfather increases the likelihood of delinquency, the presence of a stepmother may reduce it, although only a very small percentage of children from divorce live with stepmothers.[67] Cesar Rebellon's analysis of data from the National Youth Survey suggests that youth who have been raised in the long-term presence of a step-parent are more likely to engage in violent delinquency than youth with minimal or no exposure to a step-parent.[68]

Although divorce is related to or even causes multiple problems for children and adolescents, recent research suggests that delinquency is *not* one of them. Jui-Chung Li analyzed data on more than 6300 children from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and found that children of divorce had higher levels of delinquency. Once other correlates of delinquency were considered, however, the effect linked to divorce disappeared. In other words, children fare well or poorly in terms of their behavioral adjustment even if their parents divorce or stay married because other factors explain delinquency.[69]

In the end, the most important point is that parental discord—whether it occurs in intact or divorced families—has negative consequences for childhood development. Kimberly Rhoades recently conducted a meta-analysis of studies of children's responses to parental conflict. She found that parental arguing and fighting increased problem behaviors such as delinquency, aggression, and relational problems; increased internalizing problems such as depression; and lowered children's self-esteem.[70]

Parenting in Families

While the relationships among broken homes, absent fathers, and working mothers have been extensively studied, research findings in this area are inconsistent. One body of research suggests that the most important determinant in terms of whether a child will be involved in delinquency is the *quality* of the parent–child relationship rather than the family structure itself (the nature and impact of parenting are discussed later in this chapter).[71] For example, a study of nearly 2500 middle and junior high school students in Dade County (Miami), Florida, reported that a strong attachment between parent and child significantly reduced the likelihood of delinquency, whereas family structure had only a weak indirect effect on the delinquency rate.[72] In addition, Marc Zimmerman and his colleagues studied the effects of family structure and parental attachment among 254 African American male adolescents from a large East Coast city. Regardless of the family structure, the time these youths spent with their fathers and their perceptions of his emotional support were associated with lower levels of delinquency and marijuana use.[73] Perhaps delinquency more strongly reflects family process than family structure, an idea proposed by sociologists more than 50 years ago.[74] The link between family process variables and delinquency is examined next.

A standard assumption is that married adults automatically know how to be good parents. Presumably some kind of universal common sense is transmitted from one

generation of parents to the next. In fact, effective parenting depends on many things. The quality of parenting (as well as interactions within the family) changes as a child's misbehavior or delinquency increases over time. Often parents become angry and short-tempered with a child who consistently gets into trouble or grow disillusioned when they find they cannot believe what the child tells them. Over time, parent–child conflicts may escalate, or the relationship between parent and child may become more distant and alienated. In circumstances where the child's antisocial behavior is directed against the parents, many parents are less able to exercise reasonable parental authority and may even abdicate their parental responsibilities altogether.

Gerald Patterson found the type of deviance children engage in most is the type parents tolerate most. In the case of children who steal, for example:

> Many of the parents maintained that since they had never actually seen their child steal, they could not prove that their child had stolen, and therefore could not punish the child. In numerous instances, someone else had actually seen the child steal, but the child's "story" would be accepted by the parents, who would then rise to the child's defense and accuse others of picking on the child. As the parents used the word "steal," it could be used as a label only if it could be proven, which was usually impossible; ergo the child did not really steal, ergo no punishment could be applied.[75]

James Snyder and Gerald Patterson have identified two divergent disciplinary styles that characterize families with delinquent children: enmeshed and lax. Parents who practice the *enmeshed* style are overly inclusive in what they define as problematic behavior. Even trivial misbehaviors by the child result in sharp parental reactions, ranging from cajoling to verbal threats. Nevertheless, enmeshed parents "fail to consistently and effectively back up these verbal reprimands with nonviolent, nonphysical punishment . . . [and] inadvertently provide more positive consequences for deviant child behavior." At the other extreme, parents who engage in the *lax* style tend to be very liberal in what they define as excessive or antisocial behavior.

Problem solving and negotiating disagreements or conflict are ways to forestall violence. Snyder and Patterson believe that parental violence often erupts at the end of a chain of events that began with a trivial incident such as the child "sneaking" candy or food. To avoid such violence, parents must learn to break this chain and apply techniques of negotiating a settlement before minor matters get out of hand.[76]

Critics contend that this prescription cannot hope to be effective for all parents. Travis Hirschi has identified a few problems with Snyder and Patterson's approach:

> The parents may not care for the child (in which case none of the other conditions would be met); the parents, even if they care, may not have the time or energy to monitor the child's behavior; the parents, even if they care and monitor, may not see anything wrong with the child's behavior; finally, even if everything else is in place, the parents may not have the inclination or the means to punish the child.[77]

Hirschi also reminds us that families with more children face greater strain on parental resources such as time and energy. Single-parent families are strained even more:

> The single parent . . . must devote a good deal to support and maintenance activities that are at least to some extent shared in the two-parent family. Further, she must do so in the absence of psychological or social support. As a result, she is less able to devote time to monitoring and punishment, and is more likely to be involved in negative, abusive contacts with her children.[78]

Parental Supervision

Patterson's rules of parenting also note the need for effective parental supervision, such as establishing a set of "house rules" and clearly communicating them. House rules should cover people with whom the child associates, places considered off-limits, curfews, and times when the child should be home from school. Parents must be aware of the child's performance in school as well as school attendance, the possibility of drug or alcohol use, and the activities the child is involved in with friends. "Good supervision . . . indirectly minimizes the adolescents' contact with delinquency—promoting circumstances, activities, and peers."[79]

Common sense suggests that unsupervised children are more likely to participate in delinquency, and substantial research confirms the relationship. For example, Grace Barnes and Michael Farrell studied a sample of 699 adolescents and their families and found that close parental monitoring, when combined with high parental support, was the key factor in preventing delinquency.[80] Jaana Haapasalo and Richard Tremblay examined aggressiveness in samples of more than 1000 boys in Montreal in an attempt to predict which boys would become "fighters" and which would be "nonfighters." They concluded that nonfighters appeared to be the most closely supervised, whereas low levels of supervision were associated with higher levels of fighting.[81]

Although a variety of studies have reported that poor parental supervision makes a significant contribution to delinquency,[82] Sung Jang and Carolyn Smith suggest that parental supervision and delinquency are reciprocally related. Their analysis of data from 838 urban adolescents led them to conclude that although parental supervision has a significant negative impact on delinquency, the effects of supervision vary over time, with its influence declining as adolescents mature. They also found that weak parental supervision not only promotes delinquency, but to the extent that the child is delinquent, his or her participation in delinquency also leads to a further erosion in the perception of effective parental supervision.[83]

John Wright and Francis Cullen argue that parents who are supportive of their children—for example, encouraging the children's hobbies, facilitating special lessons or activities, and becoming involved in a child's activities—are more likely to provide greater supervision and to exhibit a stronger attachment than less supportive parents. According to Wright and Cullen, "parents who are nurturing, reliable, and closely attached to their youths and who provide guidance in the form of rules and supervision reduce the delinquency of their adolescents."[84] Positive parenting involves interactions between parent and child that have positive effects on interpersonal, academic, and work skills for the child and that reinforce conventional values and norms. Positive parenting requires a consistent approach to the child, as well as positive feedback when the child behaves as desired.

Parenting Styles

The style of parenting influences the behavior of children. According to Diana Baumrind, there are two critical aspects of parents' behavior toward children: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. *Responsiveness* is the degree to which parents are supportive of the needs of their children. *Demandingness* is the extent to which parents demand age-appropriate behavior from children.[85] Parents will vary on each dimension. They can be supportive and demand much (*authoritative*) or be rejective and demand much (*authoritarian*). Similarly, parents can be supportive and demand very little (*indulgent*) or be rejective and demand little (*indifferent*). A description of these four parenting styles follows.

Authoritative parents are warm but firm. They set standards for the child's conduct but form expectations consistent with the child's developing needs and capabilities.

They place a high value on development of autonomy and self-direction but assume the ultimate responsibility for their child's behavior. Authoritative parents deal with their child in a rational, issue-oriented manner, frequently engaging in discussion and explanation with their children over rules and discipline.

Authoritarian parents place a high value on obedience and conformity, tending to favor more punitive, absolute, and forceful disciplinary measures. These parents are not responsive to their child and project little warmth and support. Verbal give-and-take is uncommon in authoritarian households because authoritarian parents believe that the child should accept without question the rules and standards established by the parents. They tend not to encourage independent behavior, but rather place importance on restricting a child's autonomy.

Indulgent parents behave in responsive, accepting, benign, and more passive ways in matters of discipline. They place relatively few demands on the child's behavior, giving the child a high degree of freedom to act as he or she wishes. Indulgent parents are more likely to believe that control is an infringement on the child's freedom that may interfere with healthy development. Instead of actively shaping their child's behavior, indulgent parents view themselves as resources the child may or may not use.

Indifferent parents are fairly unresponsive to their child and try to minimize the time and energy they must devote to interacting with the child or responding to the child's demands. In extreme cases, indifferent parents may be neglectful. They may know little about their child's activities and whereabouts, show little interest in their child's experiences at school or in his or her friends, and rarely consider the child's opinion when making decisions. The child is typically ignored except when he or she is making demands on the parents, which often results in hostile or explosive responses toward the child.

Parental Attachment

Another way parents influence the behavior of children is through emotional closeness. Presumably, children who like their parents will respect their wishes and stay out of trouble. Research supports the conclusion that the children least likely to turn to delinquency are those who feel loved, identify with their parents, and respect their parents' wishes. In contrast, delinquents often lack a supportive relationship with their fathers, have minimal supervision of their activities, are closer to their mothers, and come from broken homes. Strongly attached children also are more likely to have more open communication with parents, and youths who have problems communicating with either parent or who communicate less frequently are more likely to engage in serious forms of delinquency.[86]

Likewise, parental love may curb delinquency because it is something children do not want to lose. Randy LaGrange and Helen White found this supposition to be true especially for juveniles in middle adolescence. They suggest that attachment to a positive role model is important because it functions as a "psychological anchor" to conformity.[87] For some adolescents, the attachment to parents is reflected in their family pride. Specifically, establishment of a positive family identity appears to significantly reduce levels of delinquency for white and African American youths.[88] Weak attachments may also have a greater negative impact on female adolescents. For example, Angela Huebner and Sherry Betts report that attachment bond variables explain three times more delinquency among girls than among boys.[89]

The positive effects of attachment vary somewhat in single-parent and intact families. Michelle Miller and her colleagues found that attachment to mothers and fathers in intact families was negatively related to delinquency. In single-mother households, parental attachment was negatively related to serious delinquency, but was inconsistently predictive of minor delinquency.[90]

Finally, it is important to remember that across all types of parenting, children mutually influence their parents and the dynamics that characterize their family. Not everything in the family flows from parent to child: Some things flow back from child to parent and from child to sibling—referred to as *child effects*. For instance, Kevin Beaver and John Wright found that among youths from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, family risk did not have a major effect in determining whether boys engaged in a delinquent career. In contrast, boys' involvement in delinquency *did* significantly increase the overall risk level of the family.[91] Similarly, Ronald Simons and his associates found that children with low self-control, hostility, anger, and acceptance of deviant norms were involved in delinquency irrespective of parenting practices.[92] The behavior of children and adolescents feeds back onto the family, leading to complex family dynamics that influences the ways they produce behavior.

Parental Deviance

Studies show that children with criminal parents are more likely to participate in delinquency. Donald West and David Farrington's longitudinal study of British boys led these researchers to conclude that delinquency is transmitted from one generation to the next: Criminal fathers are likely to produce delinquent sons.[93] John Laub and Robert Sampson reached a similar conclusion: "Parental deviance of both the mother and father strongly disrupts family processes of social control, which in turn increases delinquency."[94] Helen Garnier and Judith Stein's analysis of data from the 18-year longitudinal Family Lifestyles Project led them to conclude that early maternal drug use was linked with adolescent drug use, "signaling a more deviant lifestyle to which children were exposed and which could increase their exposure and attraction to deviant peers."[95]

One of the best studies of family deviance was conducted by David Farrington and his colleagues. These researchers were interested in the inter-relationships among offending by three generations of relatives (fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, grandfathers, and grandmothers) and the concentration of offending within families. They also studied to what extent criminal relatives predict a boy's delinquency based on data from 1395 Pittsburgh boys aged 8, 11, or 14. Farrington and colleagues found that

The sins of the parent are often visited upon th e child . Delinquen ts ar e m ore likely to have parents who abuse drugs or alcohol, commit crimes, or abuse them.

offenders were highly concentrated in families: If one relative had been arrested, there was a high likelihood that another relative had also been arrested. Arrests of brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, grandfathers, and grandmothers all predicted the boy's delinquency. The most important relative in this regard was the father; arrests of the father predicted the boy's delinquency independently of all other arrested relatives. In fact, boys whose father had been arrested were 500 percent *more likely* to be arrested themselves.[96] When parents are involved in deviant lifestyles—for example, crime or illicit drug use—they are less likely to be conscientious and responsible parents. Ultimately it is ineffective parenting, and not necessarily the deviant activities modeled by the parents, that increases the child's risk of delinquency.

Recently Joseph Murray and his colleagues replicated Farrington's work by comparing delinquency levels in adult offspring of prisoners using data from England and Sweden. They found that parental criminality and parental incarceration contributed to offending among their offspring throughout the life course. The same researchers also identified a relationship between the number of times parents were incarcerated and the subsequent delinquent career of their children: Habitually incarcerated parents had children who habitually violated the law. In the Swedish sample, the effect of parents' incarceration on their children's deviance went away once the parent's criminality was considered. In the English sample, in contrast, the effect of parental incarceration persisted. Despite this differences, there is no question that the offspring of parents who are in and out of prison face a variety of uphill battles, including a propensity for delinquency.[97]

The Maltreatment of Children

The parenting methods employed within a family clearly affect a child's behavior. Some parents are too harsh, too irritable, and too inconsistent in discipline. Other parents are too neglectful and preoccupied with building their careers or maintaining the lifestyle they had before having children. Many of the problem behaviors of children are tied to the behavior of parents and other adults who have regular contact with children.

Regoli and Hewitt's *theory of differential oppression* suggests that adults generally, and parents particularly, attempt to establish and maintain order and social control in the home in ways that are broadly oppressive of children. In more rigid and authoritarian families, when children violate the rules they are punished, often severely. Children are also exposed to a variety of forms of abuse and neglect more generally known as **maltreatment**. Maltreatment encompasses six general types of child abuse and neglect:

- **Physical abuse**: acts of commission that result in physical harm including death.
- **Sexual abuse**: acts of commission of sexual acts against children that are used to provide sexual gratification to the perpetrator.
- **Emotional abuse**: acts of commission that include confinement, verbal or emotional abuse, and other types of abuse, such as withholding sleep, food, or shelter.
- **Physical neglect**: acts of omission that involve refusal to provide health care, delay in providing health care, abandonment, expulsion of a child from a home, inadequate supervision, failure to meet food and clothing needs, and conspicuous failure to protect a child from danger.
- **Educational neglect**: acts of omission and commission that include permitting chronic truancy, failure to enroll a child in school, and inattention to the child's specific education needs.

A WINDOW ON DELINQUENCY

Child Maltreatment: Risk and Protective Factors

The United States incurs $24 billion in direct costs related to the criminal justice and social service responses to child maltreatment cases each year. The indirect, long-term economic consequences of such maltreatment are estimated at $69 billion annually. In other words, each year the United States pays nearly $100 billion to respond to child maltreatment. The pain and suffering to child victims, however, is in many ways incalculable.

A combination of individual, family, community, and societal factors contribute to the risk of child maltreatment. For example, children younger than 4 years are at greatest risk of severe injury or death. Children younger than age 4 account for nearly 80 percent of all injuries, and infants younger than 12 months account for 44 percent of deaths from these causes. A variety of risk and protective factors are linked to child maltreatment.

Risk Factors

- Disabilities or mental retardation in children
- Social isolation of family
- Parents' history of domestic violence
- Family disorganization, dissolution, and lack of cohesion
- Family violence
- Substance abuse in family
- Young, single, nonbiological parents as caregivers
- Parental stress and mental health problems

Protective Factors

- Supportive family environment
- Nurturing parenting skills
- Stable family relationships
- Household rules and monitoring of the child
- Parental employment
- Adequate housing
- Access to health care and social services
- Caring adult role models or mentors
- Communities that support parents and take responsibility for preventing abuse

Modified from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Child Maltreatment: Fact Sheet* (Atlanta: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2009).

- **Emotional neglect**: acts of omission that involve failing to meet the nurturing and affection needs of a child, exposing a child to chronic or severe spouse abuse, allowing or permitting a child to use drugs or alcohol, encouraging the child to engage in maladaptive behaviors, refusal to provide psychological care, and other inattention to the child's developmental needs.[98]

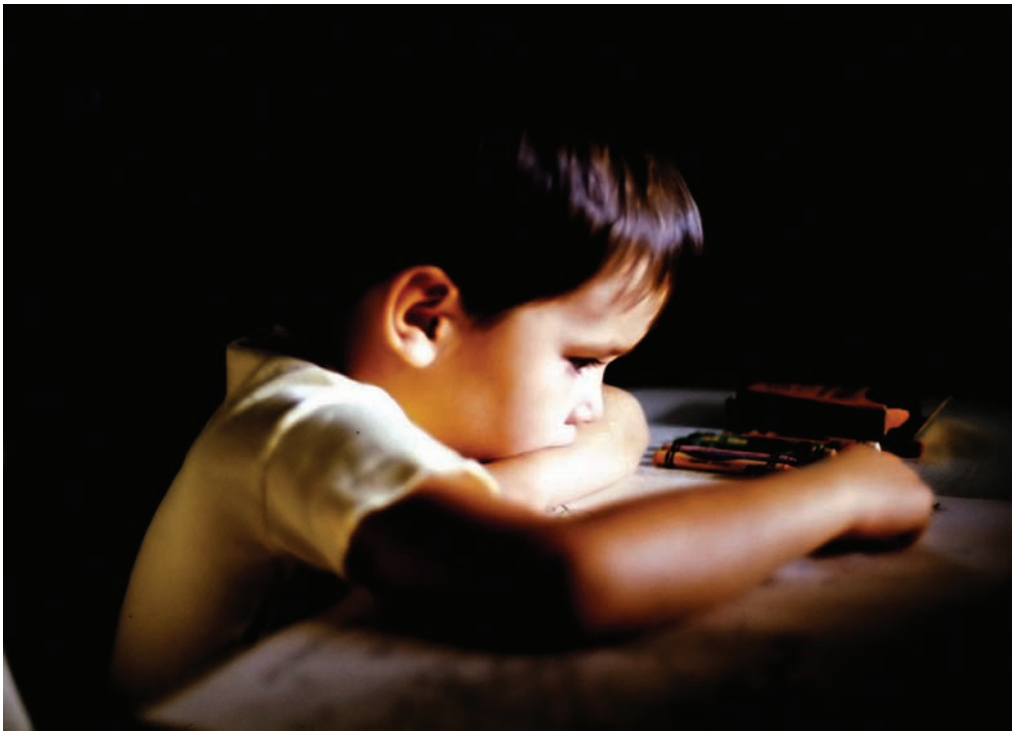
In response to such maltreatment, a child is likely to develop a sense of powerlessness, leading to negative and often harmful adaptations, such as delinquency and adult

criminality. A list of risk and protective factors for child maltreatment appears in the "A Window on Delinquency" feature.

Nature and Extent of Maltreatment

How extensive is the maltreatment of children, and what are its consequences? As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, a 2009 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 1 in 50 infants suffers from some form of maltreatment. Maltreatment comes in a variety of forms, such as when parents kick, bite, punch, and beat their children and threaten them with guns, knives, and baseball bats.[99] Children are sometimes beaten unconscious and sometimes killed by parents or other guardians. Such maltreatment has dire consequences for the child, the family, and the larger community. Children who experience maltreatment are more likely to become unhealthy adults with increased risks for smoking, alcoholism, substance abuse, eating disorders, obesity, depression, suicide, and other problems.[100] The negative effects of maltreatment are readily evident in the differences between offender and general populations. For instance, a recent study of childhood exposure to violence and maltreatment found that approximately 50 percent of delinquents were abused as children—a rate of abuse that is two to five times higher than that for the general population, for which maltreatment estimates range from 10 percent to 30 percent.[101]

Nearly 3 million cases of child abuse or neglect are reported to state child protective services agencies each year. Approximately 60 percent of reported cases are referred for investigation, and 30 percent of the investigated cases result in a disposition of either substantiated or indicated child maltreatment. Some 60 percent of the estimated 905,000 victims of maltreatment suffer neglect, about 20 percent suffer physical abuse, slightly more than 10 percent are sexually abused, 5 percent are psychologically maltreated, and the remainder experience medical neglect or some other form of maltreatment. The highest victimization rates by age are found among children younger than age 4 (14 cases per 1000 children), with abuse rates declining as age increases. Victimization rates by



Child maltreatment is a multifaceted problem that can include physical, educational, and emotional abuse of children.

Approximately 50 per cent of delinquents were physically abused as children, a prevalence that is two to five times higher than the rate among the general population.

race-ethnicity vary from a low of 4 per 1000 for Asian Pacific Islander children to 25 per 1000 for African American children. Approximately 48 percent of child victims of maltreatment are male; 52 percent are female.[102]

The youngest children, those from birth to age 3, account for 28 percent of all child maltreatment offenses. They are also most likely to experience recurrence of maltreatment during their childhood. Generally, the rates of victimization decline as children become older. Approximately 80 percent of child victims are maltreated by one or both parents. Maltreatment by both mother *and* father accounts for 19 percent of the cases, 18 percent involve victimizations by just the father, and mother-only victimizations account for 41 percent.[103]

Although corporal punishment of children is presently prohibited in nine countries (Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Norway, and Sweden), more than 90 percent of American parents report having spanked their children by the time the child has reached age 3 or 4. Corporal punishment is more likely to be used in authoritarian-style parenting, where discipline is inconsistent or developmentally inappropriate, or where there is minimal parent–child communication. Even small amounts of physical punishment can have an adverse effect on the psychosocial development of children, however. Corporal punishment has also been found to predict intelligence failure, emotional dysfunction, impaired ability to empathize, hostility, depression, conduct disorders in children, and criminality and violence in adulthood.[104]

Approximately 1530 children die of maltreatment each year. Thirty-six percent of these deaths are attributable to neglect, 28 percent to physical abuse, and 29 percent to multiple types of maltreatment. Children younger than 12 months old account for 41 percent of the fatalities, 58 percent of the fatalities occur among children younger than age 2, and 85 percent involve children younger than age 6. In those cases in which children have died as a result of abuse or neglect, 68 percent involve mothers as perpetrators and 49 percent involve fathers as the offenders.[105]

Maltreatment, Corporal Punishment, and Delinquency

The nonlethal consequences of maltreatment frequently include delinquent, aggressive, and violent behavior by its victims. According to Gail Wasserman and Angela Seracini, compared to non-maltreated children, maltreated toddlers have been found to be significantly more likely to respond with fear, threats, or aggressive behavior to another child's distress. In addition, abused and neglected children are significantly more aggressive in their interactions with peers, and abused preschool and elementary school-age children are perceived by parents and teachers to have higher rates of externalizing behavior at home and at school.[106]

John Lemmon's study of a cohort of 632 male juveniles from low-income families reported that a childhood history of maltreatment has a significant effect on initiation and continuation of delinquency. In this study, the maltreated boys had significantly higher scores on all measures of delinquency, were more likely than their non-maltreated counterparts to be referred to the juvenile court, and were more likely to be adjudicated delinquent. The maltreated group made up the overwhelming majority of youths in the juvenile justice system, accounting for 84 percent of those youths receiving placement

dispositions and 78 percent of those transferred to criminal court for prosecution. The maltreated group also accounted for most of the serious delinquencies by juveniles: 78 percent of aggravated assaults, 83 percent of robberies, and 86 percent of weapons offenses. Male delinquents who had been maltreated were significantly more likely to be persistent and violent offenders, whereas non-maltreated delinquents tended to be routine, infrequent offenders.[107]

Timothy Ireland and his colleagues report that persistent maltreatment dramatically increases the risk of chronic delinquency in both early and late adolescence. In their study, persistent maltreatment through childhood and adolescence and maltreatment limited to adolescence were predictive of both delinquency and drug use. Conversely, children who were maltreated only during childhood, rather than in adolescence, were no more likely than controls to engage in violent delinquency in early adolescence.[108]

Jane Siegel and Linda Williams conducted a prospective study among 206 women treated in a hospital emergency room to examine the lingering effects of childhood maltreatment. Women reporting childhood sexual abuse were twice as likely as members of the non-abused group to have been arrested as juveniles for violent offenses, nearly twice as likely to have been arrested as adults and to have engaged in violent offenses, and five times more likely to have been arrested for drug offenses.[109]

Cathy Spatz Widom has reported results from four studies conducted in different parts of the country over the past 25 years. A Midwest study found abused and neglected children were more likely to be first arrested about one year earlier than matched non-maltreated children and significantly more likely to become chronic offenders. Findings from a subset of data from the Rochester Youth Development Study confirmed that both self-reported delinquency and officially identified delinquency were significantly related to child maltreatment. A study carried out in North Carolina found maltreated children to have higher rates of reported delinquency and violence than controls. Research conducted in Washington concluded that abused and neglected children were 5 times more likely to be arrested for nonviolent delinquencies and 11 times more likely to be arrested for violent offenses compared to matched controls. These studies, when taken together, suggest support for the "cycle of violence" hypothesis, whereby children who experience maltreatment grow up to become perpetrators of violence.[110]

Candice Odgers and her colleagues have examined the long-term development of behavior using the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study (see Chapter 2), which followed a birth cohort in New Zealand. They found that maltreatment was strongly correlated with a person's subsequent delinquent career. For instance, among those individuals who demonstrated very low levels of delinquency, just 2 percent had ever been maltreated. Among those who became life-course persistent offenders, nearly 25 percent had been maltreated. In other words, maltreatment increased the odds of being a lifelong criminal by nearly *15 times*! In addition to their delinquency, the high-maltreatment group also suffered from a host of personal and social problems, including school failure, unemployment, mental health problems, substance use, and poorer health.[111] These effects are not unique to New Zealand: A study using a sample of American youths found that maltreatment negatively affected a range of outcomes occurring 12 years later.[112]

While few people would ever condone child abuse and neglect, many parents both condone and advocate the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline. In fact, corporal punishment also produces negative consequences. Although low-impact spanking, when used with young children by warm and caring parents, *does not* appear to be predictive of later adolescent conduct problems, more severe forms of corporal punishment are associated with delinquency. Longitudinal studies have found a strong

relationship between severe punishment, such as slapping, kicking, shoving, and hitting and both self-reported and official delinquency.

A number of studies have reported physical punishment to be more widely accepted among African Americans than among whites. While white parents may be more tolerant of moderate misbehavior, African American parents may perceive the consequences of disobedience as more serious in their neighborhood context—that is, respect for authority might reduce the chance of harassment by the police. From this perspective, firm discipline is believed to help protect the child from the variety of dangers in the child's social environment. When Delores Smith and Gail Mosby examined Jamaican child-rearing practices, they found physical punishment to be highly repressive and severe, with flogging being the most common form of corporal punishment. Children might be disciplined for a variety of misbehaviors, ranging from lying and stealing to being impolite and failing to complete their chores. Such punishment was found to be highly related to depression, post-traumatic stress disorders, prostitution, teen pregnancy, criminality, and violence.[113] As the "Delinquency Controversy" feature emphasizes, spanking is alive and well in many societies.

Beyond corporal punishment, the juvenile justice system has developed special courts to deal with family violence and other family issues related to delinquency. One such set of courts is the **family dependency treatment courts** established in Reno, Nevada, in 1994. These family courts specifically adjudicate child welfare cases involving child abuse and neglect and parental substance abuse. They strive to ensure that children are safe and provided for while providing support, treatment, and access to social services to help parents get sober. Brief stints in jail for the substance-abusing parent are used as incentives to participate in the program. Family dependency treatment courts use a multidisciplinary team of child protective workers and drug counselors to address the needs of the family. The ultimate goal is to unify the family in a healthy environment. Although formal evaluation studies of the courts have not been

DELINQUENCY CONTROVERSY

Spanking 101

Despite research showing the negative consequences of spanking, many parents and caregivers continue to use corporal punishment as a way to control the behavior of children and adolescents. Parents can even purchase spanking paddles over the Internet complete with instructions and guidelines on how to use a paddle. Here are the suggested punishment guidelines:

- One swat should be used for behaviors such as when the child is disrespectful.
- Two swats should be used when the child curses.
- Three swats should be used when the child cheats, lies, or is defiant.
- Four swats should be used when the child is caught stealing.
- Five swats should be used when the child endangers someone's safety, smokes, drinks, or uses drugs.

It is suggested that for maximum benefit, the child should tell the adult the reason why he or she is being punished. Parents are advised to wait one minute between each swat, to never paddle more than five times per day, and to only paddle on the rump with the child clothed.

Modified from: *A Spanking Paddle: Use Lovingly and NEVER in Anger,* available at http://www.spare-rods.com/, accessed November 1, 2009.

conducted to date, anecdotal information from child protective workers and drug counselors suggests that both children and parents feel that the hands-on, specialized attention that the family dependency treatment courts provide is helping reduce family-related problems.[114]

Finally, one of the most promising policy developments is the use of early family/parent training programs that provide parenting, educational, and other social service modalities to the parents of young children at the highest risk for delinquency and other maladaptive behaviors. A recent meta-analysis found that early family interventions that targeted parenting practices were effective at reducing the emergence of delinquency in adolescence.[115] In other words, public policy is following theories of delinquency, most of which point to the powerful importance of the family at either contributing to or insulating children from delinquency.

WRAP UP

THINKING ABOUT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: CONCLUSIONS

Few people would contend the family has no effect whatsoever on whether a child becomes delinquent. But what is the nature of that effect? Which aspects of the family are most significant in this arena? Is it the inculcation of moral values? Is it the structure of the family? Is it working mothers? Or does it have more to do with parenting styles and degree of supervision? This chapter has explored these issues and presented what often appear to be conflicting findings from research.

Studies suggest that a relationship exists between divorce and single-parent families and delinquency, but that it is strongest for girls and for trivial offenses. However, this finding may be misleading. The relationship between broken or single-parent homes and delinquency may seem weak simply because these variables are separated by a number of important intervening variables. In other words, the absence of one parent may affect delinquency by producing weak attachments between the parent and the child.

Parenting skills, in contrast, have a clearly discernible effect on delinquency. Patterson's techniques for making children more accepting of conventional norms include reinforcing conformity and providing sane punishment for transgressions. But reinforcement alone is not enough, Patterson discovered, particularly with very problematic children. Research shows that parents can be taught how to be more effective and, in turn, their children's misbehavior will decline.

Child maltreatment, which includes corporal punishment, abuse, and neglect, is very widespread. Nearly 3 million cases of abuse and neglect are reported each year in the United States, and about 1530 children die each year as a result of maltreatment. The maltreatment of children also creates an oppressive environment that produces a variety of negative outcomes, including drug use, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, emotional problems, and juvenile delinquency.

While the family is the most critical social institution, children may actually spend more time in direct interaction with other children and adults in another major social institution—the school. For at least 9 months every year, from about age 5 until age 18 or so, children spend nearly half of their waking hours in school. Does this time in school deter or contribute to problem behaviors in children? The next chapter explores the relationship between school and delinquency in depth.

Chapter Spotlight

- The traditional functions of the family are the socialization of children, inculation of moral values, reproduction and regulation of sexual activity, and to provide material, physical, and emotional security.
- Family structure has changed dramatically in recent decades as the two-parent, married family unit has been altered by widespread acceptance of divorce and bearing of children out of wedlock.
- A variety of parental skills and styles are related to both conventional and delinquent behaviors of children.
- The maltreatment and abuse of children is a pressing social problem in the United States and contributes to both delinquency and a host of other behavioral and social problems.
- Promising results have been produced by programs that target early family issues—specifically, programs that deliver parenting instruction intended to forestall delinquent careers.

Putting It All Together

1. Abused children are likely to become delinquent, in part because of their maltreatment. Should maltreatment be used to mitigate a youth's future delinquency?
2. Is sexual behavior during adolescence intrinsically delinquent? Do real differences exist between gender and sexual behavior? Has the juvenile justice system appropriately criminalized the sexuality of female adolescents?
3. What do the various data on the disintegration of the African American family suggest about delinquency? Which is a greater explanation of African American crime: criminal justice system biases or family disintegration?
4. Given the implications of divorce on delinquency and the maladjustment of children, should divorce become a criminal offense? If there were criminal consequences of getting divorced, how would the American family change? Would delinquency increase or decrease?

Key Terms

authoritarian parents Parents who place a high value on obedience and conformity, tending to favor more punitive, absolute, and forceful disciplinary measures.

authoritative parents Parents who are warm but firm; they set standards of behavior for their child and highly value the development of autonomy and self-direction.

educational neglect Acts of omission and commission that include permitting chronic truancy, failure to enroll a child in school, and inattention to the child's specific education needs.

emotional abuse Acts of commission that include confinement, verbal or emotional abuse, and other types of abuse, such as withholding sleep, food, or shelter.

emotional neglect Acts of omission that involve failing to meet the nurturing and affection needs of a child, exposing a child to chronic or severe spouse abuse, allowing or permitting a child to use drugs or alcohol, encouraging the child to engage in maladaptive behaviors, refusal to provide psychological care, and other inattention to the child's developmental needs.

family dependency treatment courts Family courts that specifically adjudicate child welfare cases involving child abuse and neglect and parental substance abuse.

indifferent parents Parents who are unresponsive to their child and may, in extreme cases, be neglectful.

indulgent parents Parents who are more responsive, accepting, benign, and passive in matters of discipline and place few demands on their child.

maltreatment Severe mistreatment of children involving several types of abuse and neglect.

physical abuse Acts of commission that result in physical harm including death of a child.

physical neglect Acts of omission that involve refusal to provide health care, delay in providing health care, abandonment, expulsion of a child from a home, inadequate supervision, failure to meet food and clothing needs, and conspicuous failure to protect a child from danger.

sexual abuse Acts of commission of sexual acts against children that are used to provide sexual gratification to the perpetrator.

single-parent families Families composed of children and one parent who is divorced or widowed or who was never married.

socialization The process through which children learn the norms and values of a particular society or social group so that they can function within it.

Notes

1. Douglas Morrison, *Juvenile Offenders* (New York: Appleton, 1915), p. 121.
2. Associated Press, "Police: Woman Sets Fire, Dies with Kids," available at http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20255670/, accessed October 26, 2009.
3. BBC News, "Microwave Baby Killer Convicted," available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7589247.stm, accessed October 26, 2009.
4. Associated Press, "No Bond for Mom Accused of Trying to Sell Girl," available at http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26411849/, accessed October 26, 2009.
5. Associated Press, "California Mom Charged in Gang Shooting," available at http://apnews.myway.com/article/20070630/D8Q30V00.html, accessed October 26, 2009.
6. Associated Press, "Boy Could Be Charged as Adult in Killing," available at www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22530241/, accessed October 26, 2009.
7. Associated Press, "1 in 50 Infants Suffers Abuse, Government Finds," available at www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23937497/, accessed October 26, 2009.
8. Eirini Flouri and Ann Buchanan, "The Role of Mother Involvement and Father Involvement in Adolescent Bullying Behavior," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 18:634–644 (2003).
9. Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew, Jennifer Carrano, Allison Horowitz, and Akemi Kinukawa, "Involvement among Resident Fathers and Links to Infant Cognitive Outcomes," *Journal of Family Issues* 29:1211–1244 (2008).
10. Gerald Handel, Spencer Cahill, and Frederick Elkin, *Children and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); *The Child and Society: The Process of Socialization*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989); Mary DeGenova and F. Philip Rice, *Intimate Relationships, Marriages, and Families*, 6th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), pp. 325–333.
11. Craig Calhoun, Donald Light, and Suzanne Keller, *Sociology*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), pp. 132–133.
12. Robert Apel and Catherine Kaukinen, "On the Relationship Between Family Structure and Antisocial Behavior: Parental Cohabitation and Blended Households," *Criminology* 46:35–70 (2008).
13. Frank Dillon, Michael Robbins, Jose Szapocznik, and Hilda Pantin, "Exploring the Role of Parental Monitoring of Peers on the Relationship Between Family Functioning and Delinquency in the Lives of African American and Hispanic Adolescents," *Crime & Delinquency* 54:65–94 (2008).
14. Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi, *A General Theory of Crime* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 97.
15. Laura Argys, Danile Rees, Susan Averett, and Benjama Witoonchart, "Birth Order and Risky Adolescent Behavior," *Economic Inquiry* 44:215–233 (2006).
16. William Bennett, *The Book of Virtues* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), p. 11.
17. Jennifer Wyatt and Gustavo Carlo, "What Will My Parents Think? Relations Among Adolescents' Expected Parental Reactions, Prosocial Moral Reasoning, and Prosocial and Antisocial Behaviors," *Journal of Adolescent Research* 17:646–666 (2002).
18. James Q. Wilson, *On Character* (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 1991), pp. 30, 108.
19. Robert Coles, *The Moral Intelligence of Children* (New York: Random House, 1997), p. 17.
20. Children's Defense Fund, "Every Child Deserves a Moral Start" (Washington, DC: Author, 2006).
21. Bruce Chadwick and Brent Top, "Religiosity and Delinquency Among LDS Adolescents," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32:52 (1993).
22. Colin Baier and Bradley Wright, "'If You Love Me, Keep My Commandments': A Meta-analysis of the Effect of Religion on Crime," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 38:3–21 (2001), p. 14.
23. Byron Johnson, David Larson, Spencer Li, and Sung Jang, "Escaping from the Crime of Inner Cities: Church Attendance and Religious Salience Among Disadvantaged Youth," *Justice Quarterly* 17:377–391 (2000).
24. Brent Benda and Robert Corwyn, "Are the Effects of Religion on Crime Mediated, Moderated, and Misrepresented by Inappropriate Measures?," *Journal of Social Service Research* 27:70–81 (2001), p. 80.
25. Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, *Religion, Deviance, and Social Control* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 69.
26. See, for example, Mark Harris, "Religiosity and Perceived Future Ascetic Deviance and Delinquency Among Mormon Adolescents: Testing the 'This-Worldly' Supernatural Sanctions Thesis," *Sociological Inquiry* 73:28–51 (2003); Byron Johnson, Sung Jang, David Larson, and Spencer Li, "Does Adolescent Religious Commitment Matter? A Reexamination of the Effects of Religiosity on Delinquency," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 38:22–43 (2001); Brent Benda, "An Examination of a Reciprocal Relationship Between Religiosity and Different Forms of Delinquency within a Theoretical Model," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 34:163–186 (1997); John Cochran, Peter Wood, and Bruce Arneklev, "Is the Religiosity–Delinquency Relationship Spurious? A Test of Arousal and Social Control Theories," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 31:92–123 (1994); Paul Higgins and Gary Albrecht, "Hellfire and Delinquency Revisited," *Social Forces* 55:952–958 (1977).
27. Stark and Bainbridge, note 25, p. 7.
28. J. Ross Eshleman and Richard Bulcroft, *The Family*, 12th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2009).
29. Jennifer Manlove, Cassandra Logan, Kristin Moore, and Erum Ikramullah, "Pathways from Family Religiosity to Adolescent Sexual Activity and Contraceptive Use," *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 40:105–117 (2008).
30. Travis Hirschi, "The Family," pages 128–129 in James Q. Wilson and Joan Petersilia (eds.), *Crime* (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1995).

31. Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, revised edition (New York: William Morrow, 2006); Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitt, "Do Parents Matter?" *USA Today,* May 4, 2005, p. 13A.
32. U.S. Census Bureau, "Families and Living Arrangements, 2005," *Current Population Reports* (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2006).
33. Jennifer Manlove, Cassandra Logan, Erum Ikramullah, and Emily Holcombe, "Factors Associated with Multiple-Partner Fertility Among Fathers," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70:536–548 (2008).
34. James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense* (New York: Free Press, 1993), p. 176.
35. Jennifer Schwartz, "Family Structure as a Source of Female and Male Homicide in the United States," *Homicide Studies* 10:253–278 (2006).
36. Sharon Jayson, "Society Switches Focus Away from Children," *USA Today,* July 12, 2006, p. 1D.
37. Suzanne Bianchi, John Robinson, and Melissa Milkie, *Changing Rhythms of American Family Life* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications, 2006).
38. Sharon Jayson, "Study: Family Ties 'as Strong as Ever': Technology Keeps People in Touch," *USA Today*, February 22, 2006, p. 10B.
39. Sharon Jayson, "American Families Are Envied, Disdained," *USA Today*, April 13, 2006, p. 6D.
40. Linda Gordon and Sara McLanahan, "Single Parenthood in 1900," *Journal of Family History* 16:97, 100–101 (1991).
41. David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), pp. 23, 239.
42. Stephanie Ventura and Christine Bachrach, *Nonmarital Childbearing in the United States, 1940–99* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000); James Q. Wilson, *The Marriage Problem: How Our Culture Has Weakened Families* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).
43. Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, *America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2008* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008), p. 6; Annie Casey Foundation, *2004 Kids Count Data Book* (Baltimore: Author, 2006).
44. Sara Jaffee, Avshalom Caspi, Terrie Moffitt, Jay Belsky, and Phil Silva, "Why Are Children Born to Teen Mothers at Risk for Adverse Outcomes in Young Adulthood? Results from a 20-Year Longitudinal Study," *Development and Psychopathology* 13:377–397 (2001).
45. Wilhelmina Leigh, *National Costs of Teen Pregnancy and Teen Pregnancy Prevention* (Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 2003).
46. Hirschi, note 30, p. 138.
47. Bruce Ellis, John Bates, Kenneth Dodge, David Fergusson, John Horwood, Gregory Pettit, and Lianne Woodward, "Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy?," *Child Development* 74:801–821 (2003).
48. Terence Thornberry, Evelyn Wei, Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, and Joyce Van Dyke, *Teenage Fatherhood and Delinquent Behavior* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000).
49. Thornberry et al., note 48, pp. 5–7.
50. Evelyn Wei, Rolf Loeber, and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, "How Many of the Offspring Born to Teenage Fathers Are Produced by Repeat Serious Offenders?" *Criminal Behavior and Mental Health* 12:83–98 (2002).
51. Maxine Seaborn Thompson and Margaret Ensminger, "Psychological Well-Being Among Mothers with School Age Children," *Social Forces* 67:715–730 (1989); Alison Clarke-Stewart, Deborah Vandell, and Kathleen McCartney, "Effects of Parental Separation and Divorce on Very Young Children," *Journal of Family Psychology* 14:304–326 (2000).
52. Jeffrey Grogger, "Incarceration-Related Costs of Early Childbearing," in Rebecca Maynard (ed.), *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1997), p. 253.
53. Ronald Simons, Leslie Simons, and Lora Wallace, *Families, Delinquency and Crime: Linking Society's Most Basic Institution to Antisocial Behavior* (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2004), p. 108.
54. Lisa Borrine, Paul Handa, and Nancy Brown, "Family Conflict and Adolescent Adjustment in Intact, Divorced, and Blended Families," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 59:753–755 (1991); Joan Kelly, "Children's Adjustment in Conflicted Marriage and Divorce: A Decade Review of Research," *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 39:963–973 (2000).
55. Frances Rice, Gordon Harold, Katherine Shelton, and Anita Thapar, "Family Conflict Interacts with Genetic Liability in Predicting Childhood and Adolescent Depression," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 45:841–848 (2006).
56. Susan Stewart, *Brave New Stepfamilies: Diverse Steps Toward Stepfamily Living* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).
57. Frank Furstenberg and Andrew Cherlin, *Divided Families: What Happens to Children When Parents Part* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); Andrew Cherlin, *Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).
58. See for example, George Thomas, Michael Farrell, and Grace Barnes, "The Effects of Single-Mother Families and Nonresident Fathers on Delinquency and Substance Abuse in Black and White Adolescents," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58:884–894 (1996); Stephen Demuth and Susan Brown, "Family Structure, Family Processes, and Adolescent Delinquency: The Significance of Parental Absence Versus Parental Gender," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 41:58–81 (2004); Jeffrey Cookston, "Parental Supervision and Family Structure: Effects on Adolescent Problem Behaviors," *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 32:107–122 (1999); Heather Juby and David Farrington, "Disentangling the Link Between Disrupted Families and Delinquency," *British Journal of Criminology* 41:22–40 (2001).
59. Ann Goetting, "Patterns of Homicide Among Children," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 16:63–80 (1989).
60. Edward Wells and Joseph Rankin, "Families and Delinquency: A Meta-analysis of the Impact of Broken Homes," *Social Problems* 38:71–93 (1991).

61. Michelle Miller, Finn-Aage Esbensen, and Adrienne Freng, "Parental Attachment, Parental Supervision and Adolescent Deviance in Intact and Non-intact Families," *Journal of Crime & Justice* 22:1–29 (1999).

62. William Comandor and Llad Philips, "The Impact of Income and Family Structure on Delinquency," *Journal of Applied Economics* 5:220–230 (2002), p. 228.

63. Laurence Steinberg, "Single Parents, Stepparents, and the Susceptibility of Adolescents to Antisocial Peer Pressure," *Child Development* 58:269–275 (1987); Sadi Bayrakal and Teresa Kope, "Dysfunction in the Single-Parent and Only-Child Family," *Adolescence* 25:1–7 (1990); Jeffrey Cookston, "Parental Supervision and Family Structure: Effects on Adolescent Problem Behaviors," *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 32:107–122 (1999); Mallie Paschall, Christopher Ringwalt, and Robert Flewelling, "Effects of Parenting, Father Absence, and Affiliation with Delinquent Peers on Delinquent Behavior Among African-American Male Adolescents," *Adolescence* 38:15–34 (2003); Christopher Kierkus and Douglas Baer, "A Social Control Explanation of the Relationship Between Family Structure and Delinquent Behavior," *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 44:450 (2002).

64. Constance Ahrons, *The Good Divorce* (New York: Harper, 1995).

65. Patrick Davies, Meredith Woitach, Marcia Winter, and E. Mark Cummings, "Children's Insecure Representations of the Interparental Relationship and Their School Adjustment: The Mediating Role of Attention Difficulties," *Child Development* 79:1570–1582 (2008).

66. Henrik Larsson, Essi Viding, Fruhling Rijsdijk, "Relationships Between Parental Negativity and Childhood Antisocial Behavior Over Time: A Bidirectional Effects Model in a Longitudinal Genetically Informative Design," *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* 36:633–645 (2008).

67. Simons et al., note 53, p. 114.

68. Cesar Rebellon, "Reconsidering the Broken Homes/Delinquency Relationship and Exploring Its Mediating Mechanism(s)," *Criminology* 40:103–136 (2002).

69. Jui-Chung Li, *The Kids Are OK: Divorce and Children's Behavior Problems* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007).

70. Kimberly Rhoades, "Children's Responses to Interparental Conflict: A Meta-analysis of Their Associations with Child Adjustment," *Child Development* 79:1942–1956 (2008).

71. John Laub and Robert Sampson, "Unraveling Families and Delinquency," *Criminology* 26:355–380 (1988); Ross Matsueda, "Testing Control Theory and Differential Association," *American Sociological Review* 47:489–504 (1982).

72. Jan Sokol-Katz, Roger Dunham, and Rick Zimmerman, "Family Structure Versus Parental Attachment in Controlling Adolescent Deviant Behavior: A Social Control Model," *Adolescence* 32:199–215 (1997).

73. Marc Zimmerman, Deborah Salem, and Kenneth Maton, "Family Structure and Psychosocial Correlates among Urban African-American Adolescent Males," *Child Development* 55:1598–1613 (1995).

74. Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor Glueck, *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950; F. Ivan Nye, *Family Relationships and Delinquent Behavior* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958); William McCord and Joan McCord, *Origins of Crime: A New Evaluation of the Cambridge–Somerville Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

75. Gerald Patterson, "Children Who Steal," in Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson (eds.), *Understanding Crime* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980), p. 82.

76. James Snyder and Gerald Patterson, "Family Interaction and Delinquent Behavior," in Herbert Quay (ed.), *Handbook of Juvenile Delinquency* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1987), p. 221.

77. Travis Hirschi, "Crime and the Family," in James Q. Wilson (ed.), *Crime and Public Policy* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies Press, 1983), p. 55.

78. Hirschi, note 77, p. 62.

79. Snyder and Patterson, note 76, p. 227.

80. Grace Barnes and Michael Farrell, "Parental Support and Control as Predictors of Adolescent Drinking, Delinquency, and Related Problem Behaviors," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 54:763–776 (1992).

81. Jaana Haapasalo and Richard Tremblay, "Physically Aggressive Boys from Ages 6 to 12: Family Background, Parenting Behavior, and Prediction of Delinquency," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 62:1044–1052 (1994).

82. See for example, Robert Sampson and John Laub, "Urban Poverty and the Family Context of Delinquency: A New Look at Structure and Process in a Classic Study," *Child Development* 65:523–540 (1994); Patrick Heaven, "Family of Origin, Personality, and Self-Reported Delinquency," *Journal of Adolescence* 17:445–459 (1994).

83. Sung Jang and Carolyn Smith, "A Test of Reciprocal Causal Relationships Among Parental Supervision, Affective Ties, and Delinquency," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 34:307–336 (1997).

84. John Wright and Francis Cullen, "Parental Efficacy and Delinquent Behavior: Do Control and Support Matter?" *Criminology* 39:677–706 (2001), pp. 691–693.

85. Diana Baumrind, "Parental Disciplinary Patterns and Social Competence in Children," *Youth and Society* 9:239–276 (1978); Diana Baumrind, "The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence and Substance Use," *Journal of Early Adolescence* 11:56–95 (1991).

86. Richard Clark and Glenn Shields, "Family Communication and Delinquency," *Adolescence* 32:81–92 (1997); Karla Klein, Rex Forehand, Lisa Armistead, and Patricia Long, "Delinquency During the Transition to Early Adulthood: Family and Parenting Predictors from Early Adolescence," *Adolescence* 32:61–79 (1997); Bobbi Anderson, Malcolm Holmes, and Erik Ostresh, "Male and Female Delinquents' Attachments and Effects of Attachments on Severity of Self-Reported Delinquency," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 26:435–452 (1999).

87. Randy LaGrange and Helen White, "Age Differences in Delinquency," *Criminology* 23:19–45 (1985).

88. Linda Weber, Andrew Miracle, and Tom Skehan, "Family Bonding and Delinquency: Racial and Ethnic Influences

among U.S. Youth," *Human Organization* 54:363–372 (1995).

89. Angela Huebner and Sherry Betts, "Exploring the Utility of Social Control Theory for Youth Development: Issues of Attachment, Involvement, and Gender," *Youth & Society* 34:136 (2002).

90. Miller et al., note 61, p. 21.

91. Kevin Beaver and John Paul Wright, "A Child Effects Explanation for the Association Between Family Risk and Involvement in an Antisocial Lifestyle," *Journal of Adolescent Research* 22:640–664 (2007).

92. Ronald Simons, Leslie Gordon Simons, Yi-Fu Chen, Gene Brody, and Kuei-Hsiu Lin, "Identifying the Psychological Factors That Mediate the Association Between Parenting Practices and Delinquency," *Criminology* 45:481–518 (2007).

93. Donald West and David Farrington, *Who Becomes Delinquent?* (London: Heinemann, 1973).

94. Sampson and Laub, note 82, p. 375.

95. Helen Garnier and Judith Stein, "An 18-Year Model of Family and Peer Effects on Adolescent Drug Use and Delinquency," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 31:45–56 (2002), p. 54.

96. David Farrington, Darrick Jolliffe, Rolf Loeber, Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, and Larry Kalb, "The Concentration of Offenders in Families and Family Criminality in the Prediction of Boys' Delinquency," *Journal of Adolescence* 24:579–596 (2001).

97. Joseph Murray, Carl-Gunnar Janson, and David Farrington, "Crime in Adult Offspring of Prisoners: A Cross-national Comparison of Two Longitudinal Samples," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 34:133–149 (2007).

98. Richard Gelles, "Family Violence," pages 403–417 in Daniel Flannery, Alexander Vazsonyi, and Irwin Waldman (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Violent Behavior and Aggression* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 404–405.

99. Ralph Welsh, "Spankings: A Grand Old American Tradition," *Children Today* 14:27 (1985).

100. Bridget Freisthler, Darcey Merritt, and Elizabeth LaScala, "Understanding the Ecology of Child Maltreatment: A Review of the Literature and Directions for Future Research," *Child Maltreatment* 11:263–280 (2006); Elise Pepin and Victoria Banyard, "Social Support: A Mediator Between Child Maltreatment and Developmental Outcomes," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 35:617–630 (2006); Jeffrey Steuwig and Laura McCloskey, "The Relation of Child Maltreatment to Shame and Guilt Among Adolescents: Psychological Routes to Depression and Delinquency," *Child Maltreatment* 10:324–336 (2005).

101. Rosie Teague, Paul Mazerolle, Margot Legosz, and Jennifer Sanderson, "Linking Childhood Exposure to Physical Abuse and Adult Offending: Examining Mediating Factors and Gendered Relationships," *Justice Quarterly* 25:313–348 (2008).

102. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Child Maltreatment 2006* (Washington, DC: Author, 2008).

103. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, note 102.

104. Steven Swinford, Alfred DeMaris, Stephen Cernkovich, and Peggy Giordano, "Harsh Physical Discipline in Childhood and Violence in Later Romantic Involvements: The Mediating Role of Problem Behaviors," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62:508–519 (2000); Ronald Simons, Chyi-In Wu, Kuei-Hsiu Lin, Leslie Gordon, and Rand Conger, "A Cross-cultural Examination of the Link Between Corporal Punishment and Adolescent Antisocial Behavior," *Criminology* 47–79 (2000); Ronald Simons, Leslie Simons, Callie Burt, Gene Brody, and Carolyn Cutrona, "Collective Efficacy, Authoritative Parenting, and Delinquency," *Criminology* 43:989–1030 (2005).

105. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Child Maltreatment Fact Sheet* (Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2009).

106. Gail Wasserman and Angela Seracini, "Family Risk Factors and Interventions," pages 182–183 in Rolf Loeber and David Farrington (eds.), *Child Delinquents: Development, Intervention, and Service Needs* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001).

107. John Lemmon, "How Child Maltreatment Affects Dimensions of Juvenile Delinquency in a Cohort of Low-Income Urban Youths," *Justice Quarterly* 16:357–376 (1999).

108. Timothy Ireland, Carolyn Smith, and Terence Thornberry, "Developmental Issues in the Impact of Child Maltreatment on Later Delinquency and Drug Use," *Criminology* 40:359–396 (2002).

109. Jane Siegel and Linda Williams, "The Relationship Between Child Sexual Abuse and Female Delinquency and Crime: A Prospective Study," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 40:71–94 (2003).

110. Cathy Spatz Widom, "Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: The Research," pages 1–10 in Janet Wiig, Cathy Spatz Widom, and John Tuell (eds.), *Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency* (Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America, 2003).

111. Candice Odgers, Avshalom Caspi, Jonathan Broadbent, Nigel Dickson, Robert Hancox, HonaLee Harrington, Richie Poulton, Malcolm Sears, W. Murray Thomson, and Terrie Moffitt, "Prediction of Differential Adult Health Burden by Conduct Problem Subtypes in Males," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 64:476–484 (2007).

112. Jennifer Lansford, Kenneth Dodge, Gregory Pettit, John Bates, Joseph Crozier, and Julie Kaplow, "A 12-Year Prospective Study of the Long-Term Effects of Early Child Physical Maltreatment on Psychological, Behavioral, and Academic Problems in Adolescence," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 156:824–830 (2002).

113. Delores Smith and Gail Mosby, "Jamaican Child-Rearing Practices: The Role of Corporal Punishment," *Adolescence* 38:369–381 (2003).

114. Meghan Wheeler and Carson Fox, "Family Dependency Treatment Court: Applying the Drug Court Model in Child Maltreatment," *Drug Court Practitioner Fact Sheet* 5:1–8 (2006).

115. Alex Piquero, David Farrington, Brandon Welsh, Richard Tremblay, and Wesley Jennings, "Effects of Early Family/Parent Training Programs on Antisocial Behavior and Delinquency," *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 5: 83–120 (2009).