Violence Research Centre, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge

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The Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge, UK, is one of the leading criminological research institutions worldwide. Its mission is to contribute high-quality research on the causes of crime, the operation of the police and the criminal justice system, and to develop more effective ways of preventing crime. The Institute of Criminology has particular strengths in longitudinal studies on the origins of antisocial and criminal behaviour in human development, and in research on evidence-based crime prevention. Academics like Professor David Farrington, Professor Lawrence Sherman, and Professor Friedrich Lösel are amongst the leading proponents of a research-based crime prevention approach that can inform policymakers about ‘what works’. The Institute has several research centres including the Jerry Lee Centre for Experimental Criminology (Director: Professor Lawrence Sherman), the Prisons Research Centre (Director: Professor Alison Liebling), the Centre for Community, Gender and Social Justice (Director: Professor Loraine Gelstorph), and the Violence Research Centre (Director: Professor Manuel Eisner).

VPA focal person

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Professor Manuel Eisner is the Director of the Violence Research Centre (VRC). The centre aims to contribute to the advancement of the understanding of the causes, consequences and prevention of interpersonal violence through longitudinal research, cross-national comparative studies, outcome evaluations and systematic reviews. VRC takes an interdisciplinary perspective that draws on theoretical approaches and empirical findings from criminology, psychology, biology, political science, sociology and history. To achieve its mission the VRC works closely with academics and policy-making institutions both nationally and internationally.

Currently Professor Eisner is leading a large-scale project entitled Evidence for Better Lives (EBLS). EBLS is an integrated research, impact and capacity-building programme based in eight middle-income countries across the world: Romania, Jamaica, the Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Ghana. The research component will be a longitudinal cohort study of 1,500 families in each country. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (UN), EBLS will generate high-quality evidence on how to prevent violence against children, and how best to support children growing up in the context of adversity so that they achieve their full potential. (https://www.vrc.crim.cam.ac.uk/vrcresearch/EBLS).