

Violence Prevention Focused on Children and Youth: Youth Transfer to Adult Criminal Courts

Summary Evidence Table

Studies measuring specific deterrence effects of juvenile transfer policies

Author (year) Design suitability: design Limitations of execution (#) Specific limitations Analytic methods	Historical Context	Location Study population Sample size (N) Sample demographic characteristics	Intervention population Comparison population	Results		
				Reported effect measure Follow-up time; % sample or N with sufficient time at risk for recidivism analysis ^a	Reported effect	Value used in review) ^b
Barnoski (2003) ¹ Greatest: prospective cohort study with concurrent comparison Good (0) • No limitations Multivariate analysis, controlling for demographics, charge, and offending history	Washington State expanded automatic transfer provisions in 1994 & 1997. This study examined an earlier cohort arrested on charges that would have made them eligible for automatic transfer had they been arrested after the 1994 law.	Washington state Youth 16–17 years old arrested 1/1/1992–7/1/1994 N = 913 <u>Retained youth, n = 738</u> Age: 16 yrs 54%; 17 yrs 46% Sex: F 7%; M 93% Race: white 56%; black 20% <u>Transferred youth, n = 175</u> Age: 16 yrs 26%; 17 yrs 74% Sex: F 2%; M 98% Race: white 51%; black 31%	Youth arrested on any of nine serious felonies, or with specified offending histories, and transferred to criminal justice system Youth meeting same arrest and offending history criteria, but retained in juvenile justice system	Violent felony re-arrests during 18 mos follow-up after release from confinement, adjusted for confounders by logistic regression Retained youth: 81% (600 of 738 followed up) Transferred youth: 51% (90 of 175 followed up)	Transferred youth = 11% Retained youth = 11%	% increase in recidivism associated with transfer, compared with retention Effect size = 0.0%
Bishop et al (1996), ² Winner et al (1997) ³ Greatest: prospective, with matched comparison Good (1) • Proxy measure of outcome (i.e., re- arrest for any crime) Analysis of discordant pairs; logistic regression, controlling for background and history; time to and frequency of re-arrest		Florida Youth arrested 1/1/1985– 12/30/1987. N = 2887 matched pairs Demographics: Male: 92% Age: 17 yrs 60%; 16 yrs 25%; 15 yrs 25%; <15 yrs 3% ^c Race: Transferred youth (53% white; 47% nonwhite) Non-transferred youth (58% white; 42% nonwhite)	Youth transferred from the Florida juvenile justice system to the adult justice system Youth retained in the juvenile system, matched with transferred youth on six criteria: most serious current charge, number of counts, most serious prior offenses, number of prior referrals, age, gender (race matched when possible)	Re-arrest for any crime through Nov 15, 1994; over 6 years 93% (2700 pairs [2887 total pairs – 187 lost])	Probability of any rearrest among transferred juveniles, compared with retained juveniles: 0.95 (p=0.332)	Because significant effect modification by initial arrest (misdemeanor vs. felony and felony type) was found in logistic regression analysis, and because full model coefficients were not published, effect sizes were not calculated.

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Fagan (1995, 1996) ^{4,5} Greatest: prospective cohort study with comparison Good (1) • Sample demographics not described Proportions re-arrested and re-incarcerated; time to first re-arrest Re-arrest rate; proportional hazards of specific types of subsequent crime, including violent crime	New York Juvenile Offender Law of 1978 legislatively excludes from juvenile processing 14–15 yr olds on 15 charges, and 13 yr olds on non- capital murder In NY 16 yrs is age of adult court jurisdiction In NJ, age of adult court jurisdiction is 18; no legislative exclusion	New York City metro area 15 and 16 yr olds arrested 1/1/1981–12/31/1982 on either felony robbery or burglary N = 800 youth (200 in each of 4 counties) Sampled on age (15 or 16); other demographics not stated	Youth arrested in 2 counties in NY on either felony robbery or burglary Youth arrested in 2 socio-demographically similar counties in NJ on equivalent charges	Re-arrest and time to re- arrest Follow-up through 6/30/1989; at least 2 years “at risk” following release	Proportional hazard model for violent crime re-arrest: Exp (B) = 0.72 (p<.05), (juvenile vs. adult court associated with 28% decreased rate of re- arrest for violent crime) Note: The model includes a significant interaction of transfer with sentence length; the transfer effect increases with longer sentences	Effect size used is based on transfer main effect term alone, and underestimates the effect for those with sentences including incarceration. Increased violent recidivism for transfer = 39% (1/0.72) – 1 Note: Most of the sample in each court was not incarcerated.
Lanza-Kaduce (2002) ⁶ Greatest: prospective matched pair comparison Fair (2) • Sample demographics not provided • Proxy measure of outcome (i.e., re- arrest for any felony Study compared felony recidivism rates and assessed discordant pairs in “best matched” pair data subset (i.e., retained pair member at least as serious as transferred member)	1994 changes in Florida law extended prosecutorial waiver for 14- and 15-year olds, and also for certain repeat and violent offenders of any age	Florida (6 out of 20 judicial circuits, both urban and rural) Youth arrested in 1995–1996 N = 475 matched pairs N = 315 “best matched pairs” (Best matched pairs exclude pairs in which transferred youth had a worse criminal background than retained youth on a 12-item index. Possibility of worse criminal background among retained youth not noted.)	Youth transferred to adult court system Youth retained in the juvenile system who were matched on 7 criteria: most serious current charge, number of counts, most serious prior offenses, number of prior referrals, age, gender, race	Felony recidivism after age 18 Recidivism data collected through early 2001 Depending on age at arrest, the recidivism periods after age 18 ranged from <1 to over 4+ years, equivalent within matched pairs	Best-matched pairs: Felony recidivism higher among transferred than retained juveniles (49.2% vs 36.8%) Ratio of discordant pairs among the best-matched = 1.76 Only transferred youth re-arrested (90 pairs) vs only retained youth re- arrested (51 pairs)	% increase in felony recidivism for transferred vs. retained youth Effect Size: 33.7% (49.2/36.8) – 1

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Myers (2001) ⁷ Greatest: prospective cohort study Good (0) Logistic regression of overall re-arrest, and violent felony re-arrest, controlling for demographics, criminal history, current offense and case processing; Survival models of time to recidivism following release	1996 Pennsylvania law expanded transfer by excluding from juvenile court murder and several violent crimes committed with a deadly weapon by juveniles between 15 and 18 yrs of age at the time of offense. This study examined a sample from an earlier cohort, who were arrested on charges that would have made them eligible for automatic transfer had they occurred after the legal change	Pennsylvania Males aged 15–18 yrs, arrested 1/1/1994–2/31/1994 N = 557 males Transferred: 138 Retained: 419 Mean age: 16.7 yrs transferred juveniles; 16.0 yrs retained juveniles Race: 72% transferred nonwhite; 82% retained nonwhite	Youth transferred to adult court Youth retained in juvenile court	Violent felony re-arrests Follow-up until 6/30/1998 (mean time “at risk” in the community for committing a subsequent crime: 17.9 months) Follow-up for those not still incarcerated as of Dec. 31, 1997, 89% (494 of original 557)	Logistic regression of violent recidivism following final disposition B = .692 (SE .463), (p>0.10) OR = 2.0	% increase in violent felony recidivism for transferred compared with retained juveniles, calculated from reported modeled proportions of violent recidivism Transferred youth: 0.2305 Retained youth: 0.1304 Effect size = 77% (0.2305 / 0.1304) – 1
Podkopacz & Feld (2001) Podkopacz (1996) Greatest: prospective cohort study Good (1) No analysis assessing violent outcome while controlling background confounding Logistic regression		Minnesota (Hennepin County) Juveniles arrested in 1986– 1992 for whom a motion was filed for transfer to adult court; some were transferred, others retained. N = 330 youth Transferred = 215; Retained = 115 Age at offense: mean 16.5 yrs Race: 55% African American, 28% white; 17% other	Youth transferred to adult court system Youth motioned for transfer, but retained in juvenile court system	New adjudicated or convicted offense Follow-up: at least 2 yrs of “at risk” time N = 290 (excluding 40 youth with insufficient time at risk)	Reconviction for any offense, controlled for criminal history, gender, age at transfer decision, type of sentence: Transfer OR : 1.93, p<.05. (i.e., reconvicted youth more likely to have been transferred than retained)	% increase in reconviction among transferred juveniles compared with retained juveniles: Effect size: 26.5% (OR was applied to retained reconviction rate, to generate RR)

Key: mo month; N sample size; NA not available; yr year; NJ New Jersey; NY New York ; OR odds ratio; vs versus

^a Assessment of attrition is not applicable in these studies, as they report re-arrest in the presence of re-arrest records and assume no re-arrest in the absence of records.

^b If results were reported from logistic regression models, odds ratios were transformed into relative rate changes (21,41) so that these effect measures could be more appropriately compared with other studies in the body of evidence.

^c Percentages add to >100% (error in original data)

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