Tackling the Problem of Adolescent to Parent Violence
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'All Welcome': SafeLives conference 2016
Workshop outline:

- Key findings from the Oxford Adolescent to Parent Violence Study
- The Home Office APVA information guide for practitioners – development and purpose
- Reflections on practice and potential local strategic improvements to improve the response to APV.
Investigating Adolescent Violence towards Parents (The Oxford APV Study)

- 3 year ESRC-funded project.

- Definition of APV as “Physical violence, threats of violence and criminal damage towards parents/carers by their adolescent children (aged 13-19 years)”

- Aims to investigate how violence is defined, experienced and negotiated by parents and adolescents and how violent assaults committed by adolescents within the home are currently processed and managed within the criminal justice system.

- Research Methods: interviews with parents, young people, practitioners, police officers, fieldwork with police services, analysis of police data.
We have analysed Metropolitan police data for the period 1st April 2009- 31st March 2010. This is the first UK analysis of cases of adolescent to parent violence reported to the police. All reported incidents of adolescent to parent violence involving 13-19 year old perpetrators against parents/step-parents in one year (n=1,892):

- Violence against the person (n=1,184)
- Criminal damage (n=696)
- Robbery (n=10)
- Sexual offences (n=2)
Key findings from police data

- 77% of all parent victims are female
- 87% of all perpetrators are male
- 66% cases involved son-to-mother violence
Interpreting the findings

- Explaining the findings
  - Gendered behavioural patterns?
  - Social acceptability
  - Impact
  - Interaction between sense of shame/stigma and gender norms/expectations

- Limitations in the data
Parents’ experiences

- Fear
- Guilt and shame
- Reluctance to report
- Lack of understanding
- Difficulty in obtaining help and support
  - Police
  - Social Services
  - School
- Responsibility and blame
Practitioner perspectives

- Need for more information and understanding
- Lack of dedicated support services
  - Training
  - Referral processes
  - Intervention programmes
  - Resource/funding issues
- Poor communication between services
- Need for tailor-made responses reflecting complexity of problem and family dynamics
  - Holistic family-focused approaches
APV needs a coordinated response & a thorough research base

- A problem that already arises within the criminal justice system and various services and needs to be directly addressed.
- Services as currently structured rarely meet families’ needs.
- Need to build upon examples of good practice.
- Difficult to meet parents’ needs if they are made accountable and deemed responsible for young people’s actions.
- Need to think about how we understand a problem when “victim” and “perpetrator” categories are not always straightforward.
Home Office APVA guide

- Idea stemmed from conference at the end of Oxford APV study
- Created with a working group with wide expertise
- Input from further statutory agencies and third sector organisations.
- Intended to provide a quick source of information for practitioners from a wide range of fields.

Further reading:


Miles, C. and Condry, R. (Dec 2015, online first) ‘Adolescent to parent violence: the police response to parents reporting violence from their children’, Policing and Society


See our project website

Including two short films about the study:

https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/adolescent-parent-violence

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