



**Online Sexual Offenses
Involving Child Sexual Abuse
Materials and Online Solicitation**

David L. Delmonico, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS
Internet Behavior Consulting
delmonico@duq.edu
412-780-1459
www.internetbehavior.com/legal

I. Negotiating with the DA/AUSA

- Psychological / Developmental Issues
- Risk Assessment / Recidivism
- Treatment/Supervision Amenability

II. Sentencing Hearing

- Contextualize Behaviors
- Highlight Psych/Developmental Issues
- Risk Assessment
- Plan for Success / Risk Reduction

III. Attorney / Defendant

- Reality Check
- Understanding...even if not used
- "I got nothing else."

**Psychological
Testing
&
Assessments**

**Psychosexual
Evaluations
Are...**

**A Prevention Tool to Reduce Sexual
Harm**

Used to decrease emotion / myth-
based decision making since those
increase sexual recidivism

Data-based decision tools based on
empirical research and facts to
reduce recidivism

Components of a Psychosexual

Background & History
 Testing & Assessments
 Contributing and Mitigating Factors
 Risk for Sexual Recidivism
 Summary
 Recommendations

Background and History

- Areas Related to Risk & Contributing/Mitigating Factors
 - Relationships (Family, Friends, Romantic)
 - School / Employment
 - Leisure / Recreation
 - Mental Health / Significant Physical Health
 - Mood Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, ADHD, Hypersexuality
 - Antisocial Lifestyle (Criminality)
 - History, Personality Patterns, Cognitions, Associates

Andrews & Bonta, 2010



Background and History

- Offense Behavior
 - Highlights (What was not part of the offense behavior)
 - Age & Gender of Victim(s)
 - Violence/Aggression/Use of Objects
 - Child Sexual Abuse Media
 - Production
 - Distributed to Others (active vs passive)
 - Chatting Related to Sexual Abuse of Children
 - Unrelated/Stranger Victims
 - Psychology of Technology



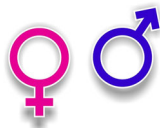
- **Psychological Testing**
 - MMPI – Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
 - MCMI – Millon
 - PAI – Personality Assessment Inventory

- **Assessments/Screening**
 - Hypersexual Behavior Inventory
 - Internet Sex Screening Test
 - Trauma Symptom Inventory
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)
 - Attention Deficit Screening
 - Autism Spectrum Quotient Screen
 - Substance Use Screenings (SASSI)
 - Shipley IQ Estimator
 - Pedophilic Disorder

Psychological Testing & Assessments

Testing and Assessments

- **Child Abuse Material Inventory (CAMI)** (Parsons, Honyara, Delmonico, & Griffin 2013)
 - Focused on Forensic Evidence
- Developed Based on Research
 - Boys versus Girls
 - Larger versus smaller collections
 - Smaller age range versus larger age range
 - Etc...



Pedophilia

- **Pedophilic Disorder (DSM-5-TR)**
 - Terminology**
 - Diagnosis
 - Prepubescent (Physical Development vs. Age – Tanner Scale)
 - Exclusive vs Non-Exclusive
 - Girls vs Boys as Focus
 - In 2026 More Complicated Diagnosis
 - Lifelong vs. Transient
 - May meet criteria at one time in life and not later
 - Voyeuristic Pedophilia
 - Technology-Induced pedophilic disorder



Terminology

Pedophilia (Pedophilic Disorder)

- Prepubescent (Exclusive/Non-exclusive)
- Minor Attracted Person (MAP)

Hebephilia

- Pubescent/Just beginning sexual maturity
- Tween

Ephebephilia

- Teens / Adolescent / Post-pubescent
- Underage

Teleiophilia

- Sexual Mature Body (Adult & Adolescent)



Pedophilia

• Research on CSAM Offenders

- 50% Pedophilic / 50% Non-Pedophilic
- 50% of defendants with CP are likely not pedophilic

• Latest Research

- Non-Exclusive Individuals with Pedophilic Interest (Interest in Children & Adults)
 - Low rates of sexual recidivism (Exclusive 5X that of Non-Exclusive)
 - Significant lower rates of contact sexual offenses
 - **It is the absence of sexual interest in adults that is concerning**
- Treatment approaches differ, but it can “work”

• Pedophilic Disorder is not “the kiss of death” in a legal case

Determining Pedophilic Interest/Arousal

Sexual Interest Testing (Abel/Affinity/Look)

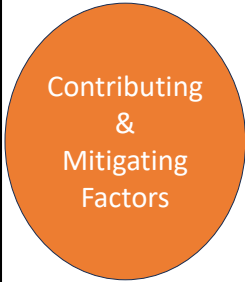
Penile Plethysmograph (PPG)

Correlates of Sexual Interest in Children (CASIC)

Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interest (SPPI-2)

Self-Report

Case Discovery



Contributing & Mitigating Factors

- Adolescent Brain Development (up to 27/28)
 - Emerging Adult Literature
- Early Exposure to CP/Sexualization/Early Childhood Sexual Experiences/Sexual Abuse
- Significant Mental Health Issues
 - Mood Disorders (Dysregulation, OCD, Bi-Polar)
 - Substance Use Disorders
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Veterans)
 - Neurodevelopment Disorder
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder/Intellectual Disabilities/ADHD
 - Hypersexuality
 - Pedophilic Disorder
- Few Coping Skills to Handle Life (Incest Offenders)
- Psychology of Technology

Psychology of Technology



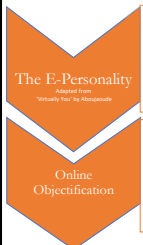
Cyber-hex
Delmonico and Griffin

- Easy to lose track of time and consequences
- Form pseudo relationships without risk of vulnerability
- Internet has become an integral part of life
- Intoxicating especially since the reward is sex

Online Disinhibition
Suler

- Anonymity: You Don't Know Me/You Can't See Me
- Escape: See You Later
- Fantasy: It's All in My Head
- Familiarity: We're Equals / Friends

Psychology of Technology



The E-Personality
Revised from "Sexually Free for Adolescents"

- Narcissism: We are the center of the universe
- Shadow: Technology releases and nurtures
- Regression: Toward immaturity
- Impulsivity: Urge driven lifestyle
- Reinforced sensation seeking behavior

Online Objectification

- Distancing (Rimer, 2019)
- Detachment/Dissociation (Quayle et al., 2002; Rimer, 2019)
- Anonymity /Moral Flexibility
- Children are more like characters (Elliott et al., 2009)
- "Only Images" (Leonard, 2010; Winder et al., 2010)
- "Restricted view of harm" (Burke et al., 2002)

Psychology of Technology

- It is recognized that these features of technology **cannot be ignored** as a factor in sexual offense behavior in the online world. (Quayle et al., 2010; Rimer, 2019)
- Function of the Internet is a crucial aspect of some types of online sexual offending (Merdian et al. 2016; Sheldon and Howe, 2007; Surjadi, 2010)



Psychology of Technology + Contributing Factors = Perfect Storm



Helps Contextualize Why Individuals with:

- No significant criminal history
- No history of contact offending
- Typically No sexual interest in children

...are engaged in online offense behavior.

D

RISK

Risk for Sexual Recidivism

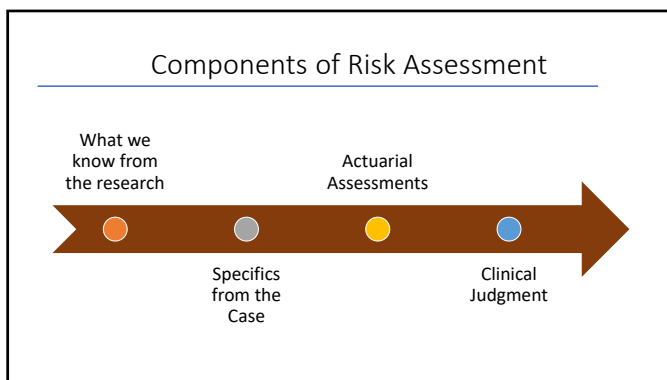
The Risk Assessment

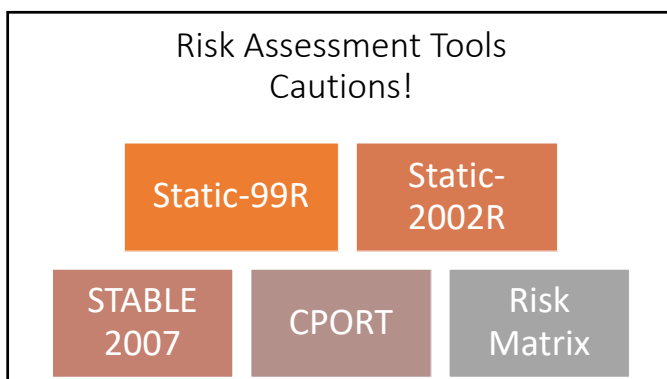
Risk Reducing Factors

Risk Principle



- The general public's perception that convicted offenders are all on a trajectory of life-course persistent sexual offending is incorrect (e.g., Mancini & Budd, 2016).
- A meta-analysis for 468 studies with over 388,994 individuals in Canada and the United States concluded that sexual recidivism rates have dropped 45% to 60% between 1940 and 2019 (Lussier, et al., 2024)
- Research indicates that for contact offenders overall sexual recidivism rates of approximately 6% (Lussier, et al., 2023).
- Research indicates that for online CSAM only offenders recidivism rates is about 3%-5% (Seto)
- Females...Risk is approximately 1% to 3%





Significant Risk Factors

- History of a past contact sexual offense
- Sexual interest in and/or sexual arousal to prepubescent children (pedophilic disorder)
 - Prepubescent Boys
 - No Interest in Postpubescent Individuals
- Presence of antisocial personality disorder (e.g., callousness towards others, pattern of criminal behavior, anti-authority issues, etc.; Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2005)
- Motivation – Facilitation Model (Seto)

Additional Risk Concepts

- Age
- Stranger Victims
- Non-Related Victims
- Substance Use Disorder
- Hypersexuality

Denial and Risk

- Estimated that between 54% and 87% of sex offenders initially deny their sexual offense behavior.
- The collective wisdom assumed individuals who deny committing their criminal offense are more at risk for recidivism of future crimes.
- “Deniers” often lost opportunities to receive treatment, failed negotiated reduced sentences, and/or did not receive early release from incarceration that they were entitled to receive
- A number of peer-reviewed research publications report that denial has no impact on sexual recidivism

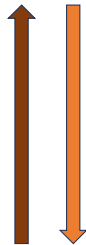
Risk Reducing Factors

- Age/Age/Age
- Protective Factors (de Vries, Mann, Maruna, and Thornton, 2015)
 - Healthy Sexual Interests
 - Capacity for Emotional Intimacy
 - Constructive Social/Professional Support
 - Goal Directed Living/Good Problem Solving
 - Engaged in Employment/Constructive Leisure
 - Sobriety
 - Hopeful, Optimistic, and Motivated Attitude to Desistance
- Treatment
 - 5% to 8% Impact on Recidivism
- Probation/Supervised Release/Monitoring



Risk and Sentencing Considerations

- The Risk Principle
 - High Risk = High Intensity Consequences/Treatment
 - Low Risk = Low Intensity Consequences/Treatment
- Research Indicates that...
 - **The system creates a higher risk for sexual recidivism if consequences/treatment doesn't match risk level.**



Risk and Sentencing Considerations

- U.S. Sentencing Commission Report (2013)
 - The content of an offender's child pornography collection and the nature of an offender's collecting behavior (in terms of volume, the types of sexual conduct depicted in the images, the age of the victims depicted, and the extent to which an offender has organized, maintained, and protected his collection over time, including through the use of sophisticated technologies);
 - The degree of an offender's involvement with other offenders — in particular, in an Internet "community" devoted to child pornography and child sexual exploitation; and
 - Whether an offender has a history of engaging in sexually abusive, exploitative, or predatory conduct in addition to his child pornography offense.





Online Child Solicitation Offenders

Meta Analysis of Comparison Studies (Babchishin, et al., 2012)

- ✓ Less likely to be deviant
 - Pedophilic/Hebephilic....know your definitions
- ✓ More likely to have self-regulation problems
 - Depression/Anxiety/Loneliness
- ✓ Lower on factors related to risk
- ✓ Fewer undetected contact sexual offenses (Seto, 2013)

Solicitation Offenders

- Contact Driven (Travelers)
 - Intimacy Seeking (Webster, 2012)
- Fantasy Driven
 - Hypersexual (Webster, 2012)

(Briggs, Simon and Simonsen, 2009)



Solicitation Offenders

(Briggs and Simonsen, 2009)

- Contact Driven
 - Motivation is to Meet
 - Chats Typically Less Sexual in Beginning
 - More Typical **Grooming** Pattern

E

Solicitation Offenders

Contact Driven (Not Stings) (CCRC)

- 1490 arrest involving online communication
 - 672 related to stranger
 - Many More Like Statutory Rape Offenders
 - 817 person known by minor
 - More Criminal/Alcohol and Drug Issues//More CP
- 90% teens
 - Offenders not pedophiles/hebephiles
- Knew sex was going to be involved
 - Cases rarely violent
- Felt they were "In love"
 - Some offenders also viewed as romantic relationship



E

Solicitation Offenders

- Fantasy Driven
 - Engaged in a variety of behaviors
 - Sexual Chatting
 - Exhibitionism / Hypersexual
 - Motivation for Orgasm Online
 - Less Typical Grooming
 - Quick Hits and Quick Moving
 - Chat Logs



(Briggs and Simonsen, 2009)

D

Online Child Solicitation Sting Operations

• “Adolescent” Sting Operations

- Older
- Employed
- More affluent
- Less likely to have any violent/criminal history
- Less likely to have drug or alcohol issues



• “Child” Sting Operations

E

Solicitation Offenders

- For all subtypes motivation is less related to...
 - Sexual Deviance
 - Criminological Behavior (Maybe for Cappers)
- Sexual behavior is more about....
 - Social Isolation/Dysphoric Moods
 - Increasing social isolation as a result on the Internet
 - Cultural Issues Related to Gay Community
 - Age of consent, “boys”, “twinks”, “dick pics”, etc.
 - Alcohol/Drugs (Sturgis Bike Week)

E

Top Signs You’re Net-Addicted

You pick up your phone to check the weather and somehow end up watching a 12-minute video about a raccoon stealing DoorDash. You lose your phone, panic, use your watch to ping it, and it is in your hand.

While waiting for the judge to arrive, you somehow end up organizing photos from your vacation in 2017.

Your phone battery hits 10%, and you begin searching the room for an outlet like a drug sniffing dog at the airport.

Your family group text is pissing you off, but you can’t leave or you might miss the drama.

When your case is in trouble, you break into a TikTok dance to “wow” the jury!

You spend half your plane trip with your laptop on your lap and your child in the overhead compartment.