



The Relationship Between Childhood Protective Factors and Adult Arrest Record



Riya Patel ~ Applied Data Analysis ~ Wesleyan University

Introduction

- Children who are exposed to higher levels of conflict and violence are more likely to develop aggressive behaviors and show anti-social behavioral signs in comparison to those who grew up in more protective environments (Kalvin et al)
- Researchers have found evidence indicating that looking into childhood to predict criminal behavior is a possibility (Kassing et al).
- It is often reported by researchers that one's past plays a significant role in their future when it comes to psychological constructs and behavior (Doherty et al)

Research Questions

- What is the association between childhood protective factors and later arrest record in adulthood?
- Does this relationship differ between those with varying associations with religiosity?

Methods

Sample

- Within the study, 80 high schools were selected from a sample frame of 26,666 schools, in which 52 agreed and were eligible to participate and 28 others were found to replace the ones that could not. Additionally, Black, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Chinese adolescents were oversampled. Information was collected through both in-school questionnaires and in-home interviews. (Wave 1)
- Later on, for Wave 5, Wave I respondents who were around their "4th decade of life" were surveyed through the use of a mixed-mode survey design

Measures

- The protective sum (prot_sum) was created by making a quantitative score of a child's responses about how much they thought adults, teachers, parents and friends cared about them. Possible responses ranged from not at all (1) to very much (5).
- Arrest record was defined by yes(1) or no(0)
- Religiosity was defined on a scale for very important(1) to not important at all(4)

Results

Bivariate

- The amount of protective factors, specifically the care that a person feels from others in early childhood is **significantly** associated with whether or not a person is arrested.
- More specifically, the odds ratio changes by a multiplicative factor of 0.87 if the protective factor increases by 1.

Figure 1: Childhood Protective Factors and Later Arrest Record

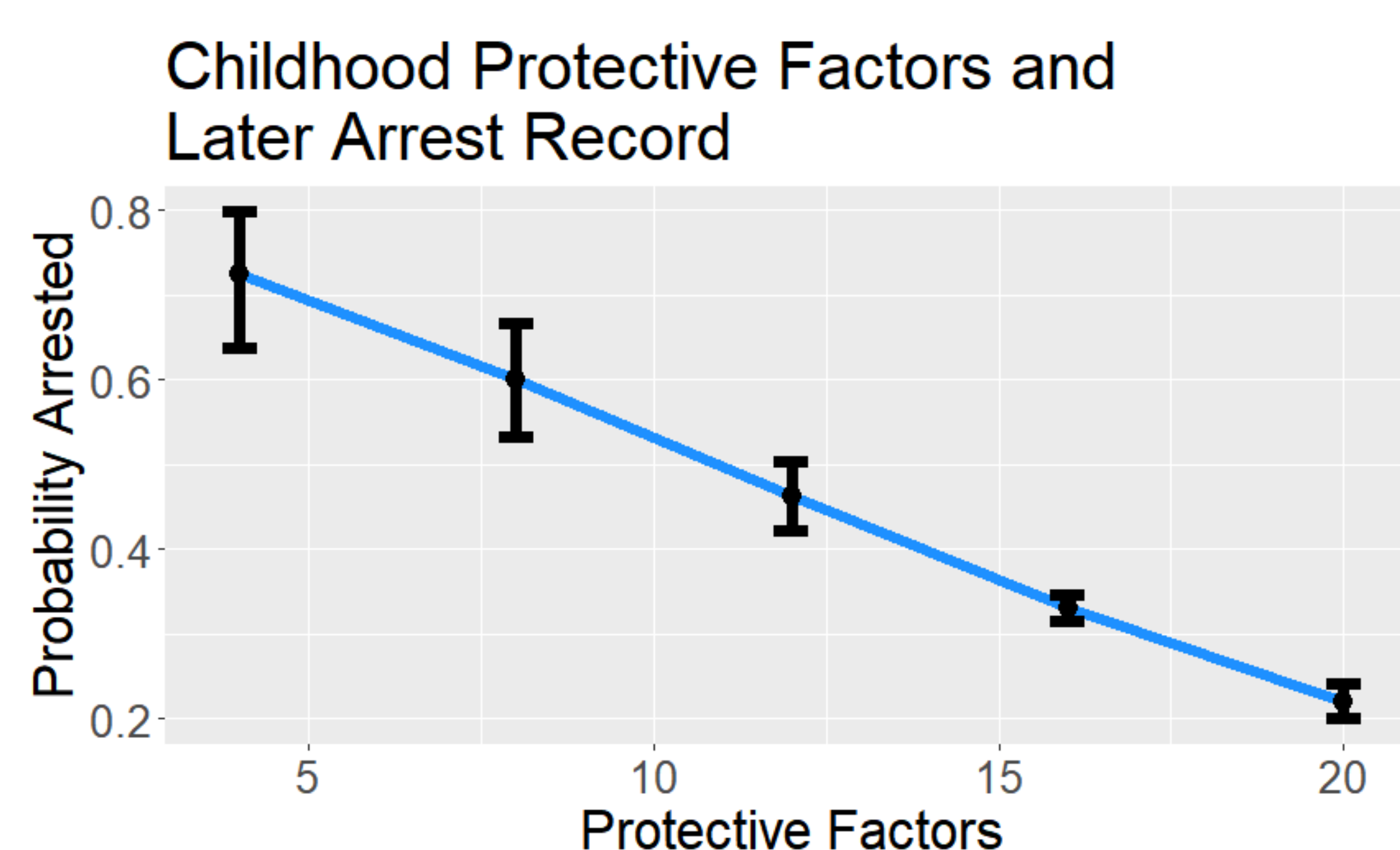
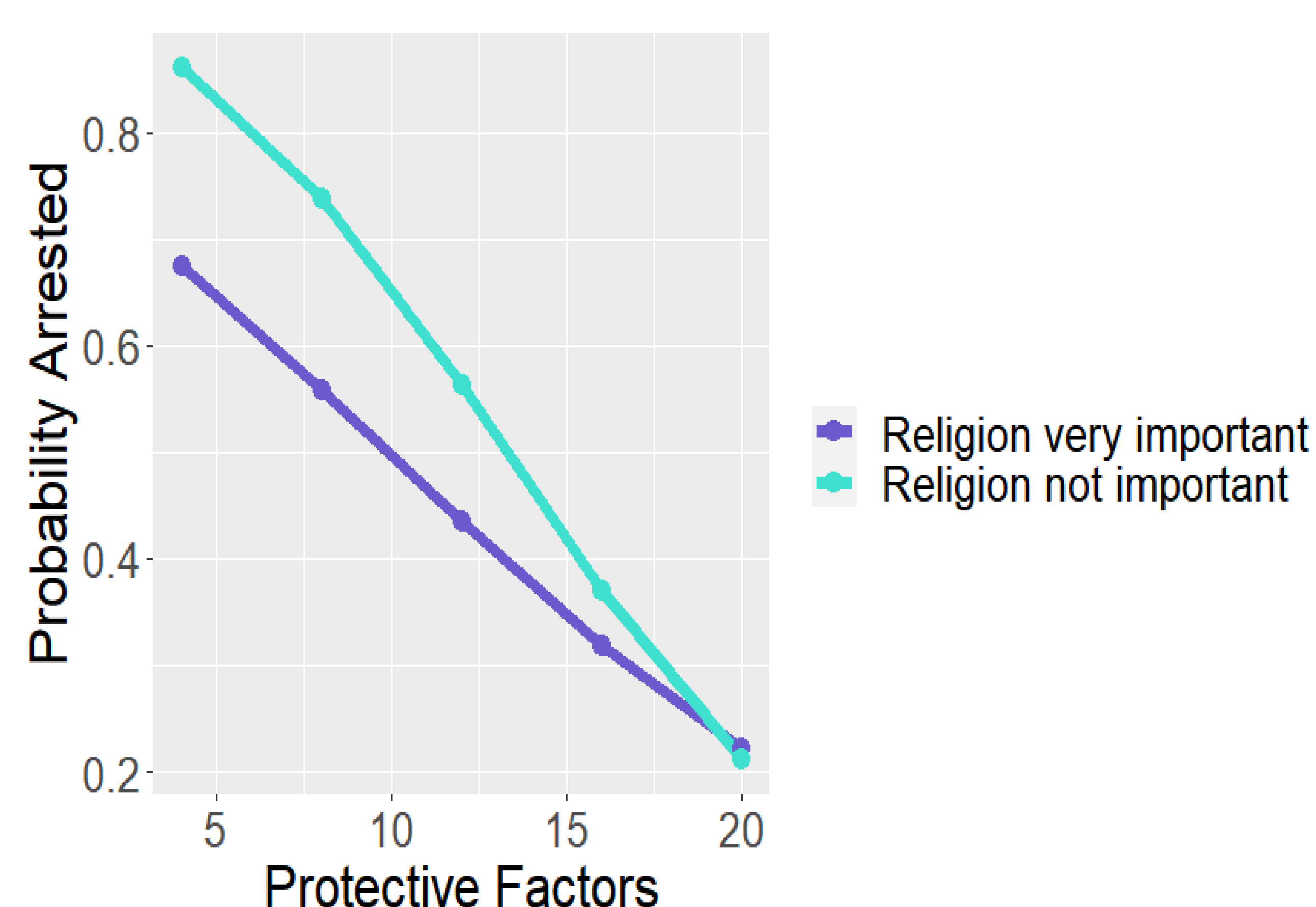


Figure 2: Childhood Protective Factors and Later Arrest Record Considering Religion



Discussion

- Protective factors are significantly associated with arrest while religiosity is not significantly associated.
- Future research regarding involvement in the criminal justice system through the form of arrest could also be affected by targeting youth protective factors. This would aid in understanding what childhood factors or influences may or may not be associated with criminal behaviors leading to an arrest to curb or even prevent high numbers of people who may engage in behaviors leading to an arrest.

References

- Cuadra, L. E., Jaffe, A. E., Thomas, R., & DiLillo, D. (2014). Child maltreatment and adult criminal behavior: does criminal thinking explain the association? *Child abuse & neglect*, 38(8), 1399–1408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.02.005>
- Doherty, E. E., & Bersani, B. E. (2020). What Protects Those at High Risk from Criminal Justice Contact Despite the Odds? A Negative Case Analysis. *The British journal of criminology*, 60(6), 1627–1647. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azaa043>
- Dubow, E. F., Huesmann, L. R., Boxer, P., & Smith, C. (2016). Childhood and adolescent risk and protective factors for violence in adulthood. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 45, 26–31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2016.02.005>
- Hesselink, A. (2023). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Link to Antisocial, Delinquent, and Criminal Behaviors. *IntechOpen*. doi: 10.5772/intechopen.1001823
- Kalvin, C. B., & Bierman, K. L. (2017). Child and adolescent risk factors that differentially predict violent versus nonviolent crime. *Aggressive behavior*, 43(6), 568–577. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21715>
- Kassing, F., Godwin, J., Lochman, J. E., Coie, J. D., & Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (2019). Using Early Childhood Behavior Problems to Predict Adult Convictions. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 47(5), 765–778. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-018-0478-7>
- Minh, A., Matheson, F. I., Daoud, N., Hamilton-Wright, S., Pedersen, C., Borenstein, H., & O'Campo, P. (2013). Linking childhood and adult criminality: using a life-course framework to examine childhood abuse and neglect, substance use and adult partner violence. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 10(11), 5470–5489. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph10115470>
- Sharma, S., Mustanski, B., Dick, D., Bolland, J., & Kertes, D. A. (2019). Protective Factors Buffer Life Stress and Behavioral Health Outcomes among High-Risk Youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 47(8), 1289–1301. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-019-00515-8>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2021). Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HHS Publication No). <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2020-nsduh-annual-national-report>
- Vera Institute of Justice. (n.d.). Arrest trends: Every three seconds. Retrieved from <https://www.vera.org/publications/arrest-trends-every-three-seconds-landing/arrest-trends-every-three-seconds/overview>

Multivariate

- Protective factors are still significantly and negatively associated with being arrested when considering differences in religiosity.
- The relationship here does not vary. More specifically, there is no difference in the slope of the relationship between protective factors and arrest record when considering level of religiosity.
- For every increase in religiosity, the probability of being arrested increases by a multiplicative factor of 1.6, although this result is not significant. (p-value > 0.05)