

Sullivan., Patricia M. & Knutson, John. F. (2000). The prevalence of disabilities and maltreatment among runaway children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 24(10), 1275-1288.

- ...strong lit review and studies (there are two) designs
- P. 2
 - Notes that each year, approximately 1.3 million children (2% of the population) under 18 run away from home
 - Links between the child's life at home and running away:
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Physical and sexual abuse
 - Substance abuse
 - Children who run away demonstrate a number of adjustment and school problems
 - Poor academic performance
 - School suspensions
 - Engaging in high-risk behaviors
 - Running away is associated with
 - Locus of control
 - Impulsivity
 - Runaway recidivism
 - Pleasure-seeking
 - Escape from interpersonal conflicts and family problems within the home
 - High prevalence of learning disabilities in reading and mathematics
 - ...noted the availability of only minimal research related to disability status of runaway youth
- P. 5
 - Study 1 – Discussion
 - "...widespread prevalence of identifiable disabilities among children who run away from home."
 - "...the presence of a disability appears to increase the likelihood that a child will run away from home for both abused and nonabused children..."
 - "...maltreatment...increased the risk of running away with maltreated children being 2.44 times more likely to run away from home than nonabused peers..."
 - "...regardless of maltreatment status, some form of communication disorder (i.e., hearing impairment, speech/language or learning disabilities) seems to be a significant risk for running away."
- P. 6
 - "Although neglect is clearly the most prevalent form of maltreatment, within this hospital sample, it was not related to runaway status among either disabled or nondisabled children."
- P. 6
 - Study 2

Reference & Summary by H. Johnson

- ...taken from total population, 40,211, of students enrolled in the Omaha Public school program during 1995-96 AY
- P. 7
 - “...the risk for running away for maltreated youth was ore than 18 times that of nonmaltreated youth.”
 - “...the risk for running away among disabled children was approximately 5 times that of the nondisabled children.”
 - “...regardless of maltreatment status, the majority of runaway youth ran away between the ages of 14 and 22...thus, running away was predominantly an adolescent problem...”
 - “...there were approximately 2.4 times as many behavior disordered children in the abused runaway group and approximately 3 times as many children with mental retardation in the abused runaway group. Thus there was a strong association between these two disabilities and maltreatment in runaway children.”
- P. 8
 - “Among the maltreated runaways with and without disabilities, physical abuse...was significantly associated with running away compared to all other forms of maltreatment. Sexual abuse was also significantly associated with running away among disabled and nondisabled maltreated runaways when compared to all other forms of maltreatment...”
- P. 9
 - “Significantly more of the families of the abused runaways had evidence of family stress factors than did the nonabused runaways.”
 - “...an official record of domestic violence was significantly associated with maltreatment among runaways...”
 - “...findings indicate that maltreatment and running away are associated with poorer academic achievement and poorer school attendance.”
- P. 10
 - Discussion – study 2
 - “...large cohorts of children with disabilities were identified among runaways in the school population, and both maltreatment and disability status were significantly related to running away.”
 - “Children and youth with behavior disorders, mental retardation and some form of communication disorder, particularly learning disabilities, were more likely to run away than children with other types of disabilities.”
 - “...physical abuse and sexual abuse were associated with running away while neglect was not related to running away.”
 - “When academic achievement and school attendance were assessed, maltreated children were clearly more academically compromised than nonmaltreated runaways.”
 - General Discussion
 - Given that physical abuse and sexual abuse were strongly associated with running away, questions are raised re. “...public policy efforts

designed to routinely reunite runaway children and adolescents with their parents.”

- “...the high prevalence of communication disorders among runaway youth ...implicates communicative disabilities as a possible factor in the running away equation.”
 - “The major demographic difference between disabled and nondisabled runaways was the predominance of males among the disabled runaways (75.3%) and females (56.8%) among nondisabled runaways.”
 - “...high levels of family violence and conduct problems among adolescent runaways.”
- P. 11
 - “The large percentages of disabilities identified among runaways in both studies attest to the need for professionals working with runaways to be cognizant of the special needs of the population, particularly with respect to behavior disorders, communication disabilities, and mental retardation.”
 - “Children with disabilities comprise a significant portion of both abused and nonabused children who run away from home.”
 - “All too often...disability status is either unknown or unrecognized among professionals who work with maltreated children and runaways.”
 - “Family interventions will need to be disability-specific and address family related stress factors that may increase the risk of running away, especially by disabled and abused runaways, rather than a focus on reuniting children with maltreating parents.”