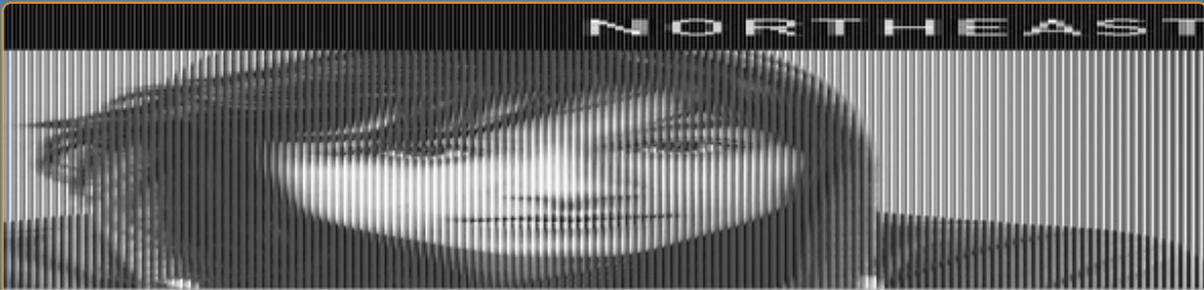


Like

in



Dear Colleague:

We want to take a moment to thank you our readership of this newsletter; we truly appreciate your feedback, ideas and suggestions. We also want to take a moment to ask you to consider making a donation to NEARI Press. As a nonprofit, our mission is to bring you the most cutting edge information in the field. But we can also use your help to make this happen. If you enjoy the newsletter, the webinars or any of our other free services, please consider making a tax deductible donation of any amount through our website at nearipress.org or by sending a check to NEARI Press at 70 North Summer Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

This month the NEARI Press newsletter article explores the impact on recidivism reduction of protective factors in adolescents who have sexually abused. Although the results of this study do not show a strong relationship between protective factors and desistance, there was enough data to recommend the need for further research. The authors reinforce the need to look at protective factors for many reasons, including how it can help build a stronger and more positive relationship between clinician and his or her client.

As always, if you have any other questions or suggestions for future newsletter topics, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely, Joan Tabachnick and Steven Bengis

Protective Factors and Recidivism in Adolescents Accused of Sexual Offenses

by Steven Bengis, David S. Prescott, and Joan Tabachnick

The Question

Is there any statistically significant correlation between protective factors and desistance from sexually abusive behaviors in adolescents?

The Research

Most of the research and assessment tools for sexually abusive behaviors have focused on risk factors for sexually abusive behaviors. Among adolescent research, less information is available about protective factors for these behaviors. In this recently published article, Verena Klein, Martin Rettenberger, Dahlnym Yoon, Nora Köhler and Peer Briken reported on their study of 71 teenagers accused of some form of sexual abuse for an average of four years. They explored whether there was any predictive accuracy that would link protective factors with desistance from sexual crimes. Like others before them, they suggest that this tight focus on just the risk factors for recidivism may not consider motivational aspects of criminal behavior or offer opportunities to intervene to change

the development trajectory of these adolescents.

Their extensive literature review identified a number of factors that have contributed to minimizing violent behaviors and in some cases protect against engagement in sexually aggressive behavior. Previous studies, while few, showed that some protective factors were correlated with reduced psychopathological problems among youth who sexually offended.

With these limited but encouraging results, the authors chose to explore protective factors using the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY: Borum, Bartel & Forth, 2001) and the Structured Assessment of PROtective Factors for violence risk (SAPROF: de Vogel, et al., 2009) instruments to measure the protective factors. The SAPROF in particular examines 17 items which are divided into three scales: 1) internal items that characterize the individual (e.g., secure attachment, empathy), 2) motivational (e.g., work, leisure activities, attitude towards authority), and 3) environmental factors (e.g., social networks, living circumstances).

They found that the protective factors measured by the SAVRY showed no predictive accuracy. However, the SAPROF protective factors did indicate moderate validity for violence and general recidivism, but no relationship with sexual recidivism. The authors state that further research is needed, with a particular focus on intelligence and self-control, factors not fully explored with the SAVRY and SAPROF. Finally, while these results might lead some to believe that there is no value in examining protective factors, the authors suggest that these factors can continue to have value in counteracting the risk and deficit orientations of many assessment tools and help to improve the important relationship between client and clinician. Indeed, while professionals have sought to build strengths and develop capacities for many years, research in this area remains in its infancy.

BOTTOM LINE:

Although this initial research did not show a strong relationship between protective factors and the likelihood of living safely in the community, the authors highlighted the value of examining what is good in a client's life (e.g., protective factors) as well as the need for further research.

Implications for Professionals

Although this research showed that there is not yet enough evidence to use protective factors in any risk assessment protocol for sexually abusive behaviors, it does not remove our obligation to look at protective factors in our broader assessments and treatment interventions. In the absence of more extensive research to guide our decision-making, judicious use of available information is part the art of engaging with individual clients. Given that risk is developmental, contextual and systemically influenced, the task becomes even more complex. As we shift our focus from exclusively on prediction to treatment and prevention, a broad pallet of information can assist all of us in making better and better decisions about the best intervention and risk management approaches.

Implications for the Field

Although the researcher notes that this study will not be helpful to defining risk in adolescents, they state that this information remains useful to understanding the complex interface between context, development and intervention as well as to establishing a positive relationship with the client. Although there is a dearth of research into protective factors that have the greatest impact on safe outcomes, we owe it to victims, the community and our clients to craft the most effective individual treatment and intervention plans possible. Further research to guide those decisions would be most welcome and our field needs to support that effort.

Abstract

To date, research on juvenile sexual offender recidivism has tended to focus on risk factors rather than protective factors. Therefore, very little is known about protective factors in the population of juveniles who sexually offended. The aim of the present study was to examine the impact of

protective factors on non-recidivism in a sample of accused juveniles who sexually offended (N = 71) in a mean follow-up period of 47.84 months.

Protective factors were measured with the Protective Factor Scale of the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY), and the Structured Assessment of PROtective Factors for violence risk (SAPROF). Criminal charges served as recidivism data. The internal scale of the SAPROF, in particular, yielded moderate predictive accuracy for the absence of violent and general recidivism, though not for the absence of sexual recidivism. No protective factor of the SAVRY did reveal predictive accuracy regarding various types of the absence of recidivism. Furthermore, protective factors failed to achieve any significant incremental predictive accuracy beyond that captured by the SAVRY risk factors alone. The potential therapeutic benefit of protective factors in juvenile sexual offender treatment is discussed.

Citation

Klein, V., Rettenberger, M., Yoon, D., Köhler, N., and Briken, P. (2014). Protective Factors and Recidivism in Accused Juveniles Who Sexually Offended. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*. DOI: 10.1177/1079063214554958.

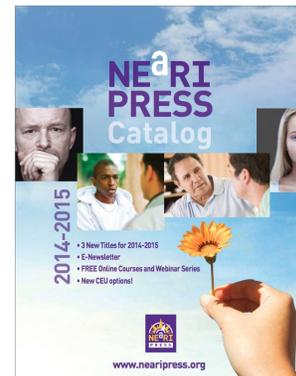
To print a pdf of this article, click [NEARI NEWS](#).

BECOME A SPONSOR - NEARIPRESS WEBINARS

Please consider becoming a sponsor of [NEARIPress.org](#)'s exciting new 2014-2015 NEARI Press Webinar series. We will continue to feature nationally recognized authors including, but not limited to: Cordelia Anderson, Deborah Hafner, David Prescott and Robin Wilson, among many others.

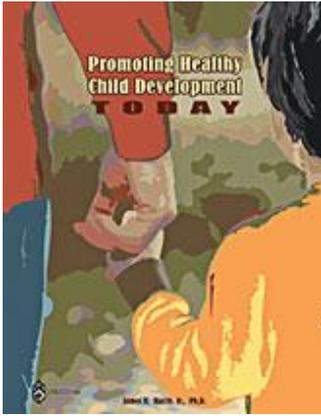
For \$98 as an individual or \$250 as an organization, we will guarantee your seat in the webinar **AND offer you CE credits**. We do all of the work to sign you up each month, and, as a thank you for your essential support, we offer you two free NEARI Press books - *Current Perspectives* and *Current Applications*, both edited by David Prescott and Robert Longo. We think that this is really a win-win situation for all of us.

For more information or to sign up, visit our website at info@nearipress.org or contact Diane Langelier at 413.540.0712 x14 or email her at info@nearipress.org.



NEW 2014-2015 Catalog

FEATURED NEARI RESOURCES



Promoting Healthy Childhood Development Today: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers

by James R. Harris, Jr.

This text combines accepted child-rearing techniques and theory with contemporary approaches in caring for children. The guide promotes positive childhood development and offers support for the adult caregiver, whether parent, foster parent, or residential facility staff.

Harris recognizes the importance of adults consistently demonstrating the desired behavior and intervening in the child's uncritical acceptance of negative media messages. Using charts and examples, the book covers common areas of concern and conflict with uncommon sense, including avoiding bedtime battles, curtailing aggression in children, discussing drugs and alcohol with youth, alleviating school-related anxiety, and protecting children on the Internet.

ISBN: 978-1-929657-30-8

Cost: \$17.00 plus shipping and handling

National Center on Sexual Behavior of Youth

An Online Resource for Parents of Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviors

The National Center on Sexual Behavior of Youth (NCSBY) is excited to announce the launch of the Parents and Resources sections of the Center's website: ncsby.org. The overall purpose of NCSBY is to improve the accuracy, accessibility, and strategic use of information about the nature, incidence, prevalence, prevention, treatment, and management of problematic sexual behavior in youth. This information is intended to help parents (and professionals) understand and support healthy sexual development and behaviors in children and adolescents.

There is also a wide range of additional resources and fact sheets available in the resource section to help caregivers with understanding and decision-making regarding sexual behavior in youth. Having a youth with problematic or illegal sexual behaviors can be an extremely stressful for caregivers. We hope that the information provided by NCSBY will help parents and caregivers feel more confident and prepared when facing these difficult circumstances.

We encourage you to go to ncsby.org and to share this website with others. For questions or comments about the website, please send an email to OU-NCSBY@ouhsc.edu.

DONATE NOW TO NEARI PRESS

NEARI Press is a nonprofit and depends upon the support of professionals like you to continue our work. Please consider giving a donation to NEARI Press.

[Click here](#) to make a donation of any amount. Thank you!

QUESTIONS/FEEDBACK

Please email us at info@nearipress.org or call us at 413.540.0712, x14 to let us know if you have a question or a topic you would like us to cover.

If at any time you no longer want the e-newsletter, just let us know and we will remove your name from our list. We value your trust. We will not sell or give your contact information to any other organization.

Volume 7, Issue 11: December 2014



©2014 Neari Press | 70 North Summer Street, Holyoke, MA 01040

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by [Mad Mimi](#)®