Introduction and Literature Review

- The mental health of juvenile offenders is generally poor
- Juvenile offenders’ behavior is highly influenced by their parents
- Social learning theory suggests that children learn delinquent behaviors through observation of their parents
- Coercive family process theory proposes that children’s antisocial behavior is developed by negative parent-child interactions
- Studies show that parental incarceration history, substance abuse history, and hostility are generally related to children’s poor mental health outcomes and likelihood of offending
- Not many studies have examined how parent’s history of psychiatric hospitalization affects children’s mental health
- Few studies have examined how these parental factors affect juvenile offenders’ mental health in particular

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between parental psychiatric hospitalization history, incarceration history, substance abuse history, and warm and hostility levels and juvenile offenders’ mental health outcomes?
- What is the relationship between ethnicity, gender, and parental warmth and hostility?

Results

Kruskal-Wallis H-test

Significant relationships were found between ethnicity and mother’s warmth and hostility, and father’s warmth and hostility

Significant relationships were found between ethnicity and all mental health outcomes

Manh-Whitney U-test

Significant difference found between males and females for mother’s hostility; no significance for father’s hostility

Significant differences were found between males and females for all mental health outcomes

Multiple Linear Regression

- GSI: Mother’s hostility and father’s history of drug use were significant predictors of high GSI scores
- Hostility: Mother’s hostility, father’s hostility, and father’s history of drug use were significant predictors
- Depression: Mother’s hostility was the only significant predictor
- Anxiety: Mother’s hostility was the only significant predictor

Implications

- Findings for all results were generally consistent with previous literature
- Findings can help inform social work practice with juvenile offenders, particularly with trauma processing and family therapy
- This research can also aid social workers in facilitating collaborative, rehabilitative care in the community for juvenile offenders
- Social work policy should advocate for more mental health services for juvenile offenders in locked facilities, as well as preventative services in schools for youth at-risk of offending

Study Limitations

- Current study was a cross sectional analysis; no claims of causality can be made
- There was little data regarding parental history of mental health issues
- There was much missing data regarding fathers due to the absence of fathers in some participant’s lives

Future Directions

- Further research on the impact of parental substance abuse history on juvenile offender’s mental health should be conducted
- Risk/protective factors for mental health among different ethnicities and genders should be further researched
- The role of maternal hostility in children’s mental health should be studied further
- Additional research should be done to explore insignificant results in this study, namely the role of maternal incarceration and psychiatric hospitalization on children’s mental health outcomes