Contemporary Issues in Juvenile Justice

Volume 2 | Issue 1 Article 4

2008

Television Violence Prevention Versus Juvenile Violence Prevention: Any Connections In Parental Control?

Sharlette Kellum
Texas Southern University

Television Violence Prevention Versus Juvenile Violence Prevention: Any Connections In Parental Control?

Cover Page Footnote

Sharlette A. Kellum, Ph.D. Texas Southern University, Assis-tant Professor, Administration of Justice, Barbara Jordan - Mickey Leland (BJ - ML) School of Public Affairs. The author would like to thank God the Father, Dr. James W. Ward, and Dr. Laura B. My-ers for their priceless support with this study. Correspondence con-cerning this article should be addressed to Sharlette A. Kellum, P.O. Box 36731, Houston, TX 77236. E -mail: Sharlette@rocket-mail.com or Kellum_SA@TSU.EDU. Phone: 713-313-7311

Journal of Knowledge and Best Practices in Juvenile Justice and Psychology 2008, Vol. 2, No. 1, 33-42

Television Violence Prevention Versus Juvenile Violence Prevention: Any Connections In Parental Control?

Sharlette A. Kellum
Texas Southern University

Abstract

Animated features, like children's cartoons, are considered by some to be the most violent shows on television, with approximately 25 to 50 acts of violence per hour (Dietz and Strasburger, 1991). Cartoons, unlike other shows that portray violence, present instances of violence to children in an "acceptable" way, which teaches children from zero to 17 years of age that hurting people is tolerable. Television violence has been linked to juvenile aggression, which has been linked to juvenile violence. In researching several studies, the author found that many of the preventions mentioned in the television violence studies were also mentioned in the research studies on juvenile violence. Parents were the primary source of control and prevention in both fields of juvenile justice and television media. The prevention connection found in both areas should help mental health professionals, law enforcement personnel, juvenile justice personnel, parents, and other interested persons curb violent behavior in children and adolescents.

British television personality, Sir David Frost once said, "Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home." In her book, *The Magic Years*, Selma H. Fraiberg gives a resounding recollection of her research on the influence of television violence:

> We need to consider what it means to be a child who receives moral education from his parents and is entertained in his own living room, with the consent of his parents, by a constant flow of visitors…whose views on society and human values would have been barely tolerated in a Neanderthal cave (Fraiberg, 1959, p. 270-271).

Television violence may be a very serious threat to the early developmental processes of children across America. According to Cheng et al., "Violent media exposure has been associated with aggressive behavior, and it has been suggested that child health professionals counsel families on limiting exposure" (2004, p. 94). Numerous violent juveniles continue their deviant behavior and often become violent adults. In a study published by *Prevention* in 2003, Megan Orthersen Gor-man found that men who were heavy viewers of very violent television shows when they were six to eight years old were twice as likely as other men to push, grab, or shove their spouses. Additionally, the men were three times as likely to be convicted of criminal behavior by the time they reached their early 20s.

Gorman (2003) also found that women were twice as likely to have thrown something at their spouse and more than four times as likely to have punched, beaten, or choked another adult. In this paper, "violence" includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Index Crimes (i.e., murder and non-negligent man-slaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) . According to a 2002 article published in the journal *Psychiatry*, a 1996 report released by the Ameri-can Medical Association (AMA) revealed that violent entertainment causes violent behavior and other prob-lems in children, and that television use, "must be limited to no more than one or two quality hours per day" (Eth, 2002, p. 301). Few in the television broadcast and entertainment industry are implementing provisions to curtail violence on television. The federal government has implemented sparse provisions for television vio-lence. Regardless of whose responsibility it may be to patrol the violence youth intake from the medium of television or the industry itself, it is clear that not many provisions are being made. This meta-analysis will review several studies that detail many interventions and preventions of violent influences on youth and interventions and preventions of violent behavior of youth. Is there a connection in the juvenile violence pre-ventions in comparison to the television violence pre-ventions? The connections found in the interventions and preventions of the two fields (media and criminal justice/criminology) should help mental health profes-sionals, law enforcement personnel, juvenile justice per-sonnel, parents, and other interested parties determine

Sharlette A. Kellum, Ph.D. Texas Southern University, Assis-tant Professor, Administration of Justice, Barbara Jordan - Mickey Leland (BJ - ML) School of Public Affairs. The author would like to thank God the Father, Dr. James W. Ward, and Dr. Laura B. My-ers for their priceless support with this study. Correspondence con-cerning this article should be addressed to Sharlette A. Kellum, P.O. Box 36731, Houston, TX 77236. E -mail: Sharlette@rocket-mail.com or Kellum_SA@TSU.EDU. Phone: 713-313-7311

the best way to help bridle violent and delinquent behavior in children and adolescents.

Anecdotal Examples

In the summer of 2004, I took my young cousins to the movie theater. Five-year-old Jessie was asked to catch the hand of her two- year-old sister, June, for a minute while I unloaded the diaper bag out of the car. In just a few seconds, June managed to release the hand of her older sister and run across the movie theater parking lot. Suddenly, a car appeared right in front of June. Everyone thought the worse was going to happen as we all paused in amazement. Thankfully, the car stopped "on a dime" and did not hit June.

However, we noticed that Jessie could have caught up with June before the car reached her. Instead of trying to catch her baby sister, Jessie laughed and said it would have been "funny" if the car had hit June. We could not believe our ears. She actually thought it would have been "funny" to see her little sister run over by a huge Cadillac. I later discussed this incident with her mother and she said, Jessie thought it was "funny" because, "On the cartoons, when the characters get run over by a car, the children laugh." I was amazed by what I had just learned. I had witnessed the devastating effects of the violence in animated shows on television. My little cousin could not detect fantasy from reality. She would have let her baby sister be hit by a car, just to get a laugh.

In the fall of 2004, my freshman college students were asked to role -play a stressful situation for a police officer. One of the groups in the class decided to mimic a police officer beating his wife after not being promoted that day by his Captain. When the group reached the stage (in front of the class), the police officer started talking rudely to his wife. The class chuckled lightly. However, when the woman said something the officer (her husband) did not like, he began to beat her. The class laughed in an uproar. They could not control themselves. They fell out of their chairs laughing while the officer beat, kicked, slapped and verbally abused his wife. I could not believe my eyes. I kept appealing to them that the scene was not meant to be funny. Clearly, some of the students were not amused, as it was a very frightening, serious scene in the skit. I was appalled that a group of 18-20 year olds thought it was funny to see a police officer brutally beat his wife. I asked them why they thought it was funny. They really did not have an answer.

Lavers (2002) explains that while young men are the target audience, young women are most often the victims, whether in a television series or in a serial-killer glorification movie. The "slasher" genre, an extreme form of film violence, was launched in 1963. This form of entertainment features people, primarily teenage girls and young women, being tortured, dismembered, disemboweled and beheaded with various construction tools: chain saws, tool guns, drills, and jigsaws. It is anyone's guess how much television my two young cousins view per day, or how much television my students viewed when they were younger. However, it is apparent that the television they were allowed to view had a major detrimental effect on their assessment of the way the world operates.

Influence of Television Violence on Juveniles: Exposure

Television is omnipresent. There is a television set in at least one room of most educational settings. More than ½ of all children in America between the ages of five and 17 have televisions in their bedrooms and ¼ of children ages two to five have a television in their bedroom (Nielsen Media Research, 2000). The effects of television violence on a child who suffers from aggression and/or other antisocial disorders may be adding fuel to the fire. A study by the Los Angeles-based Par-ents Television Council (PTC) revealed a huge increase in coarse language on television from 2000 to 2001; up 78% compared to a previous study they conducted from 1998 to 1999. Television violence had increased by 70%. They found that violence, coarse language, and sexual content (homosexuality, oral sex, pornography, masturbation, "kinky" sex, group sex, and bondage) were marketed to 10 million children every night (Lavers, 2002). According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP, 1995) children between the ages of two and 18 spend up to eight hours a day with some type of media, including television, movies, and video games. They report that children spend more time with entertainment media than any other activity except sleeping. By the time children reach age 18, they will have viewed 16,000 simulated murders and 200,000 acts of violence on television.

David Sarnoff of RCA introduced television to the United States in an experimental mode in New York City in 1939 at the World's Fair (Federal Communica-tions Commission [FCC], 2005). In the first of several volumes of the *National Television Violence Study*, Sea-well (1997) reported the highest proportion of violence is in children's programming. In their review of 74 G-rated animated feature films, Yokota and Thompson (2000) found that 100% of the animated films produced in the United States between 1937 and 1999 portrayed violence. In a Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report in 2000, "Marketing Violent Entertainment" it was revealed that entertainment industries aggressively and wrongfully target violent entertainment directly to ado-lescents and children even though the industries' ratings system found the material to be inappropriate.

Research has linked exposure to television violence to a wide variety of ailments for children and adolescents. Some of the physical and mental problems include aggressive behavior, desensitization, violence, fear, depression, nightmares, and sleep disturbances (Bar-on, et al., 2001).

Influence of Television Violence on Juveniles: Influence

Media influences children by teaching through observation and imitation. Children in grades four through eight prefer video games that award points for violence against others (Funk and Buchman, 1996). Dave Grossman (1996), a psychologist and media researcher says the alcohol and tobacco industries figured out early on that if they could continue to sell their products to children, they could start the addictive process early and keep the children hooked well into adulthood. Grossman is a retired United States Army lieutenant colonel who has studied how to make persons who are not naturally inclined to kill, become natural born killers. He used several psychological tools to get the recruits to want to kill and like it and also used practices that involved repetition, desensitization, escalation and an instinct for survival.

According to Lavers (2002), repetition is a psychological technique used to decrease phobias. By increasing exposure to the phobia, you increase the person's tolerance level of the phobia. This paradigm leads to addiction. She says this same practice is found in the advertising industry, where more exposure to violence desensitizes the child to violence. It makes the child familiar with violence and comfortable with violent occurrences. Like an addiction, once the child has reached a plateau of what constitutes violence, the industry must develop more extraordinary acts of violence to peek the interest of the child.

Can you be conditioned to kill, and like the feeling of killing someone? According to Grossman (1996), you can. He believed that the conditioning of violence was twofold. First, the operant conditioning teaches the person how to kill (in repetitive, automatic responses-like a video game simulator). Classical conditioning is a subtle, but powerful technique that teaches the person to like killing (by rewarding the repetitive, automatic responses). Over three thousand research studies have examined the association between media violence and violent behavior, and all but 18 have shown a positive, significant relationship (Grossman and DeGaetano, 1999).

Brandon S. Centerwall (1993), a Seattle psychiatrist, published a report in *Public Interest* claiming that television violence is a cause of violence. To see whether television influences the murder rate, Center-wall took advantage of the fact that television broadcast-ing was banned in South Africa until 1975. He graphed the changing murder rates for Whites in Canada and the United States from 1945 to 1974 against television ownership and compared them to the White murder rates in South Africa during the same period. The White homicide rate in the United States increased 93%. In Canada, the homicide rate increased 92%. In South Africa, where television was banned, the White homicide rate declined by seven percent.

Centerwall (1993) explains that the introduction of television also helps explain the different rates of homicide growth for Whites and minorities. He says White households in the United States began acquiring television sets in large numbers approximately five years before minority households. Thus, the White homicide rate began increasing in 1958, and that was exactly four years before a parallel increase in the minority homicide rate. He finishes his point with a very powerful, but bold conclusion:

> Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that if, hypothetically, television technology had never been developed, [there] would today be 10,000 fewer homicides each year in the United States, 70,000 fewer rapes, and 700,000 fewer injurious assaults. Violent crime would be half what it is (Centerwall, 1993, pp. 63-64).

Prevalence of Juvenile Violence: History

In a revolutionary move from pilgrim expeditions to industrialization, the United States saw an increase in unsupervised children in impoverished, inner-city neighborhoods. The increase in unsupervised, neglected children matriculated into an increase of crimes throughout urbanized areas. This increase in crime led to the formulation of foster homes and refuge houses (Sanborn, Jr. and Salerno, 2005). These temporary solaces were soon phased out and legislative actions led to the formulation of probation officers and eventually a formal juvenile justice system in 1899. The juvenile justice system was created with the "best interest of the child" (e.g., rehabilitation) in mind. With a swift move from rehabilitation to punishment in the 1980s, and a quiet push to return to juvenile rehabilitation in the 21st century, legitimate opportunities to rehabilitate children and adolescents are a necessity.

According to the *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Statistical Briefing Book* (2006) in all age groups (e.g., five to 17 years old), the number of juvenile homicide offenders increased between 1984 and 1994. However, the number of youth committing homicides decreased between 1994 and 2002 (Snyder and Sickmund, 2006). Children who kill are nothing new. Youth have consistently been accused of committing murder, from the notorious 19th century gang, Pug Uglies of New York's infamous Five Point neighborhood to the immigrant street-smart juveniles of the mid-1930s (Mones, 1999).

"Interpersonal violence, as victim or as perpetrator, is now a more prevalent health risk than infectious dis-ease, cancer, or congenital disorders for children, ado-lescents, and young adults" (Bar-on et al., 2001, p. 1224). Among urban youth, interpersonal violence is the most prevalent cause of injury (33%), and the incidence of gunshot wounds has increased dramatically in the past decade (Nance, Stafford, and Schwab, 1997).

According to a 1996 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year 3,500 adolescents are murdered. A fact sheet published by the National Adolescent Health Information Center in 1995 reveals that more than 150,000 adolescents are arrested

for violent crimes each year. Non-White children and adolescents, particularly Black males, disproportionately suffer the effects of violence in their communities as aggressors and as victims. The number of murderers 15 to 17 years of age increased by 195% between 1984 and 1994, when 94% of juveniles arrested for murder were male and 59% were Black (Snyder, Sickmund, and Poe-Yamagata, 1996).

In an article published in The Journal of the American Medical Association, Fingerhut and Kleinman (1990) explained that the murder rate of young Black males rose 300% during the three decades after television's introduction in the United States. Although exposure to television violence is not the sole factor contributing to aggression, antisocial attitudes, and violence among children and adolescents, it is an important health risk factor that needs much assessment and attention. Kashani, Jones, Bumby, and Thomas (1999) argue that the high rate of youth violence will continue for decades to come due to the growing youth population, the "criminal careers" that some youth will carry into adulthood, and the "get tough" stance many have taken against juveniles.

Variables

According to a 1999 article by Paul Mones, psychological illness, clinical depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder are very critical explanations of why some youth kill. He explains that children who suffer from these disorders often are impulsive and easily humiliated. The other psychological factors he lists as common among youth that kill are family mental illness, borderline personality disorder, and a history of being struck on the head.

Kashani et al. (1999) implicated several variables that have been linked to youth violence. They include the (1) individual and/or personal characteristics (e.g., difficult temperament, minor physical abnormalities, and low verbal IQ scores), (2) demographic characteris-tics (e.g., gender and race), (3) familial factors (e.g., family history of criminal behavior, and substance abuse), (4) school factors (e.g., lack of commitment to school), (5) peer variables (e.g., association with other rejected peers), and (6) community and cultural vari-ables (e.g., youth who carry guns or other weapons and disorganized neighborhoods) . The authors conclude that there is no "single" formula or compound combination of variables that are linked to each violent youth.

Television Violence Preventions

Disgust over the content of television programming has prompted the creation of two technological fixes, the V-chip and CC+. The V-chip is widely available in new television sets and some cable boxes. It combines hardware and software to block programming according to rating codes and content categories. CC+ is a hardware and software technology that blocks curse words (Lavers, 2002). However, according to the Henry J. Kai-ser Family Foundation (1998), many parents find the entertainment industry's rating system difficult to use. Sixty-eight percent of the parents of 10 to 17 years olds refuse to use the television ratings system. Bar-on et al., (2001) explained the difficulty in having a different rat-ing system for each medium (e.g., television, movies, music, and video games). The authors argue that it makes the rating system confusing, because the different forms of media have little similarity and conclude by explaining that simple, user-friendly, content-descrip-tive ratings that are consistent across various entertain-ment media should be implemented. "Just as it is important that parents know the ingredients in food they may feed to their children, they should be fully informed about the content of the media their children may use" (Bar-on et al., 2001). Moreover, the results suggest that if parents do not purchase or use harmful entertainment media, it will no longer be produced.

Practitioners should suggest healthy alternatives to television, such as sports, creative pursuits, interactive play, and reading. Parents should consider co-viewing television shows with their children, limiting screen time to one to two hours per day, and/or keeping the television out of the children's bedrooms. Research has demonstrated that television education and well -planned television use can reduce violent behavior in children (Robinson, Wilde, Navracruz, Haydel, and Varady, 2001).

Juvenile Violence Preventions

Mones (1999) suggests targeting young people at an early age. He relays that after-school and evening drop-in programs draw youth into the community and possibly teach them nonviolent negotiating skills. He concludes by suggesting massive mental health screen-ings along with follow-up components that become part of the children's regular pediatric checkups. Kashani et al. (1999) asserts that cognitive behavioral skill inter-ventions with seriously aggressive or violent youth (e.g., social skills and problem solving training, cognitive restructuring techniques, role-plays, therapist modeling, and behavioral assignments) may reduce delinquent or aggressive behaviors at home or in school. The authors also report that Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is the only treatment approach to date that has successfully reduced rates of violent behavior in youth. Occurring in the juvenile's home, school, and neighborhood, MST interventions are flexibly tailored to the individualized developmental and psychosocial needs of each youth and his or her family. Finally, Kashani et al., (1990) list several recommendations for policy makers, community leaders, law enforcement personnel, mental health pro-fessionals, parents and other adults to help youth develop a sense of personal accountability for their actions. They include, "reduce media violence; limit

youth access to firearms, drugs, and alcohol; involve the schools; promote healthy family functioning; and ensure community persistence" (Kashani et al., pp. 205-208, 1999).

Method

With the proliferation of information in criminological research, there is a need to combine studies from different disciplines in order to reach a general conclusion about the effect of television violence on juvenile violence. Meta-analysis falls under a broader classification of reviews known as systematic reviews (Neill, 2006). This type of systematic review is quantitative. Using a quantitative systematic review (meta-analysis) the researcher was able to generate a narrower, specific study question, make the data collection more comprehensive, allow the study selection to be based on uniformly applied criteria, and make the data synthesis quantitative.

The current meta-analysis is based on summary data that was abstracted from actual research articles and books. The steps in this meta-analysis include, but are not limited to: a search of the literature, the estab-lishment of criteria for the studies that were included in the meta-analysis, the recording of data from the included studies, and the statistical analysis of the data. Multiple databases (e.g., ProQuest, EBSCOhost, Goo-gle, and Houston Public Library) were searched in order to minimize the chances of omitting studies that met the inclusion criteria. The researcher cross-referenced bibli-ographies of retrieved studies and reviewed articles in order to identify other studies that met the inclusion cri-teria. Additionally, a hand search was conducted of journals, books, magazines, and newspaper articles for studies. Upon a manual search of the literature to locate the most relevant articles (approximately 25 articles), it became apparent that only eight articles were needed to complete the meta-analysis. Some of the retrieved arti-cles were not included in the study, because the study looked only at specific instances of youth killings, and/or the studies covered only content reviews of spe-cific television shows.

Some of the variables listed in a few of the articles were excluded because they appeared to be repetitious. There was no limit in the space of years used in the anal-ysis. Some of the studies on television violence preven-tion and juvenile violence prevention went as far back as 1993 and were as current as the year 2003. The inclu-sion criteria for studies to be covered in the meta-analy-sis were based on the research question: Are there any connections in television violence preventions and juve-nile violence preventions? Some of the things that were considered in selecting articles and studies for the meta- analysis include, but are not limited to: types of study designs (e.g., randomized trials versus nonran-domized trials), types of subjects included in the study (e.g., age and gender), types of publications from which the studies were extracted (e.g., published journal articles versus unpublished journal articles, newspaper articles and online retrievals), types of preventions listed in the studies and articles (e.g., television violence preventions versus juvenile violence preventions). Finally, the time frame was considered (e.g., studies conducted since televisions were sold commercially in the U. S. (1939) versus the creation of the juvenile justice system in 1899).

Television violence studies were coded in Table 1 with the label (TV Study), and juvenile violence studies were coded in Table 1 with the label (JV Study). In Table 1, the question of juvenile violence being linked to television violence was indicated next to each study by placing a Yes or No in the second column on the table. Several of the studies in the meta- analysis did list television violence as a causal factor or link to juvenile violence and aggression. Two studies which did not report a relationship within the two areas are Rhodes (2000), and Mones (1999). Table 2 (see Appendix) reveals which studies listed similar or same preventions for television violence and juvenile violence. The plus sign (+) indicates a prevention (variable) was listed in the study or research article. A minus sign (-) indicates a prevention (variable) was not listed in the study or research article. The studies and their relationship to the variables (preventions) of television violence and juve-nile violence are presented in Table 2.

Table 1.

Studies of Television Violence and Juvenile Violence

Author(s)	TV Linked to Juvenile Violence	Study Type
Anderson et al. (2003)	Yes	TV Study
Lavers (2002)	Yes	TV Study
Bar-on et al. (2001)	Yes	TV Study
Rhodes (2000)	No	TV Study
Mones (1999)	No	TV Study
Kashani et al. (1999)	Yes	TV Study
Domingue (1996)	Yes	TV Study
Centerwall (1993)	Yes	TV Study

Results

The tables reveal what has been extensively sug-gested by many in the criminal justice and criminology fields of learning: parents must do their part in prevent-ing their children from being influenced by violence and/or becoming violent. The following prevention vari-ables were found in both the television violence studies as well as the juvenile violence studies: Parental Super-vision, Parental Control of Children's Exposure to Media Violence, V-Chip Control, Better Media Liter-acy, Better Use of Television by Parents and Children, Clearer Media Ratings, More Responsible Portrayal of Violence By Media Producers, Limiting Screen Time,

Involve the Family in Interventions, and finally, Parents Set Firm Limits on Behavior. The effort that is mentioned the most in both studies involves *parental control*.

In most of the studies, parents were mentioned as primary sources of prevention, whether it was television violence or juvenile violence. If television violence is viewed as a link to juvenile violence, and the primary prevention factors for both involve parental control, this finding has elevated several theories. For example, according to Travis Hirschi's control theory (1969), the breakdown of the family is listed as a causal factor of crime. Later, with Michael Gottfredson, Hirschi developed *A General Theory of Crime* (1990) in which low self-control and low resistance to the temptation of crime was blamed on a lapse in parenting.

In this theory, great emphasis is placed on parental upbringing, as they argue that this is the source of socialization that instills self-control in a child. Thus, yes, there is a connection between television violence prevention and juvenile violence prevention. The connection is effective parenting. Centerwall (1993) reports children as young as 14 months can recognize, mimic, and objectively illustrate what they observe on television. Considering that fact, it is imperative that parents take advantage of the opportunity to control what their children take in during their early childhood years.

Discussion

Policy makers, community leaders, law enforcement personnel, mental health professionals, parents, and others must develop effective strategies to assist youth in developing a sense of personal accountability for their actions. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, many families have replaced teachers and parents as educators and role models, and have made the primary source of information for their children-the media (Bar-on et al., 2001). It is not the violence on television itself that causes children to become violent. However, the context in which violence is portrayed can make a difference between learning about violence and learning to be violent. Most violent portrayals on television show immediate thrills with no consequences for human loss.

On the contrary, in 2000, Richard Rhodes published an article in *Rolling Stone* magazine countering the argument that television violence causes violent behav-ior in children. He states that many reports dedicated to television violence studies being linked to aggression in children all share the same flaw. They fail to account for the powerful effect called "researcher expectation," whereby the subject(s) in the study easily guess what the researcher wants him or her to do and behaves that way. Rhodes also points out that a 1986 study by Huesmann and Eron that claimed a "strong relation between early television violence viewing and adult criminality," also showed that early aggressiveness predicts later violence, and violence runs in families. Rhodes contends that violence is not hereditary; it is a "learned behavior" (p. 57).

Point well taken! Even the antagonists believe that violence is a "learned behavior." Most of the research studies that find a relationship between television violence and childhood aggression and later adult criminality do point out the techniques media utilize to get children to learn to like their products and ultimately learn to like and observe the violent images they view on the television screen. In conclusion, Rhodes (2000) gives his bottom line to the television violence argu-ment. "To become violent, people must have experience with real violence. No amount of imitation violence can provide that experience" (Rhodes, p. 58). However, some simulated violence can be just as "real" as real vio-lent occurrences. Being conditioned to enjoy violence desensitizes children so much so, that they believe they can accomplish the feats they witness on the television screen, with no concern for human loss.

In a similar argument, Mones (1999) explains that it is "not" watching television violence that predisposes a child to commit violence; rather it is exposure to real-life violence in the child's home and/or neighbor-hood. He believes many parents and practitioners look for someone beside themselves to blame for the prob-lems with juvenile violence.

Conclusion

It all started with the findings of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, published in 1969. That report established what is now a broad scientific consensus: "Exposure to television increases rates of physical aggression" (Centerwall, 1993, p. 64). In 1996, Maryland's Attorney General, J. Joseph Curran, Jr. urged parents, broadcasters, and advertisers to fight youth violence by curbing violence in the media and restricting children's access to it. He exclaimed that the responsibility was not totally on the media to decrease the amount of violence to which children are exposed but ultimately, the burden lies with the parents to shield their children from such programming. Curran urged parents not to forego an opportunity to exert control over a most basic form of entertainment. He says, "Parents are the key here" (Dominguez, 1996, p. 1).

This leads to a very important element of the meta-analysis. Most of the articles that were analyzed for this study suggested that parents should be the major source of prevention; whether it was to lessen the influ-ence of television violence or prevent juvenile violence. In *A General Theory of Crime*, Gottfredson and Hirschi suggested, "The major 'cause' of low self-control thus appears to be ineffective child-rearing" (1990, p. 97). They explained that low self-control was the major cause of some people not being able to resist temptation to commit crime and/or participate in deviant acts. Ten years earlier, Patterson determined a set of parenting

skills conducive to effective child rearing. They include: "(a) notice what the child is doing; (b) monitor it over long periods; (c) model social skill behavior and (d) clearly state house rules" (1980, p. 81). Many of the suggestions made by researchers in an effort to decrease the influence of television violence on children involved many different forms of parental control. Similar to what Patterson suggested in 1980, parents have been asked to monitor what their child views, and clearly state how many hours of television the child is permitted to watch. The juvenile violence preventions have also been quite similar. Previous researchers have asked par-ents to model good social skills in front of their children. Parents must begin to realize the major influence they have over their children, be cognizant of their television consumption, and monitor the attitudes they allow to form from television's influence on them and their children.

Recommendations

Large-scale longitudinal studies would help identify the magnitude of media-violence affects on the most severe types of violence (Anderson et al., 2003). Just as drug companies and insurance agencies study for many years the affects of products on humans, so should researchers hoping to protect children form the affects of television violence. There should more effective ways to disseminate information learned in research studies (e.g., delivering information to directors of child protective services, juvenile justice personnel, and pro-fessionals in the school system). The discrepancy between empirically supported interventions and pre-vention programs and the services that are actually delivered to violent youth should be analyzed. Profes-sionals outside of academia should be convinced to implement empirically supported programs in their communities (Kashani et al., 1999).

Interactive media (e.g., video games, cell phones, iPods, MP3 Players, Web Cams, and the Internet) should be assessed more intensely to determine their influence on the physical and mental health of children and adolescents (Kashani et al., 1999). Finally, provi-sions should be set in place to encourage medical offi-cials to discuss with parents, the detrimental affects violent television consumption elicits on children and young adults.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics. (1995). Media violence: Committee on communications. *Pediatrics, 95,* 949-951.

Anderson, C. A., Berkowitz, L., Donnerstein, E., Huesmann, L. R., Johnson, J. D., Linz, D., *et al. (2003). The influence of media violence on youth. Psychological Science: Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 4,* 81-110.

Bar-on, E. M., Broughton, D. D., Buttross, S., Corrigan, S., Gedissman, A., de Rivas, M. R. G., et al. (2001). Media violence. *Pediatrics, 108,* 1222-1226.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1996). *Homicide and legal intervention deaths and rates per 100,000-United States, 1988-1994*. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Centerwall, B. S. (1993). Television and violent crime. *Public Interest, 111,* 56-72.

Cheng, T. L., Brenner, R. A., Wright, J. L., Sachs, H. C., Moyer, P., Rao, M. R., et al. (2004). Children's violent television viewing: Are parents monitoring? *Pediatrics, 114,* 94-99.

Eth, S. (2002). Television viewing as risk factor. *Psychiatry, 65,* 301-303.

Dietz, W. H., and Strasburger, V. C. (1991). Children, adolescents and television. *Current Problems in Pediatrics, 21,* 8-31.

Dominguez, A. (1996, September 11). Attorney General asks broadcasters to cut back on television violence. *The Daily Record*, 1.

Federal Communications Commission. (2005). *Golden age, 1930's through 1950's.* Retrieved June 17, 2008, from http://www.fcc.gov/omd/history/tv/1930-1959.html

Federal Trade Commission. (2000). *Marketing violent entertainment to children: A review of self-regulation and industry practices in the motion picture, music recording and electronic game industries*. Washington, DC: Author. (994511)

Fingerhut, L. A., and Kleinman, J. C. (1990). International and interstate comparison of homicide among young males. *The Journal of the American Medical Association, 263,* 3292-3295.

Fraiberg, S. H. (1959). *The magic years: Understanding and handling the problems of early childhood*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Funk, J. B., and Buchman, D. D. (1996). Playing violen*t video and computer games and adolescent self-concept. Journal of Communications, 46,* 19-32.

Gorman, M. O. (2003). Violent TV makes kids violent adults. *Prevention, 55,* 48.

Gottfredson, M. R., and Hirschi, T. (1990). *A general theory of crime*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Grossman, D. (1996). *On killing: The psychological cost of learning to kill in war and society*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.

Grossman, D., and DeGaetano, G. (1999). *Stop teaching our kids to kill: A call to action against TV, movie and video game violence*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers.

Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. (1998). *Parents, children and the television ratings system: Two Kaiser family foundation surveys*. Menlo Park, CA: Author. (1398)

Hirschi, T. (1969). *Causes of delinquency*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Huesmann, L. R., and Eron, L. D. (1986). The development of aggression in American children as a consequence of television violence viewing. In L. Huesmann (Ed.), *Television and the aggressive child: A cross-national comparison* (pp. 45-80). Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kashani, J. H., Jones, M. R., Bumby, K. M., and Thomas, L. A. (1999). Youth violence: Psychosocial risk factors, treatment, prevention, and recommendations. J*ournal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 7*, 200-211.

Lavers, D. (2002). The verdict on media violence: It's ugly ... and getting uglier. *Insight On The News, 18*, 28-29.

Mones, P. (1999). Confronting the truth about teenage violence. *Reclaiming Children And Youth, 8,* 151-153.

Nance, M. L., Stafford, P. W., and Schwab, C. W. (1997). Firearm injury among urban youth during the last decade: An escalation in violence. *Journal of Pediatric Surgery, 32*, 949 -952.

National Adolescent Health Information Center. (1995). *Fact sheet on adolescent homicide*. San Francisco, CA: University of California.

Neill, J. (2006). Meta-analysis research methodology. Retrieved June 18, 2008, from http://wilderdom.com/research/meta-analysis.html

Nielsen Media Research. (2000). *U.S. television household estimates*. New York, NY: The Nielsen Company.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2006). OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book. Retrieved June 18, 2008, from http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/offenders/qa03104.asp?qaDate=2002

Patterson, G. R. (1980). Children who steal. In T. Hirschi, and M. R. Gottfredson (Eds.), *Understanding crime: Current theory and research* (p. 81). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Rhodes, R. (2000, November 23). The media-violence myth. *Rolling Stone*, 55-58.

Robinson, T. N., Wilde, M. L., Navracruz, L. C., Haydel, K. F., and Varady, A. (2001). Effects of reducing children's television and video game use on aggressive behavior: A randomized controlled trial. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, 155*, 17-23.

Sanborn, J. B., Jr., and Salerno, A. W. (2005). *The juvenile justice system: Law and process*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Seawell, M. (1997). *National television violence study: Volume 1*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Snyder, H. N., and Sickmund, M. (2006). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 2006 National Report*. Chapter 3. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Snyder, H. N., Sickmund, M., and Poe-Yamagata, E. (1996). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1996 update on violence*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice.

Yokota, F., and Thompson, K. M. (2000). Violence in G-rated animated films. *The Journal of the American Medical Association, 283*, 2716-2720.

Appendix

Table 2.
Studies and Their Relationship to the Variables of Television Violence Prevention and Juvenile Violence Prevention

	Studies							
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Parental supervision	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Parental control of children's exposure to media violence	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Parental mediation	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
V-chip	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
CC+		-	-	-	-	-	-	
Better media literacy	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Better use of television by parents and children	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Clearer media ratings	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+
More responsible portrayal of violence by media producers	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
Mentors to help with parenting	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Mandatory counseling for parents and children	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Removing the child from the home	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Sports	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Creative pursuits	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Interactive play	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Reading	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Co-viewing television with children	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Limiting screen time	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+
Keeping televisions out of children's bedrooms	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Mock violence	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Early juvenile violence intervention	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
After-school and evening drop-in programs	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Massive mental health screenings	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
Treatment and prevention programs	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Social skills training	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Problem-solving training	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Cognitive restructuring techniques	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Role play	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Therapist modeling	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Behavioral assignments	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Functional family therapy (FFT)	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Multisystemic therapy (MST)	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Conflict resolution	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Parent training	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
School-based programs	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-

Table 2.
Studies and Their Relationship to the Variables of Television Violence Prevention and Juvenile Violence Prevention

	Studies							
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Vocational training programs	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Neighborhood rehabilitation projects	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Gang and gun prevention and intervention strategies	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Reduce access to firearms, drugs, and alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Modify laws to limit access to firearms, drugs, and alcohol	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Educating children	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Integrated programs into school intervention	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Involve the family in interventions	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Positive affective climate in the home	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Parents set firm limits on behavior	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
Model pro-social behaviors	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Parenting classes	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Mental health services for parents		-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Elicit social support from extended family and friends	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Time-channel locks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Reward and punish children's behavior	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-