

NEARI NEWS:

TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

An Essential Tool for Professionals Working with those who Sexually Abuse or... A Great New Way to Stay Current with Cutting Edge Sexual Abuse Research.



Volume 6, Issue 2

February 2013

Dear Colleague,

This month's issue examines differences in the prevalence and impact of risk factors for general recidivism between adolescents who have committed a variety of sexual offenses and teens who have committed nonsexual offenses. The results of this study are particularly helpful because Claudia van der Put and her colleagues have offered insights into the risk factors for teens associated with misdemeanor sexual offenses, with felony sexual offenses and with offenses against much younger children.

When broken into these distinct groups, their finding shows that the risk of nonsexual re-offense was greatest among the group of adolescents convicted of either felony offenses or offenses with much younger children.

If you have not had a chance to participate in our FREE webinars, please join us on March 5 with Gerry Blasingame speaking about: [An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders, Sexual Behaviors, and Therapeutic Intervention](#).

If you missed one of the previous webinars with Phil Rich, Robin Wilson, Rob Longo, Keven Creeden, or Pat Wilcox you can listen to the recording on our website at www.nearipress.org. Upcoming webinars will feature NEARI Press authors Geral Blanchard, Susan Robinson, and Tom Leversee.

New Insights on Risk Factors

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

Question

Are the risk factors for nonsexual re-offense the same for adolescents who commit non-sexual crimes as they are for those who commit different kinds of sexual crimes?

The Research

Claudia van der Put and her colleagues examined 1,260 moderate- and high-risk American adolescents, aged 12 to 18, who appeared before court between January 1999 and January 2000. Of that number, 756 were known to have sexually abused. This adolescent group was broken down further into youth with misdemeanor sexual offenses, youth with felony sexual offenses and youth with offenses against much younger children. In this study, the researchers examined both the prevalence of risk factors in these distinct groups of adolescents as well as the impact of these risk factors in each distinct group.

The researchers found that the adolescents who were convicted of more serious sexual offenses were associated with a lower number of dynamic risk factors than those for non-sexual re-offense. However, the impact of most dynamic risk factors on general re-offense proved to be significantly larger among adolescents who had sexually abused compared to those who had broken other laws. In other words, when these risk factors for general delinquency occur in sexually abusive youth, their impact on recidivism is much stronger.

Of note, the risk of nonsexual re-offense was greatest among the group of adolescents convicted of either felony offenses or offenses with much younger children. Additional points of interest to treatment providers:

1. Social isolation occurred more frequently among youth with sexual offenses than those with general delinquency offenses and was more common in the teens committing more serious sexual offenses.
2. Although sexual abuse is more frequently found among adolescents who commit serious sexual offenses, the study found no effect of sexual abuse on recidivism. This finding points to the possibility that interrupting the link between childhood sexual abuse and the onset of first time sexually abusive behaviors may be an important goal for prevention programs.

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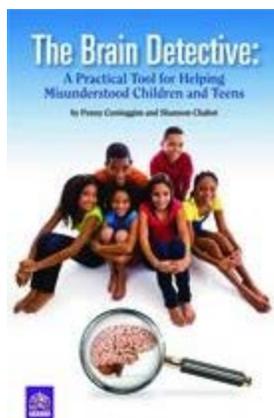
As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@nearipress.org or call us at 413-540-0712, ext. 14.

Sincerely,
Joan Tabachnick and Steven Bengis



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FEATURED NEARI RESOURCES



The Brain Detective: A Practical Tool for Helping Misunderstood Children and Teens

by Penny Cuninggim and
Shannon Chabot

3. No differences were found between the groups in the prevalence of problems with social skills; the degree to which physical abuse, neglect, and out-of-home placements occur; and the extent to which mental health problems are present.

Implications for Professionals

Conducting accurate risk assessments is one of the most difficult responsibilities assigned to practitioners in our field. What risk factors impact recidivism? How does one apply those factors across a heterogeneous population? What protective factors mitigate against or reduce future risk? And what types of re-offenses are we attempting to prevent?

This study suggests that we must look at risk factors unique to those who abuse sexually (e.g., exhibitionism, rape, or atypical sexual interests) and factors related to general delinquency (e.g., aggression, substance abuse and other anti-social traits). Further, we need to understand both the impact or weight of a given risk factor (rather than simply identifying its presence or absence) as well as how that risk factor relates to sub-categories of sexually offending adolescents--those committing misdemeanor offenses, felony offenses, or offenses against much younger children. This study also provides guidance for the creation of more targeted risk management protocols for general delinquency (e.g., aggression replacement training, drug/alcohol treatment, and developing interpersonal skills) that reduce social isolation and enhance peer-to-peer relationships. The potential effects of this approach are relatively high for sexually abusive youth and especially for those committing more serious offenses.

Implications for the Field

This article provides evidence for integrating the general delinquency literature into our approaches to assessment and treatment, although risk factors for general delinquency are less commonly found among adolescents who have sexually abused than youth who have committed other serious crimes. In a finding that is perhaps counter-intuitive but now has been replicated in two major studies, this study found that while sexual abuse occurs more frequently among adolescents who commit serious sexual offenses, there was no effect of a history of sexual abuse on general recidivism. The study findings suggest the importance of preventive interventions that interrupt the victim-to-victimizer cycle in advance of a sexual offense. This is particularly important because multiple studies now show that there is a stronger correlation between victimization in those committing serious offenses or offenses against children than in those committing less serious sexual crimes.

Abstract

To date, there is surprisingly little research on differences in the prevalence and impact of risk factors for general recidivism between juveniles who have committed sexual offenses (JSO) and juveniles who have committed nonsexual offenses (NSO). Therefore, we examined differences in the prevalence and impact of dynamic risk factors for general delinquency between youth with nonsexual offenses (NSO, n = 504), youth with misdemeanor sexual offenders (MSO, n = 136), youth with felony sexual offenders (FSO, n = 116) and youth with offenses against much younger children (CSO, n = 373). The sample consisted of boys with a mean age of 15.3 years (SD = 1.5). The prevalence of dynamic risk factors for general delinquency was significantly lower in JSOs than in NSOs. More serious sexual offenses were associated with a lower prevalence of dynamic risk factors. In contrast, the impact of most dynamic risk factors on general recidivism proved to be significantly larger among JSOs compared to NSOs. The relative importance of the dynamic risk factors varied

This booklet provides an easy to use tool that helps assess possible brain-based problems. By looking at a child's behaviors these tools identify possible neuro-developmental obstacles to communication and learning. Once identified, even the most misunderstood learner can be guided through remedies or provided with appropriate referrals. This booklet explores the brain-based keys to more successful teaching, parenting and treatment outcomes.

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for each type of JSO, resulting in differences in the dynamic risk profiles of the various types of JSOs.

Citation

- van der Put, C.E., van Vugt, E.S., Stams, G.J.J.M, Dekovic, M., & van der Laan, P.H. (2013). Differences in the prevalence and impact of risk factors for general recidivism between different types of juveniles who have committed sexual offenses (JSOs) and juveniles who have committed nonsexual offenses (NSOs). *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 25, 41-68.

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NEARI Press Webinar

An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders, Sexual Behaviors, and Therapeutic Intervention

MARCH 5, 2013

2:00pm-3:00pm EST

In the next one-hour NEARI Press Webinar, Gerry Blasingame will provide essential information regarding sexual behavior problems associated with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in adolescence. The webinar also offers guidance on the use of naturalistic behavioral intervention strategies to address these youth and their problematic behaviors.

Space is limited, so please register now to be guaranteed a spot! To register for this webinar, [click here](#). After you register, we will send you information about how to sign on.

There are three more webinars scheduled in our series, featuring internationally recognized experts such as Geral Blanchard, Su Robinson, and Tom Leversee. If you would like to be a sponsor of this series and to help support these resources -- \$98 for individuals and \$250 for organization sponsors -- we will guarantee you webinar access for 2012-13 series and send you two of NEARI Press's popular titles: *Current Applications* and *Current Perspectives* with a value of \$149. Please see our website for more information at www.nearipress.org.