

**Parents of Victims vs. Parents of Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems
vs. Parents of Both**

Janice K. Church, Ph.D.
Karen Boyd Worley, Ph.D.

Child sexual abuse may have a devastating impact to parents of an abuse victim or victims; similarly, parents of youth with sexual behavior problems have many reactions to such behavior, and the picture is even more complicated when the same parent must deal with reactions to both a victim as well as the youth in the same family who engaged in the sexually inappropriate behavior with the child. This presentation will review and summarize current literature on this topic and share many clinical examples from an outpatient clinic working with families managing sexual abuse victimization issues. Videotaped interviews will be utilized to illustrate common emotional reactions, dynamics, and unique parenting/family relationship issues. Similarities and common dilemmas as well as significant differences between the three types of parenting circumstances [parents of victim(s), parents of youth with sexual behavior problems, and parents of both] will be highlighted, with an emphasis on how parents manage their own issues while at the same time providing critical support and guidance to their child/children. Furthermore, the impact of parental reactions on clarification and reunification work, as well as on their ability to provide necessary supervision for youth who have offended and are being reintegrated into both family and community, will be explored. Inclusion of parents as members of the treatment teams of both victims and juveniles who offend sexually is considered critical to improving the success of such interventions and the overall response to sexual abuse.