

Behaviors of At-Risk Youth as Predictors of Detention Recidivism

Adolescence is a period in which youth experiment with many things as a way of trying to find their identity and a place in society. They are easily influenced by their peers and those around them and that can sometimes get them into trouble. It is also a time when, for some, they enter into delinquency. It is crucial for alternative residential programs like the Manuel Saura Center to try to identify the types of behaviors that indicate or are predictors of recidivism, admittance into a detention facility, in order to better tailor their programs to fit the needs of these vulnerable youth and prevent them from living a life of crime. Identification of key behaviors that predict recidivism are essential for just that. The participants in this study include male and female residents of Saura Center between the ages of 10-17 years with an average age of 15.6 who were referred to the center by the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department. A thorough analysis of the archival records of the participants was conducted including their daily score sheets, incident reports, and the staff record communications. A logistical regression of potential key indicators to recidivism will determine which behaviors more accurately predict recidivism. The behaviors to be looked at are refusal to follow directions or participate in group, verbal abuse or threats against staff, and noncompliance with physical escort, and contraband. So far in the data analysis, the behavior to most closely predict recidivism into the facility is verbal abuse or threats against staff. An early conclusion could suggest that emotional intelligence sessions be integrated into their curriculum.