

Mental Health and Criminal Justice: The Contributions of Forensic Psychology

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Abstract

This abstract explores the significant contributions of forensic psychology to the intersection of mental health and the criminal justice system. Mental health disorders are prevalent among individuals involved in the criminal justice system, necessitating a comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors influencing criminal behavior. Forensic psychology plays a crucial role in this context, offering expertise in assessment, evaluation, treatment, and advocacy. Through comprehensive psychological evaluations, forensic psychologists assess factors such as competency to stand trial, insanity, and risk of reoffending, informing judicial decisions and interventions. Furthermore, forensic psychologists collaborate with correctional facilities to design and implement evidence-based treatment programs aimed at addressing underlying mental health concerns and reducing recidivism rates. In legal proceedings, they provide expert testimony regarding the impact of mental health on an individual's behavior and culpability, advocating for fair and equitable treatment. Despite facing challenges such as limited resources and stigma, forensic psychology continues to advance the integration of mental health services within the criminal justice system.

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