

Researcher examines premature death in delinquent youth

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Northwestern University researcher Linda Teplin will share data showing alarming premature mortality rates for delinquent youth at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) annual meeting in Boston.

Teplin's presentation is part of the Science and the Law seminar "Crime, Justice and Death."

Teplin, the Owen L. Coon Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and director of the Health Disparities and Public Policy Program in the department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine, will present "Death in Delinquents: A 16-Year Prospective Study of Risk of Premature Mortality" using data from the Northwestern Juvenile Project (NJP).

The NJP, led by Teplin, studied a randomly selected sample of 1,829 youth who were arrested and detained in Cook County, Illinois, between 1995 and 1998. NJP data shows that 16 years after detention, 111 of those studied had died (126 as of November 2016), most from homicide by firearm. Mortality rates varied by age, gender and race/ethnicity, but were two to 10 times higher than general population rates. Significant risk factors in adolescence for later mortality included drug dealing, alcohol use disorder and gang membership.

Among [delinquent youth](#), racial/ethnic minorities were at increased risk of homicide compared with non-Hispanic whites. Compared with non-

Hispanic whites, African- Americans had 4.5 times and Hispanics had 2.8 times the hazard of homicide. African-American males had the highest [mortality rates](#) but among the lowest mortality ratios because death rates for this group in the general population are high.

This seminar examines the contributions of science to the legal system from a diversity of perspectives. Teplin, along with two other presenters, also will discuss a study on how criminal justice policies influence outcomes regarding mortality.

Provided by Northwestern University

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