

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SEXUAL REOFFENDING AND SEX OFFENDER MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT?

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Bethany: Welcome everyone. My name is Bethany Broida and I am the director of communications at the National Criminal Justice Association. It is my pleasure to welcome you to What Do We Know About Sexual Offending and Sex Offender Management and Treatment? Incidence and Prevalence and Adult Etiology. This webinar is the first in a nine part series that's designed to provide policy makers and practitioners with trustworthy up to date information they can use to identify and implement what works to combat sexual offending and prevent sexual victimization. Each webinar in this series focuses on evidence from state of the art research, knowledge gaps, unresolved controversies and the implications of key research findings for policy and practice.

The webinars are schedule to take place every three weeks or so. There is a schedule on the NCJA website and registration is currently open for the next four webinars in this series. Before I go any further, I would like to thank our wonderful partners at the SMART office, at the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs for making this webinar possible. Let me quickly cover a few logistical items. First and foremost, we'll be recording today's session for future playback. The recording and the slides from this session will be posted on the NCJA website at www.ncja.org/webinars. We will also be emailing them to everyone who've registered for this session.

Today's webinar is being AudioCast for the speakers on your computer. If you do not have speakers or prefer to use the phone, please use the phone number contained in your registration email or on the event info tab located on the top left hand side of the screen. If you have issues with audios using your computer, please feel free to call in using the phone. Due to the number of people joining us today, we have muted all participants to reduce background noise. If you have questions for the presenters, we encourage you to submit them using the chat feature on the right hand side of your screen. Please select host and presenter from the drop-down menu next to the text box.

We've also included time for a question and answer period at the end of the presentation. If we do not answer your question during the main presentation, we will try to answer it during the Q and A. You may submit your question at any time. If you would like to communicate with NCJA staff during the webinar, please submit your comment using the chat feature to Bethany Broida or host. This session is scheduled for an hour and a half and we will end promptly at 3:30pm Eastern Time. If you have technical difficulties or get disconnected during the session, you can reconnect to the session, using the same link that you used to join initially.

You can also call WebEx Technical Support at 866-229-3239. In the last five minutes of the question and answer period, we will ask you to complete a short survey. The information you provide will help us to plan and improve future webinars. At this time, I would like to briefly introduce our speakers for today's webinar. In November 2014, Luis deBaca was appointed by President Barack Obama as the director of the Justice Department's Office of Sex Offender Sentencing Monitoring Apprehending Registering and Tracking AKA the SMART office. Mr. deBaca previously coordinated US Government

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activities in the global fight against contemporary forms of slavery as ambassador-at-large for the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Served as counsel to the House Committee on the Judiciary where his portfolio for Jim and John Conyers Junior included national security, intelligence, immigration, civil rights and modern slavery issues. At the Justice Department from 1993 through 2006, he led the investigation and prosecution of cases involving human trafficking, official misconduct and hate crimes, as well as money laundering, organized crimes and alien smuggling. He is the recipient of the Secretary of State's Distinguished Honor Award. The Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award. The Attorney General's John Marshall Award and the Director's Award from the Executive Office of United States Attorneys.

He has received the leading honor given by a National Human Trafficking Victim Service Provider Community, the Freedom Network's Paul and Sheila Wellstone Award and has been named the Michigan Law School's Distinguished Latino Alumnus. Next we have Scott Matson. Scott is the senior policy advisor at the SMART Office. Mr. Matson advises 37 states and the District of Columbia on adapting the standards for the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, otherwise known as SORNA. In addition, he leads the office's efforts on a Sex Offender Management and Planning Initiative. Before joining SMART, Mr. Matson was the program manager at the JEHT Foundation, where he developed and managed a criminal justice portfolio on issues such as sentencing and corrections policy, re-entry, wrongful convictions and the death penalty.

Prior to joining JEHT, he was the Associate Director of the Vera Institute of Justice Center on Sentencing and Corrections. Mr. Matson served as a research associate at the Center for Sex Offender Management from 1998 to 2006. In this role, he provided training and technical assistance to a wide range of international, national, state and local audiences on issues related to sex offender management. Mr. Matson began his career at the Washington State Institute for Public Policy where he researched issues of importance to state legislature, including sex offender registration, community notification and civil commitment policies.

Next, we have Christopher Lobanov-Rostovsky. He has worked for the Division of Criminal Justice within the Colorado Department of Public Safety, as the program manager for the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board since 2006, where he is responsible for overseeing the development of standards for treatment and management of sexual offenders, approving treatment providers and providing legislative and policy input. Prior to his current position, he worked as a clinician and evaluator of adult sex offenders and juveniles who commit sexual offenses. He also worked as a private consultant for a variety of federal state, tribal and private agencies in developing and enhancing sex offender management and treatment programming.

He's been a project manager, contributing author and editor for the SMART Office Sex Offender Management Literature Review Initiative which this webinar series is based upon since the project's inception in 2010. Finally, Roger Przybylski is a consultant and

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founder of RKC Group, a private company that provide applied research and program evaluation services to organizations working on public safety issues. Prior to forming RKC Group in 1997, he served as associate director for the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority where he directed the agency's research division. He also has served as coordinator of research for the Chicago Police Department.

Mr. Przybylski has been a project manager, contributing author and editor for the SMART Office Sex Offender Management Literature Review Initiative which this web series is based upon since the project's inception in 2010. I will now turn the presentation over to Director deBaca.

Luis: Thank you Bethany and thanks everybody. I want to start off by particularly thanking the NCJA's staff and everybody else, who's pulling together not just today but the other eight webinars in the series and we're very excited about this here in the SMART office as we continue to work to ensure safety for our communities, ensure tools for law enforcement, for folks in the criminal justice playing field but also to start to look at the aperture a little more broadly, bringing in, whether it's probation and parole, whether it's bringing in clinical folks, people in the treatment community, et cetera, as we start to put our hands around these issues of sex offender management.

Registration and the notification schemes that we all deal with in our lives both to the federal and the state local level are all critical parts of this but at the end of the day, we have to be able to harness the information that we're getting through registration and notification, start to learn a lot more about the offender profiles, start to learn a lot more about the offenders as people and why they did what they did. How we can keep them from doing that and how we can actually have actual management in the sex offender realm. We're excited about this nine part webinar, as far as building on the work that has been done by NCJA's and the SMART office over the last few years.

As we go into the next decade of the federal SORNA law, we think that a lot of the action is going to be in this side of sex offender management. One of the people who's been really wrestling with that problem here at the SMART office, really the leader in the field, somebody who we're very proud of, I want to not only introduce him but also publicly thank Scott Matson. Ladies and gentlemen, Scott Matson.

Scott: Thanks, Lou. Welcome everybody. Good afternoon. I just wanted to start off, this webinar by providing a bit of background information about OJP's efforts and the SMART office efforts in sex offender management, sexual violence reduction. Just to give you a bit of background and to catch everyone up to speed, in case no one has been paying attention, everybody should know that sexual offenders and sexual violence has been really a focus of a lot of legislation and programs and practices in the last 20 years, 25 years or so. The public has gained a lot of knowledge about offenders in their communities as a result of those programs and policies.

There has also been a growing recognition that evidence based practices are really the best way to go when trying to combat violence and particularly sexual violence. Knowing

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these things, OJP has been involved in the sexual violence reduction field for more than 20 years now. OJP since 1996 has sponsored multiple publications, training curriculum, projects, all related to sexual violence reduction or sexual assault reduction and sex offender management. Through the center for sex offender management and other grant programs, OJP has funded over 200 different jurisdictions in efforts to enhance their sex offender management practices.

In 2006, the SMART office was developed or was initiated by the passage of the Adam Walsh Act. Our primary mission is to help jurisdictions, that is states and tribes and territories, in implementing title one of the act which is the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act but we also see this part of our mission to provide assistance to criminal justice professionals across the entire spectrum of sexual management act, sex offender management activities with the goal of reducing sexual violence. To that end, in 2010, we initiated, started the Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative. We'll refer to it as the SOMAPI project because it's the best acronym we could come up with.

The goal of the project ultimately was to identify evidence based practices in sex offender management, to find out what research says about all of the activities designed to help curb sexual offending and figure out what we know about sexual violence. We were hoping to use this information to make better decisions about our funding and research related objectives within the Office of Justice Programs and the SMART office. As part of the SOMAPI project, the main feature of the project was to conduct a thorough literature review. We contracted with the National Criminal Justice Association and a host of subject matter experts to comb the literature on about 13 different topic areas, to tell us what is known, what the research says.

What relevant up to date research says about these activities and what it says about sex offenders and what it says about sexual violence. Also, as part of the outreach or NCJA's outreach, they conducted an informal survey to their membership organizations to find out what kinds of programs and practices are in place across the country, related to sexual offending and sex offenders and also to find out what the needs and the different disciplines involved in the field are. As a final part of the project, as sort of a peer review part of project, we invited about 60 national experts in the field, representing prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement, judges.

Victim's advocates, treatment providers, probation and parole officers, corrections official, researchers, a whole host of experts representing the different fields involved in sex offender management, to come together here in DC and review what we've presented, what we've come up with and give us direction on where we should be going when we think about future research and future funding in this field. Ultimately, we came up with a large report which contains all that information. By looking at the literature review, the SOMAPI literature review, these are the different topic areas that are presented in the different chapters of the review and recognizing the really important differences between adults and juveniles, the report is divided into two sections.

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One focuses exclusively on adults and one focus exclusively on juvenile, juveniles who commit sex offenses. The key products of the SOMAPI initiative are the ... as I said in the report which is available on our website, the links there on your screen, I encourage everyone to take a look at it to gain a really in-depth knowledge about what we found, if there is really good information in there, including the findings from literature review, the policy implications identified by the authors and the subject matter experts that came to our forum and recommendations about research and funding. Those are all in the report. We're also about to release a series of research briefs which are stand alone papers.

Each one associated with the different chapter of the report. Those should be available in the coming months then it will be downloadable and easily separated from the other material. We are releasing this information at conferences, national and regional conferences across the country. As Bethany and Lou mentioned, we are also ... and through NJCA conducting these nine webinars. Now, I would like to turn it over to our subject matter experts on this project, really Chris and Roger who have been our leads on the project. Without them, we would be nowhere so thank you very much and take it away Chris.

Chris:

Thank you Scott very much and I certainly like to thank the National Criminal Justice Association and Cabell Cropper for his leadership on this project as well as the SMART office and in particular Scott Matson for the vision to really want to work on this project. We've all been very excited about this project and the results of the project and hope you find this information to be helpful. Before I get into the particulars of the first chapter related to incidence and prevalence, I did want to briefly say something about the research review methodology. We wanted to make sure that all of the authors use the similar methodology to provide a level of playing field and make sure that the research that was considered was consistent across all of the chapters.

We used a similar methodology for all of these chapters including using abstract databases that are typical to the social science field, doing searches for those, outreach to relevant organizations that may have information about the topic at hand. Contacting specific subject matter experts who could provide us with a list of additional references to be considered. Given that there has been ... Historically, some of this work has been done previously say by the Center for Sex Offender Management among others, we decided to focus this literature review particularly on the current literature over the past 15 years. Now, in some cases, literature outside of that was certainly considered but we really wanted this to be as contemporary and as current as it could possibly be.

Then, finally, we really looked at the literature related to specific research studies and those studies that in particular employ very rigorous scientific methods for the research to ensure that what we were summarizing had a solid foundation in research. We had looked both at individual studies as well as synthesis studies. Those that are either systematic reviews or meta analysis. That was the methodology that we used through this process to do what I think are some fairly comprehensive literature reviews. In

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terms of this, this webinar is consisting of two chapters, the incidence and prevalence of sexual offending, which I will cover and then the etiology for adult sex offenders which Roger Przybylski will cover.

This webinar has been divided that way. In terms of this particular chapter, I would like to acknowledge and thank the work of Jane Wiseman who was the author of this particular chapter and did a fine job. Just again to sort of give some background and foundation in terms of this chapter, when we're defining incidence and prevalence, let me give you a quick definition. It's not on the slide unfortunately but I'll go ahead and define it for you. Incidence is the number of separate victimizations or incidence perpetrated against people within a demographic group during a specific period of time. Prevalence on the other hand is the number of people within a demographic group, say for example, women or men who were victimized during a specific period of time, say the person's life for the past year.

Incidence has to do with the number of victimizations. Prevalence has to do with the number of people. As we go through some of the findings in this chapter, you might pay a particular attention to whether they're focusing on people or the number of incidence because those are different and that presents a challenge not to get too far ahead on myself but it does present a challenge in terms of summarizing this literature. In terms of how many sex ... I mean, this is the question, right, how many sex offenses are committed each year? This is a very difficult thing to estimate. Again, this requires very rigorous research processes to be able to do that.

The thing that we are significantly hindered by is the issue of the fact that sex crimes are notoriously under-reported, that victims often don't report these crimes for a variety of different reasons and offenders, from my experience clinically, often don't report or typically do not report these crimes. It makes a real challenge in terms of identifying the actual numbers of sex crimes or the actual numbers of victims. I want to qualify what we're doing right off the bat related to that but despite these limitation, I think this information is very important. It's important to know what we know about sexual offending and the incidence and prevalence of sexual offending.

It also is very helpful I think to look at how those things change over time, trend data, if you will in terms of really looking at the way in which the numbers are either increasing, decreasing or staying the same. That's important to know and I think this information is really important for all of us, certainly those of us who are practitioners, those of us who are policy makers, those at the federal state or local government level, these are really important things I think for all of us to know again provided that we keep in mind the limitations of the research as we know it today. In terms of the summary of the research findings, I'm going to run through and talk specifically about some of the different ways in which we measure incidence and prevalence.

Some of the challenges other than what I've just mentioned here that there is not a consistent definition unfortunately of sexual offending across all of these different ways of measuring incidence and prevalence. Even within specific measures so like within one

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measure, say the uniform crime report, all the local law enforcement jurisdictions are looking at different state laws in terms of defining what sexual offending is. There is a tremendous amount of variability that goes into looking at this issue and that's the real challenge for us. Also then, the way in which this data is looked at, makes it challenging as well because different ways of collecting data then make it hard to do a cross comparison with other ways of collecting data.

We see different reference periods in terms of say, for example, the uniform crime report is collected on an annual basis, the calendar year basis. The national crime victimization survey is collected one year prior to the date of the survey and so again, it's hard to say ... it's hard to compare those two data sources based on the fact that they're measuring different periods of time. What you will also see is that different measures also look at different lengths of time. Some of these measures will look at the incidence and prevalence of sexual offending or victimization within somebody's entire history or something that's happened to them within the prior year.

For all these reasons again, I think you have to look at these things very carefully in terms of what they're reporting on and it makes cross study comparison challenging. Without further ado, let me share some of the data that was found. What I would note is the chapter describes at least 16 different measures of sexual victimization that have occurred. Some of them are annual surveys or collections of data. Others maybe are one time so we'd encourage you to look at the chapter in terms of getting a detailed description of all of those different measures but I will highlight some of them for you specifically today. In terms of the uniform crime report, this is the information that is collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

It is information that is submitted by law enforcement across the country and this is triggered based on law enforcement having contact, making an arrest with the offender in a situation. What they have identified in the most recent year that data is available and you'll also find there is a little bit of lag time unfortunately in terms of some of this data being collected. For 2009, there was a little bit more than 88,000 forcible rapes and then it gives you a breakdown per 100,000 persons in the US. This information I think is very helpful information for policy and policy makers and practitioners in terms of the fact that it consistently collected every single year and it's collected on a national basis.

It does give us an idea of what the law enforcement contacts related to forcible rapes look like. However, the weakness of this particular measure is that this only reports, reported sexual crimes and as they indicated earlier, there is a real challenge related to not having all sex crimes reported to the authorities. This is most likely an underestimate of the two true incidence and prevalence of sexual offending that's going on because it's only reporting on those where the victim or somebody has reported the crime to law enforcement and law enforcement has acted on that. The next measure that we'll talk about here is the National Crime Victimization Survey and this is a survey that occurs every three years, representing 42,000 households.

Of note, in this particular measure, this is only measuring what occurs to people over

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the age of 12 and we know that there are many offenses that occur against people who are under 12 so we need to keep that in mind in looking at this. You'll note that this looks at both rape and sexual assault so it's slightly different categorization and they come up with a significantly higher number than the law enforcement numbers of 243,800 in 2011, which is the last year that the information is available. In terms of the strengths and weaknesses of this data, this does measure unreported victimization, unreported to law enforcement or to the authorities because it's asking people about their experiences.

It is also collected and reported on annually. Again, a weakness in the literature as a whole, again, has to do with this reporting issue and in this case, it's not just, did the victim report to the authorities but does the victim view what happened to them as being victimization. If they don't view it that way, based on the manipulation by the offender or for whatever reason they don't view it as an offense then they're not going to report it. Again, another weakness that this resolve but again the National Crime Victimization Survey I think is a very solid data source for giving this information about what's going on as far as sexual offending in the country.

This study is a one time study. The National Violence Against Women Survey, this study occurred, the data was collected in the mid 1990s and sampled or surveyed 8,000 men and 8,000 women and gives us a real sense for the degree to which sexual offending touches our society as a whole and what they found was that, roughly 18% of women and 0.3% of men had been the victims of rape in their lifetime. Again, I would note in this study now, we're talking about a lifetime of having been victimized versus those other two studies are looking at annually, either the prior ... annual prior to the survey or in a calendar year that's being studied.

What these authors then did was extrapolate that information and make an estimate on what they think is the true range and impact of sexual violence within US society and estimate 18 million women and almost three million men have been raped at some point in their lifetime. The strength of this study were that it's a nationally representative sample of men and women, even though it's labeled National Violence Against Women Survey, they did survey both. They ask a series of questions rather than a yes or no question. One of the things that those studying this area have found is that if you ask someone, have you been a victim of rape? The person may answer, no.

Whereas if you ask more descriptive question or a progression of questions, perhaps the person is then willing to reveal what has occurred to them, even if they're not defining that as victimization for themselves. The weakness of this study is it's a nearly 20 year old study. Many people cite this study as a very seminal study, something that really gives us some great information but it somewhat out of date and so it has to be considered in that light. The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System ... now, this is looking at incidence of child sexual abuse from a child protective services' perspective. We've moved from law enforcement to surveying people to now what exist within child protective services' files and records.

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This NCANDS as it's referred to, looks at the numbers of child victims of sexual assault and in 2009, the most recent year for which that data is available, they identify 66,000 child victims of sex assault. Again, the National Crime Victimization Survey is talking about adult victims or those over 12 anyway. This is talking about children so anyone under the age of 18. In terms of the strength of this particular measure, all states are participating in this so it's a fairly national comprehensive look at the incidence of child sexual abuse for child protective services. However, child protective services may not be involved in sexual abuse cases involving non-family members or non-caretakers. This is not covering that specific population in this particular data system.

The National Incidence Studies of Missing Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway children-2, NISMART as it's referred to, is another survey but this one is surveying, in addition to household also juvenile residential facilities and law enforcement via the phone, doing phone surveys and they identified 285,400 children who were the victims of sex assault during and through this study process. The strengths of this study where it's a large probability sample using the same questions at the national crime victimization survey, the weakness is this is not an annual survey. It's been done twice so far, 1988 and 1999 and that makes it somewhat difficult to be able to do cross comparison, even within the results of this individual study.

Again, you have to look at that in terms of what the measure is telling us and what the strengths and the weaknesses of the measure are. That is the last of the ones that I'm going to go through specifically today. I think that just gives you a feel for some of the different ways in which we look incidence and prevalence. It gives you a good representation of that and again, if you wanted to look at the chapter, you could see other ones that's really focused in a lot on specific groups or specific ways in which to measure sexual abuse within a given population. I would encourage you to do that as a follow up. As I indicated at the beginning, I think trend data is very important in looking at this and what we have seen is that the rate of sex assault have been declining over the past 10 to 20 years.

That is similar that we're seeing within other crime types. What we see is that the Uniform Crime Report rates of forcible rape are down 14% and the National Crime Victimization Survey result show a decrease of 30% over nine years. I think researchers are trying to make sense of what this trend data tells us, is it truly reflective of a decline in the rate of sex assault or are there other things that maybe going on that are leading to having less sexual victimization being identified or not? That's still something that's being studied. However, I think it's still important to note that according to trend data, the numbers do appear to be going ... are going down.

In summary, in terms of this data that I'm talking about here today, that there is a variety of ways in which researchers are looking at, the incidence and prevalence of sex assault, from the police reporting, arrest to victim surveys where people are being asked about their experience. Some of these are situations where someone is asked one time, sometimes it's a regular ongoing request for information. There is a variety of ways in which this information is collected. It's not similar or cross measures. I still believe and

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we still believe that this information is very important for policy makers and practitioners to be keeping in touch with and using as the basis for further policy development and for practice.

In terms of giving you some information about under-reporting, I mentioned that also earlier on in terms of the under-reporting of sex crimes, here is some data from a few of the victimization surveys that tell, when they ask, "Have you been a victim?" Then, they can also ask, "Did you report this or not?" What the rates range from is 25% from the national crime victimization survey data and that's been fairly consistent. It's fluctuated a little bit but fairly consistent over the past 15 years, to the National Violence Against Women study which show that roughly one in five women and one in six, one in seven males reported to the police, down to the 16% figure where in the National Women Study, 84% of victims did not report to police.

The one thing that I think was interesting in terms of that finding was that out of that 16% that did report, 12% reported within 24 hours and only 4% reported after the 24 hour period. It would seem as if it's very important to try to capture and to support the victim reporting early on as the likelihood of reporting decreases over time. In terms of some of the research, limitations of what was talked about today, the need for a standard definition of sex crimes, I think is really important. That's one of the findings from this chapter is that the inconsistent definition creates some challenges. Although it may or may not be realistic to do a complete standardized definition across all jurisdictions given that every state has its own sex crime laws with its own variations in them.

The importance of helping and supporting victims in disclosing both, to law enforcement but then also through the process of these surveys. When you ask questions, making sure that you're asking behaviorally descriptive questions rather than yes, no questions seems to be very important. Obviously, the concern about the under-reporting of sex crimes is a significant research limitation through this process. Then, related to that is the victim's perception of the crime. Do they view what happened to them at the crime or not, plays a role in whether they choose to report that or not and needs to be taken into account in terms of both how to approach this issue as well as in how we're analyzing the data.

The wording of the questions therefore becomes crucial in terms of wording questions in a way as I indicated that was behaviorally descriptive. Prevention of sexual abuse needs study. This project did take an initial look at prevention and SMART office is continuing to study this issue. However, there is not a significant amount of research out there related to this topic and that's something that's definitely needs to be studied, that we're dealing with the approach from the criminal justice perspective and how to deal with sex crimes and sexual violence, once it occurred. It's also very important to look at this issue before it occurs and how we can prevent that from occurring.

Then, finally, looking at the vulnerable populations and there are a number of specific kind of special population sections within this report that I'm not going through right

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now. They include looking at the issue of stalking, sex offending on campuses, individuals with developmental disabilities, the military and native American population. There is some significant concern going on within those populations related to sexual violence. This chapter looks at those issues and this is something that I think is in need of continued study as well. In conclusion, the incidence of sexual offending may or may not be truly declining but certainly the data is showing a decline.

This is something that needs to be considered. Policy maker should monitor these key indicators and work with researchers to better understand the data. That data should really be informing policy and practice and that's why I think the SOMAPI project is such a good project because truly, this data is informing what's going on right now within the SMART office and I think that's terrific. We need improved and expanded data with enhanced comparability across the different data sources. It's something that really would be helpful to the field. We need to learn more about under-reporting and provide supportive environments for victims to report.

It's really important that people not feel re-victimized after reporting and that that not be a deterrent for them to report. Therefore as a result of that under-reporting though, it's important that policy makers and practitioners keep in mind that the policies that we're enacting and the practice that we're employing are only touching those offenders who would have been identified and are within the criminal justice system and that there are other offenders outside of that that we don't know about and that that data may skew the results of what we're doing as well as in overall research and something that's just been really important to keep in mind.

Here at the end, you'll note that we have end notes and so all of the number are associated with the various pieces of research that we talked about during this presentation and then here are the specific references. If you want to go and look this stuff up, you can do that. It's also available in the chapter as well. With that, I'm now going to turn it over to Roger Przybylski who's going to do a similar discussion related to the chapter on etiology of adult sexual offending. Roger, it's all yours.

Roger: Great. Thank you Chris. We're going to shift gears now and talk about etiology. Before I get started, I would like to make two, what I think are important, acknowledgments and the first of these, something that Chris had also but I want to acknowledge that the original literature review work and the original drafting of this chapter in the SMART office report, this was done by Susan Faupel who is a training director at the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault. The other acknowledgment that I wanted to make upfront here is to really extend my appreciation to people at the SMART office and notably Scott Matson but the leadership there as well and individuals at NCJA like Cabell Cropper, the executive director and Bethany Broida who is moderating this webinar.

I also wanted to mention someone by the name of Kay Chopard Cohen who is no longer at NCJA but is now the executive director of the National District Attorneys Association and I wanted to specifically mention Kay because she was intimately involved in this literature review project from its inception and for a very long time and her

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contributions were really invaluable. I'm sorry I've taken the time on this but I want to acknowledge the contributions and the work that was done by a team of people throughout office of justice programs, agencies because they were very much involved in reviewing work, providing comments, insights and helping to refine the information that is going to be presented today as well as in the other webinars that are going to take ... be a part of this series.

I did want to start with that and I also think it make sense to start out here with a few words about what we really mean when we talk about etiology of sexual offending and also why etiological knowledge really matters. When we use this sort of term, the etiology of sexual offending, what it really refers to is the origins or causes of sexually abusive behavior including the pathways that are associated with the behaviors development, onset and maintenance. As we begin here, I think it's important to recognize at least from my own perspective that it's very to come away disappointed when you examine the landscape of etiological research and the body of knowledge that it's produced.

This is precisely because there are no simple or straightforward answers to the question of why people engage in sexual offending behavior. The problem of sexual offending is far to complex to attribute to a simple isolated cause. Etiological research I think has produced many important insights about sexually abusive behavior and etiological knowledge is important for a number of reasons. I think the development of effective prevention in treatment programs, for example, that's contingent on having credible knowledge about the underlying causes of sexual offending and victimization. Without that knowledge, prevention efforts are likely to be haphazard and inefficient.

Let's say, rather than focusing on symptoms or using one size fits all approach, treatment efforts can target the specific underlying causes and pathways to offending, that apply to individual offenders, provided you have trustworthy information about the causes and the development of pathways of these offenders. I think that etiological knowledge also can be really helpful to assist sex offender management professionals manage and mitigate risk in a much more effective manner so sort of simply put knowledge about causes and pathways to offending, can provide important insights into the characteristics of various sex offending behaviors and the likelihood that they will persist overtime.

I think also finally, etiological information can inform both discourse and decision making at the policy level. Whether the focus is on sentencing over sight in the community, civil commitment or any other criminal justice or societal response to sexual offending. Knowledge about origins, causes and pathways can play a critical role in the development I believe and the delivery of effective public safety strategies. Now, theories about the origins and development of sexual offending behavior have evolved considerably over time. Theories can be classified according to whether they are single-factor theories or multi-factor theories.

Single-factor theories attempt to explain sex offending behaviors, using a narrow set of

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factors or one single underlying cause. Multi-factor theories, as the term suggest, tend to combine multiple factors to explain sexual offending behavior. They were largely developed once single-factor theories were tested and largely deem to be inadequate, if you will, in their capacity to explain sexual offending. Now, despite their limitations, I'm going to talk about some single-factor theories first and then I'll delve into some of the multi-factor theories. In both cases, I'm going to be rather selective in terms of the theories that I'm going to talk about.

Given the amount of time I have today, it's simply is impossible to cover every theory of sexual offending and it's not even possible to touch on everything about etiology that's covered in the SMART office report. I'm going to focus on theories that I think provides some substantive contributions to our knowledge base and invariably, I'm going to leave out a number of theories or perspectives that either are not supported with research evidence or that haven't been adequately tested, either because they're relatively new or because they simply don't blend themselves to testing. Evolutionary theories are a prime example of the latter.

They largely view human behavior as a result of millions of years of adaptive changes and they can't really be tested like other theories can. There are other theories that I'm only going to mention, in passing right now because they're not well supported through research but that doesn't mean in any way that future studies won't produce something insightful or important in these areas. Biological theories are an example and they focus on abnormalities and things like brain structure, hormone level, genetics and there isn't any evidence right now that the presence of a particular biological phenomenon has cause a relationship with sexual offending.

That doesn't mean again, that future research in this area won't provide some important insights about the behavior. Feminist theories also fall into this category. There are many forms of feminist theory, that they often focus on the structure of gender relations and the imbalance of power between men and women. While there is insufficient empirical evidence to support gender and balance as a sole cause of sexual offending, we really need more research in this area, particularly the roles that gender imbalance might play as an enabling factor in the acceptance and perpetuation of sexually aggressive behavior. Then, finally, I'm not going to delve into personality theories which were some of the first sources of explanation for sexual offending behavior.

Early theories in this area will raise on the work of pride. They've been sort of falling out of favor, if you will, due to lack of empirical support. The later theories tended to focus on childhood trauma or mistreatment. While that's a valuable and important contribution to the knowledge base, other theories that I'm going to talk about delve into this issue in a much more detailed fashion. Those are the ones, I'm going to tend to focus on during the presentation today. The first single-factor theory that I am going to cover today are, what are called cognitive theories. Cognitive theories focus on the way in which offender's thoughts affect their behavior.

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It's well documented through research as well as through clinical practice, that individuals who commit deviant sexual acts, they often make excuses or justifications for their behaviors. In other words, they try to rationalize their actions. These justifications and rationalizations are commonly referred to as cognitive distortions or thinking gears. Thinking gears on the part of sex offenders include things like denial, minimalization of harm done, blaming the victim and so on. The research has also documented that many sex offenders have a sense of entitlement. In other words, they believe that the need to offend is more important than the negative consequences that are experienced by a victim.

The research has found that thinking gears lead sex offenders to pay attention to information that's consistent with their distorted beliefs and to reject information that is inconsistent with their beliefs. For example, a child molester may interpret a child's hug as sexual interest because that interpretation conforms to his or her distorted beliefs, thinking patterns or a child molester may ignore a child's crying because it conflicts with his or her beliefs. The research has also found that many sex offenders hold feelings of resentment and they use these feelings as justifications for their behaviors. Finally, the way sex offender process both internal and external cues may explain how and why they manipulate information.

For example, research suggest that sex offenders misinterpret social cues and have difficulty recognizing and interpreting the emotional states of others. They don't make good choices based on the information they perceive and they don't consider the perceptions of others in making decisions about their own behavior. Cognitive theories have been contributed to a better understanding of sex offenders and their behaviors by demonstrating that sex offender is engaged in cognitive distortions and that these distortive thinking patterns have the capacity to drive their behavior. In fact, cognitive theory serve as a core component of many of the sex offender treatment programs in existence today and most treatment programs incorporate some type of intervention to help the offender identify and correct distorted thinking patterns.

Despite their contributions, I mean, cognitive theories do have limitations. They've not done a very good job of explaining where or why distorted thought processes originate and research undertaken to date has not done a very good job of differentiating between sex offenders with cognitive distortions and non-sex offenders with cognitive distortions. In other words, they don't do a very good job in terms of this theory, in terms of explaining why some individuals commit sexually abusive acts specifically. I'll move on to a group of theories that are called behavioral theories. I wanted to talk about these primarily because they explain sexual offending as a learned behavior.

Behavioral theories at least as they've been proposed in the past, are based on the assumption that sexually deviant arousal plays a pivotal role in the commission of sex crimes. That people who have sexual feelings toward inappropriate stimuli are more likely to commit sexual offenses than those with appropriate sexual desires. In behavioral theory, the development and maintenance of deviant sexual behavior as with any behavior, it depends on reinforcement and punishment, sexual gratification

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and the perceived, if you will, lack of negative consequences for sexual offending increases, serves to increase the likelihood for sex offenses to develop and continue.

The notion that sexual abuse is a learned behavior, is supported through a research, that's a recurring theme across several theoretical perspectives. Now, behavioral theories do have limitations because first of all, it's important to recognize that many male sex offenders have arousal patterns similar to those of non-sex offending men. This means that the behavioral theories at least as they've been presented in the past aren't generalizable to many individuals who engage in sex offending. In addition, research has not been able to predict with accuracy and I think this is important, it hasn't been able to predict with accuracy which reinforcements or consequences are likely to increase or inhibit sexual offending behavior.

This seems awfully critical both in understanding etiology and prescribing treatment and public policy. Simply put behavioral theories postulate that sex offenders should be influenced by the threat of negative consequences or punishment but the empirical evidence that's been assembled to date doesn't substantiate this assumption if you will in a very consistent manner. The last theoretical perspective I want to talk about under this category of single-factor theories is what are called social learning theories. Again, there are a variety of social learning theories that have been applied to sexual offending but the primary social learning hypothesis that I want to address today is that children who are sexually abused grown into sexually abusive adults.

A considerable amount of research has examined the impact of childhood victimization on future behavior and negative or adverse conditions and early development have indeed been linked to sexual offending later in life but it's critically important to recognize that a large percentage of sex offenders do not report being sexually abused as children. While sex offenders have higher rates of sexual abuse in their histories than with the expected in the general population, there is relatively good evidence indicating that the majority of perpetrators were not abused as children and it's also important to recognize that childhood victimization does not automatically lead to sexually aggressive behavior later in life.

The certain types of sex offenders such as those who offend against young boys have higher rates of child sexual abuse in their histories and for those victims of childhood abuse who later become perpetrators, the majority are male. Researchers have focused on male victims and the way they perceived their abuse and how it affects them later in life, to try to better understand those social learning process in sexual offending and the factors that help to determine whether deviant sexual behavior patterns will be adapted later in life. Keep in mind, sexual victimization as a child cannot be the sole explanation for sexual offending as an adult but several factors may lead more easily to the development of sexually abusive behaviors in those individuals who were victimized as a child.

These factors include the age of a victim, the intensity and duration of abuse, whether the victim internalizes the victimization as normal or pleasurable and the manner in

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which others respond to disclosure of the victimization. In a nutshell, the younger the victim, the more violent and intrusive the abuse, the longer the duration of abuse and the greater the number of perpetrators, the more likely it is that sexually deviant behavior will develop later in life. In addition, research has found that a child who has internalized the victimization experiences normal or pleasurable in some way, is more likely to adapt the belief system that it's favorable to offending later in life.

The manner in which others respond to disclosure also appears to be important. In different response, where response of disbelief to disclosure has been shown to contribute to a victim internalizing negative sexual behaviors and developing abusive behavior in the future. While social learning theories do not offer a complete explanation for sexual offending, they do solidify the notion that sexually abusive behavior has environmental influences and this is an important insight for intervention policy and practice. It contradicts any assumption that abusive behaviors are inherent within some individuals.

The insight social learning theories produce about the impact of childhood and its ramifications if you will, for sexual offending later in life, is really an important contribution to our knowledge base, because understanding exactly how the abuse is modeled and manifested will however require additional research. Let me move on now to a few multi-factor theories. Again, these are theories that combine multiple factors to try to explain sexually abusive behavior and they were largely developed because single-factor theories despite some of their valuable insights were deemed to be inadequate in some way to explain sexual offendings, origins or causes.

Again, I'm not going to talk about every multi-factor theory that's covered in the SMART office report but I'll focus on some of the more prominent theories that have contributed to our knowledge base. The first one I want to talk about is William Marshall and Howard Barbaree's Integrated Theory. This theory attempts to integrate what Marshall and Barbaree viewed as widely desperate literature findings concerning the factors which play a role in the etiology of sex offending. They argued that a proper understanding, if you will of sex offending can only be attained when diverse processes such as those addressed independently in prior theories, when those processes are seen as functionally interdependent.

Marshall and Barbaree proposed that the prominent causal factors for sexually offending are developmental experiences which were mentioned previously, biological processes, cultural norms and the psychological vulnerability that could result from a combination of these factors. They suggested that early negative experiences in childhood such as sexual abuse can cause children to view their caregivers as emotionally absent and to see themselves as being unworthy to receive love or be protected. As a result, low self-esteem, poor interpersonal skills that weave coping skills developed. The presence of antisocial or say misogynist attitudes in home can be aggravating factors here.

Another key feature of this particular theories is that sex meets a number of

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psychological needs beyond sexual gratification. Now these maybe an increased sense of confidence, elevated self-esteem and a sense of achieving, if you will, an ideal male or masculine image. Marshall and Barbaree suggested that a key developmental task for adolescent boys is to learn how to distinguish between sexual impulses and aggression. They argue that this task is very difficult precisely because both types of impulses are generated by the same brain structure and adolescent boys may find it difficult to know when they're angry, sexually aroused or both and they must learn how to inhibit aggression in sexual situations.

Combined with the influx of hormones that occur in adolescence, these factors render the young male vulnerable to developing sex offending behaviors and situational factors such as social rejection can trigger a sexually abusive act. The more vulnerable a person is to committing a sexual offense, the less intense a situational trigger needs to be. Now, this theory is an important achievement in terms of it being quite innovative when it was first published about 25 years ago and its importance I think is because of its ability to unite multiple influences on sex offending behavior as well as the way it shed lights on factors such as poor impulse control and poor social skills.

Both of these have been documented amongst sex offenders through empirical study and of course research has documented the link between early childhood maltreatment and sexually coercive behavior later in life. The results of scientific research also demonstrate this theory has limitations. I've already talked about the fact that a significant number of sex offenders do not report being abused as a child. Marshall and Barbaree place a great emphasis on impulse control in their theory, stating that individuals commit sex offenses due to their failure to inhibit deviant impulses. However, the empirical evidence also indicates that while some sex offenders have trouble with impulse control, it's not necessary the case for all sex offenders.

Another weakness is declared that adolescent males have difficulty distinguishing sexual drives from aggression because these impulses are generated by the same general brain structures. Research has shown that this simply isn't physically the case. The next theory that I'm going to jump to here, I get this changed, I'm very sorry, I should have advanced this slide here as I was talking about the latter aspects of Marshall and Barbaree. I will advance this on here to this next theory that I wanted to talk about briefly and that's the Quadripartite Model that was proposed by Hall and Hirschman. This theory also was first published back in the early 1990s in a group sex offender personality traits and characteristics derived from other studies into four factors that Hall and Hirschman viewed as being the most important in the etiology of sex offending.

These four factors relate to sexual arousal, thought processes, emotional control, and personality problems or disorders. Hall and Hirschman suggested that it's not only sexual arousal that is driving the deviant sexual behavior but the individual's thoughts regarding that arousal. Thought processes particularly those involving justifications may lead the individual to see deviant sexual behavior as acceptable or even appropriate in the given situation. A negative emotional moods also often precedes sexual offending

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with anger, being an important aspect of negative emotion for rapist and depression being the same for child molesters. These emotional states become so uncomfortable in the individual, if you will, that they have further difficulty controlling behavior.

Finally, negative childhood experiences can lead to personality traits or disorders involving such things as selfishness, a lack of remorse, an exploit of personality and these things can interact with deviant sexual arousal and a lack of emotional control or negative thought processes to intensify their impacts and trigger sexual abuse. Hall and Hirschman's theory is based on really sound empirical evidence about the traits of sex offenders and that they could contribute to our understanding of the roles that cognitive distortions, foreign pulse control and problems with self regulation of emotions can play. The notion that individual offender display contrasting problems also is important, it has considerable empirical support.

Nevertheless this theory too has limitations and the primary criticism is that theory doesn't adequately explain the relationships that exist in the interaction that take place among the four factors nor does it explain how the four factors serve as motivations to abuse in the first place. This notion that these different factors play a role and interact I think is pretty important. Now, Ward and Siegart developed something called the Pathways Model and if you consider both of the multi-factor theories that I just talked about and what research tells us about their strengths and weaknesses, I think it becomes quite apparent that there are different pathways that can lead to sexual offending.

This precisely what Ward and Siegart proposed or argued in their model. In many ways the pathways model attempts to combine the best of the integrated theories that came before it, it is suggest that a number of different pathways can lead to sexually abusive behavior, within each pathway's unique set of factors that contribute to the behavior problem. Based on this different symptom clusters, Ward and Siegart created five different causal pathways for the development of sexually abusive behavior. The intimate deficit pathway describes an offender who takes advantage of an opportunity to offend if it prefer sexual partners that's available.

This offender has significant problems with intimacy and turns to sex to ease feelings of loneliness. The deviant sexual script pathway suggest that sex offenders have distorted thought processes that guide their sexual and intimate behaviors. This involves a fundamental confusion between sex and intimacy as well as difficulty in determining when sexual contact is appropriate or desirable. The third pathway is the emotional deregulation pathway, is the primary cause of abusive sexual behavior with children. Offenders in this category demonstrates significant problems regulating emotional states. The antisocial cognition pathway involves attitudes and beliefs, supportive of criminal behavior in general.

Such offenders have an antisocial lifestyle, a significant sense of entitlement and little regard for the emotional and psychological needs of others. They commonly endorse cultural beliefs consistent with their offending lifestyle. The last pathway, the multiple

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dysfunctional mechanisms pathway involves all symptom clusters associated with the previous pathway with no single one being prominent. Now, in the pathways model situational stressors, again, can serve as triggers to sexual abuse and they vary according to the particular profile that causes underlying each individual's pathway. Now, this model has been subject of several criticisms in the literature including the lack of an evidence base for some of its propositions.

For example, some scholars have argued that the data supporting the basic tenets of the model come from other areas of psychology and that there is little direct support for the model that comes directly from research on sex offender populations. It's also been argued that there is no empirical justification for grouping offenders into separate categories as the theory does, as there is some evidence suggesting that individuals in all five pathways share many of the same traits. The model does address psychological variables that interact with sexual deviant or sexual arousal and it's important to recognize that the pathways model has not been subject to extensive testing yet.

Its strengths, even though we haven't done a great deal of research on it, is a success if you will, in unifying promising aspects of other theories and its in-depth description of the multiple factors that can really be involved in sexually offending behavior. Despite the criticisms, problems let's say of self-regulation of emotions and a sense of entitlement for example have been shown through research to be associated with sex offending behavior, even though that may not be the particular cause of the behavior. Now, the last theory that I want to just touch on very briefly is the self-regulation theory introduced by Stinson, Sales, and Becker back in 2008.

The theory integrates various psychological perspectives and implicates self-regulatory deficits as a key variable in the development of sexually appropriate interest and behaviors. As part of the theory, Stinson, Sales and Becker argue that significant self-regulatory deficits resulting from negative childhood experiences combine for the development of deviant sexual interest and arousal. When certain biological and temperamental vulnerabilities are also present, the individual is unable to manage his or her behavior and sexual offending can result. Stinson Sales and Becker also suggested that a behavioral conditioning also occurs here as sexual gratification coupled with a lack of corrective action, helped to solidify the behavior and the development of deviant sexual interest.

They also suggested that cognitive beliefs and personality traits such as ego centrality, sense of entitlement, sensation seeking and impulsivity can serve as mediators in the development of sexually abusive behaviors. Now, this theory as I said was first introduced just a few years ago so very little research has been conducted to date. However, there is empirical support from many tenets of their theory, including the roles that negative developmental experiences, cognitive distortions and a lack of emotional control can play in sexual offending.

Some of the linkages hypothesize and the theory often criticized for being implausible because deviant sexual interest are not found among all sex offenders but this makes it

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difficult to generalize the theory to complete sex offender population. The bottom line is that far more research really needs to be undertaken about this but I think it's an important again, contribution because we're beginning to understand how so many different factors combine and integrate to really develop not only the behaviors onset but its maintenance over time as well. Now, what do we take away from all this?

I can't get the slide to change, is as eluded to earlier that, I think when you look at the knowledge base regarding etiology you can see this proverbial glass if you will, as being either half empty or half full. On the one hand, it's absolutely true that we've yet to find a clear explanation or cause for sexual offending and definitive answers remain elusive. Research has produced a number of important findings and insights. First, this notion that there isn't ... A, simple answer is important because we really do need to look at the combination of factors that contribute to this behavior. Negative or adverse conditions in an individual's early development can lead to poor attachment to others particularly caregivers.

These conditions can contribute to the development of sexually offending behaviors later in life. The link between child abuse in sexual offending later in life is important but as I said earlier, keep in mind that most sex offenders do not report childhood abuse and many victims of childhood abuse do not go on to sexually offending later in life. Factors that do play ... appear to play a role in the development of sexually abusive behaviors later in life include as I mentioned earlier, the age of the victim, the intensity and duration of abuse, whether the victim internalizes the victimization is normal and the manner in which others respond to disclosure. Like other behaviors sexual abuse appears to be learned and it's influenced by reinforcement and punishment.

However, the specific punishments that are needed to mitigate sexual offending remain unclear, particularly in light of the cognitive distortions that are maintained by many sex offenders. Then, finally, even though a causal relationship has not been established impulse control problems and problems related to the self regulation of emotions and moods both appear to be related to sex offending behavior. Researchers also demonstrated that many sex offenders have thinking areas related to their own assault and this in turn can lead to problems with sexually abusive behavior emerging later on in life. Now, there are number of other variables that come into play that I haven't addressed like the use of alcohol and drugs or mental illness.

These factors can play a role in sexually abusive behavior but they have not been established in any way as being a cause. Etiological research certainly has a number of different limitations and if I were to basically try to summarize the two major ones, they have to do with sampling problems and a lack of intersection among different theoretical perspectives. Many of the studies that are undertaken in the area of etiology are based on samples of sex offenders who are in treatment, in prison or both and these studies represent, as Chris was eluding to, only a subset of sex offenders overall because we're capturing information from offenders who have become known to authorities.

This leaves out a very substantial percentage of sex offenders whose behavior has not

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come to the attention of the authorities at all. Many studies also rely on self report data which is of question of validity because of course many sex offenders engage in cognitive distortions and relatively few studies have explored how social structures or cultural phenomenon contribute to sexually offending behavior as well. There are a number of needs that are out there in terms of future research. We certainly need samples that are more representative of the range of individuals who commit sex crimes. We need long term perspective longitudinal research that explores things like the antecedence to sex offending.

How sexually aggressive behavior can change over time for whatever factor might be involved including things like treatment. We also need to delve much deeper into the notion of maltreatment in early childhood development and get a better understanding of which factors really do make a difference and whether someone goes on to future sexually abusive behaviors in adulthood. One of the areas I think that's critically important for criminal justice policy is how specific punishments and rewards affects sexually offending behavior. The research to date as I said earlier has not been very consistent in providing an understanding of how negative consequences or punishments can affect this behavior.

I haven't talked at all about the issue of pornography but we do need research on the impact of sexually violent and exploitive images in the culture. Not only in pornography but in television, movies and go on and on with different cultural aspects of this issue. Finally, we need further study regarding the integration of theories and different factors which are involved in sexually offending and how they interact and relate to one another. As Chris mentioned, at the end of these slides if you download them, are going to be a couple of slides related to notes and background material, all the research that is referenced in the material that I've presented today. Those are there if you do download this and I'm going to stop and turn it over to Scott I guess for a few questions.

Scott:

Thanks, Roger. Thanks, Chris. We have the Q and A session starting now. I think we've got about 10 minutes for some questions and if you look at your screen there, if you want to submit a question, there is a drop-down box and send to host and presenter and then put your question in that box and we'll try to get to it. We had a number of questions that were submitted during the registration portion of the ... the time while you sign up for the webinar as well as a number of questions that have been presented as Chris and Roger have been talking. Some of these questions relate to subjects that we will be covering in later webinars like we said, if it is in treatment, supervision, internet, internet facilitated sexual offending.

Given the number of questions that we have in a short period of time, I think we should just focus on questions more directly related to the content of this webinar. We hope that you'll submit those questions in the future webinar sessions. I wanted to start off with the questions, by asking Roger a question ... Roger we've received a question. It says, what does the research tell us about the etiology of adult offenders who choose adult victims known to them?

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Roger: Right, okay. The way that I would answer that is the theoretical perspective that have been offered so far and the research that's been undertaken and etiology neither of them provide what I would consider to be a plausible answer to that questions as it sort of phrase there. The reason for this is that the theories and the research that have been done so far, the one we put out there and that we can take a look at, they have focused primarily on trying to understand causes origins, things of this nature for this sex offending population as a whole without having the capacity to delve down into specific variables such as the age of a victim and victim offender relationship.

There is a exception to that in some ways because some theoretical propositions and some of the research that's been done to test the validity of those theories have looked at dynamics that are associated with child molestation but being able to answer anything directly about the notion of adult offenders choosing adult victims who are known to them, there is not a research base or sort of theoretical propositions that have been put forth for that specific sub group of the offending population. This in many ways reflects what I think ... we have a very rudimentary knowledge right now about the causes and the development of sexual offending behavior.

We're hard pressed to be able to come up with really sound good answers about the sex offending population as a whole and it points to the need for more research not only across the entire spectrum of sex offenders but for various sub groups of that population as well. The bottom line is we don't have an answer to that and I tried to explain why primary area where we're learning about the substance of the offending population is ... in terms of etiology is with child molesters.

Scott: Thanks Roger. Chris, I want to throw one out there to you related to tribal communities, what do we know about native American victims and violence in tribal lands?

Chris: Thanks, Scott. I think this is another area that's really a great unknown in some ways. Certainly some of the measures that I talked about approach issues related to native Americans so the National Crime Victimization Survey has some native Americans in that survey but it's really hard to generalize from a very small number of native Americans in a specific sample to make some generalized statements about the significance of sexual violence in Indian country. What we have heard in some of the data that has been suggested is something along the lines of one and three native American women reporting a history of being raped in their lifetime and that this is again, given the very small sample sizes, this is the highest rate of any sort of ethnic or cultural group.

We also know a little bit from the nature of that sex crime as well that crimes against native Americans also tend to be more violent and also some of them involve physical assault, use of weapons et cetera and that native American women are twice as likely to believe that the police or the authorities will not help them or that they will be blamed if they do report the rapes so I think there is a significant gap in terms of being able to identify this information because there is that basic mistrust within the native American community about the authorities, the unwillingness to report as a result and the lack of significant sampling that's occurred in some of these samples or some of these

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methodologies that have been used.

However, there is certainly a suggestion that there is a significant problem here based on the limited research that we do have and obviously this has been something that has been worked on a great deal by the SMART office and through the provision of training and technical assistance in Native American communities in terms of implementing SORNA and some of the information that's being received anecdotally through that in turn talk about sort of the significant problem of sexual violence within Indian communities but certainly this is an area I think that is in far greater need of being studied.

Scott: Thanks, Chris. We've received a couple of questions related to the self-report issue. Roger in social learning theory discussion you mentioned that male sex offenders have a higher rate of being actually victimized in the general population. Given that some research demonstrates the limits of sex offender's self-reported history, how is the prior history of victimization determined in those studies? Is there a way to really know that more offenders weren't abused themselves?

Roger: Yeah, primarily what, the source of the information is self report data and like very briefly at the conclusion of the etiology presentation, we mentioned in fact, that this is a limitation of the research because we know first of all that many sex offenders engage in thinking discretions but we also know that there maybe a validity problems with self-report data particularly among this population because they are seeking certain types of benefits and treatment or what have you and you could go on and on about that. The bottom line is that as is the case, within off a lot of the research findings that we're dealing with here is that we have significant problems understanding just how valid some of these findings are.

In the context of early childhood abuse or maltreatment, we really don't know that a significantly larger percentage of offenders really haven't been abuse in some way because we're going on self-report data and it is ... if the question is raised about we've got some statistics so to speak of research findings on this and are they questionable? Is it possible that the much larger percentage of individuals have been abused in childhood, that there is a stronger link that's there? That certainly is the case because we are ... if the question is specifically asking about what the source or the methods are for collecting this, it's primarily self-report and yes, there can be validity problems that are there particularly with this population.

Scott: Thanks. I think we're about out of time. Before we close out, I'd like to open up a poll and we'd really appreciate if you had a chance to participate. As we open that up, I wanted to ask one last question with Chris. Has there been any data collection or research conducted based on third party perspectives or reporting such as from family, friends, or neighbors?

Chris: Scott. I saw that question on the chat rolling. I was thinking about it. One thought is that say, like the ... some of the surveys that involve children, they maybe asking questions of

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caregivers or parents in those situations who report the experiences of their children. Now, I'm driving ... getting by the tone of the question that maybe that might be a way to get that more information if we're asking some help site source. However, that can also lead to some underestimation of the extent of sexual victimization as well because say, a family member may have an agenda in terms of not wanting to disclose that information as well.

I think as I indicated very early on in the presentation, really, the only two people who are aware of the victimization are the offender and the victim and so this is very hard to have observable ... be observable from the outside. I'm not aware of too many other studies that have really tried to get at the issue of other people's awareness of abuse but I think it's important for the question or just to keep in mind that that can come with some inherent biases as well.

Scott: Thanks, Chris.

Roger: Yeah, I was just going to mention Scott, I know in the full report that is on your website, that in the etiology material, that there have been calls for future research to include perspectives by victims in order to better understand sort of the interactions and the dynamics that take place in the offending behavior as it relates to the victim because that has been an area that hasn't been tapped in any fruitful manner in the past when we're talking about etiology and that's something that's mentioned in the full report on your website.

Scott: Thanks Roger for including that, another plug for the report too. That concludes the webinar. I want to thank Chris and Roger as well as everyone in the audience for joining us. We hope that you'll be able to join the next webinar in the series on April 20th. That one is focused on internet facilitated sexual offending. The registration is currently open for that webinar along with the next three webinars in the series. You can visit www.ncja.org/webinars to register. Thanks again for joining us, have a great afternoon and we hope to see you on April 20 ...