

# Criminal Offenses Committed by Muslim Children at Henry Gurney Puncak Borneo School Kuching

**BITARA**

Volume 8, Issue 1, 2025: 275-289  
© The Author(s) 2025  
e-ISSN: 2600-9080  
<http://www.bitarajournal.com>  
Received: 9 February 2024  
Accepted: 29 February 2024  
Published: 14 February 2025

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## Abstract

Crimes committed by children in Sarawak are increasingly alarming and this not only involves petty crimes but also serious crimes such as drugs, theft, robbery and sexual crimes. According to the Royal Police Report (PDRM 2023) shows that in the last five years, there has been an increase of 15% in criminal cases involving perpetrators under the age of 18 in Sarawak. Therefore, this paper was conducted to explore criminal offenses among Muslim children at Henry Gurney Puncak Borneo School Kuching as well as to understand the factors that drive them to engage in criminal activities. By using qualitative methods through face-to-face interviews with three selected respondents and quantitative methods through the distribution of questionnaires to 56 child offenders as well as convenient and purposive sampling techniques. The writing is practical, theoretical and descriptive analysis, which is a statistical method used to explain, summarize and illustrate data in a form that is easier to understand. This author found that crime among children at Henry Gurney School Kuching involves several types of major offenses including drugs, theft, robbery, rape, sexual offenses and traffic offenses. Several factors influence their involvement in crime, including peer influence, lack of love and attention from family and social media influence. To address this problem, this writing suggests several prevention strategies that involve the roles of all parties. These include mandatory counselling sessions for parents, increasing parents' awareness of their role, providing religious education to children, paying attention to them and raising awareness about the dangers of crime. In addition, parents are reminded not to reduce their children to prevent them from falling into criminal activities. In conclusion, the findings of this paper are expected to be used as a reference by the authorities in their efforts to address criminal offenses involving children as perpetrators.

**Key Words:** Muslim children, criminal offenses, Henry Gurney School



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## Cite This Article:

Asydididi Hamzah, Zuliza Kusrin & Wafaa' Yusof. (2025). Criminal Offenses Committed by Muslim Children at Henry Gurney Puncak Borneo School Kuching. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences* 8(1): 275-289.

## Introduction

Crime among children is often the headline in newspapers, print media and electronic media. Starting from drug abuse, racketeering and robbery, it is often presented to the public in general. This issue requires serious attention from all parties including parents, schools, the community, government and non-government agencies. This study focuses on the involvement of children in the crimes they commit and finding the causes of these criminal acts.

## Problem Statement

In recent years, the issue of child crime has received increasing attention because it reflects deeper social problems in society. Studies at the global level show that socioeconomic factors, family environment and peer influence are among the main contributors to criminal behaviour among children (Smith 2018). In Malaysia, especially in Sarawak, the same pattern can be observed, where children are involved in various crimes including theft, violence and drug abuse.

The main problem is the increasing statistics of crime involving children in Sarawak which is linked to factors such as poverty, parental neglect and lack of access to quality education (Ali 2020). A report from the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) found that over the past five years, there has been a 15% increase in criminal cases involving perpetrators under 18 in Sarawak (PDRM 2023). For example, a criminal case reported in early 2023 involved a 16-year-old teenager who was arrested for stealing a motorcycle in Sibul (The Borneo Post 2023). In addition, there was also an incident of a child trafficking drugs worth RM1.89 million who was arrested in Kuching (suarasarawak.my 2023).

Several types of crimes are frequently committed in Sarawak, including theft and robbery, drug abuse, sexual offenses, traffic offenses and vandalism. Theft and robbery are common, especially in urban areas, with adolescents being involved due to peer influence and poverty (PDRM 2022). Drug abuse is also increasingly worrying, especially in rural areas, with children being affected by problematic environments (AADK 2023). Sexual crimes such as rape and molestation involving children and adolescents as perpetrators are also increasing, influenced by a lack of sexual education and parental supervision (Ali 2020). In addition, traffic offenses such as riding motorcycles without a license and vandalism that damage public property are also among the crimes that are often reported in Sarawak, where children are involved in illegal racing and acts of damaging public facilities due to peer influence and lack of parental control (The Borneo Post 2023).

Several main factors drive children to commit crimes in Sarawak. Among them is peer influence, where children who associate with groups involved in negative activities are more likely to commit crimes (Ali 2020). In addition, family factors such as lack of love, attention and supervision from parents also contribute to the tendency of children to be involved in crime. Children raised in troubled or neglected families often seek attention outside the home, including through criminal activities (Jamaluddin 2019). Socioeconomic factors such as poverty also affect children in Sarawak where they may be involved in crimes such as theft or drug abuse to meet financial needs (PDRM 2022). The influence of social media that spreads negative content and encourages criminal behaviour also has a major impact on children's behaviour (Hassan 2022). A knowledge gap in previous research studies is the lack of in-depth studies on the specific causes of child crime in the context of the state of Sarawak. Studies in Malaysia often focus on large urban areas such as Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, while studies in Sarawak pay less attention to local socioeconomic factors such as the influence of customs and rural community structures. Therefore, this study will investigate the factors that contribute to crime among children in Sarawak with a focus on cultural, economic and family environment aspects that have not been emphasized in previous studies (Ahmad 2019).

## Writing Methodology

This study uses a mixed approach with a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method is through the distribution of questionnaires to 56 Muslim child offenders at Henry Gurney School Kuching to understand the types of crimes and their involvement factors while qualitative data is obtained through semi-structured interviews with relevant officers, namely the Magistrate, Prison Officer and Welfare Officer. The study location was chosen because it is relevant to the target population. The sample was selected through purposive sampling. The data was analysed using SPSS 27.0 for descriptive and main themes. The pilot study showed a high Cronbach's Alpha value (0.96-0.992), proving the reliability of the measuring instrument.

## Research Findings and Discussion

Crime among children needs to be given more attention by leaders, authorities, NGOs and the community. This is to ensure that this criminal behaviour can be curbed from continuing to fester in society and to ensure the stability and harmony of Malaysia. The objective of this study is to identify the types of criminal behaviour and factors that influence the involvement of children. As a result of these findings, the researchers put forward suggestions for improvement and used not only in Henry Gurney Schools throughout Malaysia but also in other mainstream schools. A total of 56 Muslim residents were selected from all children of Henry Gurney School Kuching as respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to residents as a research instrument and interview data from magistrates, prison officers and welfare officers as supporting data.

## Respondent Demographics

Table 1 Descriptive Distribution of Writing Respondent Profiles

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age (Years)</b>	15	2	3.6
	16	2	3.6
	17	4	7.1
	18	8	14.3
	19	19	33.9
	20	21	37.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Race</b>	Malay	49	87.5
	Iban	2	3.6
	Javanese	2	3.6

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Residing in</b>	Melanau	2	3.6
	Kadayan	1	1.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	Kuching	19	33.9
	Samarahan	14	25.0
	Betong	6	10.7
	Miri	2	3.6
	Engkelili	1	1.8
	Serian	9	16.1
	Sibu	3	5.4
	Sematan	1	1.8
	Sri Aman	1	1.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2023 questionnaire

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the objectives of this study have been achieved. This is because all respondents consisting of Muslim residents of Henry Gurney School Kuching, magistrates, prison officers and welfare officers have fully cooperated in answering the interview questions and questionnaires successfully. Muslim residents who answered the questionnaire were between 15 and 20 years old. Most of them are of Malay descent and the rest are Iban, Javanese, Melanau and Kadayan.

Overall, the researchers can conclude that the strong influence of a child falling into the crime scene is due to peer influence. Family background also has a high impact on a child, for example, we can see that the relationship between children and their fathers is mostly less friendly. Most of the children placed at Henry Gurney School Kuching are from families with an income of RM1500 and below. Some have many siblings and live in rented houses. This causes children to not get special attention from their parents who are busy earning a living and they try to make a living by being influenced by friends' invitations to commit crimes.

## Types of Crimes Committed by Children

Table 2 Types of Crimes Committed by Children

No.	Type of Criminal Conduct	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
1	Dangerous Drugs Act 1952	18	32.0	38	68.0	1.32
2	Sexual Offences against Children Act 2017	7	12.5	49	87.5	1.13

No.	Type of Criminal Conduct	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
3	Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
4	Dangerous Weapons and Corrosive Substances Act 1958	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
5	Section 148 IPC (Armed Riot)	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
6	Section 224 IPC (Escape from Custody)	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
7	Section 375B IPC (Gang Rape)	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
8	Section 376 IPC (Rape or Sexual Intercourse Without Consent)	8	14.3	48	85.7	1.14
9	Section 379 IPC (Theft)	7	12.5	49	87.5	1.13
10	Section 411 IPC (Offence of Receiving or Possessing Stolen Goods)	3	5.4	53	94.6	1.05
11	Section 414 IPC (Receiving or Selling Stolen Property with Malicious Intent)	2	3.6	54	96.4	1.04
12	Section 457 IPC (House Breaking and Entering at Night)	2	3.6	54	96.4	1.04
13	Section 447 IPC (Trespassing)	2	3.6	54	96.4	1.04
14	Section 506 CC (Threat of Violence Directed at Another Person)	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02
15	Section 509 CC (Insulting the Modesty of a Person)	1	1.8	55	98.2	1.02

Source: 2023 questionnaire

Based on the results of this study, various types of criminal acts were committed by children placed at Henry Gurney School Kuching. According to Table 3.7, offenses under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 recorded the highest rate, which was 32% of respondents involved in this offense. This reflects that the drug issue is still critical in the community in Sarawak despite various preventive measures being implemented. The second highest was offences under the Sexual Offences against Children Act 2017 with a rate of 12.5%, emphasizing the importance of child safety. This statistic emphasizes the need for increased enforcement and community awareness of sexual offenses.

Theft cases also received attention, with Section 379 of the IPC recording a frequency of 12.5%, and Section 411 and Section 414 of the IPC regarding receiving or possessing stolen goods showing a rate between 3.6% to 5.4%. Although this rate is not as high as drug crimes, it shows that theft is still an issue that needs to be addressed through more effective enforcement and security monitoring. Meanwhile, the offenses involving threats or insults as stipulated in

Section 506 KK (threat of violence) and Section 509 KK (outraging modesty), the very low rate of 1.8% indicates the effectiveness of existing laws or the fear factor to report cases.

Overall, despite the implementation of comprehensive laws, the results of this study show that there are still challenges in terms of enforcement, reporting and crime prevention. Proactive measures involving community awareness, education and improved law enforcement are recommended to improve public safety and reduce crime rates in Malaysia, especially in Sarawak.

## Actors Involving Crime Against Children

### Peer Factors

Table 3 Peer Factors

No.	Statement	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
1	My friends often invite me to engage in negative activities such as smoking, vaping, etc.	42	75.0	14	25.0	1.75
2	My friends always challenge me in everything.	38	68.0	18	32.0	1.68
3	My friends always provide good guidance.	53	95.0	3	5.0	1.95
4	My friends always provide bad guidance.	21	37.5	35	62.5	1.38
5	My friends often use profanity and vulgar language.	42	68.0	20	32.0	1.68
6	My friends often lie to me.	36	64.0	20	36.0	1.64
7	My friends often threaten me.	10	18.0	46	82.0	1.18
8	My friends often exclude me if their demands are not met.	15	27.0	41	73.0	1.27
9	My friends often give gifts or rewards if their demands are fulfilled.	30	54.0	26	46.0	1.54
10	My friends invite me to hang out together.	55	98.0	1	2.0	1.98
11	My friends taught me how to smoke.	28	50.0	28	50.0	1.50
12	My friends taught me how to vape.	30	54.0	26	46.0	1.54
13	My friends taught me how to use drugs.	34	61.0	22	39.0	1.61
14	My friends influence me to engage in bad and negative activities.	26	46.0	30	54.0	1.46
15	My friends are known as troublemakers in the village.	32	57.0	24	43.0	1.57

No.	Statement	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
16	My friends often cause trouble in the village.	49	87.5	7	12.5	1.88
17	My friends never perform prayers.	28	50.0	28	50.0	1.50
18	My friends often invite me to go out at night.	42	75.0	14	25.0	1.75
19	My friends influence me to engage in sexual activities.	46	82.0	10	18.0	1.82
20	My friends invite me to watch pornographic films.	22	39.0	34	60.0	1.39
21	My friends influence me to commit crimes.	27	48.0	29	52.0	1.48
22	My friends invite me to earn money through illegal means such as robbery, theft, drug dealing, etc.	27	48.0	29	52.0	1.48

Source: 2023 Questionnaire

The results of the study in Table 1.3 examine the influence of peers on children's behaviour, both positive and negative, based on the frequency questionnaire and percentage of responses as well as the mean for each behavioural item.

This study found that negative peer influence is significant, especially in pushing children towards risky behaviours such as smoking, vaping, night outings and premature sexual behaviour. A total of 75% of children reported experiencing negative influence in terms of smoking and night outings while 82% stated negative influence in sexual aspects. This statistic shows that peers can play a large role in influencing children's risky behavioural choices. A study by Hussein and Ahmad (2021) also found that peer influence is a dominant factor in children's involvement in high-risk activities.

On the other hand, positive peer influence is also significant with 95% of children stating that they receive good guidance from friends. This shows that peers can be important agents in the formation of positive behaviour, in line with the findings of Rahim (2019) who observed that positive guidance by peers helps good social development among children.

From the perspective of peer pressure challenges, 68% of respondents felt that they were often challenged by their friends in various ways, creating pressure to adapt to their friends' social environment. This finding reinforces Syed's (2020) view of social pressure that influences adolescents to meet social expectations. However, irresponsible behaviour such as cheating (64%) and invitations to watch pornographic films (39%) also occurred, showing the negative side of peer influence that needs to be paid attention to by the authorities.

Overall, this study emphasizes that peer influence on children has the potential to have a positive effect on forming good values and can sometimes bring negative risks that can invite risky behaviour.

## Family Background Factors

Table 4 Family Background Factors

No.	Statement	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
1	My parents often scold me.	21	37.5	35	62.5	1.38
2	My parents often expect more from me.	27	48.2	29	51.8	1.48
3	My parents often compare me to others.	18	32.1	38	67.9	1.32
4	My parents are also involved in crime.	0	0.0	56	100.0	1.00
5	My parents are also involved in drug abuse.	56	100.0	0	0.0	2.00
6	My parents often neglect me.	5	8.9	51	91.1	1.09
7	My parents are always busy with their careers.	26	46.4	30	53.6	1.46
8	My parents strictly monitor me.	35	62.5	21	37.5	1.63
9	My parents often hit me.	14	25.0	42	75.0	1.25
10	My parents often yell at me.	28	50.0	28	50.0	1.50
11	My parents often argue.	15	26.8	41	73.2	1.27
12	My family often excludes me.	9	16.1	47	83.9	1.16
13	My family rarely talks to me.	15	26.8	41	73.2	1.27
14	My family does not understand my needs.	28	50.0	28	50.0	1.50
15	My family often prevents me from doing what I want.	25	44.6	31	55.4	1.45
16	My family is the reason for my stress.	12	21.4	44	78.6	1.21
17	I have problems with my family.	13	23.2	43	76.8	1.23
18	I do not get attention from my family.	20	35.7	36	64.3	1.36
19	I am not close with my siblings.	18	32.1	38	67.9	1.32
20	I am often controlled by my family.	23	41.1	33	58.9	1.41
21	There are many conflicts among family members.	11	19.6	45	80.4	1.20
22	My family does not prioritize religious education.	10	17.9	46	82.1	1.18

Source: 2023 Questionnaire



Based on the results of the study, family background plays an important role in the involvement of children in criminal cases. Among the main factors is drug abuse by parents which recorded the highest frequency with 100% of respondents confirming it. This indicates that children in a family environment involved in drugs are at high risk of falling into crime due to lack of supervision and moral support as supported by Ahmad et al. (2020) who stated that a toxic environment hurts children's morals.

A total of 46.4% of respondents reported that parents are busy with their careers and 8.9% stated that they are often neglected. This lack of attention encourages children to seek attention outside the home, which can result in them being involved in negative activities. This neglect is often associated with crimes committed by children as stated by Zulkifli and Hamid (2019) and Chief Inspector of Prisons Norjayadi bin Sarkawi (2023).

Family stress is also a risk factor, with 48.2% of respondents stating that parents expect more than they can handle and 37.5% stating that they are often scolded. This stress can lead to feelings of inferiority and rebellion, in line with Rashid's (2018) study which states that family stress has the potential to trigger emotional instability in children. In addition, 19.6% of respondents reported frequent disagreements in the family, while 16.1% felt left out. According to Bakar and Salim (2022), a conflict-filled family atmosphere causes mental stress that encourages children to seek peace through risky activities.

The final factor is the absence of religious education in the family, reported by 17.9% of respondents. Religious education is important in shaping personality and the absence of these values makes children more susceptible to bad influences. Hasan (2023) emphasizes that religious education is fundamental in strengthening children's morals.

Overall, this study confirms that family background factors involving substance abuse, neglect, stress, conflict and lack of religious education will significantly influence children and increase their risk of being involved in criminal activities.

## Self-Problem Factors

Table 1.5 Self-Problem Factors

No.	Statement	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
1	I do not like being controlled.	35	62.5	21	37.5	1.63
2	I am a hot-tempered person.	31	55.4	25	44.6	1.55
3	When I desire something, I will strive to get it.	52	92.9	4	7.1	1.93
4	I feel unloved.	19	33.9	37	66.1	1.34
5	I feel useless.	24	42.9	32	57.1	1.43
6	I like to try new things.	40	71.4	16	28.6	1.71
7	I am a drug addict.	36	64.3	20	35.7	1.64
8	I am a smoker.	50	89.3	6	10.7	1.89

No.	Statement	Yes (N)	Percentage (%)	No (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean
9	I am an alcoholic.	30	53.6	26	46.4	1.54
10	I am easily influenced by those close to me.	45	80.4	11	19.6	1.80
11	When I like something, I will continue liking it even if it is against the law.	27	48.2	29	51.8	1.48
12	I do not like being bound by rules.	23	41.1	33	58.9	1.41
13	I like freedom.	48	85.7	8	14.3	1.86
14	I am a good person.	50	89.3	6	10.7	1.89
15	I like goodness.	15	26.8	41	73.2	1.27
16	I do not like myself.	32	57.1	24	42.9	1.57
17	I am an egoistic person.	12	21.4	44	78.6	1.21
18	I like to belittle others.	38	67.9	18	32.1	1.68
19	I like to follow my emotions/instincts.	19	33.9	37	66.1	1.34
20	I am a vengeful person.	47	83.9	9	16.1	1.84
21	I lack self-confidence.	24	42.9	32	57.1	1.43
22	I like being praised by everyone.	22	39.3	34	60.7	1.39
23	I like to show off my abilities even if they are wrong.	18	32.1	38	67.9	1.32
24	I am not interested in deepening my religious knowledge.	5	8.9	51	91.1	1.09
25	I am touched when my friends invite me to do good deeds.	44	78.6	12	21.4	1.79

Source: 2023 Questionnaire

The study findings show several personal factors that potentially contribute to children's involvement in crime. One of the main factors is the desire for freedom and non-compliance with rules. As many as 62.5% of children stated that they do not like being confined while 85.7% like freedom, indicating that the desire for freedom without control can lead them to ignore norms and rules. Ibrahim and Zainal's (2020) study support this finding, showing that freedom without guidance tends to push children to risky activities.

In addition, hot-temperedness and being easily influenced by peers are also important factors. As many as 55.4% of children admitted to having hot-temperedness and 80.4% are easily influenced by individuals close to them. Hot temperedness can lead to impulsive actions, especially when combined with negative peer influence. Rahman et al. (2019) found that children with hot temperedness are more likely to act uncontrollably in challenging situations, especially under the influence of friends.

Furthermore, lack of self-confidence and feelings of being unloved also contribute to risky behaviour. As many as 42.9% of children feel useless and 57.1% dislike themselves. This lack of confidence can lead them to seek recognition outside the family and risk being trapped in negative groups or activities. According to a study by Ali and Ramli (2021), children who feel low self-esteem or lack emotional support from their family tend to seek attention through negative means that can lead to misbehaviour.

Overall, these findings indicate that self-factors such as a desire for independence, hot-tempered attitude and lack of self-confidence play an important role in pushing children to engage in criminal activities.

## **Crime Consistency**

Studies show that crime among children is a serious issue that requires an integrated approach from various parties for prevention. Family factors, peer influence and lack of supervision are identified as the main causes of children's criminal behaviour (Ahmad & Hashim 2018). In this context, the role of institutions such as courts, schools, and parents are very important to effectively address this problem.

Kuching Magistrate, Puan Zaiton binti Anuar (2023) stated that the role in dealing with child crime cases should not only depend on the courts but also involve parents and teachers. In the Children's Court, she utilizes a counselling and advisory approach to increase the awareness of children and their parents in line with the views of Che Omar (2019) who recommends counselling-based interventions to foster a sense of responsibility in children.

Welfare Officer, Encik Mohd Faizal bin Mohd Ali (2023) emphasized the role of parents in shaping positive behaviour by paying attention to children's associations, religious education and supervision of their activities. Without adequate supervision, children may be involved in risky activities such as theft and motorcycle gangs as detailed in the study by Mahmud and Khalid (2017).

In addition, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, Norjayadi bin Sarkawi (2023) suggested that dysfunctional parents should also be given counselling and motivation. He proposed a law that allows parents whose children are involved in crime to be called for counselling to increase their understanding of the important role of parents. This suggestion is supported by Hamid and Sulaiman (2020), who found that children from dysfunctional families tend to seek attention through delinquent behaviour.

Overall, this study emphasizes that the role of all parties, including the court, parents, teachers and authorities is critical in preventing child crime. A comprehensive approach involving education, counselling and guidance is needed to avoid negative influences and increase children's awareness of social responsibility. Previous studies also support that consistent support can help children avoid criminal behaviour (Rahman & Ishak 2016).

## Study Proposals

The proposed crime prevention strategy at Henry Gurney School through a mandatory approach to learning skills for children can be supported by several important studies and references. In an effort to develop highly skilled and competent individuals, skills-based learning has been identified as one of the effective mechanisms (Ismail, 2017). According to a study by Rahim (2019), an approach that prioritizes specific skills based on children's interests can increase the effectiveness of learning, thus yielding positive results and improving children's behaviour and thinking.

Collaboration with training institutions such as the Industrial Training Institute (ILP) and the Centre for Technology Excellence Sarawak (CENTEXS) is a strategic step in driving children's innovation and creativity (Aziz & Hamid, 2020). This is because this collaboration can provide direct exposure to the world of work and current technology, making children more prepared and innovative. Abdullah and Hashim (2018) emphasized that children exposed to industry-based training can build positive personalities and mature minds.

In addition, the comprehensive training program module not only aims to equip children with technical skills but also to form positive morals and thinking (Mohamed et al., 2021). With this holistic approach, the risk of children getting back into crime can be significantly reduced (Zainal, 2020). Therefore, training modules that emphasize the formation of positive attitudes along with technical skills are important in developing better children as acknowledged by Hassan et al. (2022).

Raising awareness of crime cases among Henry Gurney School children requires a holistic approach involving various agencies and stakeholders. Based on studies and scientific references, various initiatives and strategic collaborations can be implemented to reduce the risk of child crime. One effective way is through close collaboration between the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), the National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK), and the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Department (JPJKK) in formulating and implementing crime awareness program strategies. A study by Mohamed and Sulaiman (2020) found that the active involvement of authoritative institutions such as PDRM and AADK in crime prevention can increase understanding of the risks and effects of crime among high-risk youth.

Support from the Department of Social Welfare (JKM) and the Department of Women and Family Sarawak (JWKS) in the form of funding and specific programs is also very important. According to a study by Ismail et al. (2019), programs that involve children in crime prevention activities with the support of welfare agencies can trigger positive changes in them and reduce crime risk rates.

## Conclusion

Overall, this study has examined in depth the criminal offenses among Muslim children at Henry Gurney School Puncak Borneo Kuching by focusing on the types of crimes committed, the main causative factors and the steps that can be taken to curb this phenomenon. The study findings show that peer influence, unstable family background, socioeconomic factors and the

influence of social media play a major role in encouraging children to get involved in crime. This situation proves that crime among children is not just an individual problem but reflects their social and family environment. Solving this issue requires a holistic approach that involves all stakeholders including parents, schools, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and law enforcement agencies. Measures such as stricter monitoring of children's associations and strengthening religious and moral education can help reduce the crime rate among them. In addition, personality development and skills training programs at institutions such as Henry Gurney School need to be expanded to ensure that children who have served sentences can return to society with useful skills and a clearer direction in life. With the results of this study, it is hoped that it can be used as a reference and guide for the authorities in formulating more effective policies and interventions in efforts to curb crime among children. Prevention is better than cure. Therefore, it is a shared responsibility to ensure that children receive appropriate guidance and support so that they can develop in a safe and positive environment. Hopefully, this study can have a positive impact on social development and the well-being of society.

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