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Presenters

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Combatting Sexual Offending and Victimization

- Practitioners and policymakers have a common goal: to protect the public from sex offenders and prevent sexual violence
- A variety of policies and programs exist
- Little known about “what works”
- Programs are more likely to be effective when based on scientific evidence
Established in 2006 by AWA
First federal office devoted solely to sex offender management-related activities
Responsible for assisting with implementation of SORNA, and for informing about a broader scope of sex offender management activities needed to ensure public safety
SOMAPI: identify evidence based practices, current gaps/needs of the field, and provide guidance to states and locals
**SMART Office Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative**

- **Goal**: Identify research-supported programs for replication across the U.S.
  - Inform OJP funding decisions concerning sex offender programming and research
- **Assess the state of research and practice of sex offender management**
  - Work conducted by subject-matter experts through NCJA
  - Review of the literature on sexual offending and sex offender management
- **2012 Discussion Forum** involving national experts
SMART Office Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative

Literature reviews on 8 adult and 5 juvenile topics

*Important to distinguish between adults and juveniles*

**Adult Topics**
- Incidence and prevalence
- Etiology
- Typologies
- Risk assessment
- Recidivism
- Internet offending
- Treatment effectiveness
- Management strategies

**Juvenile Topics**
- Etiology/typologies
- Risk assessment
- Recidivism
- Treatment effectiveness
- Registration and notification
SMART Office Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative

Key products:
- Summaries of the research available online at: http://www.smart.gov/SOMAPI/index.html
- Findings, policy implications, future research needs
- Research briefs
- Targeted conference presentations
- Webinars
- National Symposium
Literature Review Methods

- Source materials identified using abstract databases, internet searches, outreach to relevant organizations and subject matter experts
- Primarily studies conducted within the past 15 years
- Emphasis on individual studies that employed scientifically rigorous methods, as well as on synthesis studies – such as systematic reviews and meta-analyses
Sex Offender Typologies
Why Typologies Matter

- Sexual violence has devastating consequences for society.
- Scarcity of resources impedes progress.
- Comprehensive understanding of accurate offense patterns and risk are necessary.
- Offense typologies inform decisions regarding management and treatment.
Traditional Typologies

- Basic assumption that sexual offenders specialize
- Child Sexual abusers – sexual interest, victim gender/relationship
- Rapists – motivation, anger, power, sexual sadism
- Female offenders – co-offender, age/gender of victim
- Internet offenders – sexual interest, exploitation
Challenges to Traditional Typologies

- Crossover offending
- Developmental risk factors
- Offense patterns
Sex Offender Typologies

Summary of the Research Findings
Traditional Typologies: Problems

- Sexual offenders exhibit heterogeneous characteristics.
- Have inadequate definitions
- Research findings are inconsistent.
- Fail to address treatment issues\(^2\)
- Have not been shown to predict recidivism\(^3\)
**Child Sexual Abusers and Rapists**

- **Child sexual abusers**
  - Offenses - uncontrollable, stable, and internal\(^4\)
  - Deficits in information-processing skills and maintain cognitive distortions to deny impact of offenses\(^5\)
  - Offend to relieve anxiety or depression; believe it is a mutual relationship\(^6\)

- **Rapists**
  - Offenses - external, unstable, and controllable causes\(^4\)
  - Distorted perceptions of women and sex roles\(^7\)
  - Blame victim for offenses and offend as a result of hostility\(^7\)
Typologies: Child Sexual Abusers

- Pedophilic vs. non pedophilic distinction
- Pedophilia is a strong predictor of recidivism\(^8\)
- Pedophilia does not necessarily result in a sexual offense\(^2\)
- Individuals who sexually assault a child are not necessarily pedophiles
Fixated vs. Regressed Child Sexual Abusers

- **Fixated**
  - Identifies with children socially and sexually\(^9\)
  - Develops and maintains relationships to satisfy sexual needs\(^{10}\)
  - More likely sexually abuse male children\(^{11}\)

- **Regressed**
  - Prefers social and sexual interactions with adults\(^9\)
  - Sexual involvement with children is situational due to life stresses\(^{12}\)
  - Typically incest or female adolescent victims\(^{12}\)
Role of Victim’s Gender

- Accounts for variability in child sexual abuse, addresses treatment issues, and related to recidivism\(^2\)
- Male victims - strong predictor of recidivism\(^8\)
- Female victims - twice as many victims\(^{13}\)
- Both males and females – highest number of victims and offenses\(^{14}\)
Relationship to Child Victim

- **Intrafamilial**\(^1^5\)
  - Less psychopathic, fewer victims, more likely to report female victims
  - Less likely to be pedophilic, cause less injury, and have lower recidivism

- **Extrafamilial**\(^1^6\)
  - More likely pedophilic and no/few adult relationships
  - More child victims
Characteristics of Rapists

- More likely to be younger\textsuperscript{17}
- Socially competent
- Engage in an intimate relationship
- Lower socio-economic status
- Substance abuse
- Antisocial personality disorder\textsuperscript{18}
- Intimacy deficits, negative peer influences, deficits in self-regulation, and offense supportive beliefs\textsuperscript{19}
Are Rapists different than Violent Offenders?

- Rapists are similar to violent offenders.
- 19% sexually recidivate and 22% violently recidivate over a 5 year follow-up period.\(^8\)
- Rapists engage in many types of crime over time.\(^{20}\)
- Rape reflects only one manifestation of and underlying antisocial condition.\(^{21}\)
Types of Rapists

- Most rapists know their victims
  - Power reassurance - feelings of inadequacy, poor social skills, less likely to inflict injury, and instrumental aggression
  - Power assertive (antisocial) - impulsive, aggressive methods, substance abuse, and unlikely to use a weapon
  - Anger retaliation – motivated by power, offends for retaliatory reasons, uses degrading tactics
  - Sadistic rapist – reenacts sexual fantasies of torture, desire to inflict pain, more likely to murder, and predictor of sexual recidivism

\(^{22}\)
Female Offenders

- More likely to assault males and strangers\textsuperscript{25}
- Less likely to reoffend (1% over 5 yr. period)\textsuperscript{26}
- More likely to assault in a group or with a co-offender\textsuperscript{27}
- Can take an active or passive (indirect) role in the sexual abuse\textsuperscript{28}
Female Typologies

- Accompanied abusers – emotionally dependent socially isolated, and display low self-esteem
- Teacher/lover/heterosexual nurturer- abuse adolescent boys, acquaintance/position of trust relationship, dependency needs, substance abuse, attachment deficits
- Predisposed offenders- younger children, sexual interest, PTSD, psychopathologies, sexual abuse history
- Offend against female adults/adolescents- extensive criminal history, exploitation, domestic violence, and financial gain
Internet Offenders

- Report more psychological difficulties in adulthood and fewer sexual convictions
- More likely to succeed in the community and less likely to engage in sexually risky behaviors
- More likely to be of white, European descent
- Substance abuse and criminal history predicted contact offenses
- Sexual interest in children, criminal history, and substance abuse predicted violent offending among child pornography offenders
Internet Typologies

- Access child pornography impulsively and/or out of curiosity
- Access/trade pornography to fuel sexual interest in children
- Sexual contact offenders used to acquire victims/disseminate produced images
- Download child pornography for financial gain
Crossover Offending

- Presents significant challenges to traditional typologies
- Crossover offending has been reported in studies using guaranteed confidentiality, anonymous survey, or treatment with polygraphy\(^{34-36}\)
- Offenders admit more victims and offenses than arrested/convicted\(^{34}\)
Crossover Behaviors: Prevalence across Studies

- Adult and child victims (age crossover): range from 29 to 73%\textsuperscript{37-38}
- Rapists who sexually assault children: range from 50 to 60%\textsuperscript{34-35}
- Males and females (gender crossover): range from 20 to 43%\textsuperscript{34,39}
- Relationship (intrafamilial/extrafamilial): range from 64 to 66% \textsuperscript{34,39}
Crossover Offending: Female and Internet Offenders

- Female sexual offenders also report crossover offending\(^{40}\)
  - Age and relationship crossover – female offenders (11% to 30%)

- Internet offenders also report engaging in physical, sexual contact
  - Reported physical sexual contact (12.5% to 85%) depending upon study/methodology (polygraph obtains greater prevalence)\(^{41-42}\)
Explanation of Crossover: Sexual Offense Patterns

- Rehabilitation theories examine clusters of behaviors and psychological processes that account for the heterogeneity of offending\(^43\)
- Developmental factors- predictive of high risk sexual behaviors, treatment failure, and static/dynamic risk for reoffense\(^44-46\)
- Specialization – child sexual abusers who sexually prefer children\(^47\)
- Generalization – rape and criminal versatility\(^47\)
Developmental Histories of Sexual Offenders

- Advanced statistical methods have been able to evaluate the unique and combined contributions of risk factors, offense patterns, and developmental histories.

- Different types of maltreatment during childhood associated with different types of sexual offending\(^ {48,49}\):
  - Child sexual abusers – heightened sexuality\(^ {50}\)
  - Rapists – Violence and criminal diversity\(^ {50}\)

- Poor parental bonding enhances the effects of child maltreatment\(^ {51}\)
Self-Regulation Model\textsuperscript{52}

- Nine-stage model of the sex offense process accounts for heterogeneity of offending
- Examines situational precipitants, cognitive distortions, degree of control, self-evaluation after the offense, attitude toward offending
- Individuals are goal-oriented and offend to achieve a desired state
Four Distinct Pathways to Offending

- Avoidant
  - Mis-regulation (Avoidant Active)
  - Under-regulation (Avoidant Passive)
- Approach
  - Under-regulation (Approach Automatic)
  - Intact regulation (Approach Explicit)
Generalist vs Specialist Model

- Takes into account the risk and needs of offenders
- Does not classify by victim type
- Specialists – commit sexual crimes persistently
- Generalist – do not restrict themselves to one type of crime (majority of sexual offenders)
Specialist vs Generalist

- Specialist – sexually abuse children exclusively, more likely to have a sexual interest in children, history of childhood sexual abuse, sexual preoccupation, and emotional congruence with children\(^{54}\)
- Generalist – resemble violent nonsexual offenders, low self-control, impulsivity, substance abuse, and criminal lifestyle\(^{55}\)
Sex Offender Typologies

Research Limitations and Future Needs
Limitations

- Traditional typologies based upon official record or self-report
- Only 1-3% of sexual offenses are available in official record\textsuperscript{56}
- Traditional typologies have not demonstrated clinical utility or predictive validity for re-offense
- Polygraph testing remains controversial
Future Research Needs

- Generalist vs specialist demonstrates potential as a treatment conceptualization. Further research needed to identify factors that differentiate the types.
- Self-regulation model has been validated extensively. Research is needed to determine whether the interventions based on pathway impacts recidivism.
- Additional research needed to develop extensive models of offending.
Sex Offender Typologies

Conclusions and Policy Implications
Conclusions and Policy Implications

- If crossover is disclosed, assigned risk level increases—should be taken into consideration for treatment and management\(^{57}\)
- To address heterogeneity and crossover offending, it is best to regard typologies as a continuum than discrete categories\(^ {58}\)
- Important to classify offenders based on characteristics not victim type\(^{58}\)
Conclusions and Policy Implications

- Prevention of sexual abuse requires a balance of community safety and effective resource allocation.
- Developmental experiences predict dynamic risk and combined with static markers increase likelihood of re-offense - should be used as secondary prevention strategies.
- Comprehensive understanding of treatment needs and effective intervention is necessary to prevent re-offense.
Notes


Notes (Continued)


Notes (Continued)


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References


References (Continued)


References (Continued)


References (Continued)


Q & A

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Q & A

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Thank You for Joining Us!

Please join us for the next webinar in this series on September 21

The topics will be Adult Sex Offender Management and Juvenile Registration and Notification

To register for this webinar, please visit http://ncja.org/webinars-events/sex-offender-mgt-webinars

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This webinar series is supported by Grant No. 2010-DB-BX-K086 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions are those of the speakers.