

Brain Science and Violence: Causes and Cures

Abstract:

An increasing body of knowledge is documenting a brain basis to the etiology of crime and violence, with health factors such as poor nutrition, nicotine exposure, and poor sleep being implicated in the etiology of poor brain health in offenders. An important question emanating from this etiological literature concerns how brain functioning can be enhanced in order to reduce antisocial and aggressive behaviors. This presentation outlines both the brain basis to violence as well as preliminary interventions to enhance brain health, ranging from health enrichment in early childhood to transcranial direct current stimulation in adulthood. New findings from a meta-analysis of 34 randomised controlled trials of omega-3 supplementation will be presented, showing that this nutritional supplement is effective in reducing aggression in both children and adults.