

Class: Adolescent Risk Behaviors and Brain Development

Instructional time: 8 hours

Adolescents who end up involved in the justice system have invariably begun practicing unhealthy and illegal risk-behaviors. Some of these are: dangerous/violent initiations, gang involvement, use of alcohol and drugs, violence and acting out, use of weapons, bullying, scapegoating, stealing, vandalism, running away, dangerous dieting/eating disorders, and sexual acting out.

This course examines risk-behaviors and risk-taking in adolescent's lives. The first portion of the course is devoted to an overview of adolescent development including current and historical perspectives. Then, the course investigates what makes some kids and not others, turn toward negative outlets. Reinforcement for negative risk-behaviors, including criminal activity is discussed. What creates "resilience" in adolescence is examined. Positive, effective techniques for working with adolescents are demonstrated and practiced.

*San Diego County hires an external instructor to teach this class therefore the material is not available for review as it is not property of the San Diego County Probation Department.

