

A Parent's Guide to Adolescent Delinquency

Definition:

Adolescent delinquency is unacceptable conduct that violates the law. Behavior(s) that constitute adolescent offences are not violations of the law when committed by an adult.

Facts:

- Adolescence is the period of greatest risk for law violations
- The older an adolescent is when delinquency first appears, the less likely the behavior will manifest into more serious crimes.
- Those who begin delinquency before the onset of adolescence are at a greater risk to commit more serious crimes.
- 60 - 80% of adolescents have participated in delinquent behavior.

Who is at risk?

- Any adolescent

What types of crimes do adolescents commit?

- Truancy, skipping classes
- Curfew violation
- Running away from home
- Arson
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Minor in possession; alcohol, tobacco, controlled substance

Predictors of adolescent delinquency

- History of aggression or violent behavior
- ADHD diagnosis
- Negative peer groups, hanging out with the wrong crowd
- Family conflict, divorce, drug abuse, physical or emotional abuse
- High absenteeism—missing a lot of school
- Failure in school, academic performance

What resources are available to prevent and/or treat delinquency?

- Support groups and Family Outreach programs
- Communities in School Social Services
- Job Corps
- Boles Home, Boles, Texas
- Foster care programs
- Salesmanship Program
- Texas Youth Commission, TYC Grand Saline, Texas (Court Ordered)
- Local School District Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs

Reference:

<http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org>