

Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending,  
Registering, and Tracking (SMART)  
FY 2010 Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management Newsletter  
April 2012

## Introduction

This edition of the newsletter for CASOM grantees features:

- An announcement of and information about the Sex Offender Treatment Intervention and Progress Scale (SOTIPS);
- Lessons learned from recent media coverage of child sexual abuse allegations;
- New information about sexual assault prevention and juvenile sex offenders now available to the field; and
- Important dates for sex offender related events.

### The Sex Offender Treatment Intervention and Progress Scale (SOTIPS) is Now Available

The Sex Offender Treatment Intervention and Progress Scale (SOTIPS) is a revised version of the Sex Offender Treatment Needs and Progress Scale (SOTNPS; McGrath & Cumming, 2001, 2003, 2008). Both versions of the scale were developed with the assistance of grants from the U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs to the Vermont Department of Corrections. The Sex Offender Treatment Intervention and Progress Scale (SOTIPS) is a statistically-derived dynamic measure designed to aid clinicians, correctional caseworkers, and probation and parole officers in assessing risk, treatment and supervision needs, and progress among adult males who have been convicted of one or more qualifying sexual offenses and

committed at least one of these sexual offenses after their 18th birthday.

A qualifying sexual offense is a conviction for illegal sexual behavior committed against an identifiable child or non-consenting adult victim.

Qualifying sex offenses include:

- Contact sexual offenses such as sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, and child molestation; and
- Non-contact sex offenses such as exhibitionism, voyeurism, obscene telephone calling, and Internet luring.

The SOTIPS is not intended for use with individuals whose only sexual offense conviction is for a non-qualifying sexual offense. A non-qualifying sex offense is a conviction for sexual behavior that was illegal but the parties were consenting or no identifiable victim was involved. Non-qualifying sexual offenses include:

- Consenting sex with an adult in public places;
- Soliciting a prostitute;
- Possessing child pornography; and
- Committing statutory rape where the age difference between the offender and the victim is typically three years or less.

Ideally, as described in the "Risk and Need Categories" section of the SOTIPS manual, the SOTIPS should be used in conjunction with a static risk assessment measure such as the Static-99R (Helmus, Thornton, Hanson, & Babchishin, 2011) or VASOR-2

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(McGrath, Hoke, & Lasher, 2012). The scale consists of 16 dynamic risk factors empirically linked to sexual offending. Each risk factor is potentially amenable to change and, therefore, is commonly a target for treatment and supervision intervention with sex offenders. Evaluators score each individual on every item on the scale using the scoring criteria and score sheet contained in this manual. The scale is designed to score individuals at intake and thereafter every six months. SOTIPS item scores are intended to reflect an individual's relative treatment and supervision needs on each risk factor. The SOTIPS total score is intended to provide an estimation of an individual's overall level of dynamic risk and need for supervision and treatment.

This manual updates previous versions of the scale, the Sex Offender Treatment Needs and Progress Scale (SOTNPS; McGrath & Cumming, 2001, 2003, 2008). Three types of revisions have been made. First, in order to improve the predictive accuracy of the scale and make it easier to use, the number of items that compose the scale have been reduced from 22 to 16 items. Second, although no item definitions have changed, a few items have been edited to make them clearer. Third, sample interview questions have been provided for each item to assist evaluators gathering information to score the scale.

The SOTIPS was designed to be scored easily by clinicians, correctional caseworkers, and probation and parole officers. Before using the SOTIPS, however, it is critical that users carefully read the accompanying manual and complete

training that includes scoring practice cases in order to optimize scoring accuracy and reliability. SOTIPS users should also have a basic understanding of risk factors related to sexual offense recidivism and principles of psychological assessment.

For more information about the SOTIPS and to access the tool (which is available for use at no charge), [visit the CSOM Web site](#).

### Promoting Prevention: Lessons Learned from Recent Media Coverage of High Profile Child Sexual Abuse Allegations

Allegations of child sexual abuse involving coaches at Penn State and Syracuse Universities have permeated the news in recent months. Much of the media coverage and public discourse about these cases has focused not on a call for the proliferation of additional sex offender laws and restrictions, but rather on illuminating several basic, key facts about sex offenders and the young victims of child sexual abuse. The media coverage of these cases has provided an important opportunity to educate the public, and some of the key lessons that have emerged bear repeating.

*Most victims of child sexual abuse know, or are related to, the person who commits the offense.*

This is a fact that CSOM, and many of our other colleague national entities and organizations, have continued to emphasize to stakeholders and the public in recent decades. It is clear that public education efforts in this regard have had at least some impact on citizen awareness; findings from

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a recent CSOM public opinion poll indicate that 88% of the respondents polled recognize that in the majority of cases, offenders know their victims.

*Sex offenders come from all walks of life.*

In some ways, the coverage surrounding the allegations at these universities offers an illustration to the public that individuals who commit sex offenses can be successful and high achieving individuals in the community, not just violent, socially isolated repeat sex offenders released from prison. It is critically important that the public and others understand the diversity of the sex offender population.

*Sexual abuse is under-detected and under-reported.*

These cases underscore that children who experience victimization may not come forward for a number of reasons, including shame, guilt, the fact that they may have a relationship with or familial ties to the offender, and, unfortunately, inadequate system responses that sometimes exist when disclosures and reports are made. These incidents illustrate to the public the complex dynamics of cases involving child sexual abuse and some of the impacts that coming forward can have on victims.

*Mandated reporting laws are an important mechanism that can support the prevention of sexual abuse.*

Provided that the public and other professionals are aware of and take responsibility for utilizing this tool,

mandatory reporting requirements offer a vital opportunity for intervention. While mandated reporting laws have been in place in every state for decades, these laws vary in terms of who is required to report – and the potential penalties for failing to report – suspected abuse. Perhaps an additional outcome of the current cases, of which there has been some discussion already, is a greater awareness of mandatory reporting laws, and enhancement or broadening of these laws to expand responsibility beyond the current mandatory reporters (i.e., those in the medical, mental health, or education fields).

*Primary prevention efforts are a critical part of the solution.*

Perhaps the most important and promising message that has emerged from the coverage of these cases is the significant role the community plays in primary prevention: that the criminal justice system is not the sole, or even most effective, place to attempt to address the problem of preventing sexual victimization. Indeed, recent media coverage has highlighted repeatedly that a number of early interventions can mitigate the potential for sexual abuse, and that all citizens must play a role if we are to truly prevent sexual violence. One important voice in this conversation has been Stop it Now! ([www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)), an organization that is committed to talking publicly about preventing child sexual abuse. Their work includes the development of resources for parents and families about how to talk to their children about sexual abuse; tools that identify potential warning signs and cues of

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sexual abuse; and what to do and where to turn if individuals have questions, concerns, or suspicions that sexual abuse has occurred. In addition, materials exist not only for those individuals closest to the persons of concern, but also for individuals outside of the close circle of friends and family members.

Without question, there is much to be done in the area of prevention. Perhaps the coverage that has been generated will provide a catalyst for further support of sexual violence prevention efforts at federal, state, and local levels; and will serve as a reminder to all of us that even one person can help to prevent sexual victimization in our communities.

### Important Dates and Events

#### ***April is Sexual Assault Prevention Month***

The month of April has been designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) in the United States. The goal of SAAM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence. This April, the 2012 Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) campaign centers on promoting healthy sexuality to prevent sexual violence. On the SAAM site (see <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>), you will find information and materials for both upcoming and past campaigns. The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) encourages state, territory, tribal and local organizations and groups focused on sexual violence awareness and prevention to tailor these

campaign materials to their local communities. By working together, we can highlight sexual violence as a major issue in our communities and reinforce the need for prevention efforts.

#### ***National Adolescent Perpetration Network (NAPN) 27th Annual Conference***

The NAPN annual conference will be held from April 30 – May 2, 2012 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Since the early 1980s, providers serving sexually abusive children and adolescents have shared information through the National Adolescent Perpetration Network (NAPN). The NAPN conference continues to provide a forum for sharing information and resources, as well as an opportunity to connect with and support our colleagues in working with the troubled and troubling youth who perpetrate sexual abuse. "Challenging Times" will bring together diverse, multidisciplinary professionals who deal with sexually abusive youth in a variety of roles and settings to explore the implications of research and clinical experience specific to youth. By addressing factors that decrease the risks of sexual deviance and abusive dynamics while increasing the opportunity for healthy relationships and successful outcomes, treatment is likely to achieve results far beyond the initial goals of containment and risk management. [Click here](#) for more information about the conference and how to register.

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*SMART's National Symposium on Sex  
Offender Management and Accountability*

The SMART Office's 2012 National Symposium on Sex Offender Management and Accountability will be held at the Hyatt Regency in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 7th - 9th, 2012. Please check the SMART Web site at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/smart](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/smart) for more details about the event. Your existing grant funds may be allocated to allow for a limited number of team members from each CASOM site to attend. Please contact your team's site coordinator with questions.

*National Sexual Assault Conference*

The National Sexual Assault Conference is a two and a half day, advocacy-based conference providing advanced training opportunities and information regarding sexual violence intervention and prevention. This event will be held from August 22-24, 2012 at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel and Towers. See [http://icasa.org/docs/misc/2011%20ad\\_lay\\_out%201.pdf](http://icasa.org/docs/misc/2011%20ad_lay_out%201.pdf) for more information about the conference and how to register.

*Association for the Treatment of Sexual  
Abusers (ATSA) Annual Research Conference*

ATSA's 31st Annual Research and Treatment Conference will be held from October 17 - 20, 2012 at the Sheraton in downtown Denver, Colorado. This conference will offer symposia, workshop presentations, poster sessions, discussion groups, and advanced clinics relating to issues in both victim and perpetrator research and treatment. Each presentation

will provide information and training based on cutting edge research development and clinical application. The format is designed to best facilitate interaction with and learning from some of the most advanced practitioners in the field of sexual abuse. All sessions, with the exception of posters, have been approved for Continuing Education credits. In addition to the three-day Conference schedule, ATSA will offer a selection of intensive half- and/or full-day Pre-Conference Clinics. These Clinics are designed to provide participants with extensive training and skills enhancement. For more information about this event, visit <http://www.atsa.com/atsa%E2%80%99s-31st-annual-conference>.

*More News from the Field*

*New Videos Available from the King County  
Sexual Assault Resource Center:  
Focus on Prevention and Sex Offender  
Management*

The King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) is a FY10 Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management grantee. Using their CASOM grant funds, KCSARC, in partnership with their longstanding sex offender management team, has produced two videos about prevention and sex offender management with the common theme of "No More Victims."



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crtl + click to view video

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***New Resource for Working with Juvenile Sex Offenders***

John A. Hunter's *Help for Adolescent Males with Sexual Behavior Problems: A Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Program (Workbook and Therapist Guide)* details a holistic three-phase program created specifically for juvenile male sexual offenders. Based on the principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy to address criminal behavior, social skill development, impulse control, healthy sexuality, anger management, empathy, and relapse prevention, the *Workbook* and corresponding *Therapist Guide* are proven-effective, essential resources for those undergoing treatment and everyone working with this unique group of clients.

Eileen P. Ryan, John A. Hunter, and Daniel C. Murrie's *Juvenile Sex Offenders: A Guide to Evaluation and Treatment for Mental Health Professionals* provides a thorough, empirically based approach to evaluating and treating youth who have committed sexual offenses or engaged in sexually abusive behavior. The authors discuss how juvenile offenders differ from adults, the common dilemmas facing evaluators, risk factors and assessment, changing perceptions and trends in youth crime, and treatment modalities, all while emphasizing practicality and utility.

Visit [www.oup.com/us](http://www.oup.com/us) and enter promo code (30501) to receive 20% off on *Help for*

*Adolescent Males with Sexual Behavior Problems: A Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Program, Therapist Guide and Workbook* by John A. Hunter and *Juvenile Sex Offenders: A Guide to Evaluation and Treatment for Mental Health Professionals* by Eileen P. Ryan, Daniel C. Murrie, and John A. Hunter.

**Next Newsletter**

The next newsletter for CASOM grantees will be published in Summer 2012.



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