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Speech delivered by Adam Graycar:

"Young people & crime: breaking the cycle"

at Moonah, Tasmania, 10 February 1999

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- What is the life-style of these offenders?

Pathways to Prevention

- Childhood factors of difficult temperament and poor social skills
 - Family factors of poor parental supervision and discipline, substance abuse, family violence and disharmony, long-term parental unemployment, and abuse/neglect
 - School factors of school failure, deviant peer group, bullying, and inadequate behaviour management
 - Life factors of divorce and family break up, death of a family member
 - Community and cultural factors of low income and poor housing, neighbourhood violence and crime, and lack of support services
- At what age do they begin their crimes?
 - NSW data
 - Commence at age 14?
 - Desist at age ??
 - What kinds of crime do they commit as juveniles, and does their pattern of criminal behaviour change as they grow older?
 - Property offenders - juvenile males have highest arrest rate compared with any other group, including adult males.
 - However the value of the property is less than for adults.
 - 86% of offences are property offences, not crimes of violence.
 - Juveniles are arrested at higher rates than adults for offences such as common assault and robbery
 - Stealing followed by break, enter and steal appear to involve juveniles of both sexes most frequently.
 - Juvenile crime is frequently committed in the same geographic community as the juvenile's place of residence.
 - More likely to offend **WITH** peers.
 - Most juvenile crime is unplanned, opportunistic and episodic.
 - One third or roughly 40% of juvenile crime is committed during the hours of 2pm-6pm on weekdays.
 - How many crimes do they commit in a year?

A question for research?? Ask Sat

- What is their employment pattern?

Another question for research

- What is their involvement in drugs?

Very little is known about juveniles, drug use and crime. The current research being conducted by the Institute concerns adults, and juveniles drug use is the possible subject of future research.

Overseas research published in 1990 shows that

Overall, use of illegal drugs was not found to be extensive [amongst young people]. By far the most frequently used drug was alcohol followed by tobacco, with cannabis and solvents some way behind, and a range of other drugs being used on a small scale (Davies & Coggans 1991, p. 21).

It should be kept in mind that the nature and type of drug use differs between groups within the community.

Evidence gathered in the Violence Prevention Summit suggests that young people commence drug use without knowing the harm it will cause. The young men said that they got into drug dealing when they could not afford to sustain their habit. There was no discussion about the type of drugs commonly used amongst young people.

- What distinguishes those with long careers from those whose careers are brief?

Another question for research

- What distinguished high-rate offenders from those who commit crimes infrequently (Greenwood 1983, p. 403)

Another question for research