What Do We Know About Sexual Offending and Sex Offender Management and Treatment?
Internet-Facilitated Sexual Offending

April 20, 2015
2:00-3:30 pm ET

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Presenters:

Luis C. deBaca
Director
Office of Justice Programs, SMART Office

Scott Matson
Senior Policy Advisor
Office of Justice Programs, SMART Office

Michael Seto
Director, Forensic Research Unit
Institute for Mental Health Research
Combatting Sexual Offending and Victimization

- Sexual offenders and the crimes they commit have received considerable attention from policymakers, practitioners, and the public in recent years.
- Widespread recognition that crime control strategies, including those targeting sexual offenders, are more likely to be effective when based on scientific evidence.
U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Role in Combatting Sexual Offending and Victimization

- Since 1996, OJP has sponsored more than 100 research projects, publications, and training curricula related to sexual assault and sex offender management
- Grant programs have provided funds to approximately 200 state, local, and tribal jurisdictions to enhance sex offender management
- Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART) Office:
  - Established in 2006
  - Provides assistance to criminal justice professionals around the entire spectrum of sex offender management activities
SMART Office Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative

- Goal is to 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
- National inventory of sex offender management professionals
- 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
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
**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
Introduction

- US arrests tripled from 2000 to 2010\(^1\)
- Fastest rising offender type in federal custody\(^2\)
- Internet: Accessible, Affordable, “Anonymous”
- Range of crimes, including child pornography, sexual solicitation (luring), and conspiracy\(^3\)
- Large majority of cases involve possession/distribution of child pornography
- Often cross-jurisdictional; international in scope
Internet Offender Characteristics

- Most are male
- Disproportionately Caucasian
- Higher education than typical contact offenders
- Less criminal history than typical contact offenders
  - One in eight have official record for contact sexual offending
  - 55% admitted to history of contact sexual offending
Offender Motivations

- Majority of child pornography offenders are pedophiles (sexually attracted to prepubescent children)\(^6\)
- Solicitation offenders, in contrast, are predominantly interested in adolescent girls\(^7\)
- Solicitation offenders might be distinguished as fantasy-driven (online interactions only) or contact-driven (seek to meet in real life)\(^8\)
Risk to Reoffend

- Recidivism results available from 9 studies (total sample of 2,630 internet offenders)
- Average follow-up of 3 years
- Sexual recidivism rate of 4.6%
  - 2% committed new contact sexual offense
  - 3.4% committed new child pornography offense
Risk Assessment

- Internet offender risk to sexually reoffend related to $^{9-12}$:
  - Offender age at time of first arrest
  - Lower education level
  - Being single
  - Prior criminal history
  - Failure on prior conditional release
  - Admission of sexual interest in children
  - Ratio of boy to girl child pornography content
Intervention

- Most programs modify existing sex offender treatments\(^3\)
  - Example, Internet Sex Offender Treatment Programme in UK (i-SOTP)\(^{13}\)
    - Modification of standard sex offender treatment
    - For internet-only offenders
    - Fewer individual or group sessions
    - More internet-related content
Internet Sex Offender Treatment Programme (i-SOTP)

- 70 treatment hours (35 sessions) in six modules:
  - Module 1: Motivation and Values
  - Module 2: What needs did offending meet
  - Module 3: Victim Awareness
  - Module 4: Emotional and Relationship Skills
  - Module 5: Community, Collecting & Compulsivity
  - Module 6: Relapse Prevention and New Life Plan

- Treatment targets mostly map onto dynamic risk factors: sexual & general self-regulation problems; offense-supportive attitudes & beliefs; interpersonal deficits
Other Treatment Options

- Sexual addiction/compulsivity based programs\textsuperscript{14}
- Self-help via croga.org
- Individual service providers via ATSA or stopitnow.org

*None of these interventions have gone through rigorous, peer-reviewed evaluation*
Practical Implications

- Increasing proportion of sex offender case loads: need more knowledge
- Different in some important ways from typical contact sex offenders
- Lower risk to reoffend therefore less intensive management required
- Some different treatment and supervision needs (e.g., being online)
Limitations & Future Directions

- Most research has focused on child pornography offenders
  - Risk to reoffend and risk factors for solicitation offenders?
  - Characteristics of other online offenders, e.g., sexual trafficking, conspiracy, sexual assaults of adults?
  - Types of online offenders?
- Extent of overlap between online & offline offending?
- Internet offender risk assessment measure?
Notes


Notes


References

References


Q & A

To submit questions for the presenters please use the chat feature on the right hand side of your screen.
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Q & A

Moderator:
Scott Matson  
Senior Policy Advisor  
Office of Justice Programs, SMART Office

Presenter:
Michael Seto  
Director, Forensic Research Unit  
Institute for Mental Health Research
Thank You for Joining Us!

Please join us for the next webinar in this series on May 11, 2015. The topic will be Juvenile Risk Assessment & Juvenile Recidivism.

Today’s slides and a recording of this webinar will be available at:
http://ncja.org/webinars-events/sex-offender-mgt-webinars

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