

Speaker: *Ulrika Athanassiou*

Presentation title: Examining the overlap of young people's early contact with the police as a person of interest and victim or witness

Co-authors: *Tyson Whitten* (University of Adelaide; University of New South Wales, Australia), *Stacy Tzoumakis* (Griffith University; University of New South Wales, Australia), *Gabrielle Hindmarsh* (University of New South Wales, Australia), *Kristin R. Laurens* (Queensland University of Technology; University of New South Wales, Australia), *Felicity Harris*, (University of New South Wales, Australia), *Vaughan J. Carr* (Monash University; University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia), *Melissa J. Green* (University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia) and *Kimberlie Dean* (University of New South Wales, Sydney; Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, Australia)

Individuals who come into contact with the criminal justice system are commonly victims of crime as well as offenders, but the extent of this overlap early in life among children and young adolescents is not clear. We examined the sociodemographic profiles of young people who had contact with police as a person of interest, victim/witness, or both, as well as the patterns of multiple police contact types, from birth to 13 years of age. Data were drawn from a longitudinal, population-based sample of 91,631 young people from New South Wales, Australia. Among the 10.6% (n=9,677) of young people with at least one contact with the police for a criminal incident by age 13 years, 14.4% (n=1,393) had at least one contact as a person of interest and as a victim/witness on separate occasions. The most common first contact type was as a victim/witness but those children with a first contact as a person of interest were most likely to have at least one further contact. Young people with both types of police contact were younger at first police contact, were more likely to reside in a socioeconomically disadvantaged area and to be recorded as having an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. These findings suggest that one in ten children and young people under 13 years have contact with the police in relation to a criminal incident and that a minority have contact with the police as both a person of interest and a victim/witness. These young people may represent a particularly disadvantaged group in the community who are likely to be at risk of future adversity, including repeated contact with the criminal justice system.