

CONTACT: Tom Blomberg, Editor, tblomberg@fsu.edu, 850-644-7365
By Julie Mestre, cpp@fsu.edu

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RESEARCHERS INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM ON JUVENILE CRIME

TALLAHASSEE, FLA—In a recent study published in *Criminology & Public Policy* (CPP) [Volume 11, Issue 2], researchers found significant reductions in problem behaviors of young children who participated in an early intervention program. Professor John Paul Wright, of the University of Cincinnati, Pamela M. McMahon, Research Director/Pediatric Residency Program at Our Lady of the Lake Hospital, Claire Daly of the Louisiana 16th Judicial District, and District Attorney J. Phil Haney of the 16th Judicial District in Louisiana examined an early intervention program sponsored by and housed in a district attorney's office in Louisiana's 16th Judicial District. The program was mainly interested in addressing the immediate behavior problems of young children whose antisocial behavior was not serious enough to warrant more official reactions but was in need of attention. The authors' findings show that successful early intervention efforts can be made part of the juvenile justice system and that in some limited situations prosecutorial involvement can result in positive outcomes.

Regarding the policy implications, the authors suggest that the expansion of early intervention programming into the juvenile justice system offers opportunities to address early problem behavior. Closely coupled partnerships between schools and the juvenile justice system can effectively address, mitigate, and perhaps prevent an early onset of anti-social behavior.

Senior Editor for this segment, Alex Piquero, of the University of Texas at Dallas highlights the importance of the Louisiana early intervention programs. Each of the policy essayists, David Farrington of Cambridge University, Peter Greenwood of Advancing Evidence Based Practice, and Brandon Welsh of Northeastern University and the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement agree that a lot is known about crime prevention and that early intervention can work at preventing crime and reducing other adverse problems. Further, all three essayists believe that prevention efforts enacted as early in the life course as possible are a concrete, actionable step that should be high priority among policymakers and practitioners.

