

## POSTER

### Early Abuse History and the Relationship to Sexual Offending

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The relationship between previous victimization and later sexual offending is, of course, highly complex. This paper will explore patterns between victimization history and the characteristics of sexual offenses perpetrated against others. While some research has found that child maltreatment may increase an individual's risk for future sexual misconduct, little is known regarding unique offending characteristics among convicted sex offenders as it relates to their own victimization history.

This study examined archival data obtained from a sample of incarcerated sex offenders ( $n = 800$ ) who were housed at a U.S. Department of Corrections treatment facility between the years of 1996 and 2007. With regard to the characteristics of the sample, a majority of the offenders were incarcerated for the molestation of a child (89%) while 5.3% were convicted for adult sexual assault. Within the sample of child molesters, 70.7% had female victims, 21% had only male victims, and 5.7% had victims of both genders. The majority of the child victims were either the biological or step-children of the offender, while 15.3% were a member of the offender's extended family. As for extrafamilial offense, 10.3% of the victims were stranger victims and 20.3% were acquainted to the offender prior to the offense.

This paper will compare offense patterns between sex offenders who reported a history of abuse to those not having a history of childhood abuse. Additionally, specific types of abuse, i.e., physical, verbal, sexual, and multiple forms of abuse, will be examined in relation to offending patterns and offense characteristics. Specifically, the number of offenses and victims, nature of index offense, and characteristics of victims, including age and gender of victims, will be examined as it relates to the offenders' history of abuse. These findings will be discussed in light of current results in the victimization and subsequent sexual offending research, in addition to implications for treatment and future research in this area.