

Saving children from a life of crime: early risk factors and effective interventi...

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Because children getting into a life of crime is inarguably one of the saddest and most disappointing events that happens in society many theorists have tried to figure out the risk factors and ways of stopping it from taking place. While many have undertaken the task of figuring this out, few have been successful at coming up with an outright solution. With this in mind some have been more effective than others.

Farrington and Welsh's book " Saving Children from a Life of Crime: Early Risk Factors and Effective Interventions" is one of the seminal works on this topic, tackling the subject not only from an academic point of view but also from a practical interventionist's point of view. The book lays out the many ways that people can see a life of crime coming on for a child and some of the most effective means through which people can solve those issues. The authors suggest that there are many different ways that risks can be categorized. Some risks have to do with the children themselves. These are individual risks, based in factors like personality and gaps in development. Another category of risks, according to the authors, comes down to environment. They opine that children often go into a life of crime in part because of the ways in which their environment shapes them. It is not that children wake up wanting to be criminals. Rather, their families and their support systems are designed in such a way that they will often head into this life. In addition to this, the authors look at the way that bigger socioeconomic factors play into the tendency of a child to trend toward crime. Namely, when children grow up very poor, in poor communities, and without access to healthcare and education, they are more apt to commit crime.

What these authors suggest is that even if there are success stories of some kids being able to come out of these environments and achieve great things, the environments themselves are still damaging and still tend to lead to more criminal behavior. When people are desperate and when they lack opportunity from the beginning of their lives, they are much more likely to seek a life of crime because they have nothing to lose and they may see this as a means of improving their own station.

The authors are not totally hopeless when it comes to this topic. They see a number of different ways in which the situation can be improved for some young people. They suggest that the most important thing one can realize is that interventions have to begin early. The earlier a society can get to a kid, the better chances that kid has of being successful. As a kid gets older, it becomes more difficult not only to execute the intervention with him individually, but also to deal with the environmental and socioeconomic factors that can influence a child's life. In addition to that, the authors suggest that individual interventions can come in various forms. Some come with regard to the child's education, getting him into programs that allow him to succeed. Some come in regard to influences, providing a child with a good mentor that can help. However, some have to deal with the environment of the child, providing him with more opportunity so that he has something to lose. In cases where society is successful in its intervention, it has to be able to work with all of these different factors. The authors suggest that the more interventions, the better, especially when they tend to come earlier in a child's life as opposed to coming down the road.