

Exposure to community violence and children's aggressive and delinquent behaviors: how are they related? Results from the SUCCEED project

Gilda Santos

CIJ - Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Justice; School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Margarida Santos

CIJ - Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Justice; School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Josefina Castro

CEJEIA, Lusíada University, Porto, Portugal

Carla Cardoso

CIJ - Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Justice; School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Diana Almeida

School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Hugo Gomes

School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Inês Guedes

CIJ - Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Justice; School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Samuel Moreira

CIJ - Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Justice; School of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Porto

Children's aggressive and delinquent behaviors have become objects of intense research seeking to understand which conditions might contribute to their emergence and further development. Previous studies have highlighted the crucial role adverse childhood experiences, such as exposure to violent behaviors, might play in the explanation of such behaviors alongside other individual, familiar, and contextual factors. Thus, this ongoing project seeks to expand previous research by exploring how exposure to community violence is related to and able to influence the development of children's aggressive and delinquent behaviors. Furthermore, it aims to analyze the indirect effect that individual (e.g., executive functioning, sex, age, substance use, deviant peer association) and contextual (e.g., perceptions of social disorder and incivilities, collective efficacy, neighborhood attachment) features might exert in this relationship. Using a national sample of middle-school, non-referred children aged between 12 and 15 years and attending the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades in public schools, this study followed a quantitative approach, using an online self-report survey directed at the participating children. This paper seeks to present and discuss this study's key findings and highlight the importance of exploring these relationships with samples with different social and cultural backgrounds to enhance comprehensive and informed juvenile delinquency prevention efforts.