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## PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR AND DELINQUENCY IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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### Highlights

- As is found in almost all studies of delinquency, girls were less likely to report being involved in delinquent acts than were boys. For example, 29% of girls aged 12 to 13 reported being involved in some type of aggressive behaviour, including such things as, threatening someone and getting into fights, compared to 56% of boys aged 12 to 13. The majority of aggressive behaviours were relatively minor.
- Self-reported rates of aggressive behaviour were highest in the Prairies. Quebec 12 or 13 year old youths report the lowest level of aggressive behaviour compared to 12 to 13 year olds living in other regions.
- Many children involved in delinquent acts involving property were also likely to be involved in aggressive behaviour. Forty-seven percent of the 12 and 13 year olds who reported high frequencies of delinquent acts involving property also reported high frequencies of aggressive behaviour.
- Data demonstrate the challenges of dealing with aggressive youth by focusing solely on those who are 'highly aggressive' at age 10 and 11. For example, of the children who were at the highest frequencies of aggressive behaviour at age 10 and 11, 45% were not reporting any aggressive behaviour two years later at age 12 and 13.
- Of the youths who were not aggressive at age 10 and 11, only 5% reported involvement in relatively high frequencies of aggressive behaviour at age 12 and 13.
- Children who reported being bullied at school were more likely than those who were not bullied to be aggressive. Ten percent of 12 and 13 year olds who were never or rarely bullied reported high frequencies of aggressiveness whereas 20% of 12 and 13 year olds who reported being bullied a lot were involved in high frequencies of aggressive behaviour.
- Children who experience higher levels of punitive parenting and lower parental nurturance are also more likely to report high frequencies of aggressive behaviour.
- Children who were involved in aggressive behaviour were more likely to be depressed. Of those who were not very depressed, 5% were involved in high frequencies of aggressiveness whereas seventeen percent of youths who were very depressed reported being involved in high frequencies of aggressive behaviour at age 12 and 13. The same pattern emerged with delinquent acts involving property.

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