

Sexual Abuse by Adolescents

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Table 1

Percent of 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds experiencing any lifetime sexual abuse/assault by perpetrator type and victim gender

N = 2,293	Age (years)		
	15 (n = 781) ^a	16 (n = 804) ^b	17 (n = 708) ^c
Sexual abuse/assault type			
Percent experiencing (95% CI)			
All perpetrators			
Females	16.8 ^c (11.5–22.2)	21.7 (16.3–27.0)	26.6 ^a (19.8–33.5)
Males	4.3 (1.9–6.8)	3.3 (1.6–5.0)	5.1 (2.6–7.6)
Adult perpetrator			
Females	6.1 (2.6–9.6)	7.7 (4.0–11.5)	11.2 (6.4–16.1)
Males	1.0 (–.4 to 2.5)	.6 (.0–1.2)	1.9 (.5–3.4)
Juvenile perpetrator			
Females	12.1 (7.5–16.6)	13.4 (9.0–17.7)	17.8 (11.4–24.3)
Males	3.3 (1.3–5.3)	2.6 (1.1–4.2)	3.1 (1.3–4.9)
Family perpetrator			
Females	3.3 (.2–6.4)	2.3 (.6–4.1)	5.5 (2.25–8.7)
Males	.0	.4 (–.1 to 1.0)	.6 (–.2 to 1.4)
Acquaintance perpetrator			
Females	14.2 (9.2–19.2)	15.4 (10.7–20.0)	19.6 (13.1–26.1)
Males	2.3 (.6–4.0)	1.8 (.6–3.1)	3.1 (1.3–5.0)
Stranger perpetrator			
Females	.6 (.2–1.5)	2.3 (.1–4.6)	3.0 (.3–5.6)
Males	.7 (–.7 to 2.1)	.3 (–.1 to .1)	1.4 (.1–2.7)
With Penetration			
Females	2.4 (.9–3.9)	4.8 (1.8–7.7)	6.1 (2.3–9.9)
Males	.7 (–.1 to 1.6)	.4 (–.2 to .9)	.6 (–.3 to 1.0)

Diversity of Dynamics

- ✓ Sibling sexual abuse
- ✓ Neighborhood, social network, school
- ✓ Older youth victimizing younger child
 - ✓ (baby sitter)
- ✓ Dating abuse
- ✓ Group assaults
- ✓ Bullying, humiliation
- ✓ Commercial, self-exploitation, e.g. online

Potential Subtypes: Hunter et al. (2003, 2004)

- Lifestyle delinquent
- Adolescent onset, non-paraphilic
 - Experimental, compensatory
- Early adolescent onset, paraphilic

Table 2: Characteristics of Juvenile Sex Offenders Who Victimize Minors, by Age of Offender

Characteristic	Juvenile Sex Offenders (%)	
	Younger (age < 12 years) (N = 2,104)	Older (age ≥ 12 years) (N = 11,367)
Multiple offenders in incident	29.0	23.0
Adult offender in incident	2.6	5.7
Female offender	14.6	5.9
Multiple victims in incident	16.0	12.1
Victim identity (youngest victim)		
Family	31.6	23.8
Acquaintance	56.0	64.5
Stranger	1.6	2.7
Victim is also offender	1.0	0.8
Unknown	9.7	8.2
Incident location		
Residence/home	73.0	68.1
School/college	10.8	12.1
Store/building	2.9	4.0
Outside	5.0	7.4
Other/unknown	8.2	8.3
Victim gender (youngest victim)		
Male	36.6	19.9
Female	63.4	80.1
Age of youngest victim (years)		
0-6	57.1	21.0
7-10	31.2	15.5
11-14	10.9	43.2
15-17	0.8	20.2
Sex offense (most serious)		
Rape	11.0	26.4
Sodomy	15.4	11.9
Sex assault with object	7.2	4.2
Fondling	61.3	47.2
Nonforcible sex offense	5.1	10.5
Injury in incident		
None	88.8	86.9
Minor	9.6	10.6
Major	1.6	2.5
Incident time of day		
Morning (6 a.m. to 12 p.m.)	28.9	26.3
Afternoon (12 p.m. to 6 p.m.)	45.6	42.5
Evening (6 p.m. to 12 a.m.)	22.7	25.7
Night (12 a.m. to 6 a.m.)	2.8	5.6
Arrest in incident	16.5	32.9

Sex Offenders vs Other Juvenile Offenders

Meta-analysis 59 studies (Seto & Lalumiere, 2010)

LESS

less extensive criminal histories

fewer antisocial peers

fewer substance abuse problems

MORE

sexual abuse history

exposure to sexual violence

other abuse or neglect

social isolation

early exposure to sex or pornography

atypical sexual interests

anxiety

low self-esteem

Two Pathways

High level child maltreatment background

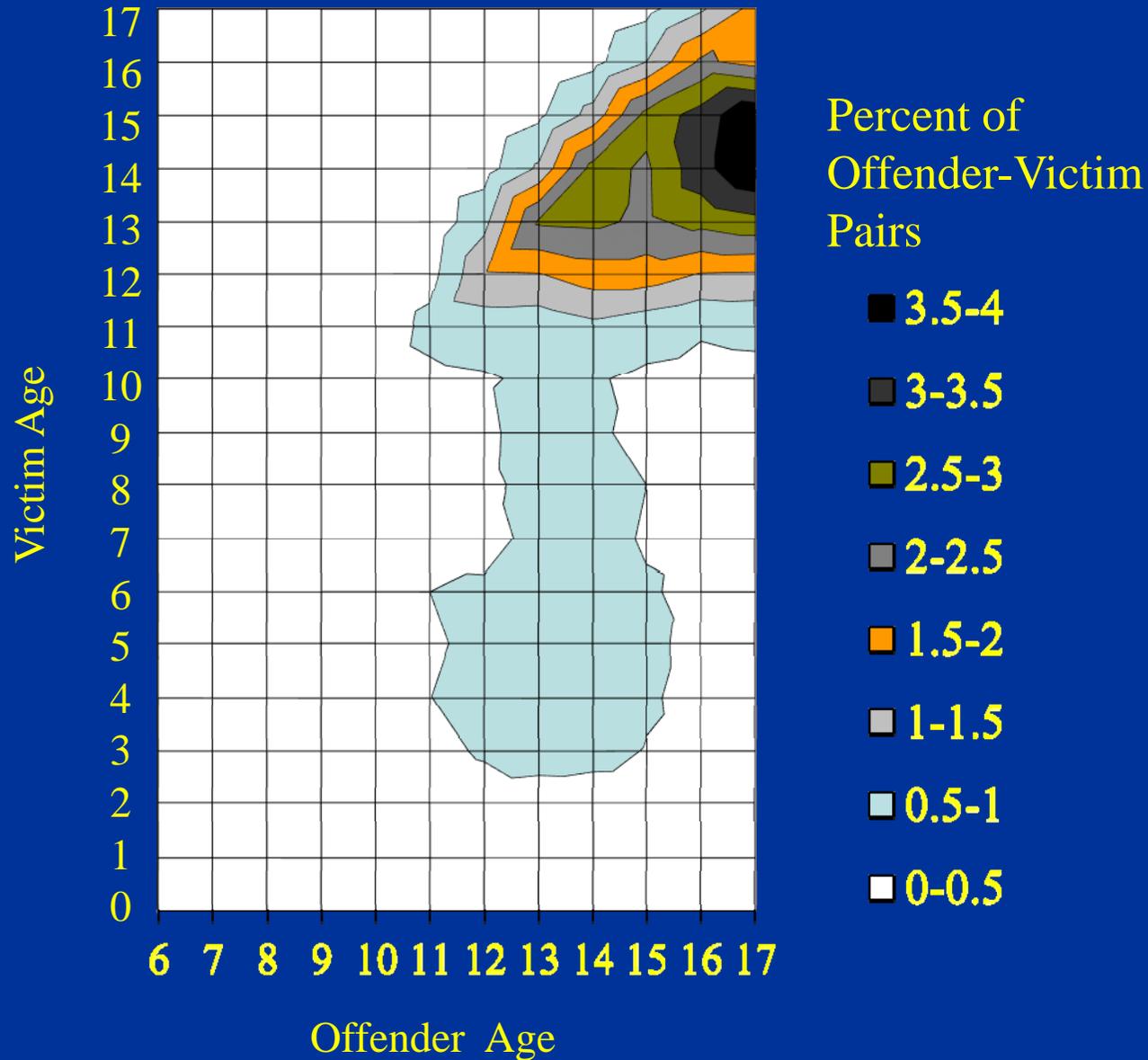
Sexual Victimization → Sexual Offending

Physical, Emotional Abuse → Sexual Offending

Via
Psychopathy
Sexual inadequacy

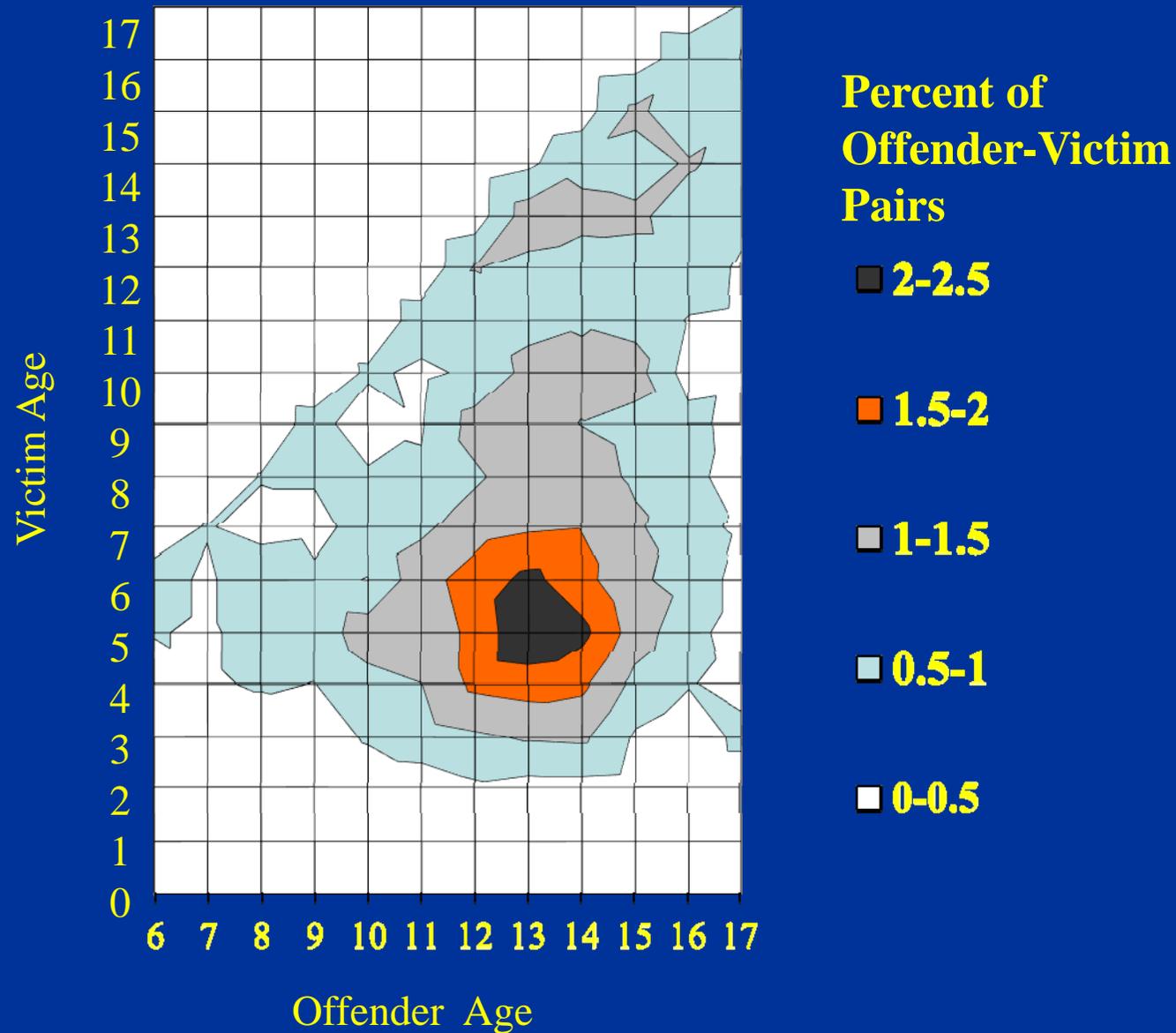
Daversa and Knight (2007)

Juvenile Sex Offenders Vs. Female Juvenile Victims



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Incident-Based Reporting System, 2004

Juvenile Sex Offenders Vs. Male Juvenile Victims



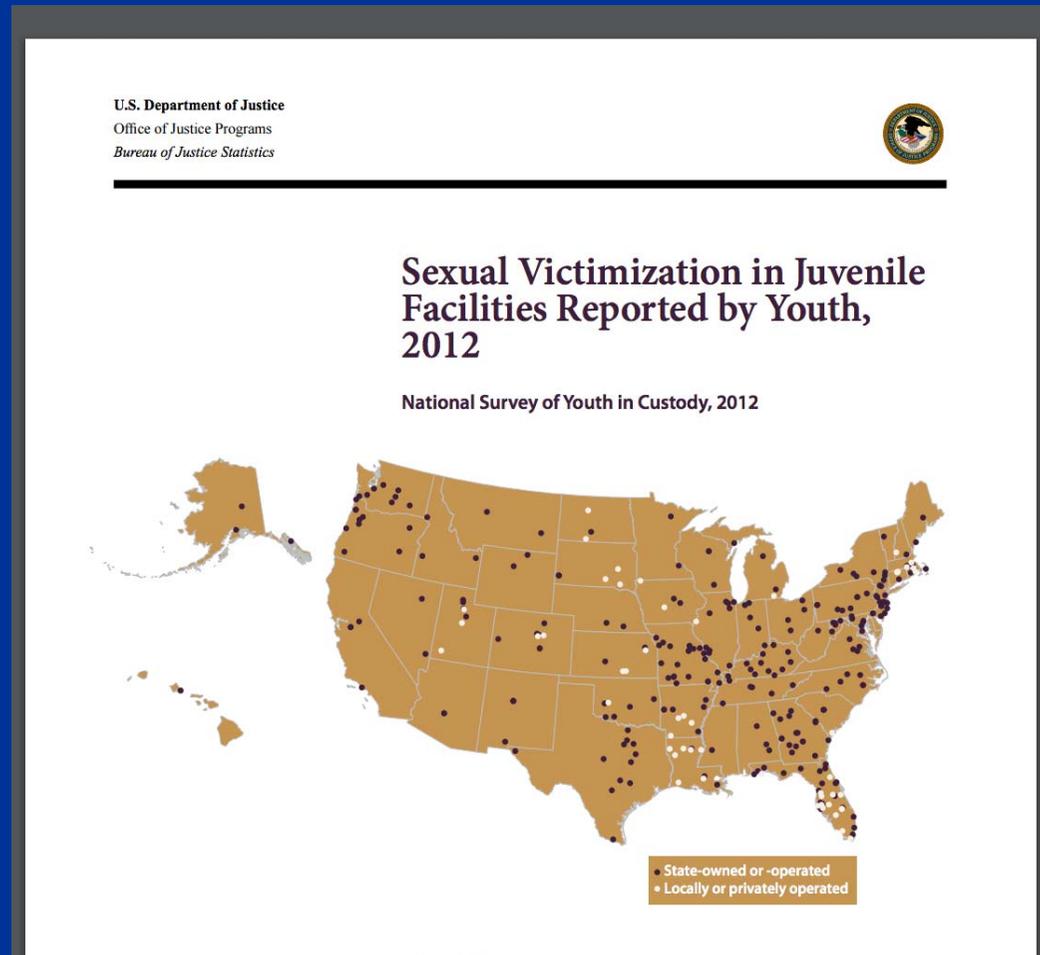
Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Incident-Based Reporting System, 2004

Important Findings

- ✓ Youth offenders generally more benign than adult offenders
 - ✓ Generally not a sign of incipient pedophilia
 - ✓ Recidivism rates are considerably lower
 - ✓ Some youth appear to offend due to peer pressure or transient impulses or influences

Implication: Youth offending is easier to prevent and treat. Long-term sanctions and supervision often not necessary.

National Survey



Sexual victimization last 12 months while in residence

TABLE 1

Youth reporting sexual victimization, by type of incident, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2012

Type of incident	National estimate ^a		
	Number of victims	Percent of youth victimized	Standard error
U.S. total	1,720	9.5%	0.4%
Youth-on-youth ^b	450	2.5%	0.2%
Nonconsensual sexual acts ^c	300	1.7	0.2
Other sexual contacts only ^d	110	0.6	0.1
Staff sexual misconduct	1,390	7.7%	0.4%
Force reported ^e	630	3.5	0.2
Excluding touching ^c	550	3.1	0.2
Other sexual contacts only ^d	40	0.2	0.1
No report of force	850	4.7	0.3
Excluding touching ^c	770	4.3	0.3
Other sexual contacts only ^d	70	0.4	0.1

Female staff most frequent staff perpetrators

both male and female staff).

TABLE 14
Victims of staff sexual misconduct, by use of force and sex of youth and staff, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2012

	Percent of youth reporting any sexual victimization			Standard error		
	All victims	Force reported*	No report of force	All victims	Force reported	No report of force
All victims	100%	100%	100%	:	:	:
Male victim						
Male staff	5.2%	9.9%	2.0%**	1.5%	3.1%	0.8%
Female staff	89.1	79.3	94.6**	1.8	3.4	1.4
Both male and female staff	3.0	5.5	2.4	0.7	1.5	0.8
Female victim						
Male staff	2.4%	5.1%	0.7%**	0.7	1.5	0.6
Female staff	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3
Both male and female staff	0.1	--	--	0.1	--	--
Estimated number of victims^a	1,390	630	840	:	:	:

Note: In facilities covered by the NSYC-2, an estimated 91% of adjudicated youth were male. Based on staff counts provided by 321 facilities responding to the facility survey, 44% of staff members were female.

School based Education Programs

✓ Virtues

- Proven prevention paradigm
- Considerable research
- Relatively low cost

✓ Limitations

- Limited evidence as yet that it prevents sexual abuse
- Burden on schools and teachers

Logic Model

✓ Education

- Knowledge about rules and norms
- Resistance and avoidance training
- Disclosure promotion
- Secondary harm prevention, stigma reduction
- Deterrence
- Improved guardianship

Considerable Research

- ✓ Children learn concepts
- ✓ Children acquire skills
- ✓ Some sustained learning

- Safe Dates

- . Intended for male and female 8th- and 9th-grade students, the goals of the program include the following:

- Changing adolescent dating violence and gender-role norms
- Improving peer helping and dating conflict-resolution skills
- Promoting victim and perpetrator beliefs in needing help and seeking help through community resources

- Safe Dates has five components: a ten-session course, a play script, a poster contest, parent materials, and a teacher training outline. Research found reductions in sexual dating violence perpetration and victimization that continued through a four-year follow-up period.¹

- Shifting Boundaries

- . Intended for male and female middle school students, the program has two parts: a classroom-based approach and a school-wide component. The goals of this program include the following:
 - Increasing knowledge and awareness of sexual abuse and harassment
 - Promoting positive social attitudes and a negative view of dating violence and sexual harassment
 - Promoting nonviolent behaviors and intentions in bystanders
- Shifting Boundaries is a six-session classroom course with a school-wide program that involves revising school rules regarding dating violence, and sexual harassment, temporary school-based restraining orders, posters to increase awareness and reporting, and student 'hot spot' maps of unsafe school areas to determine the placement of faculty or school security for greater surveillance

- Green Dot

- Green Dot is a bystander-based prevention program designed to increase positive bystander behavior, change social norms, and reduce sexual and other forms of interpersonal violence perpetration and victimization. The program consists of a 5-hour training in bystander behavior for peer opinion leaders and campus/school-wide “persuasive speeches” to educate and engage the population. Green Dot was designed for college populations but has been adapted for high school, community, and military populations. A study found that Green Dot was associated with reductions in unwanted sexual victimization and sexual harassment, stalking, and dating violence victimization and perpetration on a college campus implementing the program compared to two comparison campuses without the intervention.^{5, 6}

- Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention (SS: SSTP)
- Second Step: SSTP is a school-based, social-emotional skills based program for middle school students aimed at reducing bullying, peer victimization, and other problem behaviors. The program is delivered over 15 weeks by teachers and includes content related to bullying, problem-solving skills, emotion management, and empathy. A multi-site evaluation found that Second Step was associated with reductions in sexual violence perpetration and homophobic teasing victimization in one of the two states where it was implemented following 6th and 7th grade implementation. More research is needed to understand differences in effectiveness observed by site and the effects of the program through 8th grade.⁷

- Bringing in the Bystander

- Bringing in the Bystander is a bystander education and training program designed for male and female college students and adapted for high school students. The program aims to engage participants as potential witnesses to violence, rather than as perpetrators or victims. Skills are provided to help when participants see behavior that puts others at risk. Skills include speaking out against rape myths and sexist language, supporting victims, and intervening in potentially violent situations.

Possible New Directions

- ✓ Need for developmental sequence to sexual abuse prevention tailored to children's changing socio-sexual developmental context
- ✓ Integration of sex abuse prevention education into comprehensive prevention and life skills curricula (including bullying)
- ✓ Support for gay, questioning youth
- ✓ Media education

Common Treatment Goals

- Accept responsibility for behaviors
- Identify contributing factors
- Explore, utilize effective coping strategies
- Develop prosocial skills and competencies
- Establish positive peer relationships
- Promote healthy family functioning

Examples of Evidence-Based Interventions

- Wraparound Services
- Functional Family Therapy
- Multisystemic Therapy

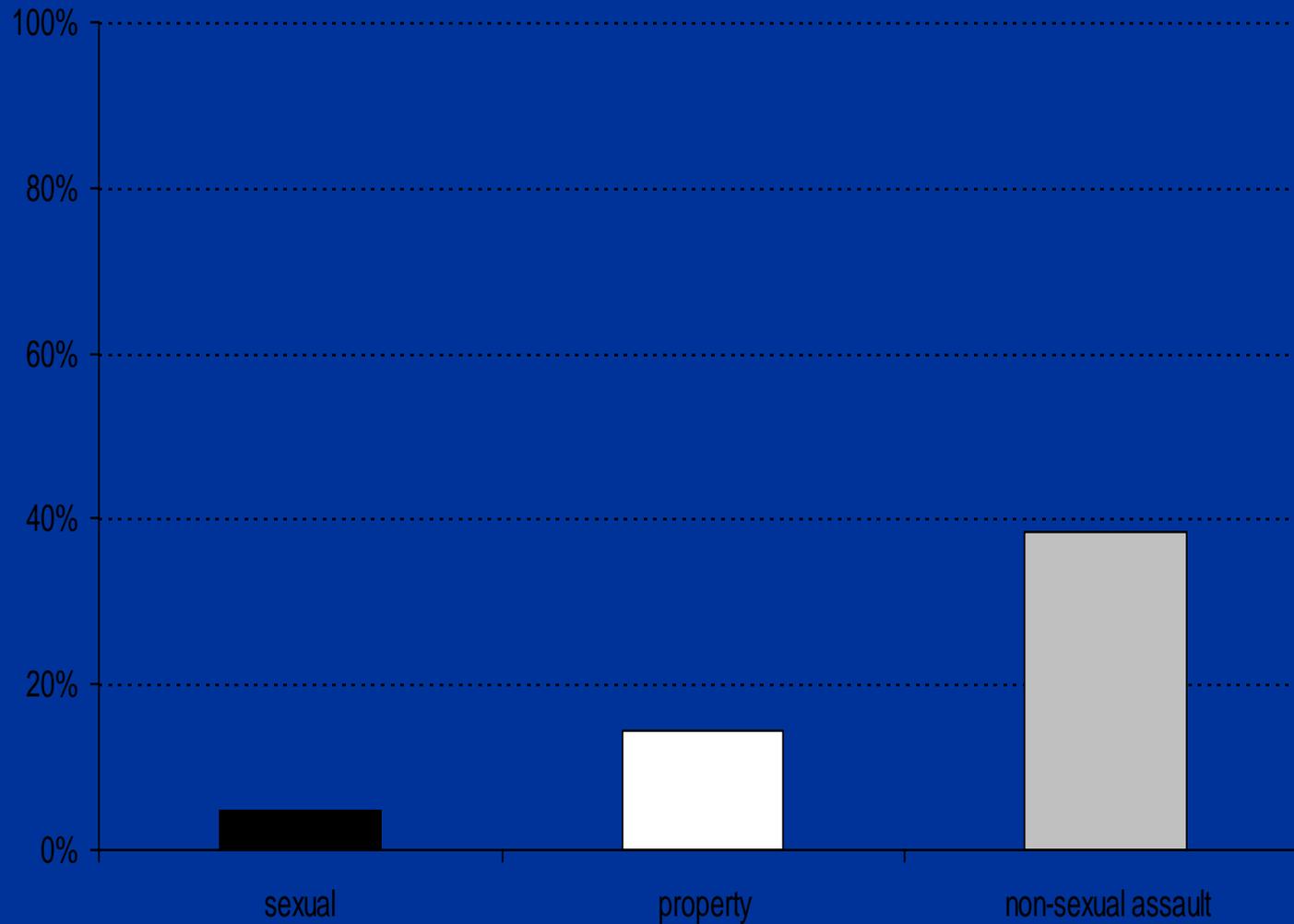
Common Treatment Targets

- Responsibility-taking
- Cognitive distortions or thinking errors
- Victim empathy
- Intrapersonal and interpersonal skills
- Sex education
- Relationship skills
- Healthy masculinity
- Arousal control
- Trauma resolution
- Family functioning

Psychiatric Disorders and Juvenile Sex Offenders

- Common presence necessitates screening
- Can interfere with treatment engagement and response
- Pharmacological interventions may be warranted

Recidivism Trends for Treated Youth Released from Facilities



(Waite et al., 2005)

Suggested Risk Factors for Juveniles: Sexual Recidivism

- Family instability, poor parent-child relations
- Association with delinquent peers
- Social isolation
- Antisocial orientation, psychopathy
- Deviant arousal
- Sexual preoccupation, compulsivity
- Non-familiar victims
- Pro-offending attitudes
- Impulsivity
- Treatment non-compliance, termination

(see, e.g., Prescott, 2006; Worling & Langstrom, 2006)

Promising Risk Assessment Tools for Juveniles

- **Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol-II**

- (Prentky & Righthand, 2003)

- **Estimate of Risk of Adolescent Sexual Offense Recidivism**

- (Worling & Curwen, 2001)

J-SOAP-II Subscales

- Sexual drive/preoccupation
- Impulsive, antisocial behavior
- Intervention
- Community stability/adjustment

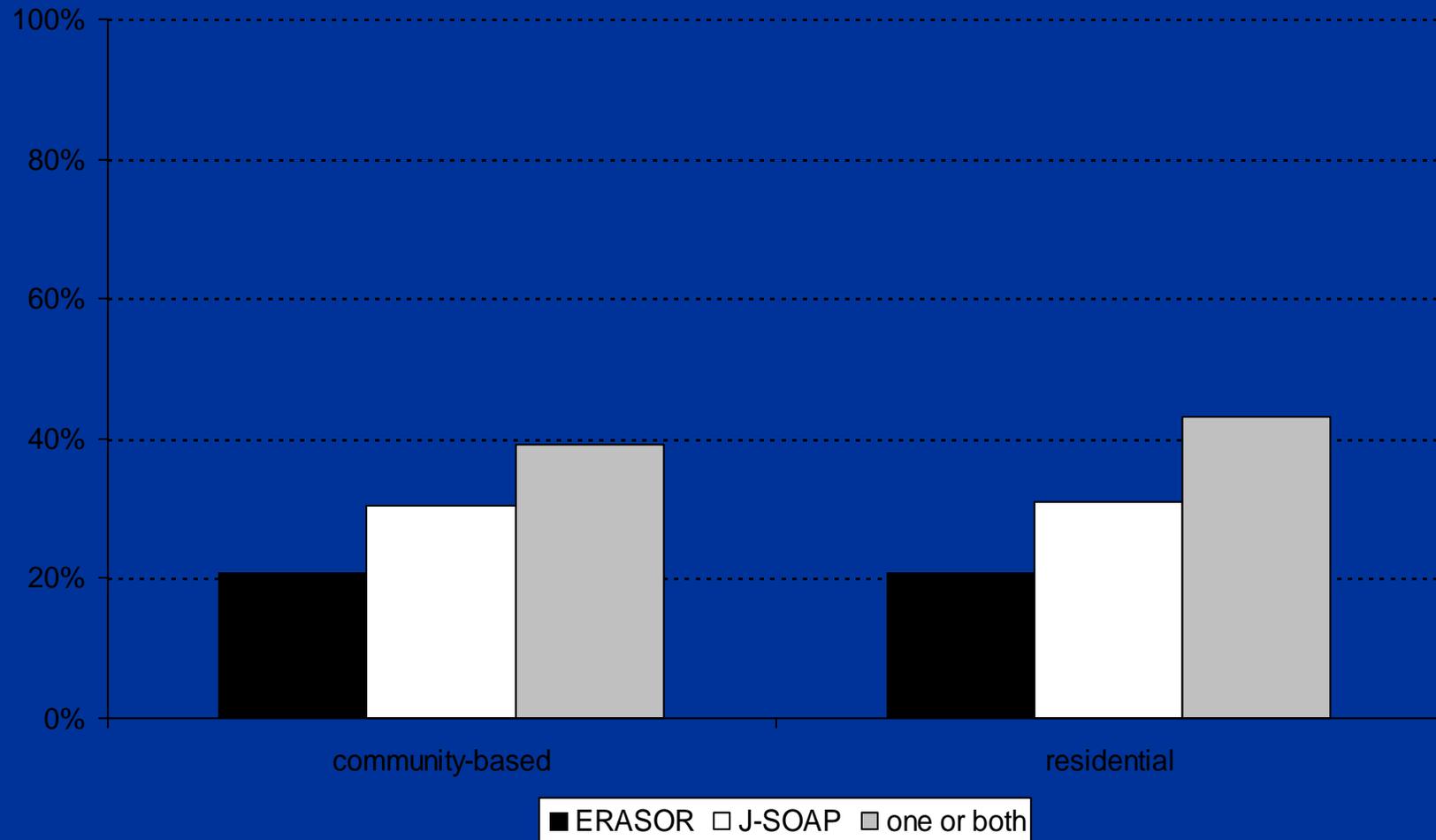
(Prentky & Righthand, 2003)

ERASOR Domains

- Sexual interests, attitudes, behaviors
- Historical sexual assaults
- Psychosocial functioning
- Family environmental functioning
- Treatment

(Worling & Curwen, 2001)

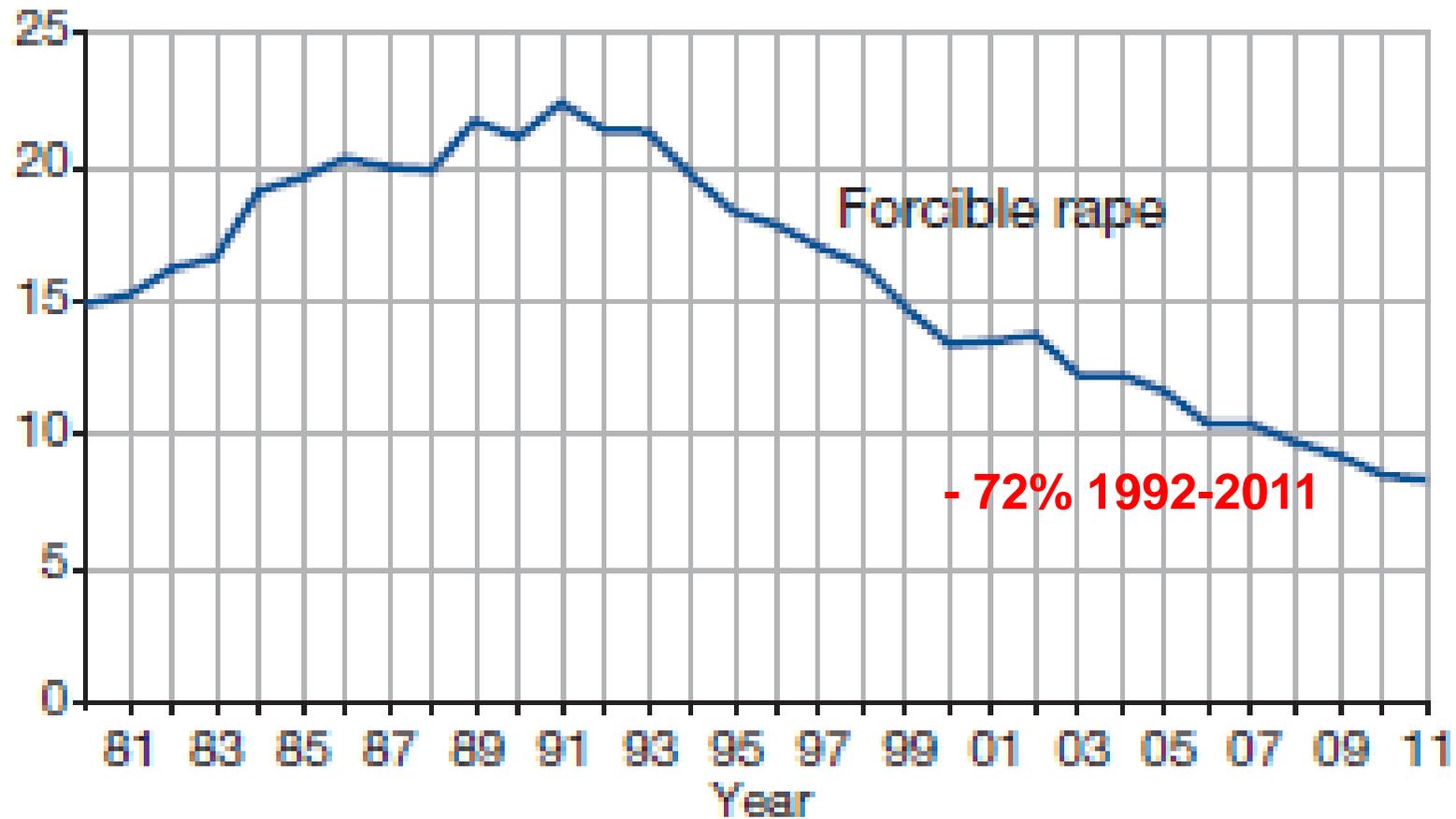
Programs Using J-SOAP-II or ERASOR



(McGrath, Cumming, & Burchard, 2003)

Rape by Juveniles

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Decline in Sex Victimization in Residential Facilities

TABLE 2

Youth reporting sexual victimization in state juvenile facilities, by type of incident and survey year, National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2008–09 and 2012

Type of incident	Percent of youth reporting any sexual victimization in state-owned or -operated facilities only ^a		Standard error	
	NSYC-1 2008–09*	NSYC-2 2012	NSYC-1 2008–09	NSYC-2 2012
U.S. total	12.6%	9.9%**	0.5%	0.5%
Youth-on-youth ^b	2.8%	2.5%	0.3%	0.3%
Nonconsensual sexual acts ^c	2.1	1.7	0.2	0.2
Other sexual contacts only ^d	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.1
Staff sexual misconduct	10.7%	8.2%**	0.4%	0.4%
Force reported ^e	4.5	3.6**	0.3	0.3
Excluding touching ^c	4.1	3.2**	0.3	0.3
Other sexual contacts only ^d	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1
No report of force	6.7	5.1**	0.3	0.3
Excluding touching ^c	6.1	4.6**	0.3	0.3
Other sexual contacts only ^d	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1

Note: Detail may not sum to total because youth may have reported multiple victimizations or due to item nonresponse. Youth were asked to report on any victimization involving another

Beck, Cantor, Hartge, & Smith, 2013, Sexual Victimization in Juvenile Facilities Reported by Youth.

Explanations worth more study

- ✓ More effective prevention and intervention
- ✓ Psychopharmacology
- ✓ Removal of environmental lead
- ✓ Troop surge
- ✓ Aggressive policing
- ✓ Technology and surveillance
- ✓ Changing norms and awareness

Possible New Directions

- ✓ Peer and youth perpetration prevention as part of general organizational safety models

Resources

Finkelhor, D.(2009). The Prevention of Childhood Sexual Abuse. *The Future of Children*, 19(2): 169-194.

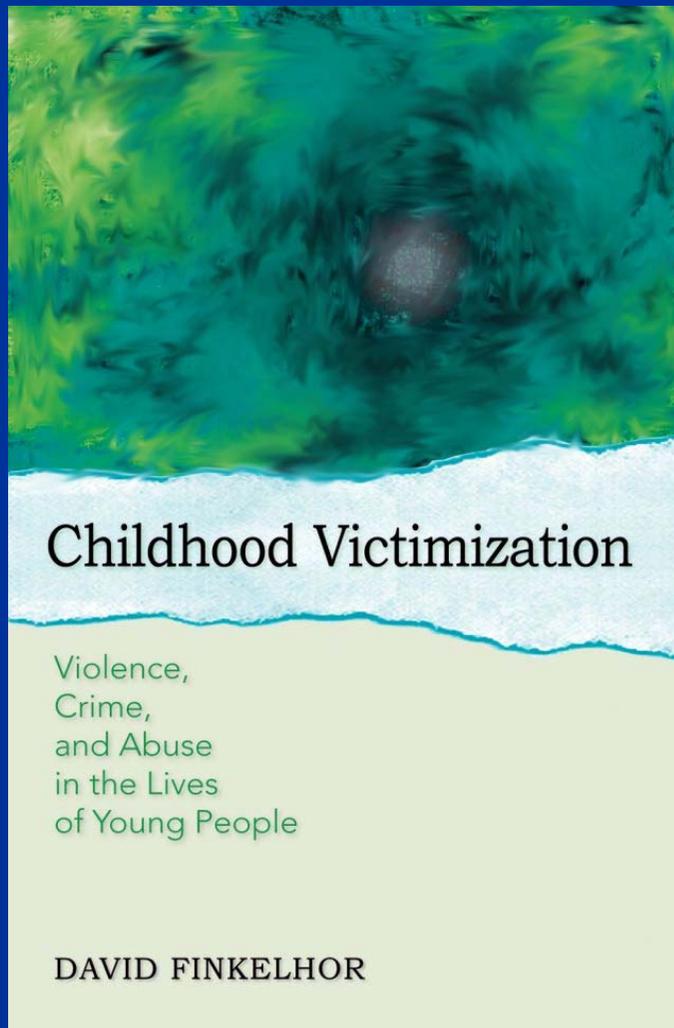
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Daniel Schneider Child Welfare Book of the Year Award