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## An Analysis of the Relationship Between Exposure to Risk, Gender, and Delinquency: An Exploratory Case Study

Rosanne D. Walters  
*Old Dominion University*

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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPOSURE TO RISK,  
GENDER, AND DELINQUENCY: AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY**

by

**Rosanne D. Walters**

B.A., 1969, Rutgers - The State University  
M.Ed., 1978, North Carolina State University  
M.U.S., 1999, Old Dominion University

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Reviewed by:

Approved by:

~~Bruce Rubin, Interim Dean~~  
College of Business and  
Public Administration

~~Berhanu Mengistu, Ph.D. (Director)~~  
Professor of Urban Studies  
and Public Administration

~~Berhanu Mengistu, Ph.D.~~  
Program Director  
Graduate Center for Urban Studies  
and Public Administration

~~William M. Leavitt, Ph.D. (Member)~~  
Professor of Urban Studies  
and Public Administration

~~Stephen W. Tonelson, Ed.D. (Member)~~  
Professor of Early Childhood and  
Special Education

## **ABSTRACT**

### **AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPOSURE TO RISK, GENDER, AND DELINQUENCY: AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY**

This case study explored the interactive relationship between the type and level of risk experienced by males and females entering the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000, differences in delinquent behaviors of males and females, and differences in responses to that behavior. The study was an outgrowth of a previous report to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Task Force suggesting that females experienced a higher level of risk than males and that they were detained for lesser offenses. The study also was motivated by data from the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicating that there had been a steady increase in the number and percentage of girls arrested, detained, and maintained in custody since 1994. Theoretical foundations for the study included the historical role and purpose of the juvenile justice system, prevailing theories of juvenile delinquency, and societal attitudes toward females.

The study included demographic and offense information on 1,298 juveniles held in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. Additional information was collected on a random sample of 621 of these juveniles from case records in the Detention Home, particularly the Mental Health Assessment form. In-depth risk factor information for a matched random sample of 226 juveniles was collected from case files at the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit to include social history and psychological evaluations. Data were analyzed through cross-tabulations and the Chi-Square test of significance and Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient measures of association. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized for age and length of stay in detention.

Findings of the study indicated that females were detained at a younger age than males and that they were admitted for lesser offenses. The risk factor data analysis suggested that males and females came to juvenile detention with complex mental health issues; however, the study confirmed the relationship between mental health issues, physical and sexual abuse with running away, depression, suicidal ideation, and truancy for females.



To the memory of my mother Rose D'Erasmio  
for helping me to understand the power of  
education to change the meaning and  
direction of our lives.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### *Problem Statement*

In May 2001, the American Bar Association and the National Bar Association reported that girls were the “fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population, despite the overall drop in juvenile crime” (Barnett & Simmons, 2001, p.1). Although a general decline in juvenile crime began in 1994, both the number and percentage of girls arrested, detained and maintained in custody have steadily increased. The Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) reports that

between 1992 and 1996 the number of juvenile females arrested for Violent Crime Index offenses increased by 25% with no increase in arrests of male juveniles for the same offenses. Juvenile female arrests for Property Crime Index offenses increased 21% while the increase in juvenile male arrests in this same category was only 4% (Budnick & Shields-Feltcher, 1998, p.1).

The Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention also reported that nearly 25% of delinquency cases processed in 1997 involved a female offender, compared with 19% in 1988. Between 1988 and 1997, the number of delinquency cases involving females increased 83%. OJJDP has concluded that “female involvement in the juvenile justice system, once seen as an anomaly, has evolved into a significant trend” (Budnick & Shields-Feltcher, 1998, p.1).

A recent report by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicated that females accounted for 23% of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault and 31% of juvenile arrests for other assaults in 2000. Females also represented 59% of juveniles arrested for running away

from home and 31% of all juveniles arrested for curfew and loitering violations. The report stated further that between 1980 and 2000, the juvenile arrest rate for all offenses increased 35% for females and declined 11% for males (Snyder, 2002).

Between March and October 2001, a study of population and utilization trends at the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home was conducted for the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Task Force. Members included representatives from the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit, Norfolk Department of Social Services, Commonwealth Attorney's office, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, and citizens. The Task Force requested a compilation of best practices developed throughout the country to reduce overcrowding in juvenile detention facilities. It also requested answers to specific questions about juveniles who had been placed in the detention center in 2000. Two findings of the Detention Home study were that in 2000 females were admitted to detention more frequently for technical violations and status offenses than males, and females reported a higher percentage of risk factors and personal issues than males (Elliker & Walters, 2002). In addition, the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice reported that statewide admissions to detention had increased from 22.4% in 1998 to 24.7% in 2000. Admissions in Norfolk increased during this same period from 23.5% to 25.3% (Pullen, Greenfield, Blakley, & Guenther, 2001).

As female arrest and detention rates increased, national studies indicated that their physical, emotional, and mental health needs generally went unmet (Barnett & Simmons, 2001). The National Research Council on Child Abuse and Neglect reported in 1993 that female adolescents were more likely to be victims of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. These experiences often resulted in emotional and behavioral difficulties to include increased incidences of depression, suicidal tendencies, and drug use. While it appeared that females were placed in

detention for their protection, they may have required specialized medical and social services that generally were not provided. This was due to the fact that most detention facilities and attendant programs were designed for the predominately male population (Barnett & Simmons, 2001; Krisberg & Austin, 1993). In addition, since there were typically fewer rehabilitative housing options available for females, they often spent more time in detention waiting for an alternative placement (Schaffner, Shick, & Stein, 1997).

Any attempt to understand factors related to the increasing numbers of juveniles entering detention, as well as increasing lengths of stay, must consider philosophical differences about the purpose of the juvenile justice system and, in particular, the purpose of juvenile detention. Over the history of the juvenile justice system, debate with regard to purpose, and resulting social and legislative policies, fluctuated between two distinct perspectives. The first perspective viewed the juvenile justice system as an opportunity to provide youthful offenders with treatment, protection and community-based rehabilitation services, such as mental health and substance abuse counseling, tutoring, training, job readiness skills, and safe shelter. The second perspective essentially viewed the system as a “big stick” that served as a method of deterrence, punishment and institutionalization (Benson & Saito, 2001; Feld, 1993; Krisberg & Austin, 1993; Schwartz, 1989).

In addition to differing philosophic approaches about the purpose of the juvenile justice system and, as a result, the purpose of juvenile detention, there also was debate regarding the existence of a double standard for treatment of female delinquents. This double standard was reflected most notably in the difference in detention rates for males and females for status offenses, which included running away from home, truancy, and being “out of control.” According to

Anderson, "bias of this kind goes back to a perception of female adolescents as more in need of protection and control than their male peers, particularly in the area of sexual behavior"

(Anderson, 1994, p.1). Chesney-Lind, who has written extensively on the issues related to gender and juvenile delinquency, contends that the American juvenile justice system has "sexualized girls' delinquency and criminalized girls' survival strategies" (Anderson, 1994, p.1) which included running away from home to escape sexual and physical abuse.

Reports from the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention on national trends for female delinquents and the preliminary data from the Norfolk Task Force study, suggested that an in-depth examination of the influence of gender on the detention of juveniles would provide a basis for a review of policies, practices and programs in the Norfolk juvenile justice system. Specifically, analysis of differences related to offense, risk factors, and length of stay would inform the work of judges, intake workers, detention staff, court services workers and treatment providers in decisions to detain or seek alternative responses to the delinquent behavior of females.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this case study was to explore the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk, gender, and delinquency within the context of the historical foundations of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and prevailing theories that attempt to explain development of delinquent behavior in adolescents. The study examined the interactive relationship between type and level of risk experienced by males and females, differences in the delinquent behaviors of males and females, and responses of the juvenile justice system to males and females. It analyzed differences in level and type of risk factors experienced by males and females and the relationship between those experiences and level and type of delinquent

behaviors in which juveniles became involved. The study also analyzed the influence that gender may have had in the decisions by the juvenile court judges to admit juveniles to detention.

As an outgrowth of the Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Study, completed in January 2002, this study built upon information previously gathered, as well as additional sources of information in a data triangulation process. This case study took place within the “bounded system” of the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. The research questions that provided the framework for the direction and design of this exploratory case study were as follows:

1. For what offenses were males and females admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000?
2. To what individual and environmental risk factors were males and females exposed prior to admittance to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000?
3. What was the relationship between the level of exposure to individual and environmental risk and the type of offense committed by males and females admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000?

Trends that emerged from the data were intended for review by the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Task Force and the possible reform of policies and practices related to the detention of juveniles in general and females in particular. The previous Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Study (Elliker & Walters, 2002) resulted in 18 recommendations that were currently under review or implementation. These recommendations included strategies for processing juveniles through the system more quickly to reduce length of stay in detention. The current study could result, for example, in a gender specific assessment process to identify more clearly underlying issues for delinquent girls and, perhaps, impact development and utilization of programs

to address their mental health needs.

### *Theoretical Framework*

This case study was built upon three theoretical frameworks. First was the body of literature that seeks to explain the relationship between gender, exposure to specific types of risk, and involvement in specific types of delinquent behaviors as a reflection of the social context of being an adolescent female (Anderson, 1994; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). Second, the study drew upon theoretical knowledge that seeks to explain delinquent behavior as it develops in the adolescent with particular regard to the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk factors and delinquency. Specifically, the study incorporated aspects of Strain, Social Control, Social Learning, and Social Development Theories. Third was the underlying philosophy of the juvenile justice system to serve as “parent” to children and youth, in order to guide, provide treatment, enforce sanctions, and maintain social order (Krisberg & Austin, 1993). Further, the study explored the philosophy of the juvenile court as “parent” in relation to the specific treatment of females by juvenile courts. Figure 1, page 13, depicts the relationship between risk factors, domains of risk, delinquency, juvenile justice system, and gender as examined in this study.

### *Methodology*

The primary purpose and value of this exploratory study was to learn more about this particular case, the juveniles admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. While the study was intended to add to the cumulative body of knowledge about the relationship between gender and exposure to risk, the relationship between gender and specific types of delinquent behavior, and the treatment of females in the juvenile justice system, the study was not intended to

be generalized to juvenile detention systems in other localities or to explain behavior definitively in terms of cause and effect. However, issues of increasing involvement of females in the juvenile justice system and questions surrounding differential exposure to risk for males and females, the effects of risk factors upon the behaviors of juveniles, and the impact of gender in the detention decision-making process were issues substantiated as contemporary by previously cited studies, as well as local, state, and national reports.

As an exploratory case study, the research focused on juveniles who were admitted to the “bounded system” of the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000, and, to some extent, the juvenile justice system in the City of Norfolk. There was no attempt to create, or evaluate, any specific “treatment” for a targeted population in order to determine the significance of a defined set of variables under a specified set of conditions. Instead, individuals were selected for this study solely because they had been admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. The study explored the environmental factors and delinquent behaviors that brought these particular males and females to detention, as well as responses of the juvenile justice system. Following Yin’s concept of exploratory research, the goal of this case study was to develop a relevant hypothetical model that might lead to future research (Yin, 1993, 1994). This approach was supported by Stebbins who states that it is through “concatenation,” or the accumulation of knowledge through linked exploration, that the development of theory occurs (Stebbins, 2001).

The study utilized multiple sources of both quantitative and qualitative data about the juveniles in the sample population over the course of one year. Detailed and comprehensive sources were reviewed in order to triangulate the data effectively. Sources of data included the individual case records maintained at the Juvenile Detention Home and the case records maintained



at the Court Service Unit. The design of the study was based primarily upon Social Development Theory which suggested that environmental risk exists in multiple domains of the juvenile's life to include family, school, and community. Risk factors exist in combinations and it is these combinations, rather than any single variable, that may negatively impact the behavior of the juvenile (Hawkins, 1995). Therefore, attempts to isolate risk factors as single variables and to examine them outside their interactive relationship may provide incomplete or inconclusive findings. The methodology of this study, in addition to the triangulation of data from multiple sources in different formats, utilized cross-tabulations and means analysis to explore the interactive nature of a variety of motivating, contextual factors, resulting delinquent behaviors, and judicial outcomes for the juveniles who were admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. The types of data analyzed included demographic and offense information, as well as the presence of specific individual risk factors and those associated with the environmental domains of family and school. Table 1, pages 14 - 15, summarizes the purpose, design, and data analysis strategies.

### *Significance of the Study*

According to Bilchik, the increasing number and changing nature of juveniles served by the juvenile justice system has "strained the system beyond capacity, from intake to detention to transitional services. The result is a system in many jurisdictions that does not consistently serve the public safety, hold juveniles accountable, or meet the treatment and rehabilitation needs of each juvenile offender" (Bilchik, 1998, p.1). Costs of juvenile crime and delinquency and the operation of the detention centers with over-crowded conditions produces strains on all aspects of the system: facilities, funding, personnel, and programs. Further, a system which essentially becomes a warehouse for juveniles is able to do little to address needs and to provide treatment and

rehabilitative services that are foundational to the framework of the juvenile justice system (Burrell, DeMuro, Sanniti, & Warboys, 1998). Like many other urban communities in the nation and Commonwealth, the juvenile justice system in the City of Norfolk, attempted to address the issues related to juvenile crime and delinquency, such as crowding in the Juvenile Detention Home, over-utilization of detention as a strategy for responding to juvenile crime and delinquency, and the on-going need for the development of alternative strategies.

This study was an opportunity for an in-depth examination of one of the fastest growing populations in the juvenile justice system: female offenders (Barnett & Simmons, 2001). Practices related to the detention of female offenders, as well as the interaction of factors that theoretically led to involvement of females in delinquent behavior and criminal activities were explored. Given the fact that the juvenile system was predominantly male, issues related to females often had been ignored (Barnett & Simmons, 2001; Krisberg & Austin, 1993). Analysis of the data collected for this study was intended to assist in the Task Force process for reviewing and developing policies and practices, as well as the creation of programs and services to better serve the needs of females in both the community and the juvenile detention center.

### *Limitations*

Although data were collected on the total population in detention in 2000, and additional data were collected on a random sample of 621 of the juveniles in detention in 2000, the most in-depth information was collected on a relatively small matched random sample of 226 juveniles. The sample size and large number of risk factors, or variables, at times limited the interpretation of the statistical results.

In addition, comparisons were between two groups (males and females) within the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home. The study would have been strengthened by a comparison to juveniles in a similar city, or to juveniles of similar demographics and risk factors who did not become delinquent. However, data collection and comparability issues precluded such a design. While the study was not experimental, the case study design is a strong one and has a high degree of intrinsic value (Stebbins, 2001; Yin, 1994). In addition, the exploratory nature of the study had the potential for linkage to other studies building toward development of a theory of juvenile delinquency that accounts for the interaction between risk and gender.

The availability of data was dependent upon the completeness of the case files. The amount and kind of information available in the files was related directly to the instructions of the judge hearing the case who took into account the particular situation of the juvenile, prior court involvement, and seriousness of offense before ordering the collection of specific information on the juvenile and his or her family. Juvenile court judges balanced the need for information that might be relevant to the juvenile's case against resources required to obtain such information.

While some of the information was self-report or anecdotal data and difficult to confirm with objective measures, the perceptions of the juvenile about his or her own situation cannot be discounted. In addition, this issue was addressed through the triangulation of data from a variety of sources.

Many variables may or may not influence a juvenile's involvement in delinquent behaviors and the responses of the juvenile justice system to those behaviors. These include gender, race, and age. While national, state, and local data clearly indicated that there was an over-representation of male minorities in the juvenile justice system (Hoytt, 2001; Hsia & Hamparian, 1998; Krisberg &

Austin, 1993; Pullen, et al, 2001), the primary focus of this study was on the relationship between gender, risk, and delinquency. Age and race were correlated with offense and length of stay data only. Peer relations and socioeconomic status also were not addressed within the scope of this study. Consistent and verifiable information about peers and socioeconomic status was not available.

The growth of the number and percentage of females delinquents made a compelling argument for such a study. Further, statistical treatment of risk factor variables included analysis of the combined effect of such variables as suggested by social development theory rather than an attempt to isolate any single variable.

### *Subsequent Chapters*

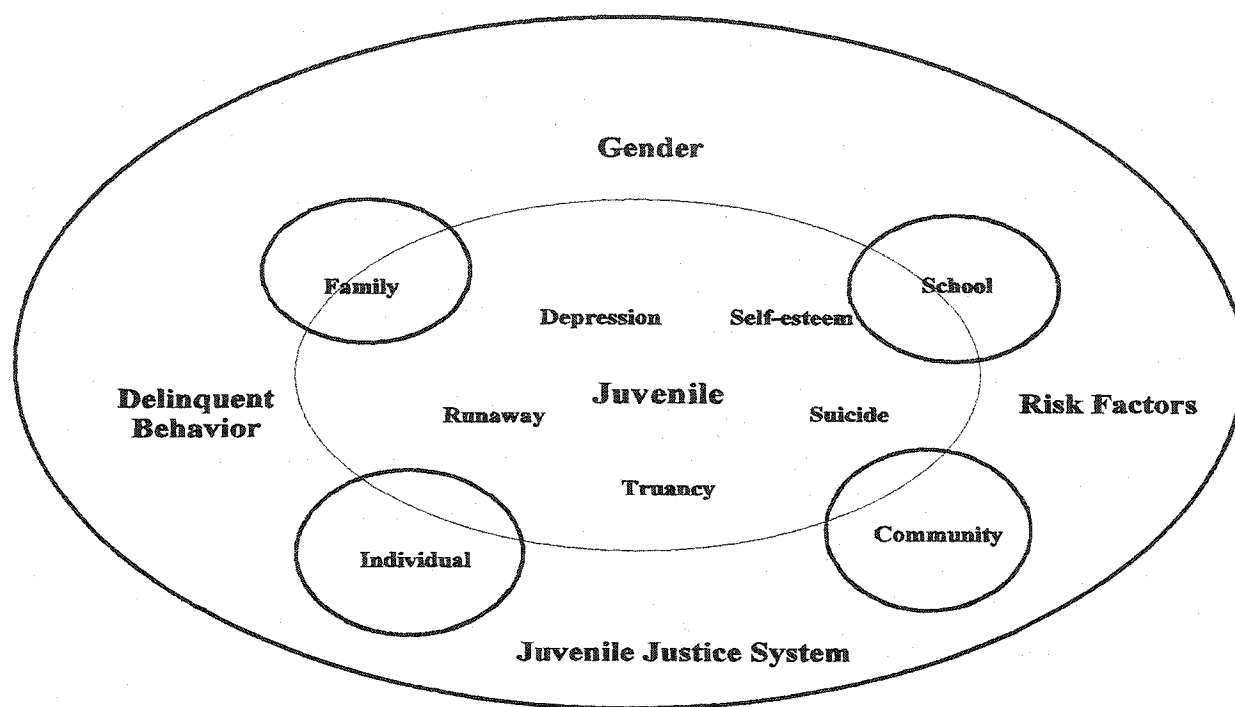
The study followed the traditional organizational structure for a case study. Chapter one introduced the purpose and research questions, summarized the methodology and theoretical framework, and addressed both the significance and limitations of the study.

Chapter Two consisted of a review of the literature exploring three theoretical frameworks and the interactive nature of their impact upon the behavior of delinquent juveniles. These frameworks were: (1) the history and purpose of the juvenile justice system; (2) the prevailing theories that seek to explain why juveniles become delinquent with a particular emphasis upon the role of individual and environmental risk factors; and, (3) the implications of the historical and social context of gender in the juvenile justice system.

Chapter Three detailed the case study methodology followed in the design of the study, selection of the sample population, strategies of data collection, and type of data collected to respond to the research questions. This chapter also detailed the statistical processes employed to analyze the data.

Chapter Four presented a detailed analysis of the findings of the data collection and testing. Statistical tests included the Chi Square Test of Statistical Significance and the Measures of Association: Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient. ANOVA also was utilized for age and length of stay data. Chapter Five provided an overview of the study and the findings. Chapter Five also discussed implications and recommendations for both policy and future research.

**Figure 1.**  
**Gender, Risk, and Delinquency**



Adapted from: Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (1996, p.153), as found in Merriam (2001, pg.189).

**Table 1.**  
**Model Summary**

**Research Problem**

Although a general decline in juvenile crime began in 1994, both the number and percentage of females arrested, detained and maintained in custody in juvenile detention and corrections facilities steadily increased.

**Theoretical Framework**

1. Juvenile Justice system served an historical role as *parens patriae*, particularly with regard to the delinquent behavior of females.
2. Female delinquents experienced a higher level of risk and are detained for lesser offenses than males.
3. Delinquency was thought to develop through social learning, strain, social control, and the interaction between multiple risk factors present in the juvenile's life.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between exposure to risk, gender and delinquency within the context of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and prevailing theories that attempted to explain the development of delinquent behavior in adolescents.

**Table 1.**  
**Model Summary, continued**

**Design of the Study**

The analysis of the relationship between exposure to risk, gender, and delinquency was accomplished through an exploratory case study of juveniles admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in the year 2000.

**Research Question**

To what individual and environmental risk factors were males and females exposed prior to admittance to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000?

**Research Question**

For what offenses were males and females admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000?

**Research Question**

What was the relationship between level of exposure to risk and type of offense committed by juveniles admitted the Norfolk Juvenile

**Data Analysis**

1. Number & percentage of males and females committing offense by type and category.
2. Length of stay in detention for males and females by offense: number & percentage.
3. Means comparison of length of stay.
4. Means comparison of age.

**Data Analysis**

1. Number & percentage of juveniles indicating "yes" on risk factors:
  - a. Individual: DSM diagnoses
    - Substance abuse/alcohol
    - Physical/sexual abuse
    - Abandonment/rejection
    - Low self-esteem
    - Depression
    - Runaway
  - b. Family: History of crime, substance abuse, mental health problems, structure, DSS involvement
  - c. School: Truancy, discipline referrals, Special Education placement

**Data Analysis**

1. Number & percentage of males & females committing each offense.
2. Number & percentage of risk factors with each offense category.
3. Relationships between risk factors and behavioral outcomes: running away, truancy, depression, suicidal ideation, low self-esteem.



## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

#### *Overview*

National, state and local data indicate increasing trends in the number and percentage of females entering the juvenile justice system and, in particular, juvenile detention centers. While the majority of youth in the juvenile justice system historically were and continue to be males, the trend with regard to females raised significant questions about the reasons for their increased involvement in acts of delinquency, precipitating environmental factors, treatment needs and disposition of cases by the courts. Essentially, the data raised questions about similarities and differences in the motivating factors that led a male or female juvenile to commit acts of crime and delinquency and how the juvenile justice system responded to such behavior in light of different precipitating factors in order to prevent further involvement in anti-social behavior and continued incarceration. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk factors, gender, and delinquency within the historical context of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and prevailing theories that attempted to explain the development of delinquent behavior in adolescents.

The study was grounded in the interaction between three theoretical frameworks. The first was the philosophic foundation for the creation of the juvenile justice system and its unique role in shaping the lives of adolescents, as well as the countervailing social and political philosophies that have directed its work. The second was the body of theory that seeks to explain the causes for adolescent delinquent or criminal behavior. The third was the developing theoretical framework that sought to explain the importance of gender as a reflection of social norms and expectations and its

impact upon the development of delinquent behavior in females.

### *Historical Perspective*

The unique history of the juvenile justice system in the United States and the way in which it evolved since its inception in 1899 was reflective of not only social, economic and political trends, but of the changing nature of the way in which adults and institutions viewed their role and responsibility in the development of children and youth. In particular, the evolution of the juvenile justice system reflected prevailing social standards of behavior for females and the uneasy, often contentious, response to female behavior deemed to be outside the norm of acceptable behavior. Also linked to the history and development of the juvenile justice system was the evolution of scientific criminology and the application of a medical model for the diagnosis of the antecedent causes and treatment of behavioral problems in youth.

It generally is agreed that the roots of the juvenile justice system are found in the 15<sup>th</sup> century legal doctrine of *parens patriae*; that is, the concept that the “state is the ultimate parent of all its children” (Schwartz, 2001, p.234; Chesney-Lind & Shelden; 1998, Feld, 1999a). The doctrine provided the rationale for the state to intervene in the lives of youth by acting in the role of parent to protect, guide, and control, although in retrospect it was also believed that such interventions were intended to maintain the prevailing social order (Chesney-Lind & Shelden; 1998, Krisberg & Austin, 1993; Schwartz, 2000). In fact, this doctrine provided the philosophic and legal framework for the creation of the Houses of Refuge (Schwartz, 2000) opened in response to the growing numbers of children living on the streets of the major eastern industrial cities, such as New York, Boston and Philadelphia, as a result of an economic downturn, arrival of a new wave of Irish immigrants, changes in family structure, and growth of the factory system (Chesney-Lind &

Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993; Schwartz, 2000).

The first House of Refuge was opened in New York in 1824 by the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents. Boston followed in 1826, Philadelphia in 1828, and Baltimore in 1830. By 1890 there was a version of a reform school found in almost every state (Schwartz, 2001). The impetus and validation for expansion of the Houses of Refuge movement came from a landmark decision by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 1838 in *Ex Parte Crouse*, a clear demonstration of the *parens patriae* concept. In 1838, a Pennsylvania justice of the peace summarily committed Mary Ann Crouse to the Philadelphia House of Refuge based upon her mother's petition to the court that her daughter was unmanageable. Mary Ann's father attempted to intervene and have his daughter returned to him through a writ of habeas corpus. However, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court denied his request stating that

The object of charity is reformation, by training the inmates to industry; by imbuing their minds with principles of morality and religion; by furnishing them with means to earn a living; and above all, by separating them from the corrupting influence of improper associates. To this end, may not the natural parents, when unequal to the task of education, or unworthy of it, be superceded by the *parens patriae*, or common guardian of the community?

(Krisberg & Austin, 1993, p.18; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a)

This decision confirmed the right of the state to assume custody of a child, superceding the rights of parents, and to utilize institutionalization (usually for an indeterminate period of time) as a method for the reform and rehabilitation of vagrant, delinquent and unmanageable youth (Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

The Progressive Era (1890-1920) was characterized by unprecedented urban growth, due to both population movement from rural to urban areas and a large influx of immigrants from Europe who hoped to find work in the expanding industries of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Social organization of cities also changed as a new urban poor began to populate core areas and the more affluent moved to the outer limits of the cities as a result of increased access afforded by the train and streetcar systems. The growth of crowded urban ghettos populated with poor ethnic minorities led to the creation of pockets of crime and apparent disorder that began to threaten prevailing social norms. The development of a climate of anti-urban sentiment soon became an anti-minority climate as problems associated with rapid urban expansion were directly linked to the populations of minorities living within the urban core areas. Movement from the rural to urban areas also had an impact on family structure. The extended, close-knit agrarian family was transformed to a more isolated, nuclear family structure. Children often worked in factories at jobs not taken by immigrants, or were left unsupervised while poor parents worked. Unlike life on the farm, there was a distinctive separation between family and work life (Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

However, changes in family structure for the urban middle class were quite different. When work and family life became separate functions as a result of modern industrialization, women remained at home to tend to children while men went off to work. Middle class children were not part of the “family work force” as they had been on the farm, and the woman’s role was now more narrowly defined by the domestic tasks of caring for her family. These changes in social structure coincided with the formalized study of child development, growth of the “child savers” movement, and the eventual creation of the juvenile court system as a separate entity from the adult court (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a).

Changes in child-rearing practices brought about by the development of the nuclear family structure led to a more intense focus on the supervision and growth of the child. Women now became the standard bearers for proper child development and socialization, as well as for the promotion of effective child-rearing strategies directed toward the moral and ethical development of young children and adolescents. Research by psychologists, sociologists, and university educators shaped the evolution of the child study movement. Middle and upper class women, however, were instrumental in taking the movement from universities and research centers to the public domain. The child savers, in their new role as instruments to shape and mold children and adolescents to maintain the prevailing social order, became responsible for developing a more compassionate system to address issues of delinquent, impoverished youth, many of whom were indefinitely assigned to reform schools (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993). Child savers addressed many issues related to youth and children to include child labor legislation, public playgrounds, health care and immunizations, compulsory education, day care and kindergartens, and foster care. In essence, child savers promoted and acted upon the concept that the community bears the responsibility for taking care of its children and youth (Abrams, 2000).

The child study movement was based upon a series of interrelated assumptions about childhood. These assumptions included the concept that all children progress through a fundamental human developmental process and they are distinctly different from adults; essentially, children are malleable beings with open-ended futures. Further, there is nothing to be gained by attempting to accelerate this process; and, finally, during the process of development children and adolescents should be excluded from adult responsibilities and activities. These assumptions had a number of implications. They led to the separation of children and youth from adults; the length of time during

which a young person was dependent upon adults was increased; and, specific child and youth leisure-time and recreational activities were created (Feld, 1999a).

It was also during the Progressive Era that positivist, or scientific, explanations of crime and delinquency merged with a focus on rehabilitation of criminals and delinquents based upon a medical model of diagnosis and treatment. Essentially, the positivist theory was built upon the concept of identifying causal factors in an individual's life that led to anti-social acts. These factors "determined" the individual's behavior, as opposed to the notion that behavior was a result of the exercise of free will. It became possible, according to positivist theory, to intervene on a case-by-case basis to change the direction of an individual's behavior (Feld, 1999b).

Within this context of vast economic and social change, the first juvenile court was opened in 1899 in Chicago. The founding of the court was a result of the interaction between changes in family structure and new roles for women in society; development of the child saver, child study, and positivist movements; a social order threatened by concentration of the ethnic poor within core urban areas; and, movement of the middle and upper classes to outer urban rims. Creation of the juvenile court appeared to be a natural outcome for these co-existing forces of social change (Abrams, 2000; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

The court was founded upon prevailing themes of the era. Focus upon the potential of intervention strategies to effect change led to the creation of probation and parole, as well as the to maximization of judicial discretion and reliance upon professional expertise in a case-by-case decision-making process. Reformers envisioned a court based upon the ideals of rehabilitation, treatment and supervision as opposed to punishment. Dispositions would be made in the "best interests" of the future development of the whole child. Within the context of *parens patriae*

reformers created a system built upon “parenting” the child and adolescent in an informal, open-ended process utilizing flexible policies with the purpose of implementing treatment goals. Juvenile court was, of course, separated from adult court in its focus on treatment rather than punishment. However, the new function, procedures, and policies of juvenile courts also left behind the concepts of jurisprudence and procedural safeguards, cornerstones of the adult corrections system (Feld, 1999b). In fact, delinquency was interpreted in its broadest sense and might have included any infraction of a local ordinance, truancy, incorrigibility, or lack of parental supervision. Sending youth to a variety of institutions to include reform schools, orphanages, or foster homes was within the authority of the court (Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

Treatment of delinquent females prior to and during the Progressive Era was reflective of society’s attitudes toward women and expectations for their behavior. While many things changed for girls and women after the turn of the century, questions regarding their treatment by the juvenile justice system remained. Both the application of *parens patriae* and a lower tolerance for delinquency in females continued to be themes in the discussion about female delinquents throughout the national juvenile justice system (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

A paradox of the child saving movement reformers was that in their attempt to reaffirm traditional family values and rights and responsibilities of families to supervise their children, their reforms resulted in the creation of a governmental system that, in fact, limited the rights of parents and increased the authority of government and the courts to intervene in the lives of children (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a; Knupfer, 2001). It is interesting to note also that the leaders of the child saving movement were well-educated, upper class women who turned to

“social” work in response to the limited number of professional opportunities available to them during this time. They were, indeed, breaking new ground. At the same time, however, they seemed to be acting to enforce traditional, conservative moral standards of behavior on young women and girls, in particular ethnic minorities and the poor (Alexander, 1995; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a; Knupfer, 2001).

The view that young women and girls required greater protection from the dangers of urban society, in particular the lure of dance halls, movies, alcohol, and sexual activity, was supported by books, such as G. Stanley Hall’s, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sex, Crime and Religion*, published in 1904. In this popular book, Hall presented what he believed to be scientific evidence confirming the fragility of the female disposition, and, therefore, the need for increased supervision and protection (Abrams, 2000). As young women and girls of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries entered the work force in expanding industrial urban areas, they began to test their independence and ability to control their lives. Their rebellion against strict Victorian standards of behavior sent them searching for heterosexual relationships in dance halls, theaters, and amusement parks (Alexander, 1995).

Community responses to what became known as “the girl problem,” or the “wayward girl problem,” were swift and sure. The juvenile courts, supported by the child savers, research on adolescent development, and professionals in sociology and psychology, focused upon sexual behavior of girls, suspected or otherwise. Charges were codified as “waywardness,” “incorrigibility,” or “immorality.” In fact, Progressive Era court records indicate that over 90 percent of arrested females were classified as “moral offenders,” which could range from staying out past curfew to prostitution (Abrams, 2000; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Nathanson, 1991).



Girls also were subjected to much harsher treatment than their male counterparts. For example, in Chicago between 1899 and 1909, one half of the girls, but only one-fifth of the boys, was sentenced to reformatories in one particular court. Records were similar in Milwaukee and Memphis where twice as many girls as boys were committed to training schools (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). Between 1900 and 1930 most young women were committed to New York State's two reformatories for prostitution and solicitation, incorrigibility and "waywardness," disorderly conduct, and petty larceny in (Alexander, 1995).

Regarding, incarceration of females for acts of delinquency and crime that flew in the face of prevailing social norms, it should be noted that reformatories were most often filled with young women and girls who were "working class, immigrant and African-American"(Alexander, 1995, p.4). The interaction of race, gender, ethnicity and social class in our juvenile justice system was set in motion during this time of expansive social change and upheaval (Alexander, 1995; Feld, 1999a).

By 1928, all but two states had established a juvenile court system. Courts functioned with somewhat conflicting purposes. The concept of acting "in the best interests"(Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998, p. 126,) of the child as the "kind and just parent" (Ayers, 1997, p. 23), who recognized the needs of children and youth for nurturing and guidance ran counter to the role of the court to maintain social order and protect the prevailing social hierarchy. The concept of protection of standards of behavior, as well as protection of children from their own weaknesses and the temptations of the inner city, was most evident in the courts' treatment of females through control and institutionalization (Abrams, 2000; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

Juvenile courts continued to operate with broad discretionary authority. While the intention

was to provide opportunities for individualizing flexible treatment plans for youth, these powers also limited rights of children to due process and procedural safeguards. The power of the courts was challenged, successfully, in 1967 *In re Gault*. The case involved Gerald Gault, a fifteen year old, who had been arrested for making obscene phone calls to a neighbor. Without notice of the charges before him, or representation by a lawyer, Gerald appeared in court where the arresting officer presented the case from the neighbor's perspective. Although this was an offense for which an adult would have received a fine of not more than \$50 or two months in jail, Gerald was committed to a state training school for up to six years, a decision which seemed to have little basis in any treatment or rehabilitative rationale. Gerald challenged the decision and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of due process applied to children. The clear implication of this ruling for the court system was that children also had the right to counsel, the right to notification of charges, and the right to confront witnesses (Feld, 1999a; Krisberg & Austin, 1993; Schwartz, 2001). This landmark decision marked the development of the modern juvenile justice system and provided impetus for the ensuing era of due process and procedural reform. The pertinent issue for the courts was whether or not the original treatment, rehabilitative purposes of the juvenile court could be maintained within the context of judicial formality where proof of legal guilt becomes the standard for decision-making (Feld, 1999a; Krisberg, 1993; Schwartz, 1989).

The 1960s and 1970s were marked by the civil rights and women's liberation movements. Concurrently, as the cities became more densely populated with poor African-American families, campus demonstrations about issues, such as the war in Viet Nam, occurred, and rates of crime and delinquency escalated (Feld, 1999b). This era also was marked by a growing concern that the

juvenile justice system of reform and training schools was ineffective in treating or reducing juvenile crime and delinquency. The court had continued to struggle with a series of dichotomous concepts: “determinism versus free will, dependency versus responsibility, treatment versus punishment, welfare versus just deserts, discretion versus rule of law” (Feld, 1999b, p.6).

Practices of severe treatment for juveniles and incarceration of youth, especially females, for non-criminal, or status offenses, resulted in a new call for reform of the juvenile justice system. Case processing studies of juveniles between 1950 and 1970 indicated that girls charged with status offenses were treated more harshly than either boys or girls charged with more serious offenses (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). The 1973 National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals reported on the need for a focus on prevention of juvenile crime and delinquency, development of diversion programs and alternatives to incarceration, provision of due process for all juveniles, and development of strategies to control the violent and chronic offender. This report became the basis for the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Goals of this act were to separate juvenile and adult offenders and to eliminate incarceration of status offenders (Ohlin, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000). However, increases in juvenile crime and delinquency were also generating public outrage and calls for “get tough” policies and practices (Schwartz, 1989; Scott, 1997; Zimring, 1998).

The demand for tougher policies resulted in over half the states enacting legislation by 1976 to make the process of transferring youth to adult courts less difficult. Between 1979 and 1984, the number of youth sent to adult prisons increased by 48%. By 1985 it was reported that two-thirds of the nation’s training schools were overcrowded (Krisberg & Austin, 1993). Further, a 1991 study by the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Conditions of Confinement*, indicated

that 53% of detained youth were held in facilities where population exceeded capacity. In addition, the definition of status offense was changed to include the violation of a valid court order as a delinquent offense. Violators of court orders, therefore, became subject to incarceration (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). An unintended result of the focus on due process has been increased criminalization of the juvenile offender (Ohlin, 1998; Washington, 1995).

### *Psychosocial Factors*

While the juvenile population declined from 32 million to 27 million and back to 32 million between 1970 and 2000, the number of delinquency cases handled by the juvenile courts more than doubled from 800,000 to nearly 1.8 million (Butts & Adams, 2001). From 1985 to 1995, the average daily population of youth in public secure detention centers in the United States increased by 72%. More striking was the fact that a one-day snapshot in 1995 revealed that less than one-third of those held were there for violent acts. The majority was held for status offenses and failure to appear (Steinhart, 1999). Data from the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicated that girls were far more likely to be held for status offenses in either public or private facilities (Seigel & Senna, 2000). They are also less likely to be held for violent offenses. In fact, twice as many girls as boys were held for violations of probation or parole (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

Despite efforts of reformers, policy makers, professional criminologists, judges, probation and parole officers, psychologists and sociologists, the juvenile justice system continued to struggle with the issues presented by juvenile crime and delinquency. Efforts to apply a variety of sanctions or to punish through incarceration had not been any more or less successful than efforts focused on treatment and rehabilitation in reducing the numbers of juveniles who became involved in delinquent

behavior. The quest to determine causality, or at the least some level of perspective with regard to individual and environmental factors that placed juveniles at risk to become involved in delinquency, continued. Prevailing theories each seemed to present one aspect of a complex issue rooted in human adolescent development and political, economic, and social issues, including poverty, race, and gender (Guerra, 1997).

The major theories of juvenile delinquency include strain theory, social learning theory, social control theory, and social development theory. These can be summarized as follows:

*Strain Theory.* While there are several versions of strain theory, each describes the major types of strain, or stress, that lead to delinquency and the conditions under which strain is most likely to result in delinquency. Agnew (2001) synthesizes the work of the most well-known strain theorists into a generic version or general strain theory. According to Agnew (2001) there are three sources of strain:

1. *Strain caused by the failure to achieve positively valued goals.* Specifically, Agnew (2001) and other theorists suggest that many adolescents place special emphasis on goals related to the attainment of money, status/respect, and autonomy from adults. Strain results when there is a break-down or gap between expectations and aspirations related to these goals and actual experience in attaining them. Delinquents experiencing this strain may try to achieve money by illegal means, engage in delinquent acts to demonstrate their dominance and power, and use delinquency as a means of asserting their independence from or frustration with authority figures (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

2. *Strain as the removal of positively valued stimuli.* This type of strain refers to the loss of something for which the juvenile has a high, positive regard, such as a boy or girl friend, other

friends or relatives. The juvenile may engage in delinquent behavior as a means of attempting to retrieve what has been lost, seek revenge, or obtain substitutes (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

3. *Strain as the presentation of negative stimuli.* This type of strain results from pain-inducing social, or interpersonal, interactions. Generally included in this category of strain are problems with family members, teachers, friends, and girl or boy friends. In particular, this category also includes child abuse and neglect, victimization, physical punishment by parents, negative relationships with peers and teachers, as well as other life events, such as the divorce of parents, parental unemployment, and changing schools (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

Strain theorists agree that not all juveniles who experience strain will engage in delinquent behavior. The likelihood that delinquency will occur is increased by several factors:

1) involvement of areas of life the individual considers important; 2) poor coping skills and resources; 3) situations where costs of delinquency are low and benefits are high; and, 4) a disposition to engage in delinquency, such as impulsivity and anger (Agnew, 2001; Broidy, 1997; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

*Social Learning Theory.* Based upon Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory and Akers' (1998) social learning theory in criminology, this approach suggests that delinquent behavior is learned through interactions with others. Essentially, juveniles learn delinquent behavior from others who reinforce the behavior, or who provide a belief system favorable to the behavior, or who are role models for delinquent behavior (Agnew, 2001; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

An outgrowth of social learning theory is differential association or differential reinforcement of delinquency. This approach suggests that while individuals learn to engage in delinquency through reinforcements and punishments provided by others for their behavior, delinquency is most likely to occur when the following conditions are present: 1) frequent reinforcement and infrequent punishment for the behavior; 2) large amounts of reinforcement and small amounts of punishments for the behavior; and, 3) a greater likelihood of reinforcement for this behavior than for alternative behaviors (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

*Social Control Theory.* Control theory, developed by Hirschi (1969), links delinquent behavior to the bond that the individual maintains with society. This theory is built upon the premise that all individuals are potentially capable of crime and delinquency. Law and order are maintained as a result of social controls established by society, rather than any code of individual morality. The bond that an individual maintains with society has four elements: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. It is the weakening of this social bond that prompts the individual to engage in delinquent behavior (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; De Li, 1999; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

*Social Development Theory.* Developmental theorists assert that multiple social, personal and economic factors can lead an individual to delinquent behavior; however, these factors can and do change over time and, therefore, so may the individual's involvement in such behavior. Current supporters of this theory of delinquency are Catalano and Hawkins (1996). Their model of delinquency relates behavior to pre-existing risk factors in the juvenile's domains of environment: home, school and community. These factors can be either reinforced or neutralized through

interactions that promote the development of resiliency, or protective factors, such as strong bonds to family, community, and school (Catalano, 1996; Dekovic, 1999; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

### *The Domains of Risk*

The concept of risk, as applied to anti-social behavior in juveniles, has been defined as those individual and environmental biological or psychosocial factors, or hazards, that increase the likelihood of negatives outcomes for a group of individuals. In other words, the presence of risk factors in an individual's life may not only lead to anti-social, or delinquent, behavior, they may, in fact, "threaten or impede" normal development and lead to a "negative developmental outcome" (Dekovic, 1999; Hanna, 2001; Hawkins, 1995; Keogh, 2000; Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999; Smokowski, 1998; Werner & Smith, 1992). This concept of risk is in a very broad sense similar to the community health model based upon the identification of specific individual and environmental factors that put an individual at risk of developing a particular disease. The other side of this model is to counteract, or modulate, the influence of those factors by increasing the presence of protective factors and healthy behaviors (Hawkins, 1995; Keogh, 2000).

According to Hawkins (1995), there are five fundamental assumptions drawn from the body of research on the relationship between risk factors and the likelihood of a juvenile's involvement in anti-social, delinquent, or violent behavior. The first is that risks exist in multiple domains; therefore, models designed to predict the likelihood of anti-social, delinquent or violent behavior must consider the interactive nature of risk factors (Hawkins, 1995). Smokowski (1998) refers to the linkage among factors as the formation "risk chains," the accumulation of which increases stress, or strain, within the individual and adversely affects their development (Smokowski, 1998). Further, development of strategies to prevent such behavior also must address the interactional



nature of both risk and protective factors.

The second assumption is that the more risk factors present, the greater the likelihood that a juvenile will become involved in risk behaviors, to include delinquent and violent acts (Benson & Saito, 2001; Hawkins, 1995). Reduction, or amelioration, of only one risk factor may have little impact on re-directing the juvenile's developmental pathway (Hawkins, 1995; Smokowski, 1998).

The third assumption is that risk factors are generally common across a wide variety of problem behaviors. While an individual may be at a high level of risk to become involved in negative behaviors, based upon his or her level of exposure to risk factors, the specific types of resulting behaviors are difficult to predict (Hawkins, 1995).

The fourth assumption is that the effects of risk tend to be consistent across races, cultures, classes, and gender. However, the effects of risk may vary within and between demographic groups based upon specific factors and their response to those factors. For example, risk has been shown to vary across developmental periods by gender, race, or ethnicity (Hawkins, 1995; Smokowski, 1998).

The fifth assumption is that protective factors can reduce the impact of exposure to risk. These factors either directly counteract, or offset, the influence of the risk factor, or they increase the individual's ability to cope more proactively with the adversity they face in their environment (Hawkins, 1995).

Research indicates that risk and protection potentially exist in each of the domains of a young person's life; that is, there are factors within the individual, their family, school and community that may threaten or impede their development or support and nurture that development. Within the family, identified risk factors include a low level of parental support and involvement; severe or inconsistent punishment; poor management practices; family history of

crime, violent behavior, and/or substance abuse; and, high levels of family conflict. Family factors also include parental rejection of the child and efforts made by parents to socialize the child to non-delinquent behaviors.

Identified community factors include high levels of community disorganization and poverty, community attitudes and expectations, and, availability of guns. Factors associated with schools include academic failure and lack of commitment to school as demonstrated by aggressive, anti-social, or acting out behavior. Individual factors have been identified as early aggression, early initiation of substance use, lack of impulse control, hyperactivity attention deficit disorder, sensation seeking behavior, and, biological conditions or genetic predisposition. Mental capacity and learning disabilities also have been identified as individual risk factors ( Agnew, 2001; Dekovic, 1999; Dryfoos, 1990; Gorman-Smith, 1998; Guerra, 1997; Hanna, 2001; Hawkins, 1995; Jessor, 1998; Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001; Pollard, et al., 1999; Rutter, Giller, & Hagell, 1998; Smith & Carlson, 1997; Smokowski, 1998; Stern & Smith, 1999).

### ***Mental Health and Delinquency***

In addition to risk factors discussed above, research indicated that the rate of mental disorders among the juvenile justice population was higher than the rate among the general population. It was suggested that 20% of all youths entering the juvenile justice system had a serious mental disorder and that 60% experienced a recognizable mental health problem. (Cocozza, 1997; Yee, 2000). These disorders included anxiety, mood and conduct disorders, psychotic disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder with up to 80% having been diagnosed with conduct disorder alone (Cocozza & Skowrya, 2000). Further, nearly 50% to 75% of juveniles entering the juvenile justice system had serious substance abuse problems

(Cocozza, 1997; Yee, 2000).

In general the general youth population, as well as the population in the juvenile justice system, depression is now recognized as a major mental health concern, although previously considered a problem experienced only by adults. Research has shown that the level of depression increases in severity from childhood to adolescence, especially for females who experienced conduct disorder (Rutter, et al., 1998). Further, while differences in rates of depression between males and females did not appear to be as pronounced as previously thought, depression did appear to be greater among females and males in high risk populations, such as those entering the juvenile justice system (Rutter, et al., 1998). A study in Chicago by the National Institute of Justice found that mildly to moderately depressed girls were more likely to commit property crimes and crimes against persons than the non-depressed girls (Obeidallah & Earls, 1999). Finally, research indicated that during adolescence, depression co-occurs with other disorders, such as anxiety and aggression, and may put adolescents at risk for suicide, poor academic performance, and impaired social functioning (Jessor, 1998; Steinberg, 2001).

Werner and Smith (1992) conducted a longitudinal study of 698 men and women born on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. Their study explored the impact of a variety of biological and psychosocial factors, stressful life event, and the presence of protective factors on their subjects during infancy, early and middle childhood, late adolescence, young adulthood, and midlife. One finding supported national data suggesting that males tended to be more vulnerable than females to "biological insults, serious caregiving deficits, and economic hardships" (Werner & Smith, 2001, p.2) and higher rates of mental health problems during childhood. However, vulnerability to these factors was greater during adolescence for females than for males. There was also a higher rate of

mental health problems for females than males during adolescence (Werner & Smith, 2001).

### *Delinquency and the Context of Gender*

For the most part, the theoretical foundations of delinquent behavior did not address differences in causes, rates and patterns of delinquency as a function of gender. Because the majority of delinquents were male, the impact of issues associated with gender had not been addressed widely. In some cases, it was even suggested that delinquency is related to a convergence of male and female roles and, thus, behavior (Seigel & Senna, 2000). As a result of the relatively few females in the delinquent population, the majority of studies in delinquency theory were based upon examination of male behaviors or, at best, a comparison of female behavior to the male “standard” (Richie, Tsenin, & Widom, 2000; Seigel & Senna, 2000). While it is agreed that these theories may have general application to the understanding of female delinquency, they did not take into account the role ascribed to females by society, historical social attitudes toward girls and women, and the issues of physical and sexual abuse which were more prevalent in the female population than in the male population (Agnew, 2001; Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Seigel & Senna, 2000).

Rutter (1998), for example, conducted an in-depth longitudinal study of 1,000 young people born in 1972-1973. Nine assessments of behavior were taken between the ages of three and 21. The research “uncovered few sex differences in the causes, correlates, and consequences of anti-social behavior” (Rutter, et al., 1998, p. 235). Rutter’s study indicated that risk factors responsible for anti-social behaviors were the same for males and females. Further, females with conduct disorder did not experience a higher level of environmental risk, and that comorbid mental health disorders were found in anti-social juveniles irrespective of gender; that is, disorders most often found co-

occurring with conduct disorder in both males and females were anxiety, depression, substance abuse, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and retardation (Rutter, et al., 1998). In fact, Rutter concluded that "males are always and everywhere more antisocial than females," except in three instances: near the time of female puberty, when alcohol and drugs are involved, and in intimate relationships with men. Rutter's research suggested that in these instances, female levels of anti-social behavior became most similar to that of males (Rutter, et al., 1998, p. 240).

Rutter's study did not examine, however, the issues of physical, sexual or emotional abuse as a strong motivating factor in the delinquency of females as suggested by Chesney-Lind (Agnew, 2001). Further, given the conclusion of the Rutter study that males were more anti-social than females, questions related to female treatment within the juvenile justice system became more perplexing. For example, 1995 arrest statistics indicated that arrests of males outnumbered arrests of females by 3:1 and that boys were more likely to be arrested for violent crimes and serious property offenses (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). Girls, on the other hand, were more likely to be arrested for status offenses, running away, and prostitution. Fifty-eight percent of those arrested for running away were girls. While status offenses accounted for 27.5% of the offenses for which girls were arrested in 1995, only 10.5% of boys were arrested for similar offenses. Running away and larceny-theft have been primary offenses for girls' arrests since 1970, accounting for approximately 50% of all girls' arrests (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). A 1991 report of a one-day count of the nation's public and private juvenile facilities revealed that only 1.8% of boys in public facilities were held for status offenses, but 12.9% of girls were held on these charges; 11.5 % of the boys held in private facilities were held for status offenses compared to 22.3% of the girls (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). These statistics highlighted two observations that are supported in the research:

males are more likely to become involved in delinquent behavior; yet, females are more likely to be arrested for lesser charges (Feld, 1993; Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

The rationale for detaining females for status offenses and technical violations could be linked directly to the historical, paternalistic ideology of the court and its belief that girls are “less able than males, simply by virtue of their status as young women, to fend for themselves” (Krisberg & Austin, 1993, p. 138). According to Chesney-Lind, the detention of females for status offenses and technical violations “stems in part from a parental desire to control the behavior of girls,” (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998, p. 240), in particular their sexual behavior. It further is suggested that girls’ delinquency is a reflection of a society that “gives little power and few options, even fewer legal rights” to female juveniles (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998, pg. 240).

The prevalence of runaway behavior among females seems to illustrate this point. Studies have linked running away with a desire to escape intense family conflict to include both sexual and physical abuse or overly strict discipline (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998). A 1990 study by the American Correctional Association of girls in juvenile correctional institutions indicated that 61% had experienced physical abuse. Over half of those reporting physical abuse indicated that it had occurred eleven or more times. This same study reported that 54% of the girls had experienced sexual abuse and for 27% of these girls the abuse had occurred eleven times or more. Moreover, most girls reported that the abuse had begun when they were nine years of age or younger (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998; Krisberg & Austin, 1993). A report from the National Institute for Justice indicated that girls who had been abused and neglected were almost twice as likely to be arrested as juveniles than girls who had not been abused or neglected. They were also twice as likely to be arrested when they became adults and almost two and one-half times more likely to be

arrested for violent crimes. The report further indicated that abused and neglected girls were at increased risk for running away (Richie, et al., 2000). A report from the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in 2001, indicated that 70% of girls in the juvenile justice system had histories of physical abuse compared to only 20% of the girls in the general population. In addition, more than 70% of girls in the juvenile justice system, as well as shelters, reported having been sexually abused and assaulted. This compared to 32% of the male population in the juvenile justice system and shelters (Osofsky, 2001).

Once on the streets, however, runaways resorted to other delinquent behaviors, such as stealing food and shoplifting, prostitution, and drug use. Behavior that began as an act of self-preservation and the reality of few other options resulted in even more difficulty for females subsequently arrested and placed in detention. Anderson (1994) reported that generally "girls convicted of non-serious offenses show no benefit from confinement in secure facilities" (Anderson, 1994, p.1). Unfortunately, judges often perceived no other available alternatives but secure detention, even though they believed the placement to be inappropriate (Anderson, 1994).

### *Disproportionate Minority Representation*

Any study of the juvenile justice system would be incomplete without a recognition of the role of race in decisions to arrest and detain youth, as well as the way in which cases are adjudicated (Feld, 1993; 1999a; Hsia & Hamparian, 1998; Krisberg & Austin, 1993). Since 1979 the percentage of white youth detained by the juvenile justice system had declined steadily while the percentage of non-white youth detained had increased steadily. As a proportion of the total population of youth and the population of those detained, non-white youth, both male and female, were over-represented in the juvenile justice system. The Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

Prevention reported that while minority youth represented 32% of the youth population in 1995, they represented 68% of the juvenile population in secure detention and training schools. This data indicated a dramatic increase from 1983 when minority youth represented 53% of the juvenile detention population and 56% of the population in secure juvenile correctional facilities (Hsia & Hamparian, 1998). In 1997-98, African-American youth were 15% of the total youth population; however, they represented 26% of youth arrested, 31% of youth referred to juvenile court and 44% of those youth subsequently detained by the court (Hoytt, 2001).

In addition, research has indicated that "detained delinquents were five times more likely to be transferred to adult court, six times more likely to be placed out of the home, and 50% more likely to be placed on formal probation than youth who were not detained" (Schwartz & Willis, 1994, p. 17). In a 1979 study by Thornberry, data indicated that at the court disposition stage, African-Americans were treated more harshly than whites and juveniles from a low socioeconomic status were treated more harshly than those from a higher socio-economic status (Krisberg & Austin, 1993).

An interaction between gender and race also had been noted in the research, even though males continued to make up the majority of those entering the juvenile justice system. First, while the number of girls held in public detention facilities had generally remained constant since 1979, the number of females admitted to private facilities had increased by 27%. Over half of those held in facilities for juveniles were white females held in private facilities. Between 1984 and 1988 there was a 10% increase in detention of nonwhite girls for delinquency offenses, particularly drug offenses, while the percentage of white females detained for similar offenses, including drugs, declined. Finally, there was a 30.5% drop in the number of white females detained for status



offenses compared to a 7.7% drop in detention of nonwhite girls for status offenses during this same period (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998).

### *Summary*

A review of prevailing theories of juvenile delinquency suggested that strain, social control, social learning and social development each provides the framework for understanding delinquent, or anti-social, behavior in adolescents. These theories were based on the interplay between adolescent development, basic human needs, developmental tasks, and the individual's environment. Problem behavior, then, was "viewed as a function of the mismatch between the needs of developing adolescents and the opportunities afforded them by their social environment" (Compas, Hinden, & Gerhardt, 1995, p. 5). Erikson (1968) described the adolescent's developmental tasks as organizing the significant changes they experience during this time in such a way to become positive, contributing members of the community. However, he also stated "that identity formation, while being 'critical' in youth, is really a generational issue"; essentially, it is the responsibility of adults to provide an array of opportunities to support healthy youth development (Erikson, 1968, p. 29).

Within the context of the unique social, emotional, cognitive, and psychological development of the individual adolescent, these theories attempted to explain the interactions and reactions of the adolescent to an adverse environment. Superimposed upon the interactive nature of the developing adolescent with his or her environment were the contextual issues of gender, race, socio-economic status, and the role of the juvenile justice system to serve as *parens patriae* in order to guide and control the behavior of youth, as well as protect and maintain social order. The purpose and research questions that provided the framework for the current study stemmed from

interactions between these theoretical foundations: (1) the purpose of the juvenile justice system; (2) the relationship between adolescent development, environmental risk, and delinquency; and, (3) the relationship between gender, risk, delinquency and the actions of the juvenile court. The study examined the differences in exposure to risk between male and female juveniles who entered the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. The study also explored the relationship between the level of risk and the type of offense committed. Finally, the study explored the differences between the offenses for which males and females were detained and the length of the detention.

The study attempted to determine if the concept of *parens patriae* was an operational dynamic in the Norfolk juvenile court with particular regard to females; that is, were females detained for lesser offenses than males and were they detained for similar periods of time, but for lesser offenses? Second, the study attempted to determine if girls who entered the Norfolk Juvenile Detention home experienced a higher level of risk than boys, particularly with regard to mental health problems, physical and sexual abuse. Third, the study examined the relationship between the level of risk and type of offense in order to determine if the level of risk was a motivating factor for specific types of juvenile crime.

The intent of the study was to provide additional guidance for the Norfolk juvenile justice system at each step of the decision-making process: arrest, detention, disposition and adjudication. The study sought to provide decision-makers with research-based insight that might lead to further examination of policy and practices related to the community's response to juveniles who commit anti-social, delinquent acts, in particular girls who may be better served through alternative treatment options.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

#### *Introduction*

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to analyze the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk factors, gender, and delinquency for juveniles admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. This study was an outgrowth of a previous report commissioned by the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Task Force. The Task Force report provided a detailed analysis of the population of the detention home in 2000, reasons for admission to detention, length of stay between court hearings, and decision-makers responsible for admitting and maintaining juveniles in custody. One of the findings of the Task Force report indicated that females were more likely to be placed in detention for lesser offenses than males and that females experienced a higher exposure to risk factors than males (Elliker & Walters, 2002). Local officials from the Task Force and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice agreed that preliminary data from this report, along with growing national concern about the number and percentage of juvenile females arrested, detained, and incarcerated, warranted a deeper exploration of exposure to risk, gender, and delinquency in Norfolk through the completion of a case study of the juveniles in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000.

Although it is intended to add to the cumulative body of knowledge about the impact and interactive effects of risk factors, gender, and types of offenses for which juveniles are admitted to detention, the study was not designed to be generalized to juvenile detention systems in other localities or definitively to explain behavior in terms of cause and effect. The study was intended to

provide the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Task Force with recommendations to support continuing efforts to improve responses to youth involved in the juvenile justice system in the City of Norfolk.

According to Stebbins (2001), the purpose of exploratory research is to produce generalizations about the subject of the study through an inductive process and, then, to develop a grounded theory from these generalizations. The focus of an exploratory study becomes the theory as it emerges from the data, rather than an established theoretical framework and a series of related hypotheses. Further, exploration is the preferred method when the subject requires openness and flexibility or when little previous, systematic examination of the subject has been undertaken. Stebbins states that it is through the “concatenation,” or accumulation of knowledge through linked exploration, that the development of theory occurs. As knowledge is built through exploration, researchers are able to formulate a theoretical framework by testing hypotheses and developing models based upon prediction. Exploration builds theory through an inductive method in contrast to experimental studies that utilize deductive strategies (Stebbins, 2001).

Yin describes an exploratory study as one that responds to “what” questions when the goal is “to develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further research”(Yin, 1994, p.5). In addition to developing hypotheses for possible future research, exploratory research is useful in testing the feasibility of research procedures. Exploratory research often is utilized within the context of pilot studies during which researchers have the opportunities to test methods and instruments for data collection and analysis; that is, to “develop a conceptual framework and test operational measures” (Yin, 1993, p. 7), as well as follow the trends as they emerge from their exploration (Yin, 1993, 1994).

Yin states that “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Yin differentiates between a case study and an experiment which, he says, “deliberately divorces a phenomenon from its context, so that attention can be focused on only a few variables”(Yin, 1994, p. 13). Essentially, the case study design does not require that the researcher attempt to control the events, or isolate the variables, of the study through a focus upon a specific “treatment” as the experimental researcher would attempt to do. While the empirical, laboratory approach is clearly a strength of the experimental design, the strength of case study design is found in the required triangulation of data in order to focus comprehensively upon “a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” when, in fact, the researcher “has little control over events” that are central to the study (Yin, 1994, p. 1).

Concurring with Yin, Creswell defines a case study as “an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context”(Creswell, 1994; 1998, p. 61). Stake adds to this conceptualization of the purpose of a case study by suggesting that it is both the “process of learning about the case and the product of our learning”(Stake, 1998, p. 87).

The analysis of the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk factors, gender, and delinquency in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home met the criteria for a case study design for the following reasons. First, it was the Juvenile Detention Home and, to some extent, the juvenile justice system in Norfolk that served as the “bounded system,” for examining the experiences of the juveniles who were the subjects of this case. Second, relevant data was collected from a variety of sources in order to conform to the data triangulation requirements of case study methodology. Third, the role of gender related risk factors and their influence on

behavior and the historical role of gender in the juvenile detention decision making process had been substantiated as important, contemporary issues by recent local, state, and national concern over the increasing number of females entering the juvenile justice system.

The study also lent itself to the case study design based upon recent theory that suggested that risk exists in multiple domains of the juvenile's life to include family, school, and community, as well as within the individual him or herself. Risk factors exist in combinations that may negatively impact the behavior of the juvenile, rather than any individual risk factor (Hawkins, 1995).

Therefore, attempts to isolate risk factors as single variables and to examine them outside the contexts in which they exist may provide incomplete or inconclusive findings. The case study methodology used in this study included the triangulation of data from multiple sources to explore the risk factors associated with domains of family, school, and the individual, as well as the relationship of these factors to delinquent behavior and gender. Triangulation of data provided the opportunity for a deeper, more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the juvenile, as well as the exploration of the relationship between delinquent behaviors and the context within which such behavior occurred.

Finally, a theory that incorporated delinquency, gender, and risk within the historical and social context of the juvenile justice system did not exist. Because it is exploratory, this case study adds to the body of knowledge that develops such an integrated theory.

### *Population, Sample and Data Collection*

In 2001, the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Task Force requested that researchers from Old Dominion University design and implement a study that would provide information pertinent to the development of strategies to reduce overcrowding at the juvenile detention facility. The study

included a review of national best practices in addressing overcrowding in detention, a statistical overview of all juveniles admitted to detention in 2000, and an in-depth analysis of a random sample of the total population.

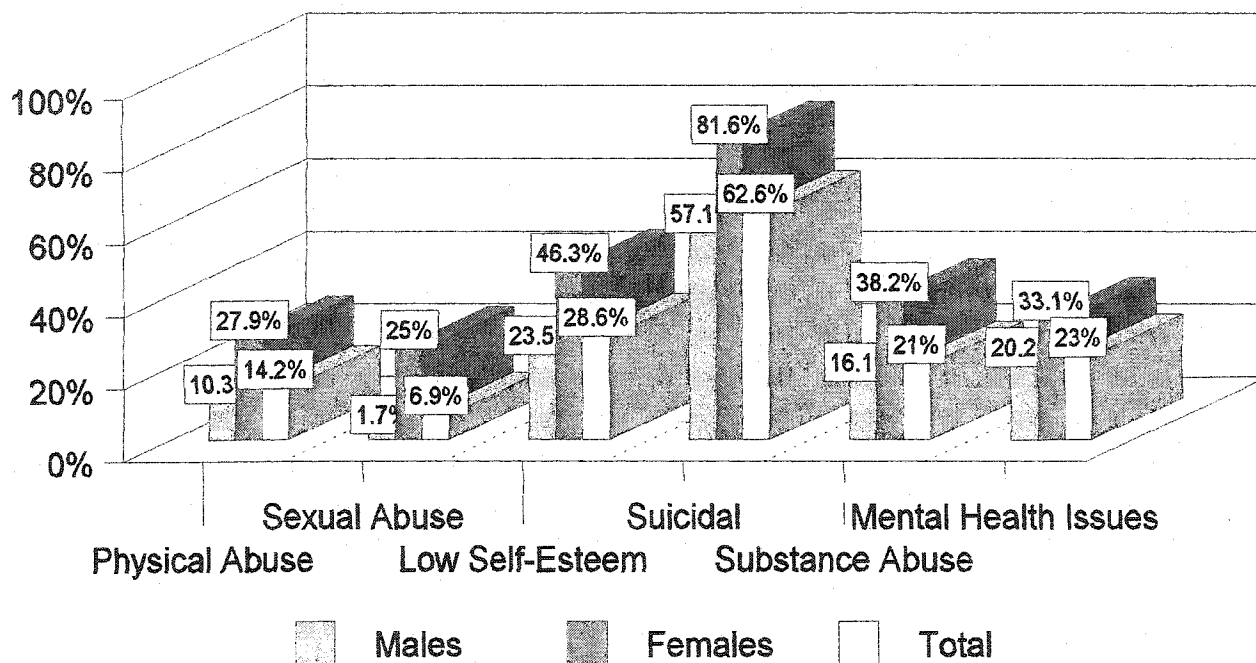
In 2000, 1,298 juveniles entered the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home and in early 2001 the following data were collected on this entire population: birth date, gender, race, offense code, confining locality, date of admission for each entry, date of each release, release code, number of local and state days in detention, total days in detention. The source for this information was the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Report: Juveniles in Pre-Disposition (DJJ JC34) January - December 2000.

In order to explore more specific questions from the Task Force about the juvenile population in detention, such as length of stay between court hearings, utilization of the Outreach Program, and the official decision-maker sending the juvenile to detention, a random sample of 621 juveniles (approximately one-half of the total population) was selected for more in-depth study. The following data was collected for this sample: Outreach Detention admit and release dates, offense by category, guardian, medical problems, injuries, pregnancy, history of substance abuse, self-esteem, mental health problems, problems in school, family substance abuse, juvenile substance abuse (current), physical and sexual abuse, suicidal ideation, court appearance history, juveniles admitted to Outreach, and name of In-take Officer, Probation Officer, and Judge.

The sources for the collection of data on the sample population of 621 juveniles were the individual juvenile case files maintained at the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home. These case files typically included: Admissions Orientation Form with staff observations; Admissions and Release Form with court contacts, identification, medical and discharge information; Running Record and

Staff Observations Form; Discipline Record; Juvenile Mental Health Screening Tool; Minimus Forms; and, Court Orders.

**Figure 2. Detention Intake Screening: Risk Factors**



One findings from the analysis of data for the sample population of 621 juveniles was that in 2000, females admitted to the detention center reported having experienced more risk factors and the existence of more personal issues than males as shown in Figure 2. Females were also admitted more often for technical violations and status offenses than males as a percentage of gender (Elliker & Walters, 2002).

The preliminary data from the Task Force report indicating that females experienced certain risk factors at a higher rate than males combined with the trend of increasing female arrests and detention suggested the need for further study. This case study built upon the Task Force report through an in-depth exploration of a matched random sample of the juveniles entering the Norfolk



Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between exposure to risk, gender, and delinquency within the context of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and factors contributing to the development of delinquent behaviors in adolescents. The Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home served as the bounded system within which the study took place.

For the purposes of this case study, and to expand upon the original Task Force report, additional data were collected on the 136 females in the random sample of 621 juveniles drawn from the total population in detention in 2000. For comparison purposes, 136 males from the random sample of 621 were randomly matched to the females by race and age. After eliminating duplicated juveniles and those for whom no additional information could be found, the total matched sample for in-depth study was 226 juveniles.

For the sample of 226 juveniles, data were collected from the individual juvenile case files at the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit (CSU). In particular, information was drawn from the Social History forms. Other information found in the individual CSU files included the following as available: CSU case worker case notes; listing of court proceedings and outcomes; Court Orders; psychological evaluations, educational evaluation; service provider reports; state correctional unit reports; results of the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS); results of the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI); written work from the juvenile, such as letters; and, other miscellaneous documents. For juveniles for whom the CSU file was not available, data were collected from the Juvenile Offender History Report that serves as the court record for proceedings. While this report generally contains only basic offense and disposition information, it sometimes provided information about the juvenile's family history and special circumstances.

Information gathered on the social history, psychological evaluations, treatment provider progress reports, and reports prepared by the Court Service Unit case workers for the juvenile court judges provided much greater detail about issues identified by the mental health screening completed at detention intake. The social history form and other reports included information provided by the parent(s) or guardian(s), as well as the juveniles. Social history forms, psychological evaluations, and court reports provided detailed interview data.

Both the CAFAS and the SASSI provided assessment information based upon the use of validated rating scales. Scores on the two CAFAS rating scales are used to indicate the level of the juvenile's functioning across family, school, and community settings. This information is then used to plan appropriate treatment services to meet the needs of the juvenile with the intention of reducing recidivism (Quist & Matshazi, 2000). Interpretation of the combined rating scale scores on the CAFAS range from "no noteworthy impairment" to "intensive treatment" recommended. The SASSI is a self-report screening tool used to classify individuals as either chemically dependent or nonchemically dependent. The SASSI is particularly helpful in identifying early stages of chemical dependency with juveniles who may be in denial or attempting to conceal the level of substance use. It can also be used to develop a clinical profile and treatment plan (Swartz, 1998). These various data sources provided the opportunity to verify information through triangulation, a critical component of case study research. Moreover, data collection for this study was sequential with each phase of the study informing the next.

According to Creswell (1998), qualitative researchers use a process of data triangulation by including "multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence" to elucidate a particular concept or topic (Creswell, 1998, p. 202). In fact,

Yin (1994) states that the opportunity to use multiple sources of data is a major strength of case study methodology because it provides the researcher with access to a wide range of information and diverse perspectives. More importantly, the triangulation process can lead to the “development of converging lines of inquiry,” increasing the quality and credibility of the study (Yin, 1994, p. 92). Stake (1995) adds that the process of triangulation assists the researcher by verifying if the case “remains the same at other times, in other spaces, or as persons interact differently” (Stake, 1995, p. 112). These multiple perceptions help to clarify the meaning of behavior and attitudes as the researcher tests the repeatability of observations (Stake, 1998).

There are different types of triangulation to include the use of multiple sources of data, multiple investigators, multiple theories, or multiple methods, all of which work to validate findings that emerge from the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Merriam, 2001; Stake, 1995). Validity in case study research is linked also to the process of triangulation. According to Merriman (2001), triangulation, or utilizing “pooled judgement,” is one of the ways in which the researcher strengthens the validity of her observations. Merriam (2001) emphasizes, however, that in qualitative research it is essential to understand the perspectives of the subjects, the complexity of behavior, and the context of the study. Interpretation of reality from this holistic perspective strengthens validity in qualitative research (Merriam, 2001). Essentially, the combination of multiple sources of data, investigators, methods, or theory works to neutralize bias that might be present in any single source, investigator, method, or theory within the context of qualitative research (Creswell, 1994).

With regard to reliability, Merriam (2001) suggests that qualitative research does not seek to isolate human behavior or identify a single reality. The focus of qualitative research is on the description and explanation of reality by those who experience it, and, therefore, it is the consistency of the findings of the study through the data collected that is of importance, rather than the concept of replication (Merriam, 2001).

According to Merriam (2001), external validity in qualitative research can be viewed from two perspectives. The first is to acknowledge as a basic assumption, and, therefore, limitation, the fact that the study was not designed to be generalized to other, even similar, situations. The value of the study is in its ability to expand the understanding of a particular phenomenon, case, or group. The second perspective is to address external validity by strengthening sampling procedures and by increasing the number of cases studied for the same phenomenon (Merriam, 2001).

The detention center records for the 1,298 juveniles entering the facility in 2000 provided baseline data that described the demographic characteristics of the entire population of subjects in the study. Analysis of this descriptive information for the total population strengthened external validity as findings emerged from the deeper exploration of samples drawn from the total.

Information collected by the mental health assessment interview at detention intake offered insight to individual, family, and community factors and began to establish a preliminary contextual understanding of the juvenile beyond the circumstances of their detention for the 621 juveniles in this sample. In addition, detention case files included corroborating information in the form of case worker observations and notations about actions taken by the juvenile court.

Social history forms completed by the Court Service Unit workers and other evaluative documents built upon preliminary contextual factors through a comprehensive interview process and collection of information from family and other sources, such as the school system. This information, collected for the 226 juveniles in the matched sample, also included multiple observations by the case worker. The CAFAS and SASSI assessments, when completed, provided additional information about the juvenile's level of functioning and involvement with substance abuse. They also served to confirm or refute previously self-reported information. Combined with the data collected in the previous two stages of the study, a more holistic view of these juveniles began to emerge.

Methodological strategies employed in this case study addressed the issues of internal validity, reliability, and external validity in case study research. Validity was strengthened through the use of multiple data sources. Data was collected, essentially, by multiple investigators in the form of Detention Home and Court Service Unit case workers, psychologists, state corrections personnel, school personnel, social workers, and clinical service providers. Multiple methods also were employed through the use of interviews, observations, and normed clinical assessments. External validity was addressed through the sampling process. In the first phase, data were collected for the total population. In phase two, a random selection (approximately one-half) of the total population was included. In phase three, all females in the random sample and a second matched random sample of males were selected. These sampling and data collection procedures served to increase consistency and confidence in the findings of the study. These strategies also responded to the three principles of data collection described by Yin (1994): (1) using multiple sources of evidence; (2) creating a study data base; and, (3) maintaining a chain of evidence (Yin, 1994). All

data collected for this study were entered into a database and all data collection forms from the case files were maintained.

### *Data Analysis*

With regard to case study inquiry, Yin states that “the case study is not either a data collection tactic or merely a design feature alone but a comprehensive research strategy”(Yin, 1994, p. 13). In a further explanation of this point, Yin states that “case studies can include, and even be limited to, quantitative evidence,” but may utilize both qualitative and quantitative data (Yin, 1994, p. 14). Primary data analyzed for this case study was qualitative including information collected on assessment forms, social histories, and psychological evaluations through interviews with juveniles and family members, guardians, or social workers, and observations from a variety of individuals involved with the juvenile. Interviewers had varying degrees of specialized training, education, and experience in interviewing and assessing issues and needs of juveniles involved in the juvenile justice system. Forms and strategies used for the collection of specific types of information were generally consistent across the juvenile justice system. Once the decision was made about the level of assessment needed for a particular juvenile by the Juvenile Court Judge, the process typically was standardized making a number of information sources available for triangulation. Qualitative data collected for this study through the interview process and observation process were coded as binary variables in order to treat the data quantitatively. All data, with the exception of length of stay and age, were categorical.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) suggest that the essence of qualitative research is in the importance of creativity and interpretation as the researcher combines all sources of data to “make sense of one’s findings,” a process that while an art is also political (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 30).

Given the qualitative researcher's view of the world, the product of the study is an elaboration of the "meaningful relationships that operate in the situations and social worlds studied," (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 4) as opposed to the empirical validation of hypotheses. Hartwig (1979) also emphasizes this point stating that the function of data analysis is not just the presentation of statistics for the confirmation of an hypothesis. He views data analysis as an opportunity to respond to the more important question of what the data can provide about the relationships being examined (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). Merriam (2001) also describes the function of data analysis in qualitative research as important, not only to the description of the phenomenon, but to the construction of categories and themes that depict significant patterns within the study (Merriam, 2001). Therefore, data analysis strategies employed in this study were intended to uncover the patterns of relationships between gender, risk factors, and offenses, rather than to confirm or refute hypothetical relationships through the application of complex statistical methods.

Data provided by the Juvenile Detention Home report DJJ JC34 about the total population of 1,298 juveniles included baseline demographic and offense information: gender, age, race, length of stay, and type of offense. Frequency data from these records provide descriptive data for the total population and were utilized for comparison to the sample populations. In addition, cross tabulations were calculated using Chi-Square test of statistical significance and measures of association for nominal data (Cramer's V, Phi, and Contingency Coefficient) to identify significant relationships and effect sizes.

A similar process was utilized for analysis of data from the mental health screening form (Appendix A) for the random sample of 621 juveniles. This form was completed by the juvenile detention intake worker when the juvenile was admitted to detention. Through a coding process

("yes or no"), the presence of specific risk factors was recorded as nominal data. Analysis of this data included not only descriptive information, but cross-tabulations with the Chi-Square test of significance and measures of association for categorical data analysis (Phi, Cramer's V, Contingency Coefficient). Risk factors included in this section of the analysis were: self-esteem, suicidal thoughts, history of physical and sexual abuse, current and history of personal and family substance abuse, family structure, mental health issues, and school problems. These factors were correlated with gender, age, race, and offense. For the analysis of length of stay and age data, means were calculated and ANOVA Tables with the F Statistic were examined.

A more in-depth analysis was conducted with the smaller sample of 226 juveniles on the information provided by the social history forms, psychological evaluations and other reports that were a part of the Court Service Unit case files. Obtained by the Court Service case worker through in-depth, detailed interviews, specific information was collected about the juvenile's family history and structure to include family members' involvement in criminal activity, substance abuse, and mental health issues, as well as current and past living arrangements. The files also contained more detailed information about reported physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse, school discipline referrals, truancy, history of running away, involvement with the Department of Social Services, Special Education placement, presence of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, and mental retardation. Where available, SASSI results were used to confirm or refute previous self-reports of substance abuse, and information related to general functioning of the juvenile as determined by the CAFAS also was reported.

Additionally, many case files included detailed information about the mental status of the juvenile with regard to depression, suicidal thoughts, self-esteem, feelings of abandonment, and



specific Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) Axis I diagnoses for juveniles for whom a psychological evaluation was ordered by the Juvenile Court Judge. DSM data were analyzed to determine the number of juveniles with a diagnosis, the most prevalent diagnoses, and the number of juveniles with dual diagnoses. DSM data were correlated with gender, offense, and risk factors. The DSM diagnosis data were coded as nominal data ("yes or no") in order to complete these cross-tabulations and review Chi Square tests of significance and measures of association for nominal data. Table 2, pages 59 - 61, summarizes the data triangulation process for this study. Figure 3, page 62, represents the levels of analysis for the total population, random and matched samples.

Data in all three samples (total population, random sample, and matched sample) were reviewed from two perspectives: (1) comparisons of presence of risk factors for males and females as a percentage of total population; and, (2) comparisons of presence of risk factors for males and females as a percentage of gender. The rationale for this approach was to offset the effect of the large number of males in the population. Utilizing only percent of population data provided a limited view and offered little insight into the possible differences between the genders and issues that may be specific to each.

### ***Research Limitations***

The scope of this case study was limited by three factors. The first factor was the availability of Court Service Unit case files for all juveniles detained in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home. For a variety of reasons, individual cases may not move forward to the Court Service Unit from the Detention Home; therefore, there may have been no additional information on the juvenile other than what was in the Detention Home files or in the computer report on court actions.

In the case of the randomly selected juveniles for the in-depth phase of this study, nineteen

juveniles were residents of either Accomack or Northampton Counties. In the absence of a juvenile detention facility for these locations, juveniles could be detained in the Norfolk Detention Home; however, case records for these juveniles were maintained in their home jurisdiction. Therefore, these files were unavailable for this case study and the information on these juveniles was limited to basic demographic, offense and in-take data from the Juvenile Detention Home records. In addition, for juveniles who were held in detention for a brief period of time for a minor offense, such as a violation of a court order to attend school (truancy), Court Service Unit case files often were either limited or they did not exist at all. Where possible, information about these juveniles was gathered from the computer generated court records which were generally limited to the type of offense, basic demographics, court actions, and, on occasion, notes from the case worker. A total of 22 files were unavailable and 24 names were duplicates, reducing the sample in phase three of the study to 226 juveniles.

The second factor that limited the scope of the research for this case study was the variability in the type and depth of information available in the Court Service Unit case files. This is not a function of quality control issues, but a function of the perceived need for information about the juvenile as determined by the Juvenile Court Judge. The judge bases his or her decision to order a comprehensive assessment on the type of offense committed by the juvenile, previous history before the court, and extenuating circumstances. For example, there, typically, will not be a court order for a social history or psychological evaluation for a juvenile before the court for truancy, or for a first-time offender before the court for a minor charge.

The sample size and availability of consistent risk factor information for all juveniles placed constraints on the computation of Chi Square test of statistical significance. For some cross-

tabulations there were an insufficient number of frequencies within the cells to reach the minimum of five or 20% for valid interpretation of the results.

The third factor limiting the scope of the study was the lack of information about risk factors in the community domain of the juvenile, although in some models of risk factors community factors are often combined with family and school factors both of which were included in this study.

Indicators of risk in the community domain include: community disorganization, poverty, availability of guns, and expectations with regard to attitudes and behaviors that support anti-social activity and aggression. The Social History Form was the only consistent place within the juvenile's case record where an impression of the family's neighborhood might be found, as well as information about the family's income. However, information about the neighborhood when available was very general.

This was true, as well, for the question about income, peers, and guns. Available information was inadequate to determine family income or neighborhood and peer influence with any degree of confidence; therefore, this domain was not included in the study.

**Table 2.**  
**Data Triangulation Summary: Phase I**

POPULATION	DATA COLLECTION	DATA SOURCE
<p>Data was collected on the total population of juveniles entering the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in the year 2000.</p> <p>Number: 1,296</p> <p>Gender:     Males - 992 (76.5%)              Females - 305 (23.5%)</p> <p>Race:     Black - 1036 (79.9%)              White - 241 (18.6%)              Other - 20 (1.5%)</p> <p>Age:     7 to 12 years - 49 (3.8%)              13 to 16 years - 959 (74.1%)              17 to 19 years - 287 (22.2%)</p>	<p>Race</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>Birth date</p> <p>Offense code</p> <p>Confining locality</p> <p>Admit to detention date</p> <p>Release from detention date</p> <p>Release code</p> <p>Local days in detention (funding source)</p> <p>State days in detention (funding source)</p> <p>Total days in detention</p>	<p>Data was collected from the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Report:</p> <p>Juveniles in Pre-Disposition (DJJ JC34 - Revised 1998) January - December 2000</p>

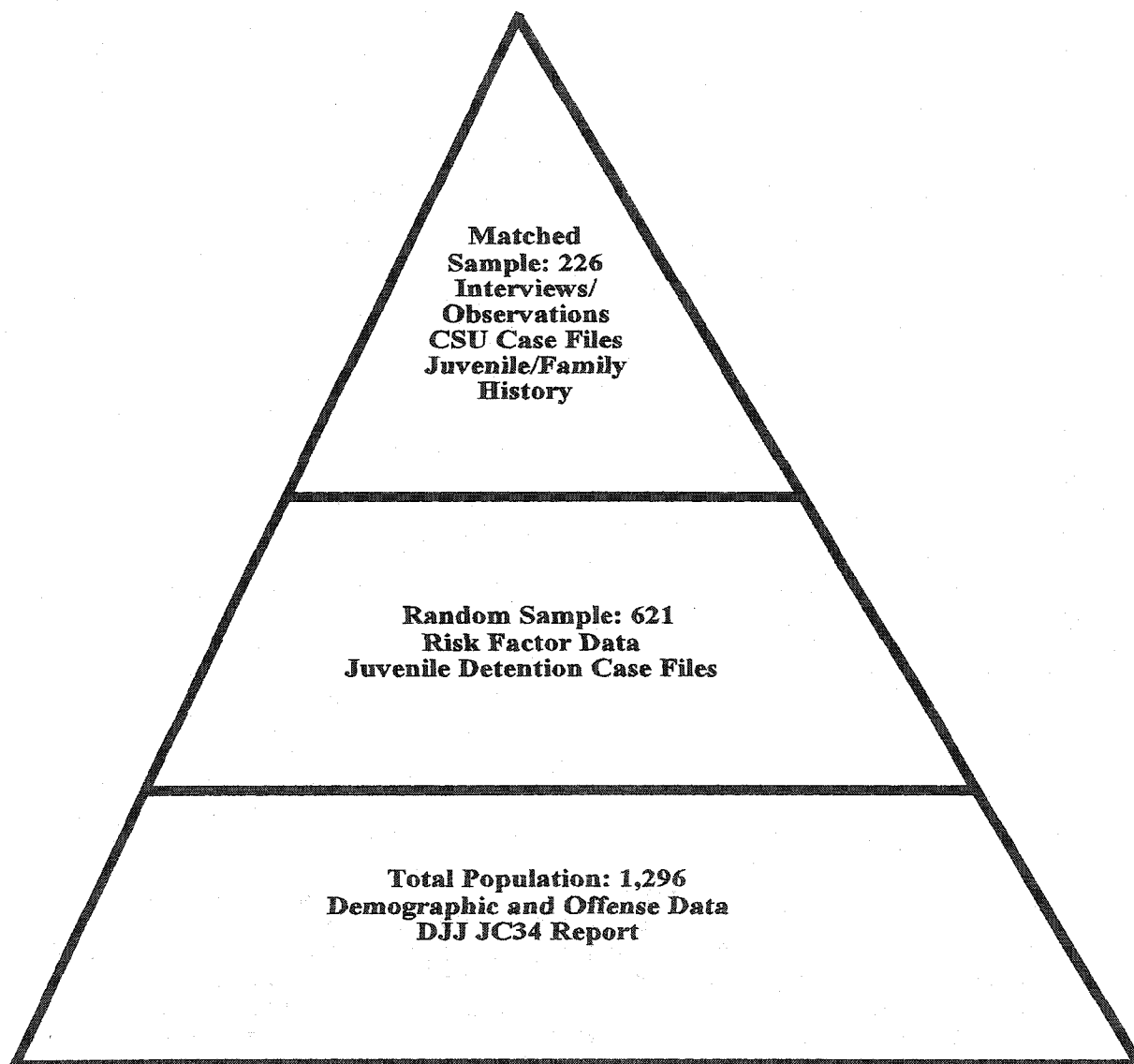
**Table 2.**  
**Data Triangulation Summary: Phase II**

POPULATION	DATA COLLECTED	DATA SOURCE
<p>Data was collected on approximately one-half of the total population of juveniles admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in the year 2000.</p> <p>Number: 621</p> <p>Gender: Males - 484 (77.9%) Females - 137 (22.1%)</p> <p>Race: Black - 485 (78.1%) White - 125 (20.1%) Other - 11 (1.8%)</p> <p>Age: 7 to 12 years - 19 (3%) 13 to 16 years - 456 (73.5%) 17 to 19 years - 145 (23.4%)</p>	<p>In addition to the data collected in Phase I of the study:</p> <p>Outreach Detention admit and release dates/number of days in Outreach</p> <p>Offense by category</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Medical problems</p> <p>Injuries</p> <p>Pregnancy</p> <p>History of substance abuse</p> <p>Self-esteem</p> <p>Mental health problems</p> <p>Educational problems</p> <p>Family substance abuse</p> <p>Juvenile substance abuse (current)</p> <p>Physical abuse</p> <p>Sexual abuse</p> <p>Suicidal ideation</p> <p>Multiple offenses</p> <p>Court appearances</p> <p>Name of admitting in-take officer, probation officer, or judge</p> <p>Admissions to Outreach from Detention</p> <p>Admissions to Detention from Outreach</p>	<p>Data was collected from the individual case files maintained at the Detention facility to include:</p> <p>Admissions Orientation form with staff observations</p> <p>Admissions/Release form with court, contact, identifying, medical, and discharge information</p> <p>Running Record/Staff Observations form</p> <p>Discipline Record</p> <p>Contact Sheet</p> <p>Juvenile Mental Health Assessment Screening Tool</p> <p>Minimus Forms</p> <p>Court Orders</p>

**Table 2.**  
**Data Triangulation Summary: Phase III**

POPULATION	DATA COLLECTED	DATA SOURCE
<p>All females in the random sample of 621 were selected for this Phase of the study. A random sample of males from the sample of 621 was matched to this female sample by race and age. Duplicates and juveniles for whom files were unavailable were deleted.</p> <p>Number: 226</p> <p>Gender: Males - 111 (49.1%) Females - 115 (50.9%)</p> <p>Race: Black - 160 (70.8%) White - 60 (26.5%) Other - 6 (2.6%)</p> <p>Age: 7 to 12 years - 10 (4.4%) 13 to 16 years - 188 (83.2%) 17 to 19 years - 28 (12.4%)</p>	<p>In addition to data collected in Phases I and II:</p> <p>Current status Family history of substance abuse Family history of crime Family history of mental health problems Results of SASSI Results of CAFAS Sexual abuse Physical abuse History of runaway History of substance abuse Suicidal ideation Special Education placement DSM-IV diagnosis/diagnoses (number and types) Self-esteem Depression Abandonment/rejection CHINS/DSS involvement Truancy Mental retardation School disciplinary referrals</p>	<p>Data was collected from Norfolk Juvenile Court Service Unit (CSU) individual case files to include the following as available in the juvenile's file:</p> <p>CSU case officer case notes Social History form Listing of court proceedings and outcomes Court Orders Psychological evaluations Educational evaluations Service provider reports SASSI results CAFAS results State correctional facilities reports Written work from the juvenile Other documents and reports as available</p> <p>For juveniles for whom the CSU record was not available, data was collected from the Juvenile Offender History Report.</p>

**Figure 3.**  
**Levels of Analysis**



## CHAPTER IV

### Data Analysis

#### *Descriptive Statistics: Population and Samples*

There were 1,298 juveniles in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000, 76.4% were males and 23.6% were females. Of the total population, 79.9% were African-American, 18.6% were white, and 1.5% were of other racial origins. The mean age for the population was 15.21 years. The random sample of 621 juveniles also included more males than females and more African-American juveniles than white or others. The mean age for this sample was 15.26 years. However, for the matched sample of 226 juveniles, whose case files were reviewed in depth, the percentage of males and females was approximately equal, although the percentage of African-American juveniles was higher than the percentage for white juveniles or those from other ethnic backgrounds. The mean age of 14.82 years for the matched sample was slightly younger than the total population and the random sample. This is a result of the stratified sampling process that was used to draw this sample from the random sample of 621 juveniles. Males were matched randomly by race and age to the 136 females from the random sample of 621 juveniles. The mean age for females in the total population was younger than males; therefore, the mean age for the matched sample was younger than both the total population and random sample. Table 3 compares the number and percentages of gender, race, and age for the total population, the random sample, and the matched sample.



Table 3.

**Gender, Race and Mean Age in the Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample**

	Population: 1,298	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Gender	Males: 76.4%	Males: 77.9%	Males: 49.1%
	992	484	111
	Females: 23.6%	Females: 22.1%	Females: 50.9%
	306	137	115
Race	Black: 79.9%	Black: 78.1%	Black: 70.8%
	1,037	485	160
	White: 18.6%	White: 20.1%	White: 26.5%
	241	125	60
	Other: 1.5%	Other: 1.8%	Other: 2.6%
	20	11	6
Mean Age	Male: 15.33	Male: 15.38	Male: 14.79
	Female: 14.80	Female: 14.81	Female: 14.85
	Overall: 15.21	Overall: 15.26	Overall: 14.82

Females between seven and sixteen years old represented 20.2% of the total population, while males in this same age category represented 57.8% of the total population. The same was true for the sample population of 621 juveniles: 19.2% of those between seven and sixteen years of age

were female and 57.3% were male. However, as Table 4 indicates, a comparison of the percentage of the juveniles within each gender by age presented a slightly different picture. Females between the ages of seven and sixteen were 85.3% of the female population; males in the same age categories were 75.6% of the population. These percentages were similar for the sample population of 621 juveniles also shown in Table 4. Of the females in the random sample, 86.8% were between seven and sixteen; 73.8% of the males in the sample were between these ages. For the matched sample of 226 juveniles, the percentages of juveniles in the age categories were approximately equal because the sample of males was matched to the females by age and race. Therefore, 89.1% of the males in the matched sample were between the ages of seven and sixteen, and 86% of the females were within these same age categories.

**Table 4.**  
**Gender and Age in the Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample**

	Population: 1,298	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Percentage of Male Population/Age	7-13: 10.09% 108 14-16: 64.7% 642 17-19: 24.4% 242	7-13: 10.6% 51 14-16: 63.2% 305 17-19: 26.3% 127	7-13: 15.3% 17 14-16: 73.8% 82 17-19: 10.8% 12
Percentage of Female Population/Age	7-13: 17.0% 52 14-16: 68.3% 209 17-19: 14.7% 45	7-13: 15.3% 21 14-16: 71.5% 98 17-19: 13.1% 18	7-13: 13.0% 15 14-16: 73.0% 84 17-19: 13.9% 16

The relationship between gender and age was significant at the .05 level for both the total population of 1,298 juveniles for ages eleven to seventeen and the random sample of 621 juveniles for ages twelve to seventeen, although in both cases the effect sizes indicated that the relationships

were weak. The Chi Square Tests and Measures of Association for the total population are displayed in Table 5 and Table 6. Table 7 and Table 8 display the Chi Square tests and measures of association for the sample population. The relationship between age and gender for the matched sample of 226 was not significant as a result of procedures to match the ages of males to females.

**Table 5.**

**Gender, Age Cross-Tabulation for Total Population: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.279 <sup>a</sup>	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	40.630	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	32.946	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1284		

a. 2 cells ( 14.3%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.19.

**Table 6.**

**Gender, Age Cross-Tabulation for Total Population: Measures of Association**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal      Phi	.179	.000
Cramer's V	.179	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.176	.000
N of Valid Cases	1296	

**Table 7.****Gender, Age Cross-Tabulation for Sample Population: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.275 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.365	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	21.368	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	614		

a. 1 cell (8.3%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.35.

**Table 8.****Gender, Age Cross-Tabulation for Sample Population: Measures of Association**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.203	.000
Nominal Cramer's V	.203	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.199	.000
N of Valid Cases	614	

Females were also younger than males when the data for gender and mean age were compared. For the total population and the random sample the ANOVA between gender and mean age when juveniles between the ages of eleven and seventeen were compared was significant at the .05 level as shown in Table 9, although the strength of the relationship was weak as shown in Table 10. Similar results are shown in Table 11 and Table 12 for the sample population of 621 juveniles. The ANOVA for gender and age in the matched sample was not significant.

**Table 9.****Gender and Mean Age for Total Population: ANOVA Table<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age Integer*Gender (Combined) Between Groups	63.227	1	63.227	33.787	.000
Within Groups	2400.921	1283	1.871		
Total		1284			

a. With fewer than three groups, linearity measures for age integer\*Gender cannot be computed.

**Table 10.****Gender and Mean Age for Total Population: Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Age Integer*Gender	.160	.026

**Table 11.****Gender and Mean Age for Sample Population: ANOVA Table<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age Integer*Gender (Combined) Between Groups	38.671	1	38.671	22.104	.000
Within Groups	1070.705	612	1.750		
Total	1109.376	613			

a. With fewer than three groups, linearity measures for age\*Gender cannot be computed.

**Table 12.****Gender and Mean Age for Sample Population: Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Age Integer*Gender	.187	.035

Table 13 indicated that females were younger than males when gender, race, and mean age were compared in the total population and the random sample. The mean age for African-American females was slightly younger than all males, as well as white and other females in both the total population and random sample. However, African-American females also were younger than males,

as well as white and other females in the matched sample. Mean age for males and females in the matched sample were, as expected, approximately the same. ANOVA for age and race was not significant for the total population, random or matched samples.

**Table 13.**  
**Gender, Race, and Mean Age Comparison for the Total Population, Random Sample, and Matched Samples**

	Population: 1298	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Mean Age: Males			
Black	15.30	15.38	14.71
White	15.41	15.33	14.93
Other	15.86	16.00	15.33
Mean Age: Females			
Black	14.74	14.67	14.75
White	14.90	15.11	15.07
Other	15.83	16.00	16.00

Although there was a higher percentage of both African-American males (62.3%) and females (17.6%) than either white males (13.0%) or females (5.5%) in the total population and random sample, a comparison of racial percentages within gender presented notable differences as indicated in Table 14. The female population consisted of 74.5% African-Americans and 23.5% whites; however, the white male population as compared to African-American males was only 17%, a smaller percentage than either white or African-American females. As a percentage of race, white females represented 29.9% of the white population, while African-American females represented 22% of the African-American population. This pattern was consistent for the total population as well as the random sample. The percentages for the matched sample again were balanced due to the selection process for the sample.

**Table 14.**  
**Comparison by Race and Gender for Total Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample**

	Population: 1296	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
<b>%/# of Total: Males</b>			
Black	62.3%: 809	61.2%: 387	34.1%: 77
White	13.0%: 169	14.2%: 88	13.3%: 30
Other	1.1%: 14	1.5%: 9	1.7%: 4
<b>%/# of Total: Females</b>			
Black	17.6%: 228	15.8%: 98	36.7%: 83
White	5.5%: 72	6.0%: 37	13.3%: 30
Other	.5%: 6	.3%: 2	.9%: 2
<b>%/# of Gender: Males</b>			
Black	81.6%: 809	80.0%: 387	69.4%: 77
White	17.0%: 169	18.2%: 88	27.0%: 30
Other	1.4%: 14	1.9%: 9	2.7%: 2
<b>%/# of Gender: Females</b>			
Black	74.5%: 228	71.5%: 228	72.2%: 83
White	23.5%: 72	27.0%: 72	26.1%: 30
Other	2.0%: 6	1.5%: 6	1.7%: 2
<b>%/# of Race:</b>			
Males: Black	78%: 809	79.8%: 387	48.1%: 77
Females: Black	22%: 228	20.2%: 98	51.9%: 83
Males: White	70.1%: 169	70.4%: 88	50.0%: 30
Females: White	29.9%: 72	29.6%: 37	50.0%: 30
Males: Other	70%: 14	81.8%: 9	60.0%: 4
Females: Other	30%: 6	18.2%: 2	40.0%: 2

A comparison of gender, race, and age indicated that there was a higher percentage (23.65%) of white females in the seven to sixteen age categories than African-American females (19.38%) as a percentage of race. Black males in the seven to sixteen age categories were 59.21% of the African-Americans in the population, while white males in the same age categories were 52.7% of the total number of white juveniles in the population. This trend was consistent in the random sample of 621 juveniles where 23.2% of the white juveniles were female as compared to 18.36% of female black juveniles in the seven to sixteen age categories. Black males represented 59.8% of the seven to sixteen year olds and white males represented 52% of the white population in the same age range. This data indicated that a slightly higher proportion of younger white females were detained than African-American females, although the comparison of mean age indicated that African-American females were younger than black or white males, and white females. In addition, younger white females were a higher proportion of the white race than African-American females were of the African-American race.

### *Relationship Between Gender and Offense*

*Research Question 1:* For what offenses were males and females detained in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in the year 2000? To respond to this question, the total population, the random sample and the matched sample were analyzed to answer the following related questions: (1) How many males and females were admitted to the Detention Home for each category of offense? (2) What was the average length of stay for males and females by age categories? (3) What was the average length of stay for males and females for each category of offense?



Offense data were analyzed for the following six categories of offense:

1. Felony versus person, including weapons
2. Felony versus property, including drugs
3. Misdemeanor versus person, including weapons
4. Misdemeanor versus property, including drugs
5. Technical violations, including violation of parole, probation and court orders
6. Status offenses, including runaway

As shown in Table 15, for the total population and random sample, technical violations represented the highest percentage of offense for juveniles entering the Detention Home in 2000. Technical violations were followed by felony-property. In the matched sample, although technical violations continued to represent the highest percentage of offenses, the second highest was misdemeanor-person. This shift was due to the balanced number of males and females in this sample and the fact that females tended to commit a higher percentage of offenses in the misdemeanor-person category. The relationship between gender and offense was significant at the .05 level for the total population as shown in Table 16 and 17, the random sample as shown in Table 18 and Table 19, and the matched sample as shown in Table 20 and Table 21.

Table 15.

Percentage & Number of Offense by Gender for Total Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample

	Population: 1298	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Felony - Person:			
Male	8.90%: 116	9.39%: 58	7.52%: 17
Female	.93%: 12	.97%: 6	2.65%: 6
Total	9.83%: 128	10.36%: 64	10.17%: 23
Felony - Property:			
Male	15.82%: 205	16.18%: 100	7.52%: 17
Female	1.54%: 20	.97%: 6	2.21%: 5
Total	17.36%: 225	17.15%: 106	9.73%: 22
Misdemeanor-Person:			
Male	11.88%: 154	9.87%: 61	7.08%: 16
Female	4.01%: 52	4.20%: 26	9.73%: 22
Total	15.89%: 206	14.07%: 87	16.81%: 38
Misdemeanor-Property:			
Male	11.50%: 149	13.59%: 84	8.85%: 20
Female	3.16%: 41	1.94%: 12	5.31%: 12
Total	14.66%: 190	15.53%: 96	14.16%: 32
Technical Violations:			
Male	27.55%: 357	28.26%: 174	18.14%: 41
Female	12.65%: 164	12.46%: 77	27.43%: 62
Total	40.20%: 521	40.62%: 251	45.57%: 103
Status Offenses			
Male	.77%: 10	.81%: 5	.00%: 0
Female	1.23%: 16	1.46%: 9	3.54%: 8
Total	2.00%: 26	2.27%: 14	3.54%: 8

**Table 16.****Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Total Population: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	80.952 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	85.056	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.736	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1296		

a. 0 cells (.0%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 6.12.

**Table 17. Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Total Population: Measures of Association**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal    Phi	.250	.000
Cramer's V	.250	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.242	.000
N of Valid Cases	1296	

**Table 18.****Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Random Sample: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	56.227 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	59.231	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	32.299	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	618		

a. 1 cells (8.3%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 3.08.

**Table 19.****Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Random Sample: Measures of Association**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.302	.000
Nominal Cramer's V	.302	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.289	.000
N of Valid Cases	618	

**Table 20.****Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Matched Sample: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	26.973 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.703	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.885	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	226		

a. 2 cells (16.7%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 3.93.

**Table 21.****Gender, Offense Cross-Tabulation for Matched Sample: Measures of Association**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.345	.000
Nominal Cramer's V	.345	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.327	.000
N of Valid Cases	226	

As shown in Table 22, analysis of offense for males and females as a percentage gender indicated that in three categories of offense, males represented the highest percentage as compared to females: (1) felony - person: males: 11.71% of the male population; females: 3.93% of the female population; (2) felony - property: males: 20.69% of the male population; females: 6.56% of the female population; (3) misdemeanor - property: males 15.04% of the male population; females: 13.44% of the female population. However, for the categories of misdemeanor-person, technical

violations, and status offenses, females represented a higher percentage of offenders within gender than did males.

**Table 22.**  
**Percentage & Number of Offense within Gender for Total Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample**

	Population: 1298	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Misdemeanor-Person:			
Male	15.44%: 154	12.66%: 61	13.91%: 16
Female	17.05%: 52	19.12%: 26	19.13%: 22
Technical Violations:			
Male	36.02%: 357	36.10%: 174	36.94%: 41
Female	53.77%: 164	56.62%: 77	53.90%: 62
Status Offenses:			
Male	1.01%: 10	1.04%: 5	.00%: 0
Female	5.25%: 16	6.62%: 9	7.00%: 8

With regard to age, offense, and gender a similar pattern can be identified. For the offenses of felony - person, felony - property, and misdemeanor - property, the percentage of males by age category committing these offenses within gender was higher than the percentage of females in the same age category within gender. However, as indicated in Table 23 for misdemeanor - person, technical violations, and status offenses, the percentage of females within gender for the younger age category was higher than the percentage of males in the same age category within gender. The relationship between age and offense was not found to be significant, although this may have been a function of the sample size and inadequate number of frequencies for the cell counts.

Table 23.

Percentage & Number of Offense by Gender & Age for the Total Population, Random Sample, and Matched Sample

	Population: 1296	Random Sample: 621	Matched Sample: 226
Males: 7-16:			
Misdemeanor-Pers.	12.41%: 123	9.92%: 48	11.71%: 13
Technical Violation	24.90%: 247	26.86%: 130	34.23%: 38
Status Offense	.71%: 7	.41%: 2	.00%: 0
Males: 17-19:			
Misdemeanor-Pers.	3.13%: 31	2.69%: 13	2.7%: 3
Technical Violation	9.18%: 91	9.09%: 44	2.7%: 3
Status Offense	.30%: 3	.62%: 3	.00%: 0
Females: 7-16			
Misdemeanor-Pers.	12.79%: 39	15.33%: 21	14.78%: 17
Technical Violation	49.18%: 150	52.94%: 72	50.43%: 62
Status Offense	4.25%: 13	5.11%: 7	5.22%: 6
Females: 17-19			
Misdemeanor-Pers.	3.93%: 12	3.65%: 5	4.35%: 5
Technical Violation	4.59%: 14	3.65%: 5	3.48%: 4
Status Offense	.98%: 3	1.46%: 2	1.74%: 2

While age and offense were not shown to be significantly related, the percentages as shown Table 23 indicated that a higher proportion of females are detained at a younger age in three categories: misdemeanor - person, technical violations, and status offenses. In addition, the Chi Square test of significance and measures of association for cross-tabulations of gender and offense were significant at the .05 level as shown in Tables 24 and Table 25 for the total population, Table 26 and Table 27 for the random sample, and Table 28 and Table 29 for the matched samples. In the random and samples the measures of association indicate a moderately strong relationship. The effect size is somewhat weaker for the total population as shown in Table 25.

**Table 24.****Gender and Offense Cross-Tabulation for the Total Population: Chi-Square Tests**

Gender	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	79.940 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	83.956	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.012	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1292		

a. 0 cells (0%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 6.14.

**Table 25.****Gender & Offense Cross-Tabulation for Total Population: Measures of Association**

Gender	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.249	.000
Nominal Cramer's V	.249	.000
Contingency Coefficient	.241	.000
N of Valid Cases	1292	

**Table 26.****Gender & Offense Cross-Tabulation for Random Sample: Chi-Square Tests**

Gender	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	56.227 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	59.231	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	32.299	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	618		

a. 1 cell (8.3%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count was 3.08.

**Table 27.****Gender & Offense Cross-Tabulation for Random Sample: Measures of Association**

Gender		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.302	.000
	Cramer's V	.302	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.289	.000
N of Valid Cases		618	

**Table 28.****Gender & Offense Cross-Tabulation for Matched Sample: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	26.973 <sup>a</sup>	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.703	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.885	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	226		

a. 2 cells (16.7%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.93.

**Table 29.****Gender & Offense Cross-Tabulation for Matched Sample: Measures of Association**

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.345	.000
	Cramer's V	.345	.000
	Contingency Coefficient	.327	.000
N of Valid Cases		226	

An analysis of length of stay data for males and females in the total population indicated that the average stay in detention for males was 21.08 days and 14.43 days for females. The overall average was 19.49 days. The averages in the random sample were 20.12 days for males, 13.27 days for females, and 18.60 days overall. In the matched sample, the average stay was 20.25 days for males, 13.11 days for females, and 16.62 days overall. The relationship between gender and length



of stay as shown in Table 30 was significant at the .05 level in the total population, although the effect size was weak as shown in Table 31.

**Table 30.**

**Length of Stay, Gender for Total Population: ANOVA Table<sup>a</sup>**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Local Days in Detent* Gender	Between Groups (Combined)	10228.137	1	10228.137	18.322	.000
	Within Groups	709546.08	1271	558.258		
	Total	719774.22	1272			

a. With fewer than three groups, linearity measures for local days in detent\*gender cannot be computed.

**Table 31.**

**Length of Stay, Gender for Total Population: Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Local Days in Detent* Gender	.119	.014

The comparison of means for length of stay, offense codes, and gender indicated that, with very few exceptions, males spent a longer average stay in detention than females for similar offenses. The ANOVA between length of stay and offense was significant at the .05 level for the total population as shown in Table 32, although the strength of the relationship was weak as shown in Table 33. The relationship between length of stay and offense was also significant at the .05 level for the random sample as shown in Table 34 also with relatively weak effect size as shown in Table 35.

**Table 32.****Length of Stay, Offense for Total Population: ANOVA Table<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Local Days in Detent* *Offense	35577.283	5	7115.457	13.167	.000
Between Groups (Combined)					
Within Groups	684166.72	1266	540.4116		
Total	719744.00	1272			

a. With fewer than three groups, linearity measures for local days in detent\*offense cannot be computed.

**Table 33.****Length of Stay, Offense for Total Population: Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Local Days in Detent* JLARC Offense Codes	.222	.049

**Table 34.****Length of Stay, Offense for Random Sample: ANOVA Table<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Local Days in Detent* Offense Codes	20180.390	5	4036.078	8.436	.000
Between Groups (Combined)					
Within Groups	288017.69	602	478.435		
Total		607			

**Table 35. Length of Stay, Offense for Random Sample: Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Local Days in Detent* JLARC Offense Codes	.256	.065

One exception to this pattern should be noted: African-American females tended to be held in detention longer than white males for some categories of offenses, although none of the tests for significance indicated a relationship between race and length of stay. For example, in the total

population, African-American females had a longer average length of stay than white males for felony-person, misdemeanor-person, technical violations and status offenses. White females had a longer average length of stay than white males for technical violations and status offenses as detailed in Table 36.

**Table 36.**  
**Mean Length of Stay (Days) by Race, Gender, and Offense: Total Population**

	Black Males	White Males	Black Females	White Females
Felony-Person	33.95	27.20	32.40	15.50
Felony-Property	24.93	26.67	17.93	15.80
Misdemeanor-Person	15.64	13.20	16.05	11.46
Misdemeanor-Property	17.35	17.40	16.75	14.00
Technical Violations	21.52	12.40	12.86	12.62
Status Offenses	10.22	4.00	10.00	7.00
Total	21.99	17.65	15.15	11.93

The analysis of length of stay and age for the total population, random sample, and matched sample did not indicate any significant relationships, nor were there any notable patterns in the data.

### *Gender and Risk Factors*

*Research Question 2:* To what individual and environmental risk factors were males and females exposed prior to their detention in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? To respond to this question, frequency and cross-tabulation data from the random sample of 621 juveniles were analyzed for the following variables gathered from the Mental Health Assessment Form completed during the detention in-take process:

1. Current substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)
2. History of substance abuse

3. Physical abuse
4. Sexual abuse
5. Low self-esteem
6. Suicidal ideation
7. Family history of substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)
8. Family status
9. History of school problems

Utilizing records from the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit, a more in-depth analysis was completed for a matched sample consisting of all females (136) in the random sample of 621 juveniles and males drawn through a random process to match the females by age and race. Variables utilized in this analysis included the following:

1. Presence of a diagnosis from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) - Axis I.
2. Presence of more than one DSM Axis I diagnoses (DSM Combination)
3. Presence of Conduct Disorder, Major Depression, Dysthymic Disorder, ADHD, or other DSM Axis I diagnoses
4. Substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)
5. Sexual abuse
6. Physical abuse
7. Abandonment/rejection
8. Low self-esteem
9. Depression

10. Runaway
11. Suicidal ideation
12. Current status within juvenile justice system (if applicable)
13. Family history of mental health problems
14. Family history of crime
15. Family history of substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)
16. Family Status
17. Involvement with the Department of Social Services
18. Identification as a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) or Supervision  
(CHINSUP)
19. Truancy
20. Special Education placement
21. Discipline referrals in school
22. Scores on the CAFAS and SASSI (if available)

In addition to reviewing frequency and cross-tabulation data for the single risk factors for males and females, the variables in the matched sample were grouped into four domains of risk: individual, family, school and mental health. These groupings of variables were also analyzed for correlation with each other, single risk factors, and gender.

Within the random sample of 621 juveniles, 62.3% lived with their mother only, while 17% lived with both parents, 13.5% with other relatives, and 6.7% lived with their father only. Family substance abuse was indicated for 50.3% of the juveniles, 21% reported a history of their own substance abuse and 40.7% indicated they were current users. Low self-esteem was indicated as an

issue for 28.6% of this population and 85% indicated they had failed a grade or term at school. With regard to mental health issues, 23% indicated they had experienced such problems and 62.6% indicated they had at sometime thought about suicide. Further, 14.2% indicated that they had been physically abused and 6.9% reported sexual abuse.

Five single factors were significantly correlated for the males and females in the random sample: low self-esteem, history of substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and suicidal ideation. Significance was indicated at the .05 level, although the effect sizes were in the low range (.200 to .226).

In addition, four factors were correlated with suicidal ideation in this data set:

1. Mental health and suicide at the .05 level for males. The effect size for males, mental health and suicide was low (.181).
2. Family substance abuse and suicide was significant for males at the .05 level with an effect size of .244.
3. A history of substance abuse and suicide was significant for males at the .05 level with an effect size of .195.
4. Current substance abuse and suicide was significant for males at the .05 level with an effect size of .236.

A review of the percentages of these risk factors within gender, rather than as a percentage of the total population of the sample, highlights some interesting differences as shown in Table 37. As a percent of gender, a higher rate of experience was indicated for females than males for eight of the nine factors listed: history of substance abuse, low self-esteem, family substance abuse, mental health issues, current substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and suicidal ideation. Males

indicated a higher rate of experience with school failure; however, this percentage was 84.5% as compared to females at 81.02%.

Table 37.

## Percentage &amp; Number of Risk Factors within Total Population and Gender: Random Sample

	Males	Females
History of Substance Abuse:		
% of Total Population	12.4%	8.4%
% of Gender	16.1%	37.96%
Number	77	52
Low Self-Esteem		
% of Total Population	16.26%	10.3%
% of Gender	20.87%	46.7%
Number	101	64
Family Substance Abuse		
% of Total Population	37.84%	11.76%
% of Gender	48.55%	53.28%
Number	235	73
Failed Grade or Term		
% of Total Population	65.86%	17.87%
% of Gender	84.50%	81.02%
Number	409	111
Mental Health Issues		
% of Total Population	15.46%	7.25%
% of Gender	19.83%	335.04%
Number	96	45
Current Substance Abuse		
% of Total Population	30.92%	9.18%
% of Gender	39.67%	41.61%
Number	192	57
Physical Abuse		
% of Total Population	7.89%	6.12%
% of Gender	10.12%	27.74%
Number	49	38
Sexual Abuse		
% of Total Population	1.3%	5.48%
% of Gender	1.65%	24.82%
Number	8	34
Suicide		
% of Total Population	43.80%	17.87%
% of Gender	56.20%	81.02%
Number	272	111



Based on a review of other available records, primarily the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit case files, in addition to the Juvenile Detention Home files for the 226 males and females in the matched sample, the population characteristics can be described as follows:

1. Sixty-five percent were inactive at the time the files were reviewed; 30.9% were still involved in the juvenile justice system; and, 3.1% had been transferred to other jurisdictions.
2. Forty percent lived with their mother only; 19.5% lived with their mother and another person; 13.3% lived with other relatives; 11.5% lived with both parents; 8.4% were in foster care; 5.3% lived with their father only; and, 2.2% lived with their father and another person.
3. Of the 42% of the sample who were given the SASSI, 45.3% were determined to be “dependent.” Of those, 31.6% were male and 13.7% were female.
4. Of the 12.3% of the sample who were given the CAFAS, 50% were recommended for More Intensive Services and 21% were recommended for Intensive Services. 57% of those given the CAFAS were male and 41.9% were female.
5. Thirty-four percent of the sample had been CHINS or CHINSUP at some point. Of these, 12.5% were male and 21.9% were female.
6. Fifty-eight percent of the sample had some involvement with the Department of Social Services. Of these, 27.6% were male and 30.2% were female.

In addition, Table 38 describes the percentage of the matched sample who experienced risk in each of the domains: family, school, mental health, and individual. It is noteworthy that 41.5% of the sample had a diagnosis based upon the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Of these, 34.7% had a multiple diagnosis. Also noteworthy is the high percentage of runaways (46.7%), those involved in substance abuse (52%), and those who had a history of truancy

(55.6%). Family history of substance abuse (47.1%) and family history of crime (45.3%) are also indicative of the high level of risk experienced by the juveniles in this sample.

**Table 38.**

**Percentage & Number of Matched Sample with Risk Factors**

Mental Health Factors	Individual Factors	Family Factors	School Factors
DSM Diagnosis: 41.5%: 93	Runaway: 46.7%: 105	Family Substance Abuse: 47.1%: 106	Truancy: 55.6%: 125
Multiple DSM: 34.7%: 78	Low Self-Esteem: 21.8%: 49	Family History of Crime: 45.3%: 102	Special Education Placement: 21.3%: 48
ODD: 22.7%: 50	Suicidal Ideation: 19.1%: 43	Family Mental Health Problems: 24.0%: 54	Discipline Referrals: 48.4%: 109
Conduct Disorder: 15.1%: 34	Abandonment: 19.6%: 44		
Dysthymic Disorder: 8.0%: 18	Depression-General: 36.0%: 81		
Major Depression: 8.4%: 19	Physical Abuse: 22.2%: 50		
Other DSM: 32.9%: 74	Sexual Abuse: 13.8%: 31		
ADHD: 24.4%: 55	Substance Abuse: 52.0%: 117		
Mild Mental Retardation: 9.3%: 21	Alcohol Abuse: 34.7%: 78		

Table 39 compares percentages of risk factors for males and females in the matched sample.

Comparisons of risk factors experienced as a percentage of the total population of the sample indicated a relatively even distribution by gender with a few notable exceptions. Higher percentages of males received Special Education placements, discipline referrals, and used alcohol. Females indicated a higher percentage of sexual abuse, truancy, and running away.

Comparisons of risk factors experienced as a percent of gender indicated more females diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), depression, major depression, suicidal ideation, and physical and sexual abuse. Males indicated higher levels of Conduct Disorder, abandonment, family mental health problems, family crime, alcohol abuse, substance abuse, and ADHD.

Table 39.

**Percentage & Number of Risk Factors within Total Population and Gender: Matched Sample**

	Males	Females
<b>Oppositional Defiant Disorder</b>		
% of Total	8.9%	13.3%
% of Gender	18.0%	26.1%
Number	20	30
<b>Abandonment</b>		
% of Total	11.1%	8.4%
% of Gender	22.5%	16.5%
Number	25	19
<b>Truancy</b>		
% of Total	24.8%	30.5%
% of Gender	50.5%	60.0%
Number	56	69
<b>Depression-General</b>		
% of Total	16.0%	20.0%
% of Gender	32.4%	39.1%
Number	36	45
<b>Family Substance Abuse</b>		
% of Total	25.7%	21.2%
% of Gender	52.3%	41.7%
Number	58	48
<b>Family Mental Health</b>		
% of Total	14.2%	9.7%
% of Gender	28.9%	19.1%
Number	32	22
<b>Special Education Placement</b>		
% of Total	15.9%	5.3%
% of Gender	32.4%	10.4%
Number	36	12
<b>Discipline Referrals</b>		
% of Total	29.2%	4.9%
% of Gender	59.5%	9.6%
Number	66	11
<b>Conduct Disorder</b>		
% of Total	10.2%	4.9%
% of Gender	20.7%	9.6%
Number	23	11

**Table 39.****Percentage & Number of Risk Factors within Total Population and Gender: Matched Sample, continued**

	Males	Females
Major Depression		
% of Total	2.2%	6.2%
% of Gender	4.5%	12.2%
Number	5	14
DSM Diagnosis		
% of Total	20.0%	21.2%
% of Gender	40.5%	12.2%
Number	45	48
DSM Combination		
% of Total	16.8%	17.7%
% of Gender	34.2%	34.8%
Number	38	40
Family Crime		
% of Total	22.7%	22.6%
% of Gender	46.0%	44.4%
Number	51	51
Suicidal Ideation		
% of Total	7.5%	11.5%
% of Gender	15.3%	22.6%
Number	17	26
Alcohol Abuse		
% of Total	21.7%	12.8%
% of Gender	44.1%	25.2%
Number	49	29
Substance Abuse		
% of Total	27.9%	23.9%
% of Gender	57.8%	47.0%
Number	63	54
Other DSM Diagnoses		
% of Total	17.3%	15.5%
% of Gender	35.1%	30.4%
Number	39	35
ADHD		
% of Total	15.5%	8.9%
% of Gender	31.5%	17.4%
Number	35	20

**Table 39.**

**Percentage & Number of Risk Factors within Total Population and Gender: Matched Sample, continued**

	Males	Females
Runaways		
% of Total	17.7%	28.8%
% of Gender	36.0%	56.5%
Number	40	65
Sexual Abuse		
% of Total	2.7%	11.1%
% of Gender	5.4%	21.7%
Number	6	25
Physical Abuse		
% of Total	10.2%	12.0%
% of Gender	20.7%	23.5%
Number	23	27
Low Self-Esteem		
% of Total	11.1%	10.6%
% of Gender	22.5%	20.9%
Number	25	24

Groupings of risk factors were created to mirror domains in a juvenile's life: individual, family, school, and mental health. Groupings were composed of the following single risk factors: (1) Individual: physical abuse, sexual abuse, abandonment/rejection, suicidal ideation, depression (general), low self-esteem, alcohol abuse, substance abuse, and runaway; (2) Family: history of family crime, substance abuse, and mental health problems; (3) School: discipline referrals, truancy, and special education placement; (4) Mental Health: DSM diagnosis (Axis One), combination DSM diagnoses (DSM Combination), ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Major Depression, Dysthymic Disorder, Mild Mental Retardation, and other DSM diagnoses.

In addition to cross-tabulations of single factors with gender discussed later in this study, cross-tabulations were run for males and females with each of the groupings of factors (individual,

school, family, mental health) and, then, with a combination of the groupings (individual/family, individual school, and school/family). Results for the cross-tabulations of gender with number of single factors are summarized within each grouping as follows in Table 40. It should be noted that while females had a higher percentage of individual factors within the higher range of factors, males had a higher percentage of school, family and mental health factors. In general, however, Table 40 indicates that as a percentage of the total population, between 25% to 40% of the males and 30% to 40% of the females had at least half of the factors in each grouping. This percentage increases to 50% to 80% as a percent of gender. Similarly, between 8% and 28% of the males and 9% to 17% of the females had more than half of the factors as a percentage of the total population; and, as a percentage of gender between 11% to 50% for males and 18% to 35% of females had more than half of the factors.

Table 40.

## Percentage &amp; Number of Grouped Risk Factors for Total Population and Gender: Matched Sample

Individual Factors	Family Factors	School Factors	Mental Health Factors
0 - 4 Factors Males 90 Females 91  % of Total Males 40.27% Females 39.82%  % of Gender Males 81.98% Females 78.26%	0 - 1 Factor Males 58 Females 75  % of Total Males 25.66% Females 33.19%  % of Gender Males 52.45% Females 65.22%	0 - 1 Factors Males 55 Females 77  % of Total Males 24.34% Females 34.07%  % of Gender Males 49.55% Females 66.96%	0 - 4 Factors Males 86 Females 94  % of Total Males 38.05% Females 41.59%  % of Gender Males 77.48% Females 81.74%
5 - 9 Factors Males 20 Females 25  % of Total Males 8.85% Females 11.06%  % of Gender Males 18.02% Females 21.74%	2 - 3 Factors Males 53 Females 40  % of Total Males 23.45% Females 17.7%  % of Gender Males 47.45% Females 34.78%	2 - 3 Factors Males 56 Females 38  % of Total Males 27.78% Females 16.81%  % of Gender Males 50.45% Females 33.04%	5 - 9 Factors Males 25 Females 21  % of Total Males 11.06% Females 9.29%  % of Gender Males 22.52% Females 18.26%

There were no significant relationships indicated for the single groupings of risk factors with gender. In addition, when the groupings were combined and cross-tabulated against gender inadequate cell frequencies prevented utilization of the data in any meaningful way, even though a number of the relationships were significant and the effect sizes were in the moderate range. This limitation was a result of the small sample size and the large number of factors, particularly when groupings were combined.

Further analysis of grouped factors with gender and age indicated again that inadequate cell frequencies precluded meaningful interpretation of the data. Although in several instances significance was indicated with moderate effect sizes, inability to meet the required expected count



of five or maximum of 20% without the expected five in the cells eliminated these results from the study.

Relationships between single risk factors identified in this study and specific behavioral outcomes for males and females were explored through a series of cross-tabulations. Five behavioral outcomes were selected: running away, suicidal ideation, depression, low self-esteem, and truancy. These five factors, or behavioral outcomes, were correlated individually with every other factor in the study for the matched sample. In addition, these five factors were correlated with the grouped factors (with running away, suicide, depression, low-self-esteem, and truancy removed from the grouping): individual, mental health, school and family. The analysis of these correlations, as summarized in Table 41, provided information about the linkage between risk factors experienced by the juvenile, individual behavioral outcomes, and differences by gender. Table 41 graphically depicts the multiple types of risk experienced by this sample of juveniles, and provides insight to the strength of the association between these factors and other behaviors. Data only were included in Table 41 that met the expected cell count of five and all Chi Square Tests were significant at the .05 level.

**Table 41.**  
**Behavioral Outcomes and Single Risk Factor Cross-tabulations by Gender for Matched Sample: Chi-Square Tests and Phi Measure of Association**

Behavioral Outcomes	Males Chi-Square/Effect Size/Phi	Females Chi-Square/Effect Size/Phi
Runaway	Depression .000/.399/.000	Sexual Abuse .000/.335/.000
	Substance Abuse .000/.347/.000	
	Alcohol .000/.425/.000	
	Family Sub. Abuse .000/.347/.000	
	DSM Diagnosis .000/.332/.000	
Suicide	DSM Diagnosis .000/.463/.000	DSM Diagnosis .000/.341/.000
	DSM Combination .000/.430/.000	DSM Combination .000/.347/.000
	Other DSM .000/.419/.000	Alcohol Abuse .000/.404/.000
Depression	Low Self-Esteem .000/.454/.000	Low Self-Esteem .000/.509/.000
	Physical Abuse .000/.356/.000	Suicide .000/.419/.000
	Suicide .000/.452/.000	DSM Diagnosis .000/.565/.000
	DSM Diagnosis .000/.602/.000	DSM Combination .000/.612/.000
	DSM Combination .000/.553/.000	Abandonment .000/.363/.000
	Family Sub. Abuse .000/.350/.000	
	ADHD .000/.563/.000	
	Alcohol Abuse .000/.388/.000	
	Runaway .000/.399/.000	

**Table 41.**

**Behavioral Outcomes and Single Risk Factors Cross-Tabulation with Gender for Matched Sample: Chi-Square Test, Effect Size, and Phi Measure of Association, continued**

Behavioral Outcomes	Males Chi-Square/Effect Size/Phi	Females Chi-Square/Effect Size/Phi
Low Self-Esteem	DSM Diagnosis .000/.343/.000	DSM Diagnosis .000/.344/.000
	DSM Combination .000/.383/.000	DSM Combination .000/.434/.000
	Other DSM .000/.414/.000	Other DSM .000/.451/.000
	Conduct Disorder .000/.415/.000	
	Abandonment .000/.379/.000	
Truancy	Family Sub. Abuse .000/.381/.000	

In addition to the risk factors that were correlated in the Table 41, the results of the SASSI were cross-tabulated against substance and alcohol abuse for males and females in the matched sample. The relationship between the SASSI, gender, and substance abuse was not found to be significant. Results did not confirm or refute the self-reported data on substance abuse because cell frequencies did not meet the expected count of five; therefore, the data could not be meaningfully interpreted. However, the relationship between the SASSI, gender, and alcohol was significant for both males and females as displayed in Table 42. The effect sizes as shown in Table 43 were strong. The results of this analysis confirmed the self-reported data on alcohol obtained from the Court Service Unit files.

There were no significant relationships indicated between the CAFAS, gender, race, offense, or specific risk factors. However, the CAFAS was only administered to 28 juveniles in the matched sample; therefore, frequencies were sparse and statistical analysis was not meaningful. It should be noted that of the 28 juveniles,

71% (20) were identified as in need of “more intensive” or “intensive services.” Of the 28 receiving the CAFAS, 54% were African-American and 39% were white; 43% were female and 57% were male.

**Table 42.**

**SASSI, Alcohol, and Gender for the Matched Sample: Chi Square Tests**

Gender		Value	df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
male	Pearson Chi-Square	15.128 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	15.872	1	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	14.853	1	.000
	N of Valid Cases	55		
female	Pearson Chi-Square	23.539 <sup>b</sup>	1	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	29.176	1	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	22.951	1	.000
	N of Valid Cases	40		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.09.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.85.

**Table 43. SASSI, Alcohol, and Gender for Matched Sample: Measures of Association**

Gender			Value	Approx. Sig.
male	Nominal by	Phi	.524	.000
	Nominal	Cramer's V	.524	.000
		Contingency Coefficient	.464	.000
	N of Valid Cases		55	
female	Nominal by	Phi	.767	.000
	Nominal	Cramer's V	.767	.000
		Contingency Coefficient	.609	.000
	N of Valid Cases		40	

*Gender, Risk, and Offense*

*Research Question III:* What was the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk and the type of offense committed by males and females? To respond to this question, offense and risk factor data from both the random and matched samples were analyzed. Each of the six offense categories was cross-tabulated with each single risk factor for males and females. Family status for males and females also was cross-tabulated with offense categories. In

addition, each of the six offense categories was cross-tabulated with grouped risk factors: individual, mental health, school, and family. Although none of the cross-tabulations from either data set indicated any relationships between offense and risk factors that were statistically significant, a review of the percentages of risk factors for each offense provided a useful overview of type of risks faced by juveniles and crimes for which they were placed in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000.

Table 44 describes the percentage of males and females within each offense category according to their family status as a percentage of the gender.

**Table 44.**

**Family Status of Males and Females within Offense Category: Random Sample**

Offense	Father Only	Mother Only	Both Parents	Other Relatives
Felony-Person	males: .6% 3 females: .0%	males: 7.5% 36 females: 3.7% 5	males: 2.9% 14 females: .7% 1	males: 1.0% 5 females: .0%
Felony - Property	males: 1.0% 5 females: .0%	males: 14.2% 68 females: 3.0% 4	males: 3.8% 18 females: 1.5% 2	males: 1.9% 9 females: .0%
Misdemeanor-Person	males: .6% 3 females: 2.2% 3	males: 6.5% 31 females: 12.5% 17	males: 3.3% 16 females: 3.7% 5	males: 2.1% 10 females: .7% 1
Misdemeanor-Property	males: 1.0% 5 females: .7% 1	males: 10.5% 50 females: 5.2% 7	males: 3.3% 16 females: 1.5% 2	males: 2.5% 12 females: .7% 1
Technical Violations	males: 3.1% 15 females: 4.4% 6	males: 22.0% 105 females: 34.8% 47	males: 4.2% 20 females: 8.9% 12	males: 6.7% 32 females: 8.9% 12
Status Offenses	males: .0% females: .0%	males: .8% 4 females: 5.2% 7	males: .0% females: 1.5% 2	males: .2% 1 females: .0%

Table 45.

## Family Status of Males and Females with Offense Category: Matched Sample

Offense	Father Only	Mother Only	Both Parents	Other Relatives
Felony-Person	males: .0% females: .0%	males: 7.2% 8 females: 2.6% 3	males: 1.8% 2 females: .9% 1	males: 2.7% 3 females: .9% 1
Felony-Property	males: .9% 1 females: .0%	males: 9.0% 10 females: 1.7% 2	males: .9% 1 females: .0%	males: 1.8% 2 females: .0%
Misdemeanor-Person	males: 1.8% 2 females: .0%	males: 1.8% 2 females: 6.1% 7	males: 1.8% 2 females: 5.2% 6	males: 3.6% 4 females: 1.7% 2
Misdemeanor-Property	males: .9% 1 females: .9% 1	males: 5.4% 6 females: 5.2% 6	males: 1.8% 2 females: 1.7% 2	males: 3.6% 4 females: .9% 1
Technical Violations	males: 3.6% 4 females: 2.6% 3	males: 15.3% 17 females: 21.7% 25	males: 1.8% 2 females: 5.2% 6	males: 5.4% 6 females: 6.1% 7
Status Offenses	males: .0% females: .0%	males: .0% females: 3.5% 4	males: .0% females: 1.7% 2	males: .0% females: .0%

Table 44 and Table 45 indicated that in all offense categories the highest percentages of juveniles lived with their mother only. In particular, the percentages of females living with their mother only are highest in the categories of technical violations, misdemeanor-person, and status offenses. The second highest percentages in all offense categories were for juveniles living with both parents.

Analysis of risk factors for offense categories and gender did not indicate any relationships of significance, however, a review of the cross-tabulations indicated that risk factors were prevalent in all six offense categories for males and females. Table 46 and Table 47 described the most prevalent

risk factors for males and females in three offense categories: misdemeanor- property, misdemeanor- persons, and technical violations. Table 46 presents this information for the random sample and Table 47 presents the same information for the matched sample. Of particular note were the higher percentages and number of risk factors for females committing misdemeanors-person and technical offenses. The percentages and number of factors for males were higher in the misdemeanor-property category, as well as technical offenses. The highest percentages of risk factors for males who committed felony-person in the random sample were failed grade or term, 9.7% (46), suicidal ideation, 5.9% (28), family substance abuse, 5.1% (24), and low self-esteem, 3.2% (15). Similar factors were present for felony-property in the random sample. With regard to status offenses both samples indicated a variety of risk factors present to include DSM diagnosis, failed grade or term, suicidal ideation, family substance abuse, family crime, and depression. While the analysis of risk factors for categories of offense and gender did not reveal clear patterns between type of risk and type of offense, the data confirmed that juveniles experienced multiple risk factors in each domain.

Table 46.

## Most Prevalent Risk Factors for Males and Females by Category of Offense: Random Sample

Offense	Males		Females	
Misdemeanor - Person	Failed Grade/Term	18.4%	Suicidal Ideation	16.3%
	53		22	
	Suicidal Ideation	7.6%	Failed Grade/Term	15.6%
	36		21	
	Family Sub. Abuse	5.9%	Family Sub. Abuse	11.9%
	28		16	
	Substance Abuse	4.1%	Physical Abuse	9.6%
	20		13	
			Low Self-Esteem	9.6%
			13	
Misdemeanor - Property	Failed Grade/Term	13.7%	Failed Grade/Term	8.1%
	66		11	
	Suicidal Ideation	9.9%	Suicidal Ideation	7.4%
	47		10	
	Family Sub. Abuse	8.2%	Substance Abuse	4.4%
	39		6	
	Substance Abuse	8.2%	Physical Abuse	3.7%
	39		5	
Technical Violations	Failed Grade/Term	32.1%	Failed Grade/Term	47.4%
	155		65	
	Suicidal Ideation	20.5%	Suicidal Ideation	43.7%
	99		60	
	Family Sub. Abuse	19.8%	Family Sub. Abuse	30.4%
	96		41	
	Low Self-Esteem	16.2%	Low Self-Esteem	28.9%
	78		40	
	Substance Abuse	9.5%	Substance Abuse	23.0%
	46		31	
Technical Violations	Mental Health Issues	7.2%	Mental Health Issues	17.8%
	35		24	
			Physical Abuse	13.3%
			18	
Technical Violations			Sexual Abuse	12.6%
			17	



Table 47.

## Most Prevalent Risk Factors for Males and Females by Category of Offense: Matched Sample

Offense	Males		Females	
Misdemeanor - Person	Abandonment 20	18.0%	Truancy 15	11.3%
	DSM Diagnosis 10	9.1%	DSM Diagnosis 12	10.5%
	Family Sub. Abuse 9	8.2%	Runaway 12	10.4%
	Alcohol Abuse 9	7.3%	Substance Abuse 11	9.6%
	Substance Abuse 8	6.4%	DSM Combination 11	9.6%
Misdemeanor - Property	Substance Abuse 12	10.9%	Family Crime 8	6.1%
	Alcohol Abuse 11	10.0%	Runaway 8	6.1%
	Family Sub. Abuse 11	10.0%	Substance Abuse 6	5.2%
	Family Crime 11	10.0%	Family Sub. Abuse 6	5.2%
	Runaway 11	10.0%	Truancy 5	4.3%
	Truancy 11	10.0%		
Technical Violations	Substance Abuse 27	24.5%	Truancy 43	37.4%
	Family Sub. Abuse 23	20.9%	Runaway 33	28.7%
	Truancy 23	20.9%	Substance Abuse 31	27.0%
	Family Crime 20	18.2%	Family Crime 26	22.6%
	Alcohol Abuse 19	17.3%	Family Sub. Abuse 25	21.7%
	Runaway 17	15.5%	Depression 23	20.0%
	DSM Diagnosis 16	14.5%	DSM Diagnosis 20	18.4%
	ADHD 14	12.7%	DSM Combination 18	14.8%
	Depression 13	11.8%	Alcohol Abuse 16	13.9%
	Special Education 13	11.8%	Suicide 12	10.4%
			Physical Abuse 11	9.6%
			Sexual Abuse 10	8.7%

In addition to the single factors described in Tables 46 and 47, categories of offense were cross-tabulated by gender with grouping of factors: mental health, school, family, and individual. There are several noteworthy percentages. Over 8% of the males and females who committed technical violations were identified as having between five and nine mental health factors. Twelve percent of females and over 6% of males who committed technical violations were also identified as having between five and nine individual factors. Over 18% of males and females who committed technical offenses were identified as having two or three of both the family and school factors. Six percent of females who committed misdemeanors-person were identified as having between five and nine individual factors; and, 5% were identified as having between five and nine mental health factors. In this offense category, 7.8% of females were identified with two to three school factors and 5% were identified as having two or three family factors. For males in the misdemeanor - person, felony - person, and felony - property offense categories, the most prevalent factors were two or three school and family factors. However, for misdemeanor-property, 7% of the males were identified with between five and nine mental health factors; over 6% were identified with between five and nine individual factors, in addition to 11.7% and 9.9% with two or three school and family factors, respectively.

### *Summary of Findings*

*Overview:* Analysis of gender, race, and age in the total population, random and matched samples revealed the following. The mean age for females (14.80) was slightly younger than the mean age for males (15.33). The relationship between gender and age was significant at the .05 level for the total population. There were more black (75.5%) and white (23.5%) females as a percentage of gender than white males (17%) as a percentage of the gender. There was a higher percentage of

white females (29.9%) than black females (22%) within the white and black populations, respectively. There was a higher percentage of younger white females (23.65%) than black females (19.38%) as a percentage of race. The mean age for African-American females was younger than for white females, as well as African-American and white males.

*Research Question 1:* For what offenses were males and females detained in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? Analysis of offense, gender, age, race, and length of stay data revealed the following.

As a percentage of gender, females committed a higher percentage of technical violations, misdemeanors-person, and status offenses than males. As a percentage of gender, females in the younger age category (7-16) committed a higher percentage of misdemeanors-person, technical violations and status offenses than males. The relationship between gender and offense was significant for females at the .05 in the random and matched samples. In the total population and random samples, there was a significant relationship between length of stay and gender at the .05 level. The average length of stay for males was 21.08 days and for females it was 14.43 days.

In the total population and random sample, the relationship between length of stay and offense was significant at the .05 level. Males stayed in detention longer than females for similar offenses. However, black females were held longer than white males in four offense categories: felony - person, misdemeanor - person, technical violations, and status offenses. White females were held slightly longer than white males in two categories: technical violations and status offenses.

*Research Question 2.* To what individual and environmental risk factors were males and females exposed prior to detention in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? Analysis of risk factors data for gender revealed the following.

Five factors (low self-esteem, history of substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and suicidal ideation) were significantly related to gender at the .05 level in the random sample. Four factors (mental health issues, family substance abuse, history of substance abuse, and current substance abuse) were significantly correlated with suicide for males at the .05 level in the random sample.

Review of the number of risk factors present by gender within the total sample populations and within gender indicated a high number of risk factors present in the domains of individual, school, family, and mental health for both males and females. Runaway behavior, suicidal ideation, depression, low self-esteem, and truancy were significantly correlated with many individual, family, school, and mental health factors. Correlations between the SASSI (dependent assessment) and alcohol was significant at the .05 level for both males and females.

*Research Question 3.* What was the relationship between exposure to individual and environmental risk and type of offense committed by males and females? Analysis of offense, gender, and risk factor data revealed the following.

While not statistically significant, the percentages of risk factors for males and females within each gender and category of offense indicated a consequential number of risk factors experienced by juveniles entering the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000 in both the random and matched samples. Consistent trends linking specific factors to specific offense were not found; however, it was evident from the data that the juveniles in this study experienced multiple risk factors in the domains of home, school, and family. In addition, a variety of mental health factors was present for both males and females in all offense categories.

## CHAPTER V

### Summary and Recommendations

#### *Summary*

The purpose of this case study was to explore the relationships between exposure to individual and environmental risk, gender, and delinquency within the context of the historical foundations of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and the prevailing theories that attempt to explain the development of delinquent behavior in adolescents. The study was an outgrowth of a prior study of the utilization trends in the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in the year 2000. Findings of that study indicated that females, as a percentage of the female population in detention, were more frequently detained for technical violations and status offenses and they experienced a higher level of risk in their lives than males. In addition, information from national organizations, such as the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, suggested that there had been a steady increase in both the number and percentage of girls, arrested, detained, and maintained in custody since 1994.

As an exploratory case study, the primary purpose was to learn more about juveniles, in particular females, entering the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in order to provide useful information to decision-makers within the Norfolk juvenile justice system. While the findings of this case study were not intended to be generalized to juvenile delinquents in other localities, it was expected that the findings would motivate future research and over time add to the cumulative body of knowledge that builds toward theory. Ongoing linked exploration will help to build a theory that conceptualizes the integration of risk, gender, and delinquency, thereby, assisting the juvenile justice system to effectively address delinquent behavior in juveniles. This case study was one step along the

way to building that theory.

The study examined the interactive relationship between the type and level of risk experienced by males and females, differences in the delinquent behaviors of males and females, and responses of the juvenile justice system to males and females. Three theoretical frameworks provided the foundation for the direction and scope of the study. The first framework was the historical purpose of the juvenile justice system to serve in the role of *parens patriae* to guide, protect, treat, and punish youth who become involved in delinquent behavior, and the application of this doctrine to females as it has historically differed from treatment of males.

The second framework was the linkage between delinquent behavior in females, types of risk experienced by females, and responses of the juvenile justice system to females as it differs from the response to males. The literature suggested that females runaway and become involved in other delinquent behavior as a result of physical and sexual abuse.

The prevailing theories of juvenile delinquency provided the third theoretical framework for the study. These theories included: Strain, Social Control, Social Learning, and Social Development. Each of these theories supported some aspect of the rationale for the selection and grouping of the risk factors utilized in this study. Strain Theory supported the concept that pain, loss, abuse, negative relationships, and neglect may lead to problems with authority and result in delinquent behavior. Risk factors, such as abandonment, family structure, discipline, referrals, and abuse, indicative of strain as defined by this theory, were included in this study.

Social Learning Theory suggested that delinquent behavior is learned from others, such as family members. Family crime, family substance abuse, and family history of mental health problems were included as risk factors in this study. Social Control Theory suggested that social bonds, or

attachments, motivate individuals to abide by the laws of the community. When those bonds are broken with family, school, and community, the individual is more inclined to participate in delinquent behavior. Both school and family risk factors were included in this study, as well as DSM diagnoses, such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Conduct Disorder, which were indicative of a breakdown in attachment to family, school, and community.

Social development theory suggested that it is the existence of risk and protective factors in a young person's life that shapes their behavior. Risks, or individual and environmental biological and psychosocial hazards, increase the likelihood of anti-social, delinquent behavior. This study included the examination of many risk factors and groupings of factors by domains in relation to offense, as well as other behaviors. In addition to these theories, the literature also suggested that mental health problems for juvenile delinquents are prevalent and complex. The relationships between the number and type of DSM Axis I diagnoses and gender, offense, and other risk behaviors also were examined in this study. These theoretical foundations were supported by the findings of this study. The role of individual, mental health, family, and school risk factors were demonstrated in the relationships between risk, gender, and delinquency as illustrated in this study.

The study was organized to respond to three research questions: (1) For what offenses were males and females admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? (2) To what individual and environmental risk factors were males and females exposed prior to admittance to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? (3) What was the relationship between the level of exposure to individual and environmental risk and the type of offense committed by males and females admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000? Data to respond to these questions came from several sources. The first was a report from the Juvenile Detention Home (DJJ-JC34) on all (1,298) juveniles

in detention for 2000. This report included basic demographic and offense data. A random sample (621) of this population was selected and data were collected on these juveniles from the case records at the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home. All females (137) in this random sample were randomly matched by race and age with males to make up the matched sample (226). Information was collected on this matched sample from the 4<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit case files.

Data collection included information about offense, length of stay in detention, family status, race, age, gender and individual, family, school, and mental health risk factors. Data analysis techniques included cross-tabulations and a review of the Chi-Square test of significance and measures of association. Data were analyzed by percentages of risk factors and/or offense by gender for the total population as applicable in each sample. Data were analyzed also by percentage of risk factors and/or offense by gender as a percentage of gender as applicable within each sample. Race was also cross-tabulated for offense, age, and length of stay data. In addition to the cross-tabulations and Chi-Square tests and measures of association, comparison of means was conducted on length of stay and age data.

The findings that emerged from the data analysis identified both differences and similarities in risk, offense and length of stay between males and females who entered the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000. Although race was not a focal point of this study, findings related to race were included where relevant. A clear trend that emerged from this data was the multiple risk factors in all domains that these particular males and females experienced. As suggested by social development theory, exposure to risk was shown to be consistent across offense, as well as gender.

Review of gender, race and age indicated that females entered detention at a slightly younger age than males; that is, the mean age for females was 14.8 years and the mean age for males was 15.3



years. While the large majority of juveniles in the detention center in 2000 were African-American males (62.3%), there was a higher proportion of black (74.5%) and white (23.5%) females as a percentage of gender than white males (17%). Further, as a percentage of race, the percentage of white females (29.9%) was higher than black females (22%). Also, as a percentage of race, white females (23.65%) were between seven to sixteen years old than black females (19.38%). The mean age for African-American females (14.7 years) was younger than for white females (14.9 years) or black (15.3 years) and white males (15.4 years).

Data responding to Research Question 1 indicated that females committed a higher percentage of technical violations (53% versus 36%), misdemeanors against persons (17% versus 15%), and status offenses (5% versus 1%) than males as a percentage of gender. They also were detained at a younger age (14.8 years versus 15.3 years) than males, suggesting, perhaps that the concept of *parens patriae* continued to play a role in the response of the juvenile court to the delinquent behavior of females. The data also supports the gender-based theory that delinquent behavior in females is less tolerated in our society.

Although females committed all categories of offenses, the offense data suggested that they engaged most frequently in delinquent behavior related to issues with authority and relationships. Data examined in this study on the connection between risk factors experienced by females seemed to confirm the linkages suggested in the literature review with regard to females, risk, and delinquency. In particular, sexual abuse, abandonment, alcohol abuse, and suicidal ideation were associated in this study with depression, other mental health diagnoses, and running away.

Length of stay data also were examined to respond to Research Question 1. Data indicated that the average length of stay was longer for males in general than for females and that the

relationship between gender and length of stay was significant. The relationship between gender, length of stay and offense was significant as well. While the overall stay in detention was longer for males (21.08 days) than females (14.43 days), it was noted that an examination of the average length of stay for categories of offense in the total population indicated that black females were held longer than white males in four offense categories: felony-person, misdemeanor-person, technical violations, and status offenses. White females were held longer than white males in two offense categories: technical violations and status offenses. (See Table 36, page 82.)

The literature review reported a nationwide over representation of African American males and females in the juvenile justice system. It further suggested that females are treated differently than males; that is, they are held for lesser offenses often committed as a reaction to family problems, mental health problems, and abuse. The analysis of offense data in this case study indicated that as compared to white males both black and white females were more often detained for lesser offenses and held longer, supporting the theory of gender-based treatment of females in the juvenile justice system.

Data analyzed for Research Question 2 included number and percentage of risk behaviors present for juveniles in the random and matched samples and the relationship between those factors and gender. In addition to the single factor analysis, factors also were grouped into four categories: individual, mental health, school and family. These groupings also were cross-tabulated with gender.

Review of the percentages and number of risk factors that were present for these juveniles indicated that both males and females in the random and matched samples experienced risk factors in all domains. While the analysis of the combined groupings did not reveal statistically significant relationships, examination of the percentages of males and females experiencing multiple factors

indicated the presence of risk within each domain .

The cross-tabulations of runaway behavior, depression, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, and truancy showed strong correlations with many of the risk factors for males and females. However, review of the percentages of runaway behavior, depression, major depression, suicidal ideation, and truancy indicated that females experienced these factors more than males both as a percentage of total population and a percentage of gender. There were also more females who experienced sexual and physical abuse than males as a percentage of both the total population in the sample and gender. (See Table 39, page 91.)

Analysis of the single risk factor and groupings of factors supported the theory that males and females in the juvenile justice system experienced a high level of exposure to risk in the domains of their lives as suggested by Social Development, Strain, Social Learning, and Social Control Theories. Twenty percent had a mental health diagnosis, over 80% had experienced failed a year or term of school, between eight and fourteen percent came from families with a history of mental health problems, over 22% came from families with a history of crime, and over 21% came from families with a history of substance abuse. Data examined in this study suggested that their behavior was a reflection of and reaction to the difficulties, or risk, present in their lives. With regard to gender, however, data confirmed the relationship between physical and sexual abuse and mental health issues with truancy, depression, and running away for females.

This study indicated that while risk was prevalent for males and females entering the Detention Home in 2000, males and females seemed to react differently to different risk factors. For example, more males received discipline referrals, were diagnosed with ADHD, were placed in Special Education classes, expressed feelings of abandonment, and came from families with substance

abuse and mental health issues. They also were more likely, according to this case study, to be involved in substance alcohol abuse than females. Females experienced more depression, major depression, physical and sexual abuse. They more often ran away, thought about suicide, and became truant than males.

Analysis of the single risk factors indicated significant relationships between the risk factors for males and females and suggested that delinquent behavior that resulted in a stay in detention was motivated by complex and multiple issues for these juveniles. The data analyzed for Research Question 3 explored the relationship between these many risk factors and the type of offense committed by males and females. While there were no significant relationships indicated by this analysis between risk and type of offense, this analysis confirmed that juveniles who committed each category of offense experienced many risk factors to include many mental health problems as suggested in the literature review. While this was indicated for all categories of offense, the percentages were notably high for females committing misdemeanors-person and technical offenses. The percentages were also high for males committing technical offenses. (See Table 46, page 103, and Table 47, page 104.)

The findings of this study support the prevailing theories of juvenile delinquency: Strain, Social Learning, Social Control, and Social Development. The number and percentages of risk factors for this population within each category of offense illustrated the concepts of each of these theories. For example, with regard to Social Control theory, the break in bonding, attachment, and commitment to social institutions was illustrated by the risk factors of truancy, school discipline referrals, running away, and the acting out behaviors of those with Oppositional Defiant and Conduct Disorders. Social Control Theory was illustrated also by the number of juveniles involved in technical

violations indicating a disregard for the authority of the court to set standards of behavior. Social Learning Theory was demonstrated by the number of juveniles in this study whose families have been involved with substance abuse, crime, and who have mental health issues of their own. In addition, the data describing family structure indicated that the percentages of juveniles in this population living with their mothers only, fathers only, or other family members were higher than national averages. The percentage living with both parents was much lower (11.5%) than the national average (69%) according to the 2000 Census. Essentially, role models and reinforcing behaviors for many of these juveniles were weak, at best, and in many cases, negative.

Strain Theory was illustrated by the number of juveniles committing technical violations and status offenses indicating an attempt to achieve autonomy from the control of the standards set for juveniles by the community and the court. Risk factor information also demonstrative of Strain Theory were the number and percentages of juveniles indicating a sense of low self-esteem, depression, suicidal ideation, a sense of abandonment or rejection, and running away. These behaviors indicated a sense of the unfulfilled adolescent developmental needs for a positive sense of identity, or status, belonging, and safety.

Social Development Theory was demonstrated by the number of risk factors present in each of the domains of family, school, and individual, as well as the number and percentages of mental health diagnoses for these juveniles. The relationship between the interaction of risk across these domains was illustrated by the number and percentages of juveniles with multiple factors in each of the offense categories. The risk factors examined in this study were also indicative of the lack of protective, or offsetting, factors that may have reduced the likelihood that these juveniles would become involved in delinquent behaviors.

The findings of this study also demonstrate the theory that suggests that females are treated differently than males within the juvenile justice system, and, further that the basis for this phenomenon is found in differing societal standards of behavior for females and males. The historical roots of these concepts are found in the role and purpose of the juvenile justice system as it was originally established, as well as the prevailing concept of *parens patriae*. Gender-based theory suggests that females are arrested and detained for lesser offenses than males and that their delinquent behavior is a reaction to both physical and sexual abuse. The number and percentages of females detained in this study as a result of technical violations and status offenses illustrate this point. In addition, the longer length of stay in detention for females compared to white males in several offense categories also suggested that females were treated differently than males. A final demonstration of this point was that not only were females detained for lesser offenses, they were detained at a younger age. The findings of this study indicated that gender played a role in detention decisions and that the role of the court to protect or punish interacted with societal expectations for standards of behavior for females.

### *Recommendations*

The following recommendations for public policy and future research are made based upon the data analysis and findings of the study, as well as an examination of relevant theory. As an exploratory case study, the findings of this study may well provide direction and motivation for future research about the linkage between gender, risk, and delinquency. It is possible that findings of this case will be linked to other studies examining the relationship between gender, risk, and delinquency as a new theory based upon the interactive nature of the history of the juvenile justice system, societal attitudes toward females, and factors that lead a juvenile toward delinquency emerges.

However, the public policy recommendations of this study are for review by the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Task Force. The primary purpose of this study was to provide data-based research to assist in the process of developing strategies to reduce utilization of detention and create community-based alternatives. While the findings and recommendations may prove useful to other localities with similar demographics, this study was not intended to be generalized beyond the City of Norfolk.

### *Public Policy*

This case study explored the relationship between exposure to risk, gender, and delinquency utilizing data from the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home for the year 2000. The data indicated that females were admitted to detention for lesser offenses than males; they were admitted at a younger age; and, they came to detention having experienced a high level of risk in the domains of their lives to include mental health issues. The study also indicated that males experienced a high level of risk in many aspects of their lives. Further, males stayed in detention longer than females, although the study indicated that there were exceptions to this, and more males were admitted for serious offenses. The study also brought to light several exceptions to the most general statistics about gender, race, age, offense, and length of stay, as well as the type of risk factors present and resulting behaviors for males and females. This case study explored not only broad trends, but also the nuances, in the relationship between risk, gender and delinquency.

The study was designed to provide the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Task Force with information to assist in their efforts to not only reduce utilization of detention, but to improve outcomes for juveniles entering the juvenile justice system in Norfolk. This study clearly demonstrated the complexity of the issues faced by the juveniles who entered the Detention Home in

2000. The interactive nature of the risk faced by these juveniles in the domains of their lives suggested that measures to address these issues must be interactive and comprehensive as well. The information provided by the study demonstrates the need for a systems approach to the development of collaborative strategies that work synergistically to ameliorate the multiple sources of risk faced by these juveniles. It is recommended, therefore, that the Task Force utilize these findings to motivate the development of comprehensive, collaborative community efforts to address individual and environmental risk faced by juveniles in the City of Norfolk.

Recognition that females entered detention at a younger age for lesser offenses presents opportunities for redirecting and diverting these young girls to community-based programs designed to address elements of risk in their lives before their response to risk intensifies in late adolescence and their delinquent behavior escalates. While this study could not determine the motivation of the juvenile justice system in detaining younger girls for lesser offenses, the literature suggested that this was an attempt to protect them and prevent further delinquent acts. However, based upon findings from this study that demonstrated a high level of risk present, it is recommended that the Task Force consider alternatives to detention in order to respond to the needs of these young girls as a strategy for prevention of further delinquent behavior.

One finding of this study described the relationship between the level of risk for girls who entered the Detention Home, particularly physical and sexual abuse and mental health problems, and certain types of delinquent behavior, such as running away and truancy. While it was clear that some level of assessment was completed on all juveniles, it was not clear if the information gathered from the assessments was a factor in the development of disposition decisions. The review of the information about the CAFAS from the matched sample indicated that only 28 of the 226 juveniles



were administered the CAFAS. Given the high level of risk factors present for this sample, it is suggested that the CAFAS be utilized more extensively. Further, it is recommended, that efforts be made to not only assess level of risk, especially physical and sexual abuse, for those girls brought to detention for running away, truancy, misdemeanors-person, and other technical violations, but that this information be considered in determining dispositions that will respond to this level of risk, as well as the delinquent behavior.

The study indicated significant associations between many mental health factors for both males and females. This data suggests that alternative treatment programs focused on mental health issues might be more appropriate and effective than detention in reducing delinquent behavior, especially for those who commit less serious offenses. It is recommended that the Task Force explore strategies for encouraging the development of community-based mental health treatment and youth development programs that might preclude detention of juveniles, especially for those who commit less serious offenses.

Findings related to family and school factors confirmed the importance of a holistic approach for positively re-engaging these juveniles in their communities. It is recommended that the Task Force include members of the Norfolk City School Division, Community Services Board, as well as the Department of Social Services and other family and youth serving agencies to develop a model for treatment and service that includes the family and addresses educational issues for the juvenile.

The findings identified in the study provided a basis for the exploration by the Task Force of additional assessment, treatment, and community-based programs targeted to gender specific needs. The findings also suggested the need for comprehensive, collaborative approaches to changing the way the system of youth serving agencies and organizations work with juveniles and with each other. While

the Task Force may accept the role as lead facilitator in mobilizing community dialogue and discussion around this issue, there are many other community agencies and organizations that must also accept their role in working with the Task Force to improve outcomes for juveniles.

### *Future Research*

This study explored the elements of risk in the lives of one isolated group of juveniles, as well as the association between risk, gender, and delinquency. Although findings were delineated for this particular group of juveniles, the study was limited by the sample size and the fact that this was not a longitudinal study. It is recommended that future research focus on replication of this exploration of risk, gender, delinquency with larger samples and that the history of the juvenile within the juvenile justice system be tracked over time with an in-depth focus on risk factors present. In particular, the findings of this study suggested that additional research be conducted to determine the underlying factors that motivate the detention of girls at a younger age for lesser offenses.

Although the focus of this study was not on race as an issue in the detention of juveniles, findings indicated that African American females, as well as white females, were subject to longer stays in detention for lesser offenses than white males. Future research to delve more deeply into this phenomenon with particular regard to the factors entering into the disposition decision was suggested by the data explored in this study. While it was not possible based upon the exploratory nature of this study to draw conclusions about the reasons why girls were admitted to detention at a younger age, particularly white females, or why both white and black females represented a higher proportion of the population than white males, this data suggested that further study be conducted to examine the relationship between gender, age, and race in the detention system. It would seem appropriate to explore this relationship from three perspectives among others: (1) gender bias that leads those in the

juvenile justice system to attempt to protect and/or punish delinquency in females more quickly than males; (2) differences in the developmental process that might lead to delinquent behavior in females at an earlier age than males; (3) the utilization of detention as a response to lesser offenses most often committed by females rather than treatment focused options.

Findings from the study also identified a high level of risk in the domains of the juveniles' life. While types of risk did not appear to be related to particular types of offenses based on the findings of this study, data suggested that additional research exploring the relationship between gender, risk, and delinquency was warranted. In particular, the data suggests that more research is needed to determine the impact of combinations of critical factors within each domain, such as family structure, that may lead to differing behavioral outcomes for males and females. Further, the data indicated that continued research on the interactive nature of gender, risk, and delinquency was suggested as a means to increase understanding of the motivating factors for juvenile delinquency and the possible development of more effective strategies for improving outcomes for those juveniles who face multiple types of risk in multiple domains of their lives

### *Conclusion*

This case study has been an opportunity to explore the interactive nature of risk factors in the lives of the juveniles admitted to the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home in 2000 and the relationship between risk and delinquent behavior. It also has been an opportunity to examine the role of gender in the admission and detention of females as compared to males. Finally, the study has examined the intersection of risk, gender, and delinquency.

The history and purpose of the juvenile justice system and the concept of *parens patriae* provided context for the study. The role of gender in our society, particularly as demonstrated in the

juvenile justice system, also provided context. Theory that attempts to explain the factors that lead juveniles to delinquency provided additional theoretical foundation.

The findings of the data analysis supported the gender-based theory, grounded in the history of the juvenile justice system, that females are treated differently in the juvenile justice system. Findings, however, also supported theories of Strain, Social Control, Social Learning, and Social Development as providing impetus to delinquent acts by both males and females. The study helped to clarify differences in the type of risk experienced by males and females and linkage to different behavioral outcomes.

The study prompted recommendations for the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Home Utilization Task Force focused on developing comprehensive, collaborative, community-based strategies for addressing risk factors that result in delinquency in juveniles. The findings of the study also suggested that more research is needed to clarify the relationship between risk, gender, and delinquency for the development of a gender-based theory of delinquency with the goal of improving outcomes for youth who face multiple risk factors in their lives.

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**ROSANNE D. WALTERS****VITA****EMPLOYMENT**

Director, Newport News Office on Youth Development  
Executive Director, Newport News Alliance for Youth  
Manager, Community Resource Development, York County School Division  
Director, Community Resources, United Way of the Virginia Peninsula  
Executive Director, YWCA of South Hampton Roads  
Executive Director, Families in Crisis  
Community Liaison Officer, U.S. Embassy, Jakarta, Indonesia

**EDUCATION**

Doctor of Philosophy, Urban Services, Old Dominion University  
Master of Education, North Carolina State University  
Master of Urban Studies, Old Dominion University  
Bachelor of Arts, Douglass College/Rutgers University  
Certificate: Program for Developing Managers, Simmons College, Graduate School of Management

**COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS**

Member, Board of Directors, Transitions Family Violence Services  
Previous, Member, Board of Directors, Newport News YMCA  
Member, Warwick Rotary Club

**SPECIAL HONORS**

Outstanding Doctoral Student in Urban Services, Old Dominion University, 1998/99  
Elected to the Honor Society of Pi Alpha Alpha, Old Dominion University  
Elected to the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, North Carolina State & Old Dominion Universities  
Recipient, Career Achievement Award, Peninsula Women's Network, 1993  
Recipient, Community Star Award, Girls' Inc., 1997  
Monthly Guest Columnist, "40 Assets: 24/7," *The Daily Press* (2000-2002)