"THE CORRELATION BETWEEN VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN WITHIN THE FAMILY AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY"

(Executive Summary)

conducted for the
Advisory Committee
for the Prevention & Combating of Family Violence

by the research team:
Stelios Georgiades
Semeli Vizakou
Dona Papastilianou

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A. Research Aim:

As per the instructions of the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence within the Family, the research aim was the correlation between violence against children within the family and juvenile delinquency.

B. The Main Targets of the research were:

A. The study of the existing foreign and Cypriot bibliography with reference to violence against children in the family and juvenile delinquency.

B. Investigation of the degree of cross correlation between child abuse and the manifestation of delinquent behavior in adolescents and adults in Cyprus.

C. Investigation of the correlation between specific types of abuse and specific types of juvenile delinquency and

D. The submission of proposals/suggestions for the confrontation of various forms of abuse and juvenile delinquent behavior at the various stages they may manifest.

C. Methodology

Taking into consideration the complexity of the subject under investigation, as well as the large number of factors which are likely to contribute in the development of such types of behavior, the data were collected using specially designed questionnaires from three different sample groups.

1. A cluster sample of a general population of adolescents (N= 1,119) aged 12-16 years old who were attending secondary education in all the provinces (urban and suburban regions).

2. A clinical sample of adolescents aged 12-16 years who were followed at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (N=151) and the Social Welfare Service(N=109) for the period of 2006-2008.The data were collected by the Archival Research Method and the sample covers urban and semi-urban regions of all districts.

3. Clinical sample of Cypriot prisoners(N=109) which was collected using also the Archival Research Method and referred to convicted young adult individuals up until the age of 30, who were serving their prison sentence in 2008.

The collected data is displayed in tables of simple distributions of multiple entries. Furthermore, the results were analyzed by means of statistical correlations using the X^2 (Chi-Square)criterion with analysis of multi-factor logarithmic regression (step-wise procedure), the main objective being to ascertain the hypothesis set concerning a number of factors and their relation to all forms of violence.

D. Basic Findings

Statistical analyses of the data showed that a series of factors which were directly or indirectly related to the family environment are considerably correlated in as much with domestic violence as with the observed juvenile delinquency. The results of each sample are summarized here below:

D1. Student Population Sample

> **General sample characteristics**.

Concerning the student sample (N=1,119) the average age was 15 years old. Half of the students resided in urban regions and at least half of them stated to have a good school record (16-20/20), whereas 27% scored a poor performance (8-13/20) and had learning difficulties.

A percentage of 7% of their parents were divorced, 6% were in a second marriage and 2.2% had deceased. 15% of the parents were illiterate or primary school graduates, while 33% were College/University graduates. Roughly half of the fathers of the students were smokers and nearly 25% consumed alcohol ranging from time to time up to very often, whilst respective percentages were less for the mothers and siblings. Also nearly 20% of the fathers and mothers were under medication. A percentage of 85% of the students reported a low financial family status.

A percentage of 80% of the sample reported a frequent contact and bond with family members. Nevertheless 35% of the students watched TV more than 3 hours per day, 20% studied more than 2 hours per day and 11% attended private afternoon classes more than 3 hours per day. Also around 90% of the students reported feeling that their family was nurturing, supportive, encouraging and protective.

> **Results of students abused by their family or by third parties.**

According to the students, they seem to be on the receiving end of high percentages of **psychological violence/abuse** so much within as outside the family unit. Within the family, 50% of the students were subjected to wild shouting, whereas 10-20% was subjected to insults, curses, devalorisation and threats of being expelled from home. A smaller percentage, 4-6% received death threats, discriminations about his/her abilities and insults for their parents.

Outside the family setting, the percentage of psychological violence and victimization by third parties at school, (adults and students) is quite considerable (30-50%). In addition, friends and even strangers exert psychological violence towards the students at a percentage of about 5-25%.

The exertion of various forms of **physical violence/abuse** toward the students by the family or third parties, even rarely, is reported at 15% or less and is mainly punching and hair/ear pulling. Additionally, a percentage of 5-9% of the students is subjected to kicking, beating with a stick, sharp pinching and thrown objects at, by family members. More severe abusive behaviors by family members such as:

locking, tying, drowning but also threatening the students with a knife, amounts to 3%. Outside the family, some forms of physical violence by other students, amounts to 25% confirming the increased frequency of the phenomenon of abusive behavior exercised by peers.

The percentage of students that have suffered **sexual violence/ abuse** one or more times from members of their family amounted to 2-2.5%. Additionally the students reported being sexually abused or exploited from a third party at a percentage of 5%.

It has been observed that, when at least one of the two parents has deceased, the frequency of verbal, physical but also sexual violence from the family members towards the students is higher (on a statistically significant level). Also alcohol consumption and use of medication, both on the fathers' and mothers' side, was found to be correlated significantly with the exertion of violence/abuse towards the students from their family members.

➢ **Elements of violence/ delinquency from students toward third parties.**

In relation to the practice of **psychological violence** towards third parties, 80% of the students used wild shouting, swearing/ridiculing, 50% of the students insulted someone in front of others and 20-30% of the students even though it was seldom, threatened, devalorised, intimidated someone or insulted his/her parents. Also 1:10 students threatened to kill someone.

With regard to the exertion of **physical violence,** 50% of the students started fights easily, impulsively and with no self-control. Whilst 40% of students have hit someone either on the body or face, 30 to 35% of the students attacked by kicking, violent pushing, pinching sharply, pulling other's' ears or hair. Further serious attacks from students toward third parties involved strangling, tying, locking and knife threatening and were reported at 10%.

Violence toward animals was reported at low levels. The biggest percentage of students, 80% reported not having kicked an animal in a wild manner, 15.3% has done so rarely whereas only 6.2% stated having beaten an animal often or very often.

Various forms of sexual violence exercised from students toward others were lower in percentage than other forms of violence, but not less important since nearly 10% of the students stated they had sexually abused/exploited someone.

Based on the above, it is clear that the frequency of violence seems to decrease as the gravity of the behavior is increased in all forms of violence. Comparatively, psychological violence seems to be more frequent while physical and sexual are less frequent. The results seem to be consistent with the relative international bibliography and confirm that when violence is easily proven or confirmed (e.g. physical, sexual) all the more seldom it is used.

> **Other challenging behaviors (Behavior Disorders)**

Beyond the violence exercised by the students, it was deemed necessary to investigate other types of behavior disorders which cropped up within the framework of juvenile delinquency.

An increased frequency of misbehaviors **not liable to legal prosecution** was reported by the students in the frame of violating school or parent regulations. More than 50% of the students declared that, frequently to rarely, they were late to arrive at school, copied during exams, were truanting and told lies in order to avoid some obligation or other. Also 31% of the students stated being smokers or having smoked already and 40% consumed beer/vodka-ice even a few times a month.

Other types of violations and students' misbehavior liable to be **legally prosecuted** were stated such as: 57% of students drive motorbikes without a helmet, 30% drive a vehicle without a car drivers' license, 25% burn/rip books 25% do not wear a seat belt in the car, 20% forge or write offensive remarks on walls against others, steal, act violently against other peoples' property, 10% proceeded to arson and vandalism and 5% make use of narcotic substances. At the same time 12% of students (N=136) reported to have been arrested by the police one to four times.

> **Correlation between juvenile delinquency and adolescent abuse within the family.**

A Regression Analysis (Step-wise procedure) was undertaken in order to investigate which factors contribute to the development of delinquent behavior and the possible correlation with violence which children/adolescents are subjected to within their own families. The aim was to predict which factors are associated with all forms of violence/ delinquency practiced by adolescents.

Factors correlated to the Students' Psychological Violence on others.

The independent factors which, when coexisting, may predict the use of psychological violence by the adolescents, were:

Verbal violence/abuse of the child/adolescent by the family members, disharmony in the members of family, the death of at least one parent, the absence of pride for one another within the family, the frequent punishment by parents, the gender (masculine) of the students, alcohol consumption by the student, watching television more than 3 hours per day and the student's smoking habits.

Factors correlated to the Students' Physical Violence on others.

As per the factors studied, those which are correlated on a statistically significant level and thus able to predict the exertion of physical violence by the adolescents are:

Verbal violence/abuse of the child by the family members, the death of a parent, disharmony within the family, poor school attendance, the severity of the student's and the mother's alcohol consumption, the excessive time spent watching television

(.>3 hours per day), the student's smoking habits and the student's use of codeine/amphetamine.

Factors correlated to the Students' Violence against Animals.

The correlated factors which may predict the violence towards animals are: the sexual abuse of the adolescent by the members of his family, disharmony between family members, the students' gender (boy) and the mothers' smoking habits.

Factors correlated to the Students' Sexual Violence on others.

The practice of sexual violence by the students seems to be correlated to and forecasted by the coexistence of many factors: sexual abuse of the student by members of the family, the students' gender (masculine), students' smoking habits, alcohol consumption by the students themselves and frequent punishment from the parents.

Factors correlated to other Students' Behavioral Disorders.

The factors correlated on a statistically significant level which when coexisting, may predict other behavioral disorders or delinquency of the students are: The practice of verbal abuse by the student, the student's gender, the student's alcohol consumption, the time dedicated by the student to homework study, time dedicated to do various activities with the family and watch TV, the student's smoking habits as well as those of the mother.

Factors correlated especially to the use of narcotic substances.

- The sexual and physical abuse of the student by members of the family, student's alcohol consumption and the smoking habits of the mother are all correlated on a significant level with the use of codeine/amphetamines by the students.
- At the same time the sexual and physical abuse of the student by members of his family, alcohol consumption by the student and the time the students spend doing various activities with their family seem to be correlated on a significant level, especially in the case of use of Cocaine/LSD/ Ecstasy and Heroin by the students.

To conclude: in the sample of the general adolescent population it is evident that there is a correlation between violence against children in the family and juvenile delinquency. Simultaneously a series of other factors have been observed which are related to and have considerable impact on students regarding the manifestation or not of delinquent behavior.

D2. CLINICAL SAMPLE CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)

The adolescents and families who apply to the services of CAMHS have already expressed some dysfunction and / or psycho-emotional difficulties and/or

psychopathology. Consequently, it is expected that, in this sample, problematic behaviors and negative experiences/**violence in the family** will be met more often**.**

➢ **Sample characteristics**

In this sample (N=109) the adolescents studied, faced problems in education at much higher rates than the general population. A percentage of 65% of the adolescents presented an incomplete school attendance, 46% had learning difficulties and attended special education classes and 3% dropped-out of school. Furthermore, their families' socio-economic status was low to average, separation/divorce of the parents was as often as 20%, whilst 10% of those were remarried. In terms of the parents' educational level, 16% were uneducated or had only completed the primary school and 21% had received a higher education. Concerning the fathers' habits, smoking reached 65%, alcohol consumption occasionally to systematically rose up to 50% and medicine abuse at 8%.

➢ **Results of child/adolescent violence/abuse within the family domestic.**

In this sample, 50% of the adolescent 'clients' grew up in a violent environment and only 38% of these had reported it to the police. Restrictive measures for the perpetrator were taken for 67% of the cases, 46% of the perpetrators were condemned and half of them imprisoned.

With regards to the types of violence/abuse that the adolescents were subjected to, it has become evident concerning **physical violence /abuse** that, about 20% of adolescents were on the receiving end of physical attacks (punching, kicking, pinching) by their parents. More severe abuse, using objects (belt, stick etc.) was recorded at 11% from their father and 6% from their mother. Injury by the use of sharp objects or cigarette burns went up to 3%. The adolescents received 'slight' attacks from their parent (e.g. pulling hair/ ears) much more often (31-35%) probably under the 'pretext' of punishment, as it has also been the case in the bibliographical review.

Psychological Violence/Abuse by both parents towards the adolescents has been recorded especially high with wild shouting at 68%, threats/intimidation at 48% blackmail, systematic rejection and depreciation at 40%, swearing/cursing at 30%. Furthermore, locking the adolescent indoors or outdoors reached 8-12% and discrimination at 6-9%. The siblings practiced similar forms of psychological violence (12-18%) towards the adolescents whereas grandparents' same behavior was reported at very low percentages. Concerning **neglect** and deprivation of food, medical care and money by the parents, even though the above are seldom occurrences, the proportional percentages oscillate between 6-17%.

Sexual Violence/Abuse was comparatively less frequent, but in total, 10% of the adolescents of the sample were sexually abused by family members (parents, step-father, siblings, grandparents) and another 5% by others.

> **Factors relative to violence within the family/ abuse of the adolescent.**

Violence is practiced in families from all socio-economic levels at a percentage higher than 30%. But, in the sample of CAMHS, the results showed that the lower economic status of families was correlated, at a statistically significant level, to the existence of violent behavior in the family, at a percentage of 54%.

Concerning psychological violence by the parents towards the adolescent, it was apparent that the percentage of fathers exerting violence is statistically much higher in those who come from a lower educational background compared to those with a higher one. A similar tendency is seen for the physical violence but the percentages are not statistically significant. The disorganization and dysfunctionality of the family exposes children/adolescents to higher rates of violence against them (divorce/separation, death of a parent and a new marriage).

In particular, the percentage of adolescents who grew up in an environment with domestic violence is statistically much lower in families where both parents lived together compared to other cases.

In the analyses conducted, the risk of an adolescent being subjected to physical violence involving injury by the use of objects from the father compared to the mother when one of the two parents at least has remarried, is shown to be considerably increased,(on statistically significant level), in contrast to parents who live together. Also the percentage of fathers who swore/cursed and systematically rejected, depreciated their children is much higher (on statistically significant level) in cases where parents are divorced or have remarried in relation to the case when the two parents live together.

Also poor school attendance and the adolescents' learning difficulties present themselves more often but are not statistically significant in families with domestic violence. The results are statistically significant concerning the correlation of domestic violence and abuse with the parents' use of alcohol, drugs, smoking, and of the neglect of the adolescents' needs. Furthermore, the adolescents' learning difficulties are marginally correlated with special education classes while the same variables are correlated on a statistically significant level with aggressive behavior both psychological/verbal) violence towards other children (44%) as well as with physical violence from adolescents towards their parents (24%). These percentages are doubled in the respective behavior of children who did not receive special education/ support.

> **Results of violent behavior in adolescents/ juvenile delinquency**

The expression of aggressiveness in adolescents is particularly high, since 60% seem to have exerted psychological violence towards their parents, 18% physical violence and 20% assaulted their parent's property. The aggressiveness was extended to other children, since 36% practiced psychological violence 15% physical violence and 2% sexual violence against other children. Also 14% assaulted other children's' property. The percentage of adolescents practicing psychological violence

toward relatives rose up to 14%, while physical violence and assault toward their property did not exceed 5%. Violence against animals was practiced by 9.3% of adolescents. In this sample 5.3% (N=8) of adolescents had been arrested by the police 1-4 times.

Self-Aggressive behavior is also important in this clinical sample, since 20.5% had attempted to commit suicide. A percentage of 18% expressed very risky behavior towards themselves and 9% presented self-injury. Also, during the last 12 months prior to the data collection, 4% made random use of narcotic substances, 30% of adolescents made use of legal substances, 25% smoked, 20% consumed alcohol occasionally and 8% were medication abusers.

In terms of diagnosis, 1/3 of the adolescents of this sample, presented disorders relative to the manifestation of juvenile delinquency. These were: learning disorders (32.5%) depression (20.5%). Oppositional Defiant Disorder 15%, Conduct Disorder (11%), ADHD (9%), Disruptive Behavior Disorder and Anxiety Disorder (8%).

> **Correlation between the violence against children within the family and juvenile delinquency.**

It has also been ascertained in this sample that child/adolescent abuse within the family is correlated, on a statistically significant level, to juvenile delinquency and the manifestation of violent behaviors.

In particular, with regards to aggressiveness towards others, 76% of abused adolescents practiced psychological violence towards their parents and 32% acted violently against them, a percentage four times bigger than that of non-abused children. It is also statistically evident that abused children/adolescents become more violent towards other children, psychologically 51%, as well as physically 27%. The percentage is twice and five times as high as the respective percentage of non-abused children/adolescents.

Furthermore, child abuse within the family and domestic violence is correlated, on a statistically significant level, to self-aggressiveness. The results show three to four times higher the use of substances, alcohol and smoking but also the rest of the risky behaviors such as driving without a drivers' license, under the influence of alcohol, speeding with the car etc. In parallel, the suicide attempts are twice as frequent in children/adolescents abused within their families rather than others.

The results in this sample have shown that abused children manifest mental disorders relative to juvenile delinquency more frequently than others. In these terms, the Conduct Disorder and the Oppositional Defiant Disorder were statistically correlated on a significant level with the verbal and physical violence against parents, and other children, self-destructive behaviors and alcohol consumption.

D3. CLINICAL SAMPLE OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

Adolescents and their families who apply to the Social Welfare Services or are under ordered supervision, have already manifested problems in the functioning and welfare of the family. This clinical sample of population was collected using the criteria of one or both of the factors under investigation being present. So it is expected that, in this sample problematic behaviors and negative experiences/violence in the family will be found more frequently.

The sample of this adolescent population (N=109) had an average age of 15.6 years. A large proportion of adolescents experienced problems in education. About 27% of the adolescents had dropped-out of school and 67% of the participants who attended school had inadequate attendance. Also 39% of the adolescents had learning difficulties and were given special education/ support at school.

As expected, in 75% of the families, the socio-economic level ranged from low to average (<2500 Euros), though 2/3 lived in a self-owned house. In this sample, twice the number of adolescents (41%), compared to CAMHS' adolescents, had divorced or separated parents, while along the same percentages (10%) had parents who had remarried. An important characteristic of the sample was that 8% of the adolescents had experienced a serious loss – death of a parent. Also on average 34% of the parents were uneducated or primary school graduates and only 5% had received a higher education. The adolescents' fathers at 45% were smokers, 53% drank alcohol, 17% made use of drugs.

> **Results of child/adolescent violence/abuse within the family.**

In this sample it has been observed that a very large percentage (80%) of the adolescents grew up in an environment of domestic violence. In these families, 65% reported the violence to the police and in 45% of the cases, the perpetrator was held under restrictive measures. The perpetrators were sentenced in court in 28% of the cases and of these 15% were imprisoned, 11% imprisonment with suspension and 2% were sentenced to a financial penalty.

Regarding types and frequency of violence against children within the family, it was found that **physical violence/abuse** is practiced twice as frequently by fathers (about 50%) than mothers (25%) in terms of punching/ kicking/ pinching. Parents attacking and injuring the adolescents using sharp objects rose to 20 % (fathers) and 10% (mothers). Hair and ear pulling seems to be an abusive behavior of both parents at a percentage of 35-40%. Less frequently (1-2%), both mothers and fathers burned their children using cigarettes or water, a form of abuse that calls for personality disorder of these parents. No other extreme forms of abuse have been noted, such as tying, drowning or using chemical substances neither by the mother or the father.

Psychological violence/abuse of the parents was especially increased as it oscillated between 75% for wild shouting, 50% for swearing, cursing, threats and intimidations, blackmail, systematic rejection and 15-20% for locking the adolescent indoors/outdoors by both parents. Regarding siblings the practice of psychological

violence rose to 25%. Also 1:10 adolescents were at the receiving end of unfavorable discrimination from the family regarding their gender or abilities. Concerning grandparents, teachers and friends, the percentages were less than 5% for all forms of psychological violence towards adolescents. Parental neglect in terms of food deprivation and insufficient medical care was reported at 10-15% while social deprivation rose to 30%.

Regarding **sexual violence/abuse** of the adolescents by the parents, it is found that the percentage is smaller than 4% for some forms of sexual violence and zero for some others.

> ➤ **Factors correlating to adolescent violence/abuse within the family.**

In the sample of the Social Welfare Services as well as that of CAMHS, there existed a correlation on a statistically significant level, between an abusive environment and living in a rented house, as well as the mothers' alcohol consumption, psychotropic drug use and smoking habits. In this sample it was also confirmed that:

Violence against children is practiced in families of all socio-economic levels at a percentage greater than 70%. In families of low financial status, living in a rented house and with parents of a low educational background (especially the mothers in this sample), the percentage of domestic violence is higher but not of statistical significance. It is evident also that fathers with a higher education tend to avoid physical violence regarding punching/ kicking/pinching but not less than others when it comes to pulling ears/hair or injury by use of objects.

The disorganization and dysfunctionality of the family in this sample also subjects children/adolescents to higher rates of violence against them. Families where parents are divorced showed a much higher percentage of domestic violence (90%), in comparison to parents who live together (67%). Also an increased percentage (30%-60%) of psychological violence with swearing/cursing/depreciation came from mothers who were separated or divorced and/or had remarried.

There was no statistically significant difference in physical, psychological or sexual violence toward adolescents in terms of their gender, but it has been observed that especially mothers devalorised their sons less often than their daughters.

In this sample, the adolescents' learning difficulties and special education/support were correlated on a statistically significant level with his/her abuse within the family and the mothers' use of psychotropic medication.

> ➤ **Results of the adolescents' violent behavior/delinquency.**

The manifestation of delinquent behavior and the enactment of aggressiveness in the adolescents of the sample were the following: 70% practiced psychological/verbal violence towards their parents, nearly 45% against other children, 16% against relatives and 23% against known or unknown persons.

Furthermore, 35% of adolescents assaulted their parents and 27% damaged their parents' property, while 32% assaulted other children and less than 10% assaulted relatives /known persons /strangers and their properties.

According to the results, in terms of bullying, beyond physical and psychological violence against other children and their property, the adolescents abused sexually peers at a percentage of 3.9% through obscene attacks and rape attempts.

Verbal and physical abuse, as an expression of aggressiveness, did not vary considerably in terms of the adolescent's gender, but was correlated on a statistically significant level with the adolescent's poor school attendance.

In the sample of the SWS the percentage of adolescents arrested by the police rose to 49.5% (N=54). The frequency of their arrest was 1-10 times. Nearly half of the adolescents (N=28), were sentenced by court and received mainly a penalty of guardianship order while 2 of these were imprisoned.

The adolescents' Self-Aggressiveness in the same sample was remarkable since around 20% attempted to commit suicide one or more times, were self-injured with, or swallowed objects, mutilated themselves, while about 50% had shown other dangerous behaviors (e.g. speed driving, without a drivers' license or under the influence of alcohol, without taking precautions).

Furthermore, five to seven out of ten adolescents made use of legal substances, smoked and drunk alcohol, while 10% abused medication during the last 12 months. The percentages rose from 2 to 9% for the use of various narcotic substances with marijuana leading as number one in frequency. In further analyses that were conducted, it became evident that the use of legal substances was correlated (on a statistically significant level) with the low or average financial status of the family.

Also concerning the self-destructive behavior of adolescents, even though the family status was not a significant factor, it was proved that specific dangerous behaviors (driving without a drivers' license, speeding etc.,) were increased when one or the other parent had remarried. It was more often manifested in boys' behavior while on the contrary suicide attempts were the privilege of girls as the statistical correlation indicates.

Poor school attendance seems to be an anticipating factor in juvenile delinquency since it was correlated on a statistically significant level in this sample, with the use of substances, verbal and physical violence which adolescents practiced against others and self-injury. Also poor school attendance had increased percentages of correlation with dangerous behaviors and suicide attempts.

Concerning the psychopathology, in this sample too, the aggressive/delinquent behaviors of adolescents are correlated to learning difficulties (40%) and specific clinical disorders such as: Conduct Disorder (28%), Personality Disorders (15%), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (28%), ADHD (9%), mild mental retardation (9%), depressive disorder (7%) and sleeping disorder(6%).

- ➢ **Correlation of the adolescents' violence/abuse within the family and juvenile delinquency.**

Domestic violence/abuse of the adolescent and juvenile delinquency in this sample too had a statistically significant correlation, as adolescents who grew up in violent environments assaulted their parents twice more often, their peers five times more often and their relatives ten times more often than non-abused adolescents. Furthermore, abused adolescents practiced verbal violence toward their parents and other children twice more often and towards their relatives eight times more often than non- abused adolescents.

Violence in the family is not in itself the causal factor for the use of legal or illegal substances by adolescents since no correlation of statistical significance was found. The same applies to other self-aggressive behaviors, even though self-injuries in abused adolescents rose to 10% in comparison to zero percent in non-abused adolescents.

D4. SAMPLE OF CONVICTS

The sample of convicts was collected by the means of the Archival Research Method and in cooperation with the mental health services in the prison department, without the convicts being influenced in any way by the indirect data collection.

- ➢ **General characteristics of the sample:**

The sample is made up of 109 Cypriot convicts of whom only 8 were women (7.3%) and with an average age of 27 years. Half of the convicts were single while 1/5 were already divorced or had remarried. 65% of the convicts had dropped out of school and did not serve their military duties. Also 65% had been convicted for serious crimes, such as narcotic use and trafficking, homicide, theft, rape 10% etc. An important finding was also that about 30% of the convicts had relapsed since they were previously convicted and imprisoned.

Regarding their parents' family status, it was observed that there was an increased percentage of divorce/separation of parents (30%) and death of the father (11%) but also a low level of education of both parents where 60-70% were illiterate or primary school graduates. Very few parents (2%) were graduates of Tertiary Education.

- ➢ **Domestic Violence and Abuse of the convict as a child.**

A percentage of 63% of the convicts grew up in a domestic violence environment and were abused physically mainly by the father at a percentage of 40% with kicking, punching, ear pulling/attacks/injury using of objects. Other forms of physical violence were rare e.g. drowning, tying and burning with a cigarette 3-5%. Mothers practiced some forms of physical violence on a level of 15%. Siblings and grandparents had practiced very little physical violence towards the convicts.

The percentage of psychological violence which both parents practiced towards the convicts fluctuated between 25-40% where they were shouted at, sworn at, threatened, blackmailed, systematically rejected or were depreciated. Other forms of physical violence (deprivation of food, expenses, medical care) were rare. Sexual violence/abuse by family members was stated for 1% of the convicts and for 3.6% by others. It is thought that convicts avoided to confess this form of violence they suffered within the prison framework.

> **Factors concerning the convict's abuse.**

No statistically significant correlation was shown between the practice of physical and psychological violence by both parents and their educational level or family status. Nevertheless it is evident that illiterate mothers exerted physical violence more often towards convicts and non-divorced fathers exerted psychological violence toward convicts during their childhood.

Statistically significant results showed that the psychological violence was more often exerted by the mothers of the convicts who resided in rural regions and the physical violence was exerted more often by fathers residing in urban regions.

> **Violent behavior of the convict towards his family members and others.**

According to the results, 20% of the convicts practiced verbal violence toward their parents, partner, known and unknown people. Also the percentages of convicts who assaulted their parent, partner, relatives were as low as 10% and assaults towards known or unknown people, about 20%. Convicts assaults towards animals were at 4%. It is noted that it is rather possible that the convicts because of their personality avoided reporting the non proven violence they practiced.

Concerning sexual violence which convicts practiced, this amounts to 14% and was connected to raping of their partner, obscene behavior, lewdness directed to children, known and unknown people and coercion for prostitution of a known or unknown person. The majority of these actions were frequent in each convict and rarely a one-off attempt. The convicts, according to the results, attempted self harm and subjected themselves to dangers.

About 30% of the convicts had risky behaviors (speeding with a car, under the influence of alcohol) 20% attempted to commit suicide, 10% has injured themselves. (Self-injury was higher when the convict had illiterate parents). Also, apart from the fact that the majority of them are smokers, 40% are marijuana / hashish users, 20% cocaine and 10% heroin users. The percentage of convict alcoholism was at 4% ("essential alcohol consumption") while 32% of convicts were recorded to be drinking systematically.

The use of substances (as opposed to non-use) by the convicts is of statistical significance and is related with a series of factors. In particular:

- Heroin Use was correlated with the convicts domestic violence /abuse, the low educational level of the father, living in an urban area and his/her divorce.
- The use of marijuana /hashish was correlated with the convict's low educational level.
- The increased use of legal substances and alcohol was correlated with the fathers' low educational level and the parents' divorce.

➢ **Evolutionary Dimension of the convicts' psychopathology.**

The convicts, always as per the Archives, had as children/adolescents quite a number of psycho-emotional difficulties and problems in controlling their behavior/delinquency. Specifically the Conduct Disorder, Personality Disorder and the Oppositional Defiant Disorder prevailed in 85% of the convicts as children/adolescents. In addition, they presented to a lesser extent anxiety disorders, excretion disorders, special phobias, depression, mental retardation and schizophrenia.

In their adulthood, the majority of convicts had a personality disorder which is connected closely with the committing of offences/crime. It is remarkable that a percentage of 13.8% of convicts suffered of schizophrenia and in parallel 6.4% had mild mental retardation.

From the results it is evident, that most convicts during their adolescence had disorders related to serious behavioral problems, difficulty in controlling their impulsiveness as well as difficulties anticipating the result of their actions within the frame of juvenile delinquency before evolving into adult criminals. Also the majority of convicts as adolescents received violence/abuse from their family before evolving into adult criminals. In the convicts' sample, the statistically significant correlation was evident between the violence exerted against them by their family and the juvenile delinquency as well as the evolved adult criminal behavior.

➢ **Correlation of domestic violence/abuse of the convicts as children, and the practice of violence by themselves.**

The experiences of domestic violence and abuse of the convicts by family members were correlated on a statistically significant level with:

- The practice of verbal abuse by the convict towards his parents and relatives
- Heroin Use
- And his dangerous/risky behavior.

➢ **Other factors related to the practice of violence by the convict.**

Other factors correlated (on a statistically significant level) to the practice of violence by the convict were the following:

- Psychopathology: Personality disorder in convicts was correlated with verbal violence towards everyone and with physical violence/ assault toward parents

and strangers. Also opposition defiant disorder and personality disorder were correlated to the convict's risky behavior.

- The personal family status and the convict's divorce, was correlated to the practice of verbal violence and assault towards his/her companion.
- The age: It is noted of statistical importance that the younger convicts practiced verbal violence a lot more frequently towards their parents than others, the older convicts practiced a lot more frequently verbal and physical violence towards relatives rather than other.

E. CONCLUSIONS

The correlation of domestic violence and juvenile delinquency was perceived in all the samples which were examined. Also it became evident that the phenomenon of domestic violence and child abuse by family members is correlated to a series of internal and external factors. The same was perceived for the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency as it is correlated to domestic/family violence/abuse of children/adolescents as well as to a number of other factors. So, we may conclude that the manifestation of illegal behavior/activity is a complex phenomenon in which clearly its strategic prevention will have to be multi-dimensional but with a central axis on the interventions concerning the improvement of the family functionality and the avoidance of abuse of their children. Abused children act-out the violence they have been subjected to with attacks toward other children, to objects, to social regulations and towards themselves, thus all kinds of delinquent behavior. It consists of an attempt to repossess the control of those around him and of himself as an antipode of the abuse he received as a child.

F. Suggestions/Proposals for the confrontation of abuse and juvenile delinquency.

1. *Prevention and intervention at a personal level.*

The rapid social changes feed the violence phenomenon. In all the more societies, child abuse and violence are almost common phenomena. On the other hand, an increasing number of children and adolescents seem to be connected to antisocial and delinquent actions, to participate in gangs and to adopt aggressive and self-destructive behavior. The prevention of violence inside and outside the home, as well as self-protection requires "training" in new positive social skills. How does one teach young people that violence is not an advisable choice and solution when all the messages they receive from their environment indicate the opposite?

It is known that the best way children can learn constructive ways of solving conflict, as much on an internal/emotional level as well as an external/interpersonal, is for adults to maintain consistency between their attitudes, convictions and behaviors. Perhaps, the main requirement for the prevention of aggressive behavior of children/adolescents, is that the adults responsible of their care (parents/teachers) stay reliable and loyal between what they deem to be and what they try to transmit to the young people, as well as the attitudes which they themselves adopt in their lives along with the manner they built their relationships with others. Theory and sterilized training have a very low effectiveness in contrast to living examples which parents and teachers can provide the children serving at the same time as role models.

Taking into consideration the above at '**an individual level**' we suggest preventive intervention programs by means of training (e.g. Health Conduct Programs) which will be focused on:

- Development of social skills and effective communication.

- Effective methods of resolving conflicting situations and problems raising in different social situations.
- Recognition, expression and management of intense emotions.
- Self-acceptance and development of empathy.
- Development of respect towards diversity.
- Use of the social dynamics of the school classroom and of the "great majority" of "law-abiding" students regarding the control of antisocial behavior (see Garrity et al. 1997; Tomlinson et al. 1997)
- Recomposition of emotions in adolescents who have suffered traumatic experiences and have expressed delinquent behavior and the building of new patterns of emotional interaction.
(Lubit, Rovine, Defrancisci & Eth, 2003; Steiner et al. 2003).

The development of positive social attitude and behavior is enhanced by the children's sense of "belonging" in groups.
- Participation in common activities of the members of the family (excursions, entertainment, cultural activities etc.)
- The channeling of child's energy towards creative activities, artistic interest, sports, games etc.
- The demonstration of desired behavior from the parents toward their children as a role model.
- The strengthening of the feeling of "belonging" in the larger community, through the parent behavior, which is indicative of a positive social attitude which they themselves adopt.

Nowadays, children and adolescents are flooded by information from the Mass Media in which a lot of violent images are projected (violence in all its forms) and often are cultivated the conditions for aggressiveness to be expressed, such as for example the creation of stereotypes and biases, the "desensitization" towards violence etc. Based on the above it is important to:

- Develop the children's' critical view concerning that which is projected by the media.
- Encourage and also seek discussion between parents and children regarding the violence they watch in the media.
- Control of the children regarding internet use by applying "filters" to accessibility of websites with a content which could subject them to dangers (porn, contact with strangers) and symptoms of excessive use/abuse, (lowered social communication, problems in interpersonal relationships).

2. *Prevention and intervention at a group level.*
   Prevention and intervention in the family

There are families where it is evident that the relationship between child and parent has been disturbed as for example in the event of neglect and physical and/or sexual

abuse. Sometimes, tracing the problems within the family framework is harder as is the case of verbal and psychological abuse. An important indicator of the problems is the child itself and the degree in which the child feels rejected and/ or estranged from its parents.

For this reason, parents must be able to manage both their own emotions and those of their child. The basic presupposition is the emotional health which springs from the sense of internal safety and psychological plenitude. The parents' role is also to find the power and patience with which he/she can react towards the child in a way by which conflict is weakened and a way which serves as a role model for the child.

In this direction we suggest:

- The efficient development and sufficient staffing of the School for Parents within the framework of which training programs may be carried out emphasizing praise, encouragement, tenderness and the related behaviors concerning the above. These approaches from the parents' side may also help adolescents to respond effectively to the needs of others (Henry et. Al 1996) and to discern between their own conditions and those of others, enhancing in this way the development of empathy.

The aims of parent training programs (Petropoulos & Papastylianou 2001) should necessarily include:

- Enhancement and positive configuration of social behavior
- Learning and use of non-physical discipline procedures.
- Anger self-management techniques
- Learning alternative flexible behavior
- Early recognition of problematic behavior
- Development of positive models (e.g. concerning use of substances)
- Upbringing matters
- Sociability matters (respect of others' individuality, possibilities, place and particularities).
- Acceptance of whichever learning abilities children have.
- Encouragement and support of children in reaching learning or other goals.
- Supporting children in personal difficulties they may encounter.

In cases of child abuse or neglect within the family framework, the following may contribute on a preventive level:

- The cooperation of different social organizations such as hospitals, clinics, public/private schools, police, church etc.
- The prevention of other types of violence within the family (e.g. abuse of the spouse, abuse of elderly and others) aiming at the prevention of abuse towards children, since it has been confirmed through research that all forms of family violence are interconnected and that there exists a cycle of violence which is perpetuated from one generation to the other.

- The strengthening and extending to all towns, of programs for the reception of abused families (refuges/shelters). At the present stage, only the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Family Violence is running such a program only in Nicosia.
- The localization of highly dangerous characteristics
- Apply secondary prevention by locating new parents who are facing difficulties in their role and thus have a predisposition for abuse and neglect of their children (Agathonos 1998). The early intervention and support of young parents contributes considerably in the prevention of the continuation of the phenomenon in the next generation.

We suggest furthermore, the enactment and the concretization of the program with sufficient members from the related Health Services.

- Enrichment of the child care programs.
- Creation of Therapy Centers for abused children and young adults and Family Therapy Centers in all towns.
- Training in life skills for children and young adults, interpersonal skills and knowledge, protective skills for abuse, sex education, pregnancy prevention and other.
- Regularization of follow-up and family support by social workers who act through their steady presence as key workers toward family members.

In cases of parental mental disorder the following are suggested: (Bimbou-Nakou 2005) (to the Health Ministry)

- Recording systematically both parents with mental disorders and the children whose parents are encountering some form of mental disorder.
- Connecting the parent's needs to the needs of the children and support for the whole family in order to moderate or limit the probability of appearance of psychological problems in the children and aiding the parents strengthen in their parental role.
- Recognition and enhancement of the family's' positive strengths.
- Individual psychotherapy of the child in parallel with counseling support for the parent or his/her guardian.
- Informing the child about his/her parent's illness and its prognosis (Beardslee, 2002).
- Development and sufficient staffing of the Mental Health Services (Adults, children and adolescents) in all towns and rural health centers, for the easy access of clients and provision of systematized multidisciplinary intervention to the families.

These interventions are suggested to be individualized and based on the personality characteristics and the family history of the child (Frick, 2004).

Based on the above the following is deemed essential:

- The Creation of Family Therapy Centers in all provinces where the family's problems may be confronted as a whole on a therapeutic level.
- The set up of Call Centre Services for psychological support may be helpful for families in crisis. Currently, the Help Line (1440) run by the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family provides emergency help and support to domestic violence victims even if they wish to stay anonymous. The line needs to be reinforced and a 24 hour basis is essential to be reestablished so as to connect the family with the Police and Family advisors during times of crisis.

3. Interventions for minor offenders.

In the case of juvenile delinquency, it seems that the negative family experience and possibly the absence of care is a general factor which predisposes young people to antisocial and offensive behavior (Kiriakidis 2008). The alternation of the adolescents' delinquent behavior requires a change in the adults' point of view, of their attitude and of course of the correctional methods applied.

In relation to the above we suggest:

- Immediate creation of a child centered juridical system, a "Court for Minors" as it has repeatedly been suggested among others since 2003 by G. Nikolaou, Chairman of the Parliamental Legal Committee.
- Further modification of the legal framework to a specialized law for minors with an epicenter being the intentional principle and the specialization of the courts composition with judges and specially trained personnel in matters concerning minors.
- Fortifying the Minor Offenders Committees with persons of child centered scientific knowledge, who will undertake, beyond the investigative procedure, the enforcement or not of sanctions as well as the provision of aid and therapy to the minor offenders and their families.
- The changes should focus on the co-ordination of all the Services, Bodies or Authorities, in order to assure education or re-education and therapy towards the minor offenders and their families. At present, regulations are being modified in order to use sentencing alternative to imprisonment so as to provide therapy for the minor/young adult users of narcotic substances. The regulations must be extended to the rest of the cases of the juvenile offenders' imprisonment.
- Application of the institution of the "neighborhood policeman" who will come into contact with the juvenile offender from the start and will function as an advisor so as to deter the relapse or the continuation of delinquent behavior.
- Creation of Therapeutic Institutions for Minor Offenders. Types of such institutions or communities that function internationally for the minor

individuals are: Therapeutic Communities in closed institutions, Reform Homes, Open departments of Religious Centers. Autonomous Community Therapy Centers. The correct and gradual preparation of the adolescents (inmates) is essential for the rehabilitation and gradual reinsertion into the social group as well as for the diminishing of relapse possibilities.

Independently of the type of Centre or Communities, the existence of a social support network is essential in achieving permanent results with re-education and rehabilitation of the offenders. According to Papadato (2003) effective preparation of these people must include:

- Interventions aiming at the transformation of specific negative characteristics of the adolescents' immediate environment which may prompt him towards antisocial behavior.
- Specific control of the adolescents' actions in order to decrease the expression of antisocial behavior.
- Education in social or educational skills, lack of which is correlated to the expression of antisocial behavior.

4. Intervention within the Prison framework.

The social isolation of the prison organization, the concentration of all the activities of the prisoners in the same space and the group control, (discipline, restriction, repression) abolish every element of privacy, absorb the personality and influence the behavior of adult detainees directly and even worse that of the minors. (Panousis) (2002).

In order to avoid or restrict wherever possible the above, referring to the incarceration of minors in prison we propose:

- Change of the legal framework in order to avoid minor offenders' imprisonment.
- More equitable planning and design. The creation of modified framework concerning the minors and young adult detainees is essential in prisons, so that young detainees do not enter in contact with adult detainees. Already such an effort is being made in the Central Prisons where a different wing is being created probably offering better conditions regarding the detention of minor/young adult detainees.
- Specialized training of wardens for the handling of minors.
- Specialized crewing of the prisons with scientific personnel in subjects regarding minor detainees and provision of therapeutic services from the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Counselors.
- Material and technical infrastructure for the development of related actions.
- Upgrading the provision of Social Welfare Services to the prisons to specialized scientific personnel specifically for Minor detainees.
- Multi-disciplinary collaboration within the Prison and the promotion of external collaborations.

- An effort to guarantee a continuous flow of educational programs.
- Development of complete collaborative interventions in Prison and in the community for social and professional re-insertion of the young detainees. (Zagoura, 2008). The Centre of Professional Training and Employment at the Prison will have to create special programs focused on the Minors/young adult detainees' needs.
- Recognition of the cultural particularities, a non negative discrimination of nations or race. (Astrinakis 1998) and transcultural counseling.
- Educational Counseling
- Counseling and training in subjects of self-protection for the prevention of risky behavior.
- Legal counseling.
- Collaboration of the interdisciplinary team with the Management, the prison staff and the related Ministries.
- Development of services or institutions that will provide protection concerning health problems.
- Promotion of the essential State Financing Policy.
- Enrichment of the Prison's Library. The Library plays a challenging, educational and recreational role but at the same time becomes a "meeting point" for exchanges and transaction with different cultural groups and races with different levels of education. (Astrinakis 1998 page 151).

Concerning Library management, the participative process of the detainees is suggested and emphasis is given on taking personal responsibility for the space.

- Interventions to be complete, as well as promoting the empowerment of minor detainees to bring about change, but also the activation of the social environment to incorporate them.
- Of importance is the post-correctional aid towards young offenders. There has already been recommended a rehabilitation committee for detainees with the participation of the Ministry of Justice, the Mental Health services and Social Welfare who are processing plans for post-correctional rehabilitation of detainees. An essential special planning for Minors/young adult detainees is essential within these frameworks.

More specifically regarding the post-correctional aid towards young people, other targets will have to be (see Yiovanoglou 2006 p.239-242).

- The selection of the object of training to be related to the skills of the released detainees.
- Preference for individualized teaching in the form of practical vocational guidance and monitoring rather than group teaching.
- Promotion of dissemination of the trainees in public workshops or private businesses and services to lower operation costs.
- Support for 8-12 month period providing basic training and for the re-organization of the individual.

- The investigation of the individual psychosocial circumstances of each released person by specialists throughout the duration of training and the provision of psychosocial support.
- The possibility of providing continuous contact of both the employee and also the potential employer with a person to refer to who will discuss the evolution of the work relationship and who will play an advisory role.

5. Prevention and intervention at school.

The scientific literature and research show that the school as a system contains the predisposition to produce and or to maintain violence but also the possibility to participate in the prevention of violence at school and in dealing with abuse and neglect in the family. The teachers under suitable conditions can constitute an ideal team for the reporting of child abuse and neglect cases.

In particular according to Agathonos (1998) a teacher should:

- Accept the existence and repercussions of the problem and commit in contributing personally in the prevention and combating of abuse by mobilizing also other colleagues in the workspace.
- To know, to follow and not to omit application of procedures for the handling of possibly abused children.
- To become interested in the present sources of help and to come into contact with these.
- To direct families with problems in a timely manner to the suitable frames.
- To be available and open.
- To commit himself not to use physical punishment anywhere.
- To try to create and maintain an atmosphere in class promoting self-appreciation, solidarity, safety, understanding of diversity and self-development etc.
- To inform and modify the students attitudes in issues which are related directly with their safety, health, such as the avoidance of substance use, (alcohol, tobacco, narcotics), the use of the seat-belt, the use of a helmet when riding a "motorbike", personal health tactics (e.g. about Aids) informing the adolescents about the responsibility they carry in illegal and aggressive actions (theft, intimidation, vandalism, illegal driving etc.)

In addition, it is suggested:

- The cultivation of a trusting atmosphere between the students and teachers so that they may talk openly and in time about cases where they have witnessed or experienced some violent behavior from a member of their family or from another child in school.
- The creation of a climate promoting the cooperation and the peaceful solving of problems in school.
- Avoidance of extreme and exceedingly humiliating punishment from school headmasters.

- Sufficient crewing of the Educational Psychology Services.

School as it was reported may play a very important role in the early localization of child difficulties and in their support within the school framework.

This presupposes:

- Teacher training in matters of interprofessional cooperation.
- Clarification of the teacher's role pertaining to their collaboration with the services.
- Informing the teachers about the existing legal and therapeutic frameworks.
- Avoidance of the stigmatization of parental mental disturbance by briefing and providing seminars for the teachers.

Concerning bullying and victimization in the school environment, a recent research conducted in Greece and Cyprus in 2007-8 within the framework of the INTERREG European program (Paradisioti, Tziogkouros et al) as well as the Smiths (1997), Kyriakidi (2007), Kyriakidi, Papastylianou, Papadatou et al (2008-10 Daphne III Program) suggest a multi-level intervention such as:

- Existence of an explicit policy in each school unit, which is compatible with the creation of a judgmental climate against the victimization phenomenon.
- Rearrangement of activities on the level of a school classroom so that group activities may be included.
- More supervision from the teacher in places where victimization is observed more frequently as e.g. the school yard.
- Application of Pikas' method and the no blame approach which gives a great emphasis on the increase of young offenders' empathy offenders and in their active participation in the effort to face these issues.
- Insertion in the program of theme study, such as learning assertiveness behavior skills, for the confrontation of victimization in school but also elsewhere.
- Intensive application of health conduct programs which seek to develop strategies for the improvement of the quality of life, prevention and care, safety, absence of fear and learning methods with which to confront threatening situations.
- At the same time using the above-mentioned instructive approaches, it is necessary to create social, counseling and psychological services aiming at violence prevention.
- Collaboration with the parents and the local community to organize self-help teams and conducting of informative meetings.

Considering the fundamental factors allowing for the expression of delinquency, aggressiveness, violence, intimidation and victimization as per the bibliography examination (Ames, 1996; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Olweus, 1996; Papstylianou 2000, Tsiantis, 2007, 2008) we suggest also:

- The briefing and sensitization of the adults within the child's environment (e.g. teachers, parents and others) about the management of given crises.
- Change of the basic aims of education which up until present is the entrance to Tertiary Education and the personal and social awards it offers, the great emphasis on academic success involves pressure, competition and scoring, distant and negative relationships with others. The fear of failure in combination with the above may cause the withdrawal of students from various expressions of violence, challenging behavior and protests.
- Participation in school and extra-curricular activities such as sports, art, technology and ecology clubs, etc.
- Providing safe vital space for the students.
- Decreasing phenomena of racism by means of creating a climate of acceptance and of respect towards diversity.
- Fortifying the bonds between school, family and community.
- Informative programs and sensitization of the students by strengthening of comprehension skills, analysis and interpretation of the different roles adopted by students involved in intimidation episodes and finally their commitment and adoption and factual application of new positive behavior in given incidents.
- Exploitation of a short duration video accompanied by an instructional leaflet which was provided by the Program against Violence towards children from the family (Daphne II) (Children against Violence at home) in collaboration with the Teachers of the World organization, Leeds, Animation Workshop (England and (YPIC) Lithuania) "The family Truths" address a wide public but are especially designed for children aged 8-15years in school of children groups where with the help of an adult will serve as catalysts for discussion. For more information on "Family Truths" or for the provision of copies one may contact elassocrates@diavatirio.net.
- Development of a support system at school with specialized psychological support services for the children and adolescents psycho-social health.
- Directive(Ministry of Education) for the promotion of "a day against victimization in which school communities in collaboration with parent groups and teachers develop social and educational activities geared against school violence.
- Development of extensive epidemiologic studies focused on the beliefs and attitudes of students and teachers about victimization.

6. Prevention and Intervention in the Community.

The Community constitutes the place from which adolescents begin to shape an image of their identity and a perception of how "they are placed" in the world that surrounds them. Furthermore, the community is the place where adolescents find answers on issues that preoccupy them, as well as soothing and comfort when they are overwhelmed with disappointment and desperation. Consequently it is important that the community:

- Provides adolescents with a sense of safety and substantial cohesion with the other members.
- Contributes towards the development of compassion, empathy, caring, cooperation and team work.
- Provides a connection to the past, roots and a vision of the future.

When adolescents have an intense sense of "belonging" in the community they are in this way protected from scorn. The splitting or erosion of the community creates a sense of being "psychologically vulnerable" in the adolescents and cause deep hurt (Hardy & Laszloffy , 2005). On the contrary when cohesion of the community is based on hate and the absence of tolerance toward other groups then a toxic ground is created which nourishes the need to destroy all the others.

In order to confront such phenomena the following is important:

- Providing help to the adolescents so that they feel proud and sure about the different aspects of their cultural identity especially when it may be scorned at by the wider community.
- Active participation in the combating of unjust social conditions which contribute to racial, sexist, social class and religious discriminations.
- Fortifying actions which make the world a safer place where all are respected and are allowed to bloom without discrimination.

The poor neighborhoods/ refugee settlements where young offenders and drug users may gather, do not allow the adolescent members to develop positive connections with the region. Adolescents under these conditions may feel alone, lost and seek protection and the sense of "belonging" which is not provided for by the community in the gangs.

Furthermore, parents and their own relationship with the wider community need:

- To be aware of the children's' social networks, friends and how they spend their free time.
- To contribute to the re-establishment of the society by organizing groups with other sensitized parents in order to do something for the community.
- To observe the children's' lives, in case the latter experience rejection from children of the same age and give them supportive and caring messages.
- In case their children belong to gangs, they should talk to them, for them to comprehend the meaning of their involvement in the gangs before taking action.
- To take initiative themselves within the community in order to lead the way and for their children (e.g. some parent who is involved in photography, to offer to give lessons to adolescents and about photography, theatre, reforestation etc.)

Within the framework of the local government bodies and community, informative and intervention programs may be developed aiming at improving relationships and

communication at various levels: between family members, between school- family – and between young people.

In this direction, the following could contribute:

- Youth Centers of municipalities/communities where young people may find entertainment and information on subjects which occupy citizens e.g. ecological subjects, violence problems mental and physical health.
- Counseling stations for adolescents where adolescents/young people may find answers and support in personal problems.
- Founding of centers crewed with psychologists, social workers and other mental health professionals by the local government body aiming to provide services for schools.
- Programs connecting the school with the community through activities where productive units may link services, institutions, and private individuals targeting the improvement in relationships of all members of the community and the demonstration of a greater participation in public issues: e.g. programs involving the sensitization of young people in ecological protection issues).
- Sports training spaces. Sports have more fans than other activities of all age groups and as a consequence may provide a nucleus for the development of positive social behavior, provided with the suitable organizing and encouragement from the experts.
- Cultural Centers of creative expression and occupation (e.g. teaching drama, music art, theatrical performance, musical events, art exhibitions) which contribute to the improvement of one's self-image and self-appreciation and the sensitization and communication with other people.
- Motivation of volunteers-persons from the community who are motivated and have special knowledge and free time- pensioners- housewives- to take the role of advisors or to provide care to adolescents, or families facing particular problems: e.g. adaptation to school, private lessons, babysitting, escorting to cultural events etc.
- Schools for Parents. These needs to be enforced as being a "support measure of the family" concerning the training in issues of "life-term" development of the whole family and problem management, upbringing of the children and communication, targeting the welfare of the members of the family and community in general.

7. Prevention and Intervention on the State Level.

It is a fact that our society has a contradictory attitude toward the issue of violence. On one hand disapproval of violence is observed and on the other hand its acceptance or hiding. A responsible attitude on the States' side would be to include interventions in the educational policy, in the study programs, providing equal opportunity and in the infrastructure. The collaboration of the Ministry of Health, The Pedagogical Institute, The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services may attribute to an effective planning of educational policy.

School Drop-Out is another important issue that needs to be dealt seriously since it is correlated to juvenile delinquency and marginalization (Papadopoulos 1997). Many authors consider school failure to be a cause not a result of challenging behavior (Papadopoulos 2002 and Walgrave 1982)

Based on the above (especially to the Ministry of Education and Culture) we suggest the following:

- To establish a **Prevention Record File** both in Primary as well as in Secondary Education for each high risk child, using specific criteria. The Ministry of Education, the Social Welfare Services as well as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services should cooperate and closely supervise the student's performance inside and outside the school.
- To strengthen the "Mentoring"status in Secondary Education so that a personal relationship is maintained between the teacher and student. The mentor should be available, show personal concern and have communicative abilities to guide the student in solving problems he may face at school.
- Creation of alternative education structures and pre-professional occupation, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Services and the Ministry of education for young people who leave school so that they may be given alternative solutions at least up until the age of 18 but also beyond this age.
- A single interdepartmental strategy for the prevention and handling of school failure and functional illiteracy.

In general, the aim of Education will have to include the growth of the students from all perspectives, the cultivation of cooperation, empathy and other social skills, the encouragement of involvement in team work, or the community as well as the personal satisfaction of expressing needs, which diminishes the sense of isolation and loneliness. For the achievement of the above we propose:

- The reformation of Analytical Study Programs with the addition or the better organization of activities for the expression of artistic and athletic skills of the students in the study program and especially educated teachers so that they may respond to the needs and abilities of the children and adolescents.
- Changes in the teaching models that prevail in the educational system e.g. through synergistic learning the student develops action from different places and this motivates him to participate more in the goings on to share his experiences with his fellow students and to become more sociable.
- The balanced distribution of instruction hours between the instructional matter and the balanced activities of psychosomatic growth as well as the ways of evaluation based on the students' abilities.

One must note further that the teachers' behavior is correlated in some cases with the violence and aggressive phenomenon. For example, the sense of injustice by teachers is one of the factors which is more frequently responded to by actions of violence, vandalism, self-destructive student behavior (Petropoulos & Papastylianou 2001)

So, the briefing of teachers on the problems frequently created in students because of the behavior of the aforementioned, we believe may help significantly in eliminating these phenomena.

With regard to teachers we consider essential:

- The attendance of special psychology lessons on adolescent psychology during the teachers primary training but also continuous education throughout their professional career in matters concerning crisis management, prevention and combat of antisocial behavior.
- The attendance of experiential self-knowledge and self-development workshops aiming at the emotional and professional support in their demanding role.
- The improvement of teachers working conditions: (e.g. decent and functional spaces in school which create a pleasant mood for work).
- The support of school teachers from Headmasters and Education Supervisors.
- The realization of workshops on the sensitization of administrative supervisors about the teachers' problems and their relationship with the students as well as the teachers themselves.
- The briefing of teachers about abuse issues in the family.
- The review and avoidance of very authoritative and repressive methods of punishment and expulsion at the least divergence, which may bring about the adolescents reaction which frequently has the contrary to the desired results.

Generally, self-Consciousness, sensitivity, empathy and a clear position and expectation of the teachers and the administrative authorities on the role of the teacher but also that of the parents may constitute a framework of protection and secure growth of children in each stage of their lives.