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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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Criminal Careers & Crime Prevention

**“Young People & Crime – Breaking the Cycle”
Moonah, Tasmania
10 February 1999**

**Adam Graycar
Director**



- **a motivated offender;**
- **a suitable target; and**
- **an opportunity.**



- **trying to reduce the supply of motivated offenders; and**
- **making crime more difficult to commit.**



- **Of those who do have contact in the form of a court appearance, the majority has only one appearance.**
- **The longer juveniles stay out of trouble, the less likely it is that they will reappear in court.**
- **However, a sizeable minority of juveniles do make several court appearances leading to conviction.**



- **A small number of persons in a birth cohort are responsible for the majority of the crimes committed by a birth.**
- **A small minority of offenders commit the significant majority of offences.**
- **However, a small proportion of “chronic” offenders (about 5% or males) account for about half of all offences.**
- **An early age of onset of offending foreshadows a long criminal career and many offences**



- **Young offenders tend to be versatile and rarely specialise (e.g. in violent offending).**
- **They are also versatile in committing other types of antisocial behaviour, including heavy drinking, drug-taking, dangerous driving and promiscuous sex.**
- **Young offenders commit most crimes for rational or utilitarian reasons. However, a minority of crimes (especially vandalism, shoplifting and taking vehicles) are committed for excitement or enjoyment or to relieve boredom.**

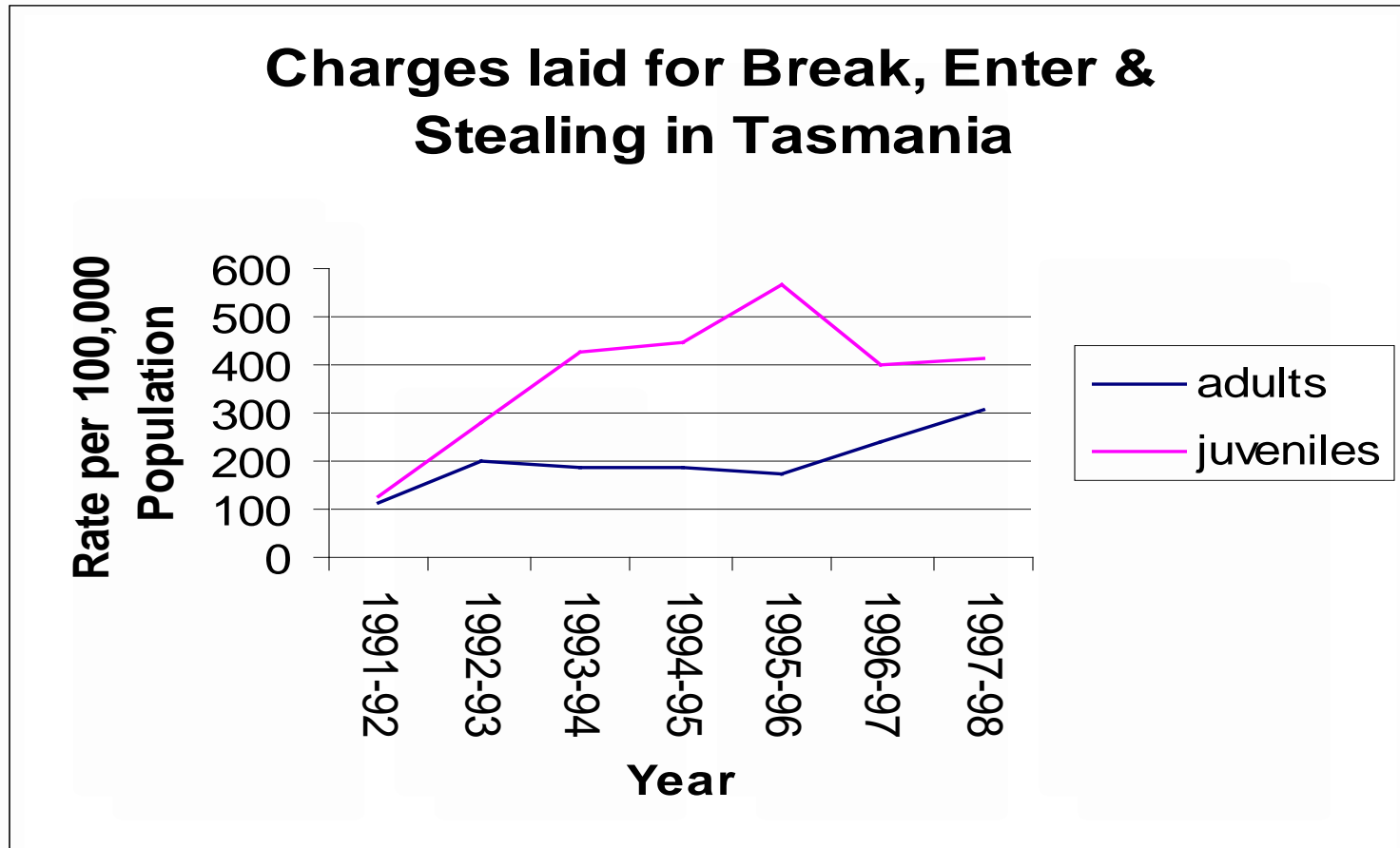


- **What is the life-style of these offenders?**
- **At what age do they begin their crimes?**
- **What kinds of crime do they commit as juveniles, and does their pattern of criminal behaviour change as they grow older?**
- **How many crimes do they commit in a year?**
- **What is their employment pattern?**
- **What is their involvement in drugs?**
- **What distinguishes those with long careers from those whose careers are brief?**
- **What distinguished high-rate offenders from those who commit crimes infrequently?**

Changes in Recorded Crime in Australia and Tasmania 1995-98

Crimes in Order	Australia		Tasmania	
	Number 1998	Trend 1995-98	Number 1998	Trend 1995-98
General theft	565,214	Slight rise (+15%)	13,872	Sharp rise (+25.6%)
Unlawful Entry/ Burglary	435,670	Slight rise (+13%)	14,315	Sharp rise (+26.1%)
Assault	132,967	Sharp rise (+30.7%)	2,231	Up & down (+9.5%)
Motor Vehicle Theft	131,572	Up & down (+3.5%)	2,991	Up & down.(+32.8%)
Robbery	23,778	Sharp rise (+63.3%)	187	Steep rise (+192%)
Sexual Assault	14,568	Up & down (+11%)	216	Sharp rise (+35%)
Homicide	333	Decline (-6.5%)	9	Up & down (-33.3%)

Source: Derived from ABS Recorded Crime



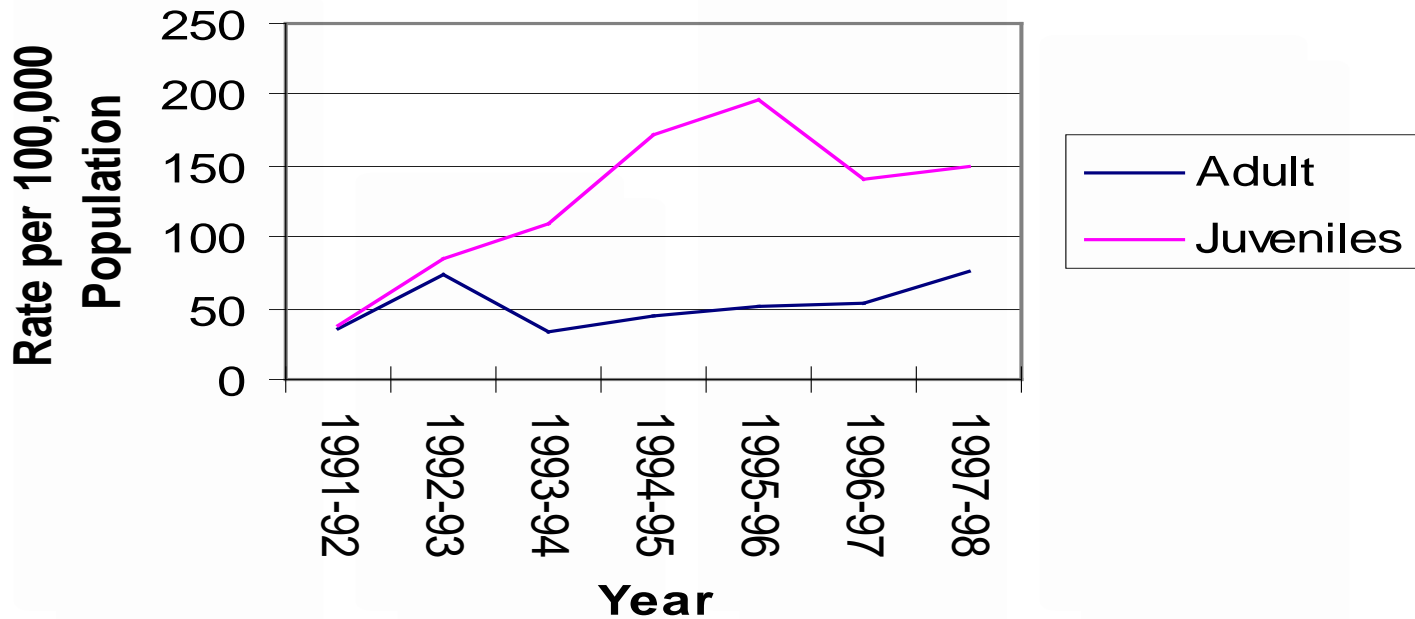
Data compiled by the Australian Institute of Criminology

1991-92: Data derived from data on persons involved in crimes cleared (Australian Institute of Criminology).

1992-93 to 1995-96: Data adapted from unpublished data on the number of charges laid classified by Age and Gender (Tasmanian Police, Crime Statistics Unit)

1996-97 to 1997-98: Data derived from Tasmanian Police, Annual Report, Department of Police and Public Safety.

Charges laid for Motor Vehicle Theft in Tasmania



Data compiled by the Australian Institute of Criminology

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- **covert antisocial behaviour (e.g., lying, stealing);**
- **overt antisocial behaviour (e.g., aggression, fighting);**
- **poor school performance;**
- **abuse of hard drugs or alcohol; and**
- **association with delinquent peers**



In a mixed approach to crime prevention, strategies could simultaneously:

- **promote community safety;**
- **address behavioural and behaviour development elements of crime prevention within families, schools and other institutions; and**
- **implement immediate situational crime prevention strategies such as developing safer communities through better urban design and policing.**



- **Strengthening social capital**
- **Working with people**
- **Building partnerships**
- **A commitment to an evidence-based approach backed by evaluation**



- **improved feelings of confidence, pride and safety within communities;**
- **enhanced access to employment and training opportunities;**
- **an increase in average levels of education; and**
- **accessible and relevant local services.**

Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Anti-Social and Criminal Behaviour

RISK FACTORS

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Childhood Factors

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Birth injury● Disability● Difficult temperament● Insecure attachment● Poor social skills● Low self esteem● Hyperactivity/disruptive behaviour● Impulsivity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● social skills● good coping skills● internal locus of control● attachment to family● empathy● school achievement● easy temperament● problem solving skills |
|---|--|

Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Anti-Social and Criminal Behaviour

RISK FACTORS

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Family Factors

- single parents
- teenage mothers
- poor parental supervision and discipline
- substance abuse
- family violence and disharmony
- father absence
- long-term parental unemployment
- rejection of child
- abuse/neglect
- supportive caring parents
- family harmony
- responsibility for chores or required helpfulness
- strong family norms and morality
- secure and stable family
- supportive relationship with other adults

Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Anti-Social and Criminal Behaviour

RISK FACTORS

School Factors

- school failure
- normative beliefs about aggression
- deviant peer group
- bullying
- peer rejection
- poor attachment to school
- inadequate behaviour management

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- positive school climate
- prosocial peer group
- responsibility and required helpfulness
- sense of belonging/bonding
- opportunities for some success at school and recognition of achievement
- school norms re: violence

Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Anti-Social and Criminal Behaviour

RISK FACTORS

Life Factors

- divorce and family break up
- war or natural disasters
- death of a family member

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- meeting significant person
- moving to new area
- opportunities at critical turning points or major life transitions

Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Anti-Social and Criminal Behaviour

RISK FACTORS

Community and Cultural Factors

- low income and poor housing
- population density and housing conditions
- neighbourhood violence and crime
- lack of support services
- social or cultural discrimination
- medial portrayal of violence

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- access to support services
- community networking
- attachment to the community
- participation in church or other community group
- a strong cultural identity and ethnic pride



- **Local communities**
- **Families**
- **Schools**
- **Labour markets**
- **Commercial settings**
- **Police agencies**
- **Other agencies of criminal justice**



- **reduce the supply of motivated offenders**
- **make crime hard to commit**



- **Frequent home visiting by nurses**
- **Preschool intellectual enrichment programs**
- **Parent training**
- **Social skills training**
- **Peer influence resistance training**
- **Teacher training**
- **School anti-bullying programs**
- **Community crime prevention programs**
- **Situational crime prevention programs**