Slide 1: Hello everyone. I'm Tayia Bush a senior criminology major with a minor in children's studies. Today I am here to talk to you about Juvenile Delinquency, the General Theory of Crime and ART curriculum. I also have conducted a study through Adelphoi Village to test the effectiveness of ART curriculum on recidivism rates.

Slide 2: Juvenile delinquency is not a new phenomenon. It has been an issue for many many years now. Over a century ago, the first juvenile court hearing proceeded in 1899 in the state of Illinois. Prior to the creation of the juvenile justice system, children were tried as adults in courts and received very harsh sentences for their age capacity. Delinquency of youth peaked on 1996 is when 8% of youth under 18 had committed a crime. Thankfully, it has been in the decline ever since. Title 18 section 5031 of the US Crimes Code defines juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency can include serious offenses such as rape, murder, and burglary and less serious offenses such as underage drinking, truancy, and being disrespectful to adults. Often times when juveniles are caught committing criminal acts, they must appear in court, and the judge sentences them to a detention center, a residential treatment facility, or a community-based program. While in these programs, the youth are taught proper behavior through group therapy and individual counseling.

Slide 3: Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is used in numerous placement facilities and is proven to be effective in reducing recidivism rates. The ART curriculum consists of three essential parts: skillstreaming, anger control, and moral reasoning. Each section of the training focuses on a different problematic area. Juvenile delinquency can be explained by using Gottfredson and Hirschi’s General Theory of Crime which correlates levels of self-control with crime rates. This theory assumes that at the age of 7 or 8, the level of self-control remains consistent throughout the life course. However, utilizing ART can help increase levels of self-control. There is an inverse relationship between self-control and crime. So theoretically, if ART can increase self-control, then crime would decrease. I conducted a study through Adelphoi Village to see how effective ART curriculum was in reducing recidivism rates in the juvenile delinquent population. Through secondary data, I was able to gather evidence in support of ART. The purpose of my research is to examine the issue of juvenile delinquency using the General Theory of Crime and how ART can help develop self-control while reducing recidivism rates among juvenile delinquents.

Slide 4: Gottfredson and Hirschi include more than just illegal acts in their definition of delinquency. They also include reckless behaviors and sinful behaviors. Recklessness and Sin may not be illegal; however, they are considered wrongful acts. Juveniles can be charged just like anybody else with felonies or misdemeanors. For example, aggressive behavior in youth is not typically socially acceptable. Although aggression itself is not a crime, it is problematic. There is a punch to reform antisocial behavior before it turns problematic. That reformation begins in the home with the child's parent or guardian. According to Goldstein, youth that are chronically aggressive are characterized as having a “life history in which, from their early years on, aggression was frequently used, and used successfully by family, peers, media figures, and others constituting the youth’s real-world environment”. There are considered to be two types of delinquency; the first is a product of personality disturbances or emotional conflict within the juvenile. The second is a result of a deviant sub-culture where the juvenile learns deviant
behaviors instead of law-abiding behaviors. According to Matza and Sykes, delinquents are viewed as deviant, meaning not only does his behavior run counter to the law but his underlying norms, attitudes, and values stand opposed to those of the dominant social order. Juvenile delinquents often engage in crime just for the fun of it, they find it thrilling and exciting. They like to take risks, and do not consider consequences because they live in the moment.

**Slide 5:** This formation of self-control must occur at an early age with proper parenting skills from the youth’s parent or guardian. According to research, a lack of self-control occurs when parents do not adequately supervise their children, do not recognize deviant behavior in their children, or do not respond appropriately. People who lack self-control often give into their temptations and impulses. However, people with higher levels of self-control are able to resist their impulses and realize the consequence is not worth it. Gottfredson and Hirschi have found that parental management determines levels of self-control, and that the level of self-control can determine criminal acts. There are two levels of this theory. The first level describes the relationship between parental management and self-control. The more the child is managed by their parent (IV), the more self-control the child will have. The second level explains that the less self-control the individual has (IV), the more likely that person is to engage in crime, deviance, recklessness, and sin (DV). The individual is looking to maximize their pleasure and minimize their pain. Self-control is established by the age 7 or 8. There have been numerous studies supporting the General Theory of Crime, it is one of the most empirically supported theories in criminology. According to Gibbs and Giever’s research, self-control was found to have the strongest effect on rates of delinquency.

**Slide 6:** Although the theory states that an individual’s level of self-control is established by the age of 7 or 8, employing ART curriculum can help the individual achieve higher levels of self-control. ART curriculum has been proven to reduce recidivism rates by increasing self-control. When youth go through the ART curriculum, they complete a pre-test and post-test. The tests that they complete include the “How I think (HIT) Questionnaire”, “Skillstreaming Checklist”, and the “Western Psychological Services Form”. The purpose of giving the youth these three tests, it to see where they initially stand on moral reasoning, skillstreaming, and anger control. After the 10-week ART cycle is finished, the youth are given the same three assessments to track their progress to see how they changed their thoughts. The goal of this training is for the youth to gain the capacity to make better choices and enhance their own insight into situations that may lead to negative outcomes. Through lessons and role-play, these deviant juveniles will be able to identify what behaviors are pro-social rather than anti-social and implement them into their daily lives.

**Slide 7:** There are 50 skills total that are systematically taught to chronically aggressive adolescents and younger children. An example of a skill that is taught is “setting a goal” (Adelphoi, 2012). Per the Adelphoi literature, there are four steps involved in setting a goal; figuring out what goal you want to reach, find out all the information you can about how to reach your goal, think about the steps you will need to take to reach your goal, and take the first step toward your goal. There are six categories of skills learned in this training: beginning social skills, advanced social skills, skills for dealing with feelings, alternatives for aggression, skills for dealing with stress, and planning skills. An example of the alternatives to anger
skillstreaming set is provided on the Slide. This training teaches the individuals what to do in certain scenarios. The youth hearing, seeing, and enacting these behaviors themselves, allows them to use these skills in their own lives outside of a treatment setting.

**Slide 8:** Oftentimes “aggressive behavior is so consistently, immediately, and richly rewarded” outside of the controlled setting. This training teaches what not to do in certain scenarios. The trainer teaches the youth different strategies to employ during a time of emotional distress. Such strategies include identifying internal and external triggers, bodily cues, anger reducers, reminders, thinking ahead, use of skillstreaming abilities, and self-evaluation. These are important to learn because they help the youth identify when they are starting to become aggressive. Once the youth have identified their aggressive behaviors, they utilize coping skills to reduce their anger and aggression. This can reduce the level of impulsivity in such scenarios. Anger is acceptable to feel, it is a very normal emotion that is produced in the brain. However, it is when anger turns into aggression that it becomes an issue. An example of the Anger Control Cycle is provided on the screen. This demonstrates the process of a youth deescalating from a situation.

**Slide 9:** This training steers the youth away from more egocentric, self-serving behaviors. The youth in this training are to adopt more prosocial values and thinking as they interact with peers who display higher levels of empathy and moral reasoning. The idea of what is right and what is wrong can be transformed. The youth can identify their antisocial behaviors and correct them with prosocial behaviors. The group facilitator goes through several scenarios with the group. In each scenario, the main character is faced with several challenges. The job of the group is to find the best solutions for each problem without the main character getting hurt or getting into trouble. An example of a scenario is provided on the next Slide.

**Slide 10:** This is Alonzo’s Problem Situation. Here, the youth read through various scenarios and pick what they would most likely do. There are 8 different questions in this scenario, but I have provided 2. When the youth finished the questions, the group facilitator going around the group discussing their answers. The facilitator and the youth all debate on what they should do.

**Slide 11:** Each component of the ART curriculum works on increasing levels of self-control. Gottfredson and Hirschi’s General Theory of Crime states that as the level of self-control increases, rates of crime decrease. According to the theory, the youth must be monitored, their bad behavior must be addressed, and behavior must be corrected in order to prevent criminal behavior. ART touches on all those points. In each section of the training, the youth use the skills learned to identify bad behavior, and replace the bad behavior with new, socially acceptable behavior. ART could potentially demonstrate higher levels of self-control that the child may not have received through their parents. ART shifts goals from being short-term to long-term and more thought out. Although the General Theory of Crime states that an individual’s level of self-control is established by the age of 7 or 8, employing ART can help the individual achieve higher levels of self-control. The theory claims that an individual’s level of self-control remains unchanged after age 7 or 8, but ART has been proven to reduce recidivism rates by increasing self-control in the Adelphoi Village facilities.

**Slide 12:** I decided to conduct a study using real records from a juvenile facility called Adelphoi Village. Adelphoi is a treatment facility for many different types of criminals. They are all placed
into group homes or treatment centers based on their crime. For example, Bennet home is for sex offenders, Sweeney home is for anger and aggression, and Margaret home is for drug and alcohol use. This data was recorded during the ART curriculum cycle in community-based programs. The pre-test and post-test scores were evaluated to test the effectiveness of ART curriculum on recidivism rates. If their post-test scores increased from their pre-test scores, they were less likely to re-offend. The purpose of the tests is to evaluate where the juvenile ranks in moral reasoning, skillstreaming, and anger control. The data also included a 12-month follow up of the client after they had been released. This monitored how long the individual remained out of the juvenile justice system. It was found that 82% of the ART participants did not recidivate. This was measured by using legal records to see if the youth had been arrested again, or not upon release.

**Slide 13:** The data for this study was gathered from the Adelphoi Village official records. Once a juvenile comes into their care, they keep records of what training they received, and for how long. The dataset used for this study was for youth in their community-based programs within two counties in Pennsylvania (Washington and Butler county). The youth in the program were court ordered to attend this group therapy by a judge. Once their obligations to the program were finished, Adelphoi continued to collect data about the youth’s rate of recidivism. They were notified if the juvenile had gotten arrested, violated probation, or had been sentenced to complete another placement program. The data used was based on frequency and descriptive statistics, these were used to draw preliminary conclusions about ART and recidivism.

**Slide 14:** The question being researched is if there is a relationship between aggression replacement training (ART) completion, partial completion, and recidivism. The question is based on whether ART is effective in preventing recidivism. The data collected shows whether the individual was readmitted into the juvenile justice system or not after their release. The data also provided information regarding whether the juvenile completed the 10 weeks of ART curriculum or if they did not. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference between ART completion, partial completion, and recidivism. The alternative hypothesis in that there is a difference between ART completion, partial completion, and recidivism. It is expected that ART will reduce recidivism rates amongst juvenile offenders.

**Slide 15:** The sample of the study was 40 people aged 12-20. This data was collected from the 2018 year. 75% of the sample were Caucasian, 15% were African American, and 10% were Hispanic. Males made up the majority of the participants. 70% were male and 30% were female. Out of the 40 participants, 91% had a successful discharge from the program. After being discharged, 83% of the participants remained out of care.

**Slide 16:** The dependent variable of the study is recidivism. Recidivism is conceptualized as if a client gets arrested or adjudicated for a crime after release. If the client gets arrested, or violates probation after release, the client would have recidivated back to crime. The client would be reintroduced to the juvenile justice system by re-offending. The variable is operationalized as the time to recidivism in days (ex. 35 days). The first independent variable is ART completion. This variable is used to determine whether the client did or did not fully complete the ART cycle. ART completion is conceptualized as if a client had fully completed the requirements of the ART program. The second independent variable is partial ART completion.
This is conceptualized as if a client partially completes the requirements of the ART program. Both variables would be operationalized the same way (0-no, 1-yes). The purpose of having two independent variables is because partial completion of ART is still significant. The client would still have been able to develop certain skills without fully completing the cycle. However, completing the full program yields more significant results.

**Slide 17:** The initial step in the research process is selecting and defining the variables. The second step is selecting the sample. To choose participants, there must be a target population. The researchers chose the participants by observing each individual client's record to see what individuals were required to complete ART in the last year. Adelphoi Village maintains official records of every client that has come into the program. The manager of clinical services was contacted in order to retrieve these records. Their records indicate their age, their race/ethnicity, their pre-test and post-test scores, and if they recidivated. Once the client is released, Adelphoi keeps track of them for a year. If the client commits a crime or has a parole violation, Adelphoi will be notified and it will be added to their record. These records are used to indicate whether the training they received was beneficial or not.

**Slide 18:** This is the dataset used for my recidivism conclusions. There were two counties used for this study and 40 youth. Butler county did better in terms of recidivism than Washington county. However, 83% of the total subjects remained out of care and did not recidivate.

**Slide 19:** There are a number of groups that are run at Adelphoi. Some clients may not even get to participate in ART group therapy during their sentence. There was a lack of universal information. There are several other juvenile placement institutions that use the ART cycle in their curriculum. The data from Adelphoi only accounted for the year 2018. To make these results stronger, data from previous years should be analyzed. Adelphoi will only track released juveniles for a year. This limits the study of effectiveness to only one year, instead of a more long-term analysis. If the juvenile's records were upkept longer than a year, then testing for effectiveness could be more beneficial. When given the post-test, the juveniles can lie about their answers. This seemingly benefits the juvenile in making others believe he/she has changed. They can select answers they know are not true to themselves. However, Adelphoi runs a test on all post-test scores to identify which ones are not accurate. The scores are them marked in a red color to identify that there may be a discrepancy in the data. Another limitation to studies like this, is that there is no way to perfectly test self-control. The juveniles being analyzed come from different areas, ages, socioeconomic status, gender, and much more. In a perfect world, there would be a way to have a completely controlled environment but that is not realistic.

**Slide 20:** Future research should explore the data of other placement institutions. This could make the data more generalizable. With this information, researchers will be able to make the ART curriculum even more effective. This will help the rates of recidivism among juvenile offenders and help develop better policy implication when running the ART curriculum.

Further research could also add to ART curriculum. If there are common trends in offenses being committed after completing the training, there could be another section added to the training to prevent those types of offenses. There could also be research done to show the possible benefits of making the group run for longer than 10 weeks at a time.
**Slide 21:** Parental figures must monitor their child and identify, as well as correct their child's bad behavior. This will allow the child to develop higher levels of self-control, which in turn will result in lower levels of crime. However, if the youth did not have proper parental management and developed lower self-control, then ART training should be employed. ART training is used in residential facilities such as Adelphoi, and even community-based programs for delinquent and deviant youth. Goldstein and Glick evaluated the effectiveness of ART in different residential and community-based facilities. Their evaluation found that ART is effective and promotes skills acquisition and performance, improves anger control, decreases the frequency of acting-out behaviors, and increases the frequency of constructive and prosocial behaviors.

**Slide 22:** The youth who commit acts of deviance and/or crime demonstrate low levels of self-control. There is a relationship between ART curriculum and higher levels of self-control based on empirical evidence within the pre-tests and post-tests given before and after the training. ART has also been shown to lower recidivism rates among juvenile offenders. Once a juvenile offender learns prosocial behavior and develops higher levels of self-control, they are less likely to commit criminal acts or engage in deviance. Juvenile offenders go through several forms of group therapy and training in order to reintegrate into society. Clients that complete the ART curriculum have a lower recidivism rate. Thank you so much for your time.