

POSTER

Teaching Sexual Offenders to Discriminate Between Safe and Dangerous Situations

Stuart Toews, M.A., Psych. Cand.
Rayleen De Luca, Ph.D., C. Psych.
Rick Rennpferd, B.A.

Sexual offending is a common problem among adult males with intellectual disabilities. This study evaluated an applied behavioral analysis program to teach sexual offenders with intellectual disabilities to discriminate between pictures of situations in which they were likely to re-offend (dangerous situations) and situations in which they were unlikely to re-offend (safe situations). The 4 participants were screened to identify relevant target categories and settings. Pictures of dangerous situations showed a target individual alone or with another target individual. Pictures of safe situations showed a target individual accompanied by an adult male. Three settings (community centre, bus stop, and bus interior) were depicted. Pictures were projected onto a wall in the training room and participants pressed buttons on a response box to indicate whether the situation presented in the picture was safe or dangerous for them. Training procedures included rule training, performance feedback, and positive reinforcement. Each participant responded to 144 pictures in pretest, 1-week posttest, and 5-week posttest. Results showed that all participants learned to discriminate between safe and dangerous situations in each of the 3 settings during training, generalized their skills to untrained target individuals, and improved from pretest to 1- and 5-week posttests.