

Foreword

I am delighted to welcome this book as an exceptionally important contribution to understanding antisocial and violent behaviour in youth. It is a wonderful resource not only for busy practitioners and policy-makers but also for busy scholars and researchers. The contents are remarkably wide-ranging, covering risk and protective factors as well as prevention and treatment techniques for an extensive variety of problems in childhood and adolescence: delinquency, aggression, violence, conduct disorder, ADHD, substance use problems and suicide. All those who read this book will learn a great deal about the frontiers of knowledge in the field of childhood and adolescent psychopathology.

Dr. Jalal Shamsie should be warmly congratulated for at least three great achievements. First, he started to publish the newsletter *Youth Update* 20 years ago and is still publishing it today. *Youth Update* is an extremely valuable resource that contains summaries of the most up-to-date research findings, selecting clinically relevant articles from over 70 professional journals. *Youth Update* is particularly important in fostering evidence-based practice because the information and how it is presented can be easily understood by practitioners. Deservedly, it is now internationally famous.

Second, Dr. Shamsie had the brilliant idea of collecting these summaries of research findings into a single organized volume called *Antisocial and Violent Youth*. This book, now known as Volume I, was published to critical acclaim in 1999. It covered the period from the founding of *Youth Update* in 1983 up to 1997.

Third, Dr. Shamsie has now produced the present update, Volume II, which covers the period from 1997 to 2002. Like Volume I, it is a great resource.

How has knowledge about antisocial and violent youth advanced? I have not carried out a systematic analysis of Volume II, but here are my impressions after reading it. First, there have been enormous advances in knowledge about risk and protective factors, mainly derived from large-scale public health surveys and continuing longitudinal surveys of antisocial behaviour. Virtually all the major surveys can be found in either Volume I or Volume II. Second, knowledge about effective methods of prevention and treatment, based on high-quality experimental evaluations, is rapidly increasing. Again, most of the major intervention studies can be found in either Volume I or Volume II. Fortunately, many of these evaluations show that there are effective methods that may significantly reduce the damage to society caused by antisocial behaviour. The challenge to researchers is

to communicate effectively about what works—not only to practitioners but also to government policy-makers and the media—and this book should help a great deal in achieving this aim.

As might have been expected, new studies about risk and protective factors, and prevention and treatment methods are the latest advancements. However, this volume also shows that more efforts are being made to link fundamental and applied research by using the results of risk- and protective-factor studies to improve intervention methods. This was also an aim of Rolf Loeber and myself in our two recent edited volumes (Loeber & Farrington, 1998, 2001). Ideally, evaluations of the effectiveness of intervention techniques should also teach us about risk and protective factors; however, this has not yet happened to any great degree, mostly because intervention techniques use a variety of approaches, and it is difficult to isolate the effects of their different ingredients.

It seems there is more research on bullying and on the effectiveness of school-based programs in this volume, no doubt reflecting the increased importance of these topics. Also, there were more summaries of systematic reviews and meta-analyses of intervention studies. The Campbell Collaboration was recently founded to carry out systematic reviews of the effectiveness of intervention programs and to make these reviews available to everyone through the Internet (Farrington & Petrosino, 2001).

This volume is a wonderful resource of up-to-date information about influencing factors and effective interventions for antisocial behaviour in childhood and adolescence. It is also easily readable. I am delighted to recommend this volume, together with Volume I, as essential reading for scholars and practitioners who are concerned with antisocial and violent behaviour in youth.

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REFERENCES

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