Public Abstract

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Title:Family-based treatments for serious juvenile offenders: A multilevel meta-analysis

Several family-based treatments hold promise for reducing serious juvenile offending, yet these treatments remain underutilized. This study used research synthesis methods to (a) review the strengths and limitations of existing research on family-based treatments for serious juvenile offenders, (b) statistically combine the results of studies to estimate an average effect, and (c) examine how characteristics of participants, treatments, and methods influence treatment outcomes. The 31 studies on family-based treatments showed several methodological strengths (such as comparison to usual treatment conditions), produced small but meaningful treatment effects relative to comparison conditions, and were influenced by several key factors. Overall, the results of this study have implications for decisions about the use of family-based treatments for serious juvenile offenders in community settings as well as the continued development and study of these treatments.