

Research in Progress

CRC 04/06-07: Jury Sentencing Survey

Professor Kate Warner, Dr Julia Davis, Dr Maggie Walter, Dr Rebecca Bradfield

The project aims to improve the measurement of public attitudes to sentencing matters and the level of public knowledge of sentencing and related issues. A three-phase research design will survey jurors in trials with a guilty verdict immediately following the verdict and again after the jurors are provided with sentencing information. Survey results will be supplemented by follow up in depth interviews with a reflective sample of jurors. The results of the research will allow policy makers to respond to informed public opinion with the ultimate aim of improving confidence and confronting public punitiveness.

CRC 05/07-08: Improving jury understanding and use of DNA evidence

Associate Professor Jane Goodman-Delahunty and Dr Lindsay Hewson, University of New South Wales

This empirical study examines whether audiovisual instruction can improve jury understanding and use of expert evidence on the science of DNA technology and the mathematical concepts about Random Match Probability (RMP) in criminal trials. Using experimental methods, we present cognitively sequenced multimedia modules that are judge-led (neutral) or prosecution lead (partisan) on DNA and RMP to jury eligible citizens who render a verdict in a simulated homicide case. Outcomes indicating whether expert evidence presented verbally or with multimedia is more effective will assist courts and policy-makers in adopting procedures to enhance justice in criminal cases.

CRC 15/07-08: The use and impact of diversionary processes for reducing indigenous over representation

Dr Troy Allard, Associate Professor Anna Stewart, Dr Hennessey Hayes and Dr Brett Gray, Griffith University

The aims of this project are twofold: (i) to compare demographic characteristics (including Indigenous status) and nature of offending of young people who are formally cautioned, attend a conference, or have a

court appearance for their first contact with the juvenile justice system, and (ii) to explore the impact of the different processing options on re-contact with the juvenile justice system. The project will require the creation of a de-identified longitudinal offender based dataset containing information relating to all individuals born in 1991 who had contact with the Queensland juvenile justice system for a formal police caution, a police referred conference, a court referred conference or a finalised Children's court appearance. Analyses of this dataset will enable comparisons to be made about the three main options that are used to process young people and an understanding to be gained about the usefulness of diversion.

CRC 19/07-08: Crime in neighbourhoods: Individuals and families in context

Dr Tara McGee, Dr Rebecca Wickes, Professor Jake Najman & Dr William Bor, Queensland University of Technology
This study will explore the interdependent effects of individual characteristics, family processes and neighbourhood contexts on antisocial behaviour (AB) across 84 SLA's in South East Queensland. By merging individual and family level MUSP data with broader neighbourhood ABS data; this project takes a new and innovative approach to distinguishing individual, familial and social predictors of AB. Further, it will be the first in Australia to utilise multilevel statistical techniques to examine the simultaneous impact of such influences. This research will make a contribution to extant literature and will provide Australian specific evidence for prevention and intervention programs.

CRC 24/07-08: Analysis of supervision skills of juvenile justice workers

Associate Professor Chris Trotter and Professor Gill Mclvor, Monash University
This research will examine the nature and effectiveness of different styles of community based supervision for offenders. The research will be conducted in collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Justice in NSW. The study sample will include 50 juvenile justice workers and 250 juvenile justice clients (5 clients for each worker). Data will be collected through observation of worker / client interviews,

follow up interviews with the clients and the workers and outcome data from files and police records. The study will provide information about what goes on in worker / client interviews and what works best in fostering compliance and reduced recidivism.

CRC 38/08-09: ‘Sudanese refugees’ experiences with the Queensland criminal justice system

Dr Garry Coventry, Dr Glenn Dawes, Dr Stephen Moston and Dr Darren Palmer, James Cook University

This study examines the under-researched topic of Sudanese refugee perceptions and experiences of Queensland’s criminal justice system; particularly their interactions with police. Further, the study will provide a content analysis of media reporting of Sudanese peoples as both victims and perpetrators of crime. The main methodological dimensions are: analysis of police databases; focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders; a survey of Sudanese refugees; and media analysis. Data analysis will provide the basis for evidence-based policy and program development related specifically to Sudanese, police, other key agencies/service providers, and also have implications for such developments related to other minority groups.

CRC 10/08-09: Oral language competence and interpersonal violence: exploring links in incarcerated young males

Dr Pamela Snow and Professor Martine Powell, Monash University

This project will build on prior research conducted by the Principal Investigators, who have shown that unidentified oral language deficits are present in over 50% of a community sample of male youth offenders. Such deficits include difficulties using and understanding everyday spoken language and may be undetected / misinterpreted by the communication partner. In this study, the prevalence of such deficits will be examined in an incarcerated sample (n=100), and links to violent offending (the most severe form of disrupted interpersonal behaviour) will be examined. Findings will inform both theory and practice

in offender treatment programs, where verbally mediated interventions are common.

CRC 42/08-09: ID scanners in night-time economy: social sorting or social order?

Dr Darren Palmer, Dr Peter Miller and Dr Ian Warren, Deakin University

The project investigates the introduction of ID scanners in ‘high-risk’ entertainment venues in Geelong (VIC) as part of an attempt to enhance community safety. Recently the inner city area of Geelong has been transformed into a significant ‘night-time economy’. However, such developments come with potential harms, such as increases in crime and anti-social behaviour. Networked ID scanners are a unique innovation introduced to address these issues. The project documents what has been done, why, with what impact and potential (or actual) harms exist to serve as a model for future policy and program development.

Recently Completed Research

CRC 03/04-05: Preventative detention for ‘Dangerous’ offenders in Australia: A critical analysis and proposals for policy development

Prof. Bernadette McSherry, Prof. Arie Freiberg and A/Prof. Patrick Keyzer

CRC 04/04-05: Getting the story in forensic interviews with child witnesses

Dr Pamela Snow and Dr Martine Powell

CRC 14/04-05: The relation between psychological adjustment and post-release challenges to community reintegration for ex-prisoners:

Associate Professor Joe Graffam, Ms Alison Shinkfield and Dr Stephen Mihailides

CRC 18/04-05: An investigation into serious violence associated with motor vehicle use: “Is ‘road rage’ a valid or useful construct?”

Dr Andrew Carroll and Professor James Ogloff

CRC 27/04-05: The young adult outcomes of childhood and adolescent antisocial behaviour: an Australian cohort

Professor Jake Najman, Dr William Bor, Dr Michael O'Callaghan, Professor Gail Williams and Ms Tara McGee

CRC 30/04-05: Schizophrenia and offending: Area of residence and the impact of social disorganisation and disadvantage

Mr Frank Morgan, Ms Vera Morgan, Professor Assen Jablensky, Ms Anna Ferrante and Ms Guilietta Valuri

CRC 06/05-06: Adolescent Stalking: Offence Characteristics & Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Interventions

Dr Teresa Fowler, Dr Rosemary Purcell & Professor Paul Mullen

CRC 35/05-06: A population based study examining the impact of interpersonal violence victimisation on mental health

Dr Lynn Meuleners, Associate Professor Andy Lee and Ms Delia Hendrie

CRC 39/05-06: Parents as prisoners: maintaining the parent-child relationship

Dr Rosemary Sheehan and Mr Gregory Levine

CRC 12/06-07: Investigation of the relationship between survey victimisation and perceptions of criminality: Analysis of the 2005 personal safety survey

Dr Joe Clare & Mr Frank Morgan

CRC 13/06-07: Abuse of female partner in Bowen Basin region of central Queensland

Dr Sanjay Sharma, Ms Heather Nancarrow and Associate Professor Stewart Lockie

CRC 15/06-07: Assessing the impact of 'available street time' and mortality on estimates of recidivism

Ms Anna Ferrante, Mr Max Maller and Ms Nini Loh

CRC 02/04-05: The impact of penalty severity on juvenile recidivism

Dr Don Weatherburn, Ms Sumitra Vignaendra and Mr Andrew McGrath