Topics in PsycINFO of Relevance to Law & Criminal Justice

PsycINFO is a research database published by the American Psychological Association. Lawyers, social workers and other professionals in the field of criminal justice can use it to locate research on jury selection, expert testimony, juvenile justice and forensic psychology.

Sample Searches in Law & Criminal Justice

Scenario: A law student wants to learn more about juror deliberations during death penalty decisions.
Search: Juries AND Capital Punishment
Results: Articles on a range of issues, including group dynamics, racial bias, decision making and juror comprehension of instructions for deliberation.

Scenario: A psychiatrist has been called as an expert witness for an upcoming trial. She needs to learn more about what to expect.
Search: Expert Testimony AND Mental Health Personnel
Results: Articles and book chapters on how to prepare and what to expect in the courtroom, as well as explorations of how expert witnesses are perceived.

Scenario: A social worker is seeking information about recidivism among juvenile offenders.
Search: Recidivism AND Risk Factors AND Juvenile Delinquency
Results: Articles exploring risk factors among a variety of subgroups of juvenile offenders, looking at factors including substance abuse, seriousness of offense, and more.
Selected Search Terms

The search terms provided here are just a few excerpts from the many relevant terms in PsycINFO’s thesaurus. If you aren’t sure how to use these terms (called Subject Terms, Subject Headings, or Index Terms depending on your interface), check with your librarian or consult the PsycINFO Quick Reference Guide you may also have received at the same time as this handout.

**Adjudication**
- Competency to Stand Trial
- Crime Victims
- Defendants
- Expert Testimony
- Informants
- Insanity Defense
- Legal Arrest
- Parole
- Restorative Justice

**Laws**
- Abortion Laws
- Child Abuse Reporting
- Civil Law
- Criminal Law
- Disability Laws
- Discrimination Laws
- Gun Control Laws

**Legal Issues**
- Censorship
- Child Welfare
- Criminal Record
- Drug Legalization
- Informed Consent
- Mentally Ill Offenders
- Privileged Communication
- Self Defense

**Legal Personnel**
- Attorneys
- Judges
- Juries
- Law Enforcement Personnel
- Parole Officers
- Police Personnel
- Prison Personnel
- Probation Officers

**Legal Processes**
- Child Support
- Citizenship
- Civil Rights
- Consumer Protection
- Diminished Capacity
- Divorce
- Forensic Evaluation
- Protective Services

**Penology**
- Capital Punishment
- Halfway Houses
- Incarceration
- Institution Visitation
- Maximum Security Facilities
- Prisons
- Recidivism
- Reintegration