

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/dreams-gangs-and-guns-the-interplay-between-adolescent-violence-and-immigration-in-a-new-york-city-neighborhood>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

To prevent violence among adolescents, we must understand its causes. This report draws on five years of field work in an immigrant community in New York City to describe how the generation gap separating immigrant adolescents from their parents, made wider by immigration, leads these children to rely on violent peer groups for protection. Previous research has tried to explain adolescent violence among immigrants in terms of cultural alienation, but this research suggests that much violence among immigrant adolescents is a pragmatic response to neighborhood conditions. Once these adolescents leave their neighborhoods or the threats to their safety disappear, they generally end their involvement with violent peers.

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