

Data Trends

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Data Trends are produced by the Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida, Tampa. Data Trends are funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There are two Data Trends products: 1) Summaries, which detail recent, published articles on systems of care for children with emotional and behavioral disabilities and their families, and; 2) News briefs, which highlight related items or events of interest to the field.

Lately, a number of items have appeared in the popular press informing the public about adolescents in the juvenile justice system who also need mental health services. Two of the most recent items were "It's a Crime," a four-part series by the *Pittsburgh-Post Gazette* (July 15-19) that reported on a nationwide survey of 172 detention center directors, and a comprehensive editorial appearing in the July 23rd issue of the *Chicago Tribune*.

This News brief alerts you to the May, 2001 issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, in which two articles address issues related to the mental health needs of this population. As noted in the first article, "mental health records are rarely available to juvenile detention centers when youth are admitted," leaving these youth without appropriate care. Therefore, this article reports on an intake instrument that may help to resolve this problem. The second article supports the need for such evaluations, and especially for the rapidly growing population of adolescent female offenders who show symptoms of depression, anxiety, and substance abuse problems. Below are brief summaries of each article.

Grisso, T., Barnum, R., Fletcher, K. E., Cauffman, E., & Peuschold, D. (2001). Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument for mental health needs of juvenile justice youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 40(5), 541-548.

Grisso et al. report on the development of the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-Second Version (MAYSI-2), a 52-item self-report measure designed to screen at intake for mental health problems common to delinquent populations, including suicide risk, alcohol, and substance abuse. The MAYSI-2 is applicable to a wide range of adolescents (by age, gender, and ethnicity), takes about 10 minutes to administer, is inexpensive, and is designed to be interpreted by intake staff in order to identify youth who may need "an immediate response to mental or emotional problems."

Kataoka, S. H., Zima, B. T., Dupre, D. A., Moreno, Yang, X., & McCracken, J. T. (2001). Mental health problems and service use among female juvenile offenders: Their relationship to criminal history. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 40(5), 549-555.

Kataoka et al. investigate relationships between emotional/substance abuse problems and previous histories of mental health services, special education classes, and rates of recidivism among 54 female offenders in a California juvenile probation camp. Finding that "lifetime contact with specialty mental health services or special education programs was relatively common among incarcerated female youths and related to having at least one mental health problem," the authors call for "standardized measures of diagnosis and impairment," which may help "guide the delivery of mental health services for female populations."

Articles from the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* are available on-line to subscribing individuals or institutions at: <http://www.jaacap.com/>

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