



NSW Bureau of Crime  
BOCSAR Statistics and Research



Griffith UNIVERSITY

Queensland, Australia

Griffith Criminology Institute

# Applied Research in Crime and Justice Conference

14 - 15 August 2023 | Sydney

## Handbook

Program and abstracts



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#ARCJC2023



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# Applied Research in Crime and Justice Conference

14 - 15 August 2023 | ICC, 14 Darling Drive, Sydney

## DAY 1 - Monday, 14 August 2023

8.15am - 9:00am	<b>Registration</b>	
9:00am - 9:10am	<b>Acknowledgment of Country:</b> <a href="#">Uncle Allan Murray Cockle Bay Room</a>	
9:10am - 9:20am	<b>Opening of proceedings:</b> <a href="#">Hon. Michael Daley</a> , NSW Attorney General.	
9:20am - 10:30am	<b>Keynote:</b> <a href="#">Cockle Bay Room</a> - Chair: Jackie Fitzgerald, Executive Director, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research. <a href="#">Professor Aaron Chalfin</a> , University of Pennsylvania. <i>Investments in Policing and Public Safety: A Review of the Evidence.</i>	
10:30am - 11:00am	<b>MORNING TEA</b>	
11:00am - 12:30pm	<b>Session 1A:</b> <a href="#">Cockle Bay Room</a> Chair: Neil Donnelly <i>Theme: Drugs, Alcohol &amp; Mental Health</i>	<b>Session 1B:</b> <a href="#">Room C3.4</a> Chair: Stewart Boiteux <i>Theme: Developmental Criminology</i>
	<a href="#">Don Weatherburn</a> , National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales. <i>Does diversion into treatment reduce the risk of re-offending and imprisonment? An evaluation of the NSW MERIT program</i>	<a href="#">Stacy Tzoumakis</a> , Griffith University. <i>Levels of involvement with child protective services associated with early adolescent police contact as a victim and person of interest: A population-based record linkage study of 71,465 young people</i>
	<a href="#">Christel Macdonald</a> , National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales. <i>What matters to magistrates when considering diversion into mental health treatment?</i>	<a href="#">Min-Taec Kim</a> , NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research. <i>Does service usage predict which youth offend? Initial impressions from a birth cohort study using the NSW Human Services Dataset</i>
	<a href="#">Scott Sisson</a> , Data Science Hub, University of New South Wales. <i>The impact of changes to liquor licensing policy on violence in NSW, 2000-2019</i>	<a href="#">Elizabeth Sullivan</a> , University of Newcastle. <i>Intergenerational incarceration in NSW: Characteristics of people in prison who experienced parental imprisonment as a child</i>
12:30pm - 1:30pm	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1.30pm - 3.15pm	<b>Panel:</b> <a href="#">Cockle Bay Room</a> - Chair: Lorana Bartels, Professor of Criminology, Australian National University. <a href="#">Professor Julia Quilter</a> , University of Wollongong, <a href="#">Professor Luke McNamara</a> , University of New South Wales, <a href="#">Elena Campbell</a> , Centre for Innovative Justice, RMIT & <a href="#">Frances Lockie</a> , KPMG. <i>Improving the experience of sexual violence complainants in the justice system</i>	
3:15pm - 3:45pm	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>	
3:45pm - 5:15pm	<b>Session 2A:</b> <a href="#">Cockle Bay Room</a> Chair: Karen Freeman <i>Theme: Domestic Violence</i>	<b>Session 2B:</b> <a href="#">Room C3.4</a> Chair: Malindi Sayle <i>Theme: Corrections</i>
	<a href="#">Charlotte Bell &amp; Lorelei Hine</a> , ANROWS. <i>The ANROWS Evidence Portal: Identifying evidence gaps in interventions for violence against women</i>	<a href="#">Steeve Marchand</a> , University of Melbourne. <i>Can parole reduce both time served and crime?</i>
	<a href="#">Apriel Jolliffe Simpson</a> , University of Waikato. <i>Examining the predictive validity of the multi-agency Integrated Safety Response's risk assessments for family violence</i>	<a href="#">Susan Dennison &amp; Janet Ransley</a> , Griffith University. <i>Transforming Corrections to Transform Lives: Supporting incarcerated mothers and their children through a model for individual and systems change</i>
	<a href="#">Nabila Chowdhury</a> , University of New South Wales. <i>The relationship between psychoses and offending in New South Wales (NSW) from two population-based data-linkage studies</i>	<a href="#">Julie Barkworth</a> , NSW Corrections Research Evaluation and Statistics. & <a href="#">Clare Power</a> , Behavioural Insights Unit, NSW Department of Customer Service. <i>Building a rehabilitative prison environment: Implementation and impacts of Five Minute Intervention training in NSW Correctional Centres</i>
5:15pm - 6:15pm	<b>Networking Drinks</b>	

## DAY 2 - Tuesday, 15 August 2023

8.30am - 9:00am	<b>Registration</b>	
9:00am - 10:30am	<b>Panel:</b> <b>Cockle Bay Room</b> - Chair: Shane Hamilton, Aboriginal Affairs, NSW. <b>Professor Vickie Hovane</b> , University of Western Australia. <b>Brendan Thomas</b> , NSW Department of Communities and Justice. <b>Edwina Crawford</b> , NSW Department of Communities and Justice. <i>Reducing violence in First Nations communities</i>	
10:30am - 11:00am	<b>MORNING TEA</b>	
11:00am - 12:30pm	<b>Session 3A: Cockle Bay Room</b> Chair: Sara Rahman <i>Theme: Policing</i>	<b>Session 3B: Room C3.4</b> Chair: Alana Cook <i>Theme: Sex &amp; Violence</i>
	<b>Sharon Bicknell</b> , Revenue NSW, Department of Customer Service & <b>Inspector Greg Donaldson</b> , Macarthur Highway Patrol, NSW Police Force. <i>Driving behaviour change: Exploring fine alternatives to achieve compliance and financial hardship outcomes through a Child Car Restraint Fines Diversion proof of concept</i>	<b>Anthony Morgan</b> , Australian Institute of Criminology. <i>Inside the brotherhood of the bikie: Research into outlaw motorcycle gangs</i>
	<b>Ilya Klauzner</b> , NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research. <i>Investigating bias towards Aboriginal people in police bail decisions</i>	<b>Heather Wolbers</b> , Australian Institute of Criminology. <i>Sexual harassment, aggression and violence victimisation among mobile dating app and website users in Australia</i>
	<b>Adam Teperski</b> , NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research. <i>Why are Aboriginal adults less likely to receive cannabis cautions?</i>	<b>Richard Wortley</b> , University College London. <i>The modus operandi of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) offenders</i>
12:30pm - 1:30pm	<b>LUNCH</b>	
1:30pm - 2:30pm	<b>Keynote: Cockle Bay Room</b> - Chair: Suzanne Poynton, Director, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. <b>Professor Jason Payne</b> , University of Wollongong. <i>Youth Crime in NSW: A time of crisis or a crisis in confidence?</i>	
2:30pm - 3:00pm	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>	
3:00pm - 4:30pm	<b>Session 4A: Cockle Bay Room</b> Chair: Min-Taec Kim <i>Theme: Technology &amp; Crime Control</i>	<b>Session 4B: Room C3.4</b> Chair: Ilya Klauzner <i>Theme: Young People</i>
	<b>Jesse Cale</b> , Griffith University & <b>Fredrick Zmudzki</b> University of New South Wales. <i>Findings from the 2016-2022 Evaluation of South Australia Home Detention Study</i>	<b>Cameron T. Langfield</b> , University of Wollongong. <i>Youth offending during the COVID-19 pandemic: a case study from New South Wales</i>
	<b>Stewart Boiteux</b> , NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research. <i>An evaluation of the NSW Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring Scheme</i>	<b>Justine Simpkins</b> , NSW Law Enforcement Conduct Commission. <i>Review of the operation of amendments to the NSW consorting law</i>
	<b>George Karystianis</b> , School of Population Health, University of New South Wales. <i>Enhancing domestic and family violence (DFV) surveillance using text mining of police narratives</i>	<b>James Ogilvie</b> , Griffith University. <i>Reducing Australian First Nations youth justice contacts: A case for raising the age of criminal responsibility based on Queensland birth cohort data</i>
4:30pm - 5:00pm	<b>Wrap Up: Jackie Fitzgerald Cockle Bay Room</b>	

# Applied Research in Crime and Justice Conference

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## Keynote speaker abstracts

### Investments in Policing and Public Safety: A Review of the Evidence

**Aaron Chalfin**

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What does empirical social science tell us about the effects of investments in law enforcement? Do police reduce crime? And are the benefits worth the costs? I review the empirical literature on the effects of police staffing, the deployment of police officers and styles of police enforcement. The evidence suggests that investments in law enforcement are an effective – and, critically, a scalable – strategy to maintain public safety in the developed world. When cities put more police officers on the street, crime and violence decline. What's more is that when more police officers are hired and deployed to high-crime areas, crime tends to decline without a corresponding increase in arrests for the types of serious offenses that are most likely to lead to imprisonment. Investments in police therefore have the potential to produce a “double dividend” for society, reducing crime without driving up imprisonment rates.

At the same time, every interaction between a police officer and a citizen carries a risk that violence or injury will occur. Likewise, when cities hire more police, those officers end up making many more low-level “quality of life” arrests for minor crimes which often do not have a clear victim. While these arrests are often made in response to service calls by community members, research suggests that the public safety value of many of these arrests is unlikely to be high. Perhaps even more important, while arresting people for low-level crimes is intended to make communities safer, new evidence suggests that prosecuting people – in particular less-experienced offenders – for non-violent misdemeanor offenses and detaining them in jail during the pendency of their case can backfire. Investments in policing thus carry costs as well as benefits. The considerable benefits of law enforcement can be maximized and the costs can be minimized when police eschew strategies which revolve explicitly around making large numbers of stops and arrests and instead focus their efforts on more precise and problem-oriented approaches.

### Youth crime in NSW: a time of crisis or a crisis of confidence?

**Jason Payne**

University of Wollongong

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Youth crime is a topic that never strays far from the public conscience, aided by the media's incessant desire to portray young people as a threat to the 'good order' of our communities. This, however, is far from the reality of youth crime in NSW and throughout Australia. In this presentation, we tell an important story about generational change in young people's contact with the criminal justice system. We compare the early life outcomes for three NSW born birth cohorts (1984, 1994 and 2004) and document how both the prevalence of criminal justice contact and the justice response to youth crime has changed over the last 30 years.



## **Panel: Improving the experience of sexual violence complainants in the justice system**

**Julia Quilter<sup>1</sup>, Luke McNamara<sup>2</sup>, Elena Campbell<sup>3</sup>, Frances Lockie<sup>4</sup>, Lorana Bartels<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> University of Wollongong <sup>2</sup> University of New South Wales, <sup>3</sup> Centre for Innovative Justice, RMIT,  
<sup>4</sup> KPMG & <sup>5</sup> Australian National University

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It is well recognised that only a small percentage (between 10-20%) of sexual assault offences are reported to police (ABS 2017). One important factor contributing to underreporting is the low rate of prosecution and conviction of sexual assault and related offences. Police lay charges against an alleged perpetrator in only around 20% of reported sexual assaults and, of those cases where criminal proceedings are commenced, just 2 in 3 result in a conviction. The high level of attrition of sexual assault cases from the justice system erodes the capacity of criminal sanctions to act as a deterrent to perpetrators and undermines public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Recognising the high attrition rate and limited evidence-base on complainant experiences of sexual offences in the criminal justice system the NSW Law Reform Commission (in their recent report on sexual assault consent laws) recommended further research be undertaken by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. To respond to this recommendation, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research commissioned two studies investigating the experiences of complainants of sexual offences in the NSW criminal justice system: (1) a review of trial transcripts; and (2) an interview study of key informants and sexual offence complainants. The results from these two studies will be presented by our panel members and the implications of this work for policy reform in this area will be discussed.

## **Panel: Reducing violence in First Nations communities**

**Vickie Hovane<sup>1</sup>, Brendan Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Edwina Crawford<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> University of Western Australia, <sup>2</sup> NSW Department of Communities and Justice

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First Peoples of Australia continue to be disproportionately incarcerated. Three decades ago, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recognised that criminal justice reforms alone would not address Aboriginal incarceration. It's examination of the underlying issues identified inherent racism and systemic discrimination across all levels of the system, resulting in Aboriginal people experiencing profound disadvantage across a range of social issues and that these experiences are inextricably linked to contact with the criminal justice system. While there has been a concerted effort to address a range of these social issues to reduce disadvantage, such responses have typically occurred in historically and culturally decontextualised ways, which have undermined the efficacy of those efforts. More recent exploration of justice reinvestment in First Nations communities reflects some recognition of the adverse legacy of colonialism, and importantly, recognition of the strengths of Aboriginal cultural structures and ways of working. But incarceration rates for violent offences, continue to rise. Respecting Aboriginal Laws and Cultures, this presentation draws together Aboriginal evidence to tell a holistic story of what works and provide suggestions for policy, practice, and implementation of holistic responses.

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## Session abstracts

### **Building a rehabilitative prison environment: Implementation and impacts of Five Minute Intervention training in NSW Correctional Centres**

**Julie Barkworth<sup>1</sup> & Clare Power<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Corrections Research, Evaluation and Statistics, Corrective Services NSW

<sup>2</sup> Behavioural Insights Unit, NSW Department of Customer Service

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Rehabilitative correctional centre environments give inmates the best opportunity to reintegrate into the community. Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) has introduced Five Minute Interventions (FMI) training for all correctional centre staff across the state to help build a more rehabilitative prison environment. FMI training equips staff with a range of rehabilitative skills and aims to turn everyday conversations between staff and inmates into meaningful interactions that inspire hope and motivate change. This presentation provides an overview of evaluations by CSNSW's Corrections Research, Evaluation and Statistics (CRES) team and the NSW Department of Community Service's Behavioural Insights Unit (BIU) that examine the implementation and impacts of FMI training.

CRES will first draw on survey data collected prior to training and at both 6-weeks and 12-months post-training to show that FMI training has had positive short- and long-term effects on staff attitudes towards prisoners, as well as their motivation and ability to support offender rehabilitation. Administrative data is also used to examine the relationship between implementation of FMI and trends in correctional centre outcomes such as rates of inmate misconduct. Finally, in-depth interviews with FMI-trained staff provide insights on how FMI has been applied in their daily interactions with inmates, and both the facilitators and barriers they face when using FMI.

BIU will then discuss interventions introduced at one correctional centre which used behavioural science to enable staff to enact FMI skills more habitually. Drawing on survey data collected from staff and inmates before, during and after the study period, it will be shown there was an increase in rehabilitative behaviours by staff, as well as an increase in belief in rehabilitation and motivation to rehabilitate. Inmates also reported an increase in staff use of difficult FMI behaviours.

Taken together, the results from these evaluations provide an evidence-base for staff undertaking training and developing skills that contribute to building a rehabilitative environment.

### **The ANROWS Evidence Portal: Identifying evidence gaps in interventions for violence against women**

**Charlotte Bell & Lorelei Hine**

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)

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The ANROWS Evidence Portal is a living resource of interventions from high-income countries that aim to address and end violence against women (VAW). The Evidence Portal is informed by gold-standard systematic review methodology and is designed to meet the needs of policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. It aims to:

- promote a collective understanding of the effectiveness of interventions
- inform evidence-based policymaking
- support decision-making when considering VAW interventions.

The Evidence Portal comprises multiple complementary outputs, designed to synthesise and visualise the available impact evaluation and systematic review evidence. A series of evidence and gap maps (EGMs) provide a visual overview of the existing evidence base and where gaps remain, aligned to the key domains of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing. The response EGM has identified gaps in the criminal justice evidence base, guiding researchers to crucial areas for future impact evaluation. Additionally, the Evidence Portal synthesises information such as the intervention characteristics, the key populations studied, the estimated effectiveness of the intervention, the risks of bias within this evidence base, and the transferability of the intervention to an Australian context. This presentation will discuss some early findings from the EGMs and syntheses about criminal justice interventions from the Evidence Portal.

## Driving behaviour change: Exploring fine alternatives to achieve compliance and financial hardship outcomes through a Child Car Restraint Fines Diversion proof of concept

**Sharon Bicknell**

Hardship Support Program Revenue NSW, Department of Customer Service

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**Aim:** With a focus on child car restraint fines, design an alternative method for a fine that encourages behaviour change, resolves a safety issue, and prevents contributing to a cycle of hardship.

**Methodology:** A proof of concept led by NSW Police and Revenue NSW tested providing first-time offenders an option to have appropriate car seats installed by an accredited provider within 21 days to avoid a \$352 fine and the loss of 3 demerit points.

**Results:** As part of the 12-month Proof of Concept, 84 drivers (representing 88% compliance) had their children securely restrained by a professional and avoided substantial fines and demerit points. Drivers appreciated the opportunity to get the seats installed professionally and learn to do it correctly themselves. However, it also identified several challenges triggering an intensive 10-week additional design research project to understand how to ensure access to this diversion and, these results are now informing a state-wide roll out of this program.

**Conclusion:** Diversion gives our customers the chance to make a change; provides confidence that a safety issue has been fixed; and helps those in hardship avoid compounding their situation further.

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## An evaluation of the NSW Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring Scheme

**Stewart Boiteux** & Adam Teperski

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Electronic monitoring has been demonstrated to effectively reduce recidivism in general offender populations. The Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring (DVEM) program is the first program in NSW to test the effectiveness of electronic monitoring for reducing the costly problem of repeat domestic violence. Individuals on the program have a GPS-enabled monitoring device fitted to their ankle and have their location tracked 24 hours a day.

Utilising data from the DVEM program, we examine whether electronic monitoring reduced reoffending in a cohort of high-risk parolees convicted of domestic violence. Using a matching approach to compare those placed on the program with a similar group of parolees who were not electronically monitored, we find that the program was associated with reductions in any offending, domestic violence-related offending, apprehended domestic violence order breach offending, and return to custody within a year of free time post release.

## Findings from the 2016-2022 Evaluation of South Australia Home Detention Study

**Jesse Cale**<sup>1</sup>, Fredrick Zmudzki<sup>2</sup>, Tyson Whitten<sup>3</sup> & Kylie Valentine<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Griffith Criminology Institute, Griffith University

<sup>2</sup> Époque Consulting, and Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC), University of New South Wales

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In 2016 the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in South Australia commissioned an independent evaluation of Home Detention (HD) in the state. The objective of the evaluation was to examine the impact that related legislative and program changes had on return to prison rates; forecast prisoner growth, and government expenditure on correctional services. The evaluation concluded in 2022. This presentation describes the final results of the six-year evaluation pertaining to: 1) reoffending outcomes of prisoners sentenced to different forms of home detention compared to matched samples of prisoners sentenced to incarceration, 2) the impact service delivery and support models for Home Detention; and 3) a cost-effectiveness analysis determining if Home Detention in the state offers value for money for government. The results demonstrated reductions in the likelihood of recidivism for Home Detention participants relative to matched samples of inmates who received prison sentences, as well as substantial cost savings relative to incarceration.



## The relationship between psychoses and offending in New South Wales (NSW) from two population-based data-linkage studies.

Nabila Chowdhury, Tony Butler, et al.

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**Background:** Studies have found that those with psychosis have an increased risk of offending, including violent offending. For the past few years, we have undertaken two population-based data-linkage studies of those diagnosed with psychosis in NSW from 2000-2021 providing compelling evidence of an association between psychosis and offending and the role of mental health treatment.

**Methods:** Population level data-linkage using several health, welfare, and justice databases in NSW from 2000-2015, and an expanded linkage from 2000-2021.

**Results:** The updated linkage study identified 143,506 individuals with psychosis in NSW (2001-2020) with 283,413 sex-age matched controls. Similar to the first linkage study, 32.9% individuals with psychosis had been convicted of an offence and 10% a prison episode. Findings from the updated study examined a range of factors including: use of prison alerts (for mental health), self-harm in prison, impact of prison programs on reoffending, and post-release factors such as access to housing and community-based treatment.

**Conclusion:** The revised study provides significant new insights on a range of in-prison and post-release factors relevant to the management of those with psychosis in the NSW justice system. Findings are presented in the context of diversionary and care pathways for this vulnerable population to improve justice outcomes for this group.

## Transforming Corrections to Transform Lives: Supporting incarcerated mothers and their children through a model for individual and systems change

Susan Dennison & Janet Ransley

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*Transforming Corrections to Transform Lives* (TCTL) commenced as a collaboration between the university, governmental, and philanthropic sector to explore how to better meet the needs of mothers impacted by incarceration, and their children.

Our preliminary research with both mothers in prison and system stakeholders revealed problems with the availability, accessibility, comprehensiveness and co-ordination of support and intervention programs, often leaving mothers and their children to 'fall through the cracks' between and across siloed service systems (Williams et al., 2023). Failing to address the longer-term and complex needs of mothers and children in a coordinated way risks driving further intergenerational disadvantage and offending. In response, we developed a transformative model for individual- and system-level change with mothers and children's wellbeing at the core, and a focus on the correctional system as a key connector to other service systems. Key features of the TCTL Centre's Transform Lives Program and Transforming Corrections Hub will be described, alongside a program of research and evaluation to generate new knowledge for evidence-based programs and sustainable system change. We conclude with insights into the early stages of model implementation, including identification of system intervention points, and development of community and government engagement.

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## Enhancing domestic and family violence (DFV) surveillance using text mining of police narratives

**George Karystianis** & Tony Butler

University of New South Wales

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Domestic and family violence (DFV) is a major societal problem in Australia but significant information gaps prevent comprehensive picture of this issue. Police are often the first to attend DFV events recording in their narratives rich information on factors such as the mental health status of perpetrators and victims, cause of the DVF event, sustained injuries, threats of future violence, drug and alcohol use and abuse types all of which remain untapped for surveillance purposes. Applying text mining on the millions of DFV police narratives across Australia can provide up-to-date population-based insights and fill knowledge gaps for priority groups and at-risk settings in real time. This new data infrastructure leverages and expands on our successful work undertaken in NSW with police narratives to build a national DFV surveillance approach to better inform prevention and intervention strategies in Australia.

## Does service usage predict which youth offend? Initial impressions from a birth cohort study using the NSW Human Services Dataset

**Min-Taec Kim** & Fan Cheng

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Predicting who is likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system should help us improve service delivery, but previous attempts at building a predictive model have been hamstrung by the data available. We build a predictive model using the Human Services Dataset. This allows us to look at an entire birth cohort for NSW and utilise the wide-array of data on demographics and service usage collected by the NSW government across health, education, family and community services and justice as predictors.

We are able to utilise this wide range of predictors by estimating a gradient boosted tree model. We use our model to predict whether an individual will have contact with the criminal justice system before the age of 18 using only information available when the prediction is made. We will present metrics summarising how effective our model is for prediction, and how the performance of the model differs for different demographic groups. We also breakdown our predictions (using SHAP values) to understand which variables are driving the predictions of our model.

## Investigating bias towards Aboriginal people in police bail decisions

Ilya Klauzner

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

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**Aim:** To investigate whether police custody managers exhibit bias towards Aboriginal defendants in their bail decisions, once accounting for the risk of reoffending and absconding when on bail.

**Method:** We compare the rates of different measures of bail misconduct for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal defendants at the margins of release on bail, using an outcome test design. If marginal Aboriginal defendants have lower rates of bail misconduct than marginal non-Aboriginal defendants, then we conclude that custody managers apply a stricter threshold of release and are biased against Aboriginal defendants. We calculate outcomes for marginal defendants using the quasi-random allocation of defendants to police custody managers with differing propensities to grant bail. By using an instrumental variable strategy, we approximate the 'marginal defendant' as the defendant who would have been denied bail if they were allocated to a harsher custody manager but would have been granted bail if they were allocated to a more lenient custody manager.

**Results:** Rates of bail misconduct are similar between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal defendants among our measures of misconduct. For example, Aboriginal defendants on the margins of release are 20.2 p.p. more likely to reoffend or abscond on bail than Aboriginal defendants refused bail, while the corresponding number for non-Aboriginal defendants is 19.8 p.p.

**Conclusion:** We find no evidence to suggest that there is bias, in the form of a stricter threshold of release by police custody managers in their bail decisions, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal defendants. This suggests that strategies to reduce disparities in the likelihood of receiving bail should focus either on other criminal justice decisions (such as the decision to charge or arrest accused persons) or research should focus on structural factors of the criminal justice system (such as the potential presence of institutional bias).

## Youth offending during the COVID-19 pandemic: a case study from NSW

Cameron T. Langfield

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Youth offending has long since captured the academic scrutiny of criminologists globally. Very little research to date, however, has explored to what extent youth offending was impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking a developmental criminological lens, this paper uses officially recorded unit-record offence data from New South Wales (NSW) to document to what extent the COVID-19 pandemic has affected young offending patterns. Specifically, these data are for those born in 2004, selected because they were entering the period of late adolescence (i.e., turning 16 years of age) as COVID-19 restrictions were first introduced. Using these data, we estimate the prevalence and frequency of offending among these young people pre-and-post the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. We also explore the geographical nature of offending among this cohort. These results shed light on the criminal justice contact of a cohort of young people pre-and-post the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, and offer new insights into the offending of young people during an exceptional event.

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## What matters to magistrates when considering diversion into mental health treatment?

**Christel Macdonald** & Don Weatherburn

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales

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**Aim:** To identify factors that influence the likelihood of mental health diversion under s.32 and s.33 of the NSW Mental Health (Forensic Procedures) Act.

**Method:** A sample of 5,405 individuals represented by NSW Legal Aid who sought to have their charges dismissed under section 32 or 33 were analysed. Logistic regression was used to examine the effect of factors expected on the basis of theory or caselaw to influence the likelihood of dismissal. A multilevel logistic regression model was used to examine the effect of the magistrate on the likelihood of charge dismissal.

**Results:** Controlling for other factors, the odds of a s.32 diversion were higher for women, those with no prior court appearance, and those who commit less serious offences and those who have previously had charges dismissed on mental health grounds. A s.33 diversion was found to be more likely where the defendant was older, lived in an inner regional area (compared with a major city), had no or few prior court appearances had not been previously imprisoned, or had previously had charges dismissed on mental health grounds. Almost 17 per cent of the variation in s.32 dismissal decisions is attributable to the magistrate hearing the case.

**Conclusion:** The results suggest that factors associated with the magistrate hearing a case play a key role in shaping the likelihood of diversion into mental health treatment.

## Can parole reduce both time served and crime?

**Steeve Marchand**

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We estimate the causal effect of parole on recidivism by exploiting the random assignment of parole board members to hearings in Quebec (Canada). Parolees in Quebec undergo a thorough selection process and are often required to stay in halfway houses for the remainder of their sentences, where they are provided with substantial rehabilitation assistance. We find that parole, in this context, increases reincarceration but decreases new sentences. To explain these results, we decompose the effect of parole on incarceration time into i) the direct reduction of the incarceration spell due to parole, ii) technical violations of parole conditions leading to reincarceration, and iii) future sentences. The positive reincarceration effect arises from technical violations, resulting in parolees being reincarcerated for a period of time on average shorter than the additional time they would have served without parole. Consequently, parole increases rearrests but still decreases time spent in prison. We find that, despite parolees being incapacitated for a shorter period, parole decreases the probability of committing new crimes. Our findings suggest that well-designed and targeted parole policies can simultaneously reduce incarceration and crime.



## Inside the brotherhood of the bikie: Research into outlaw motorcycle gangs

**Anthony Morgan**

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**Aim:** To improve the evidence base on Australian outlaw motorcycle gang involvement in crime, particularly violent and organised crime, how these crimes are influenced by the internal dynamics of clubs, and the efficacy of responses by government and law enforcement.

**Method:** This presentation will draw together the results from more than a dozen studies. Over four years, and working closely with national and state and territory law enforcement agencies, we have embarked on a program of research that has drawn on a variety of data sources, including gang intelligence databases, police recorded crime data, and interviews with former club members. Analytic methods have also varied, ranging from simple descriptive analysis to more sophisticated regression and time series analysis and machine learning methods.

**Results:** OMCG members have high rates of involvement in high-harm offences. The nature of that involvement varies between clubs and over time, and is related to the characteristics of members and clubs, internal club dynamics and contextual factors. Alternative methods of prevention and disruption show promise.

**Conclusion:** Results demonstrate the need for nuanced, evidence-informed responses that reflect the heterogeneity of OMCGs in the Australian context.

## Reducing Australian First Nations youth justice contacts: A case for raising the age of criminal responsibility based on Queensland birth cohort data

**James M. Ogilvie, Krystal Lockwood, Carleen Thompson, Troy Allard, Lisa Thomsen, Simon Little & Susan Dennison**

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Early age of first contact with the youth justice system is linked to chronic and persistent trajectories of offending that have significant costs to victims, communities, government, and the young person themselves. In jurisdictions such as Queensland, where the minimum age of criminal responsibility (i.e., 10 years of age) is out of step with international law and Australian human rights obligations, there are significant concerns about the criminalisation of children. These concerns include the potential for ensnaring young people, particularly Indigenous children, into the criminal justice system rather than addressing their underlying needs. We use a population-based cohort of individuals born in Queensland in 1990 and followed up to age 24 years to examine the characteristics of young people who experienced their first youth justice system contact between ages 10 and 13 years. We compare the progression of criminal justice contacts of the early contact group with those who experienced contact after they turn 14 years old. Findings indicate that most young people who experienced criminal justice system contact between ages 10 and 13 years were First Nations youth who were consequently overrepresented among individuals who went on to experience more persistent and extensive histories of offending. We demonstrate that the criminalisation of youth aged 10 to 13 years disproportionately impacts First Nations youth. We argue that raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility alongside the implementation of culturally relevant early intervention, diversion and support services is likely to significantly reduce the overrepresentation of First Nations individuals in the criminal justice system.

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## Review of the operation of amendments to the NSW consorting law

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The NSW Parliament tasked the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission with reviewing amendments to NSW consorting laws from 2019 to 2022. This followed an earlier review by the NSW Ombudsman. The amendments were to reduce or avoid detrimental impacts on vulnerable groups by:

- Excluding people under 14 from being warned
- Expanding the definition of family for Aboriginal people to include kinship relationships
- Additional defences relating to support services.

The Commission reviewed relevant NSW Police Force data, records and video footage, as well as speaking to Commanders and officers. We also received submissions from interested organisations in response to a discussion paper.

We found that there had been a reduction in the number of young people issued with warnings and named in warnings, but many of the young people warned were suspected of being involved in comparatively less serious criminal activity. We also reported a substantial over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The paper will discuss:

- the use of the laws by general duties officers to target comparatively less serious offending
- recommendations for legislative change
- changes the NSW Police Force has made to its procedures and systems
- further changes needed to systems, procedure and training.

## Examining the predictive validity of the multi-agency Integrated Safety Response's risk assessments for family violence

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**Aim:** The Integrated Safety Response (ISR) is a multi-agency family violence response operating in parts of New Zealand. ISR triage teams perform risk assessments before allocating interventions. However, it is unclear whether the factors triage teams select are the basis for the risk categories they assign to cases, and whether those factors are risk factors (i.e., empirical predictors of family violence-related outcomes).

**Method:** We documented the factors triage teams selected for 842 cases. We examined the association between those factors and the risk categories, and investigated whether the factors and risk categories predicted family violence-related outcomes (recurrence and physical recurrence).

**Results:** Most of the recorded factors were associated with the risk categories, but fewer than half of the factors were associated with family violence-related outcomes. The risk categories' predictive validity varied across sub-groups of cases, performing poorly for aggressors who were Māori or women, and for non-intimate partner cases.

**Conclusion:** The ISR triage teams' risk assessment protocol would benefit from increased structure and validation. Future research should also measure the interventions cases are allocated, and engage with, to find whether those interventions mitigate risk for recurrence of family violence.

## The impact of changes to liquor licensing policy on violence in NSW, 2000-2019

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Between 2008 and 2018, the NSW Government introduced several inter-related reforms designed to reduce the frequency of violence associated with licensed premises. Both statewide and local area based strategies were initiated as part of these reforms.

Responding to a recommendation by the joint parliamentary select committee on Sydney's night-time economy, this study aimed to quantify the effects of individual liquor licensing policies introduced in NSW over the last decade on rates of violent crime. The study used time-series methods to examine all non-domestic assaults recorded by NSW Police between 1st Jan 2000 and 31st Dec 2019. Counterfactual datasets were constructed using proxy data from outside of the study area to predict what would have happened if the reforms had never been introduced. The results indicate that, overall, the suite of public safety measures introduced in the last decade by the NSW Government have contributed to a significant decline in non-domestic assaults both in Sydney and across NSW. By the end of 2019, non-domestic assaults had reduced by an estimated 19% in NSW, 45% in the Sydney CBD and 84% in the Kings Cross Precinct. Policies restricting late night (or 24-hour) trading of licensed premises and targeting enforcement toward high-risk venues contributed most to these declines.

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## Intergenerational incarceration in NSW: Characteristics of people in prison who experienced parental imprisonment as a child

Elizabeth Sullivan<sup>1,2</sup>, Marc Rémond<sup>1</sup>, Reem Zeki<sup>2</sup>, Kelly Austin<sup>3</sup>, Julia Bowman<sup>2</sup>, Jennifer Galouzis<sup>3</sup> & Kelly-Anne Stewart<sup>3</sup>

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**Aim:** Imprisonment of parents may impact the health and well-being of their children, and potentially increase their risk of offending behaviour and subsequent incarceration. We explored the epidemiology of intergenerational incarceration in NSW.

**Methods:** We analysed data from state-wide surveys of adults in prison (Network Patient Health Survey) and young people in Youth Justice Centres (Young People in Custody Health Survey).

**Results:** One-in-six (16.9%) adults in prison and 52.6% of young people in youth justice centres reported that at least one of their parents had been imprisoned. The prevalence of intergenerational incarceration was higher for First Nations adults (32.0%) and First Nations young people (66.4%). Younger participants, multiple offenders, school exit before year 10, and those who had experienced out-of-home-care were more likely to report a previously imprisoned parent. There was an over-representation of mothers as the imprisoned parent suggesting mother-child transmission of incarceration may be stronger than father-child transmission.

**Conclusions:** Intergenerational incarceration is prevalent within the NSW prison population. It is associated with systemic socioeconomic disadvantage. Programs to support children with parents in prison or at risk of imprisonment should be a priority, with culturally safe programs developed in partnership with First Nations communities.

## Why are Aboriginal adults less likely to receive cannabis cautions?

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The Cannabis Cautioning Scheme is an important mechanism for diverting minor cannabis offenders from the NSW Criminal Courts. However, scholars and media commentators have raised concerns about disparities in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people's access to this diversionary option. This presentation describes results from a study which identifies the extent to which eligibility criteria, legal, and other observed factors explain recent disparities in cannabis cautioning between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. We find that just 12% of Aboriginal adults were issued a caution compared with 44% of non-Aboriginal adults. Using a combination of descriptive and decomposition analysis, we establish which eligibility criteria contribute towards this overall disparity, and identify key factors influencing different cautioning rates for eligible Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders.



## Levels of involvement with child protective services associated with early adolescent police contact as a victim and person of interest: A population-based record linkage study of 71,465 young people

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**Aim:** To examine associations between different levels of involvement with child protection services (CPS; 0 to <11 years) and early adolescent ( $\geq 11$ -14 years) police contact as a victim and/or person of interest.

**Method:** Data for 71,465 young people were drawn from the New South Wales Child Development Study (NSW-CDS; <https://nsw-cds.com.au/>), an intergenerational, longitudinal investigation that uses administrative records from CPS and police alongside other health, justice, and education data. Multinomial regression was used to determine associations between levels of CPS involvement (i.e., no risk of significant harm [non-ROSH], unsubstantiated ROSH, substantiated ROSH, and out-of-home care; each relative to no child protection contact) and police contact as a victim and/or person of interest while adjusting for covariates (child's sex, Aboriginal and/or Torres Islander background, socioeconomic status, maternal age, and parental offending).

**Results:** Analyses revealed that all four levels of CPS involvement were associated with police contact, relative to children with no CPS contact. Substantiated ROSH and out-of-home care had the largest odds ratios, which were similar in magnitude across police contact categories.

**Conclusion:** Findings highlight that children with even unsubstantiated CPS reports are at heightened risk of police contact compared to children who are unknown to CPS, underlining the need to support all families in contact with CPS.

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## **Does diversion into treatment reduce the risk of re-offending and imprisonment? An evaluation of the NSW MERIT program**

**Don Weatherburn**<sup>1</sup>, Sara Rahman<sup>2</sup>, Suzanne Poynton<sup>2</sup>, Stephanie Todd<sup>3</sup>, Tanya Merinda<sup>3</sup>,  
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The NSW Magistrates Early Referral into Treatment (MERIT) program is designed to reduce the risk of reoffending and imprisonment among defendants whose offences are drug-related. It is also intended to improve health outcomes among those who participate in the program. In this study we employ Augmented Inverse Probability of Treatment Weighting (AIPW) to compare two groups of people; one of which was recommended and accepted onto the program and the other of which was recommended and not accepted onto the program. We compare the groups on three outcomes: risk of re-offending, risk of imprisonment and risk of re-admission (following MERIT treatment) to a hospital emergency department (ED) for a drug and/or alcohol problem.

## **Sexual harassment, aggression and violence victimisation among mobile dating app and website users in Australia**

**Heather Wolbers**

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Use of mobile dating platforms has increased exponentially in the past 10 years. While these platforms create opportunities to develop and pursue social, romantic and/or sexual relationships both online and in the real world, media reporting and broader commentary has raised concerns about users being subjected to high levels of sexual harassment, aggression and violence. We surveyed 9,987 dating platform users in Australia to explore the prevalence and nature of dating app facilitated sexual violence (DAFSV) victimisation. Findings revealed that three-quarters of users were subjected to online DAFSV, and a third were subjected to in-person DAFSV, perpetrated by someone they met on a dating app or website. Users often experienced repeat victimisation. DAFSV victimisation was particularly common among women and LGB+ communities. Findings provide valuable information to aid development of policies and practices to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of DAFSV.

## The modus operandi of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) offenders

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The overwhelming bulk of research examining child sexual abuse material (CSAM) offenders has focused on their demographic and psychological characteristics. This presentation reports the results of self-report study on 75 convicted CSAM offenders, focussing on their pathways to offending and the offending strategies they employ. Specific issues covered include: how and where they first encountered CSAM; how their offending escalated; the search terms they use; where they locate CSAM online; the devices they use; the locations and times of their offending; situational triggers for offending; how they go about establishing connections with other offenders; security strategies they employ to avoid detection; and things that discourage them from offending. It is argued that understating the offending strategies and patterns of offenders can inform prevention efforts aimed at blocking, discouraging and disrupting their behaviour.

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