



# 14th National Indian Nations Conference

Roundtable Discussion on the Treatment Services Tribal Communities are Providing to Sexual Offenders



## Presenters

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## Purpose of the Native American Sex Offender Management (NASOM) Program

- The NASOM Program was created to identify and develop evidence-based and best practice resources for the treatment, management, and re-entry of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) adults and juveniles who have committed sexual offenses.

## NASOM Objectives

- Identify treatment and management services, programs, and tools currently being used with AI/AN adults and juveniles who commit sexual offenses
- Literature review of treatment and re-entry services for AI/AN adults and juveniles who commit sexual offenses

## NASOM Objectives (Cont'd)

- Assessment of general research on treatment, management, and re-entry services for adults and juveniles who commit sexual offenses
- Convene a forum of experts to review, provide input, and make recommendations on specific models of sex offender management and treatment programs that can be implemented in Indian Country

## NASOM Objectives (Cont'd)

- Identify specific tribal sites to serve as case studies for implementation of sex offender treatment, management, and re-entry models
- Develop written materials for the on-going development of the NASOM Project

## NASOM OUTCOMES



### Identification of Existing Treatment, Management and Reentry Programs

- Tribal mental health and criminal justice professionals (including SORNA contacts)
- Sex offender treatment, management, & reentry professionals and organizations, including states with largest percentage of AI/ANs
- Federally funded sexual violence prevention and intervention programs
- Related programs (trauma, wraparound services)



## Identification of Existing Treatment, Management and Reentry Programs

- Treatment specific for AI/AN sex offenders typically provided by federal, state, or local resources
- Adjunct treatment services may be provided by AI/AN communities (substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence)
- Supervision (federal, state, local, or tribal)
- Traditional practices
- Sexual violence prevention programs

## Identification of Existing Treatment, Management and Reentry Programs

- Conclusions
  - Few existing programs for AI/AN sex offenders (or for sexual violence prevention generally)
  - Available programs are federal, state, or local jurisdiction-based (some w/cultural component)
  - Geographically scattered with lack of reentry services
  - Lack of AI/AN community resources
  - Existing programs have little data on AI/AN offenders or outcomes

## Literature Review Results

- Several book chapters describing treatment for AI/AN sex offenders
- Few published & unpublished articles
- Overall, literature fairly limited

## What Does Treatment Look Like

- View sex offenders from a cultural perspective
- Understand the role of trauma and attachment for AI/AN sexual offending
- Relevant assessment measures for treatment planning
- Help offenders connect to their culture
- Need for community/familial support

## Reentry Services

- Receive treatment services in federal prison
- Limited services following release
- Follow-up treatment provided through funding from U.S. Probation/Parole
- Local treatment services may or may not be near tribal community
- Lack of tribal-based reentry programs

## Youth with Sexual Behavior Problem Treatment Model

- Model developed by the Indian Country Child Trauma Center
  - Cognitive-behavioral therapy
  - Address trauma (e.g., victimization, exposure to violence) as part of intervention
- Recent federal funding to develop and research

## Needed Research

- Re-offense risk factors and risk assessment measures
- AI/AN sex offender treatment
- Reentry programs (circles and other traditional practices)

## Research/Literature from Other Countries

- Canada, New Zealand, and Australia have large indigenous/aboriginal populations
- Over-represented in the criminal justice system
- Higher risk and needs per traditional assessments
- Western style interventions ineffective – higher recidivism & treatment failure
  - Cultural and social status



## Research/Literature from Other Countries

- Studying aboriginal sex offenders
  - Identifying characteristics and dynamics of offending, including significant risk and need issues
  - Validating and developing aboriginal specific assessments
  - Developing treatment and policies blending western and aboriginal-facilitated approaches
  - Completed outcomes studies showing reduced recidivism

## Research/Literature from Other Countries - Implications

- Addressing problem
- Collaboration with aboriginal communities
- Can learn from their work
  - Engage AI/AN communities
  - Review existing research/literature
  - Need more information
  - Research what we do

## Literature on Research Supported Practices

- Literature based on adult and juvenile Caucasian males
- SOMAPI (Sex Offender Management and Planning Initiative) information utilized
  - Literature reviews (available at SMART Office website)
  - Research briefs
  - National forum
  - Survey of research supported programs

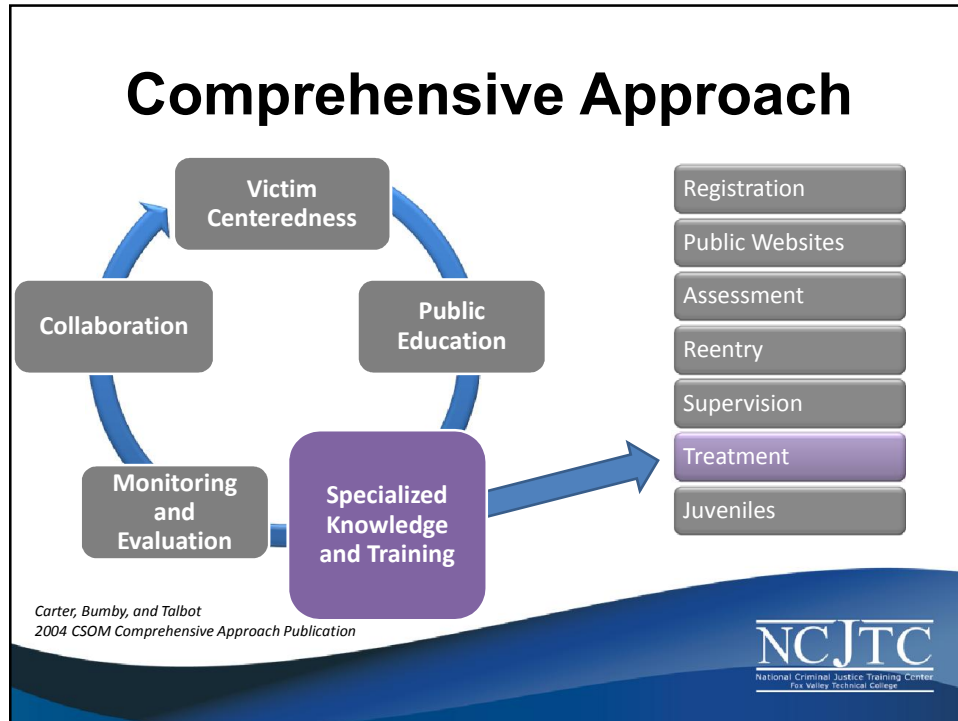
## Literature on Research Supported Practices

### **8 Adult Topics**

- Incidence and prevalence
- Etiology
- Typologies
- Risk assessment
- Recidivism
- Internet offending
- Treatment effectiveness
- Management strategies

### **5 Juvenile Topics**

- Etiology/typologies
- Risk assessment
- Recidivism
- Treatment effectiveness
- Registration and notification

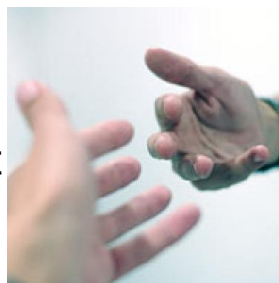


## Literature on Research Supported Practices

- Key Findings: Risk Assessment
  - Risk assessment practices effective
  - Development of valid risk assessment instruments
  - Identification of static and dynamic risk factors
- Treatment
  - Cognitive-behavior/relapse prevention works
  - Risk, Need, Responsivity (RNR) format effective
  - Juveniles – MST, residential care beneficial

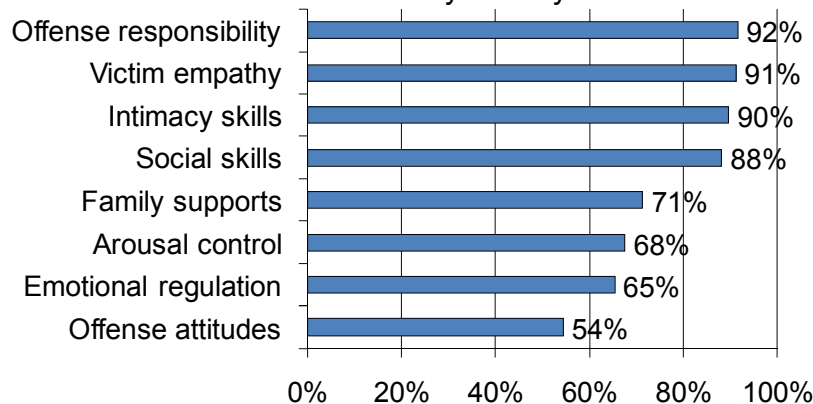
## What is Different Between Sex Offender and General Treatment?

- Client directed vs. therapist directed
- Mandated vs. voluntary
- Group vs. individual
- Treatment provider as part management team



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Core Treatment Targets  
Programs for Adult Males (n = 408)  
McGrath, Cumming, Burchard, Zeoli & Ellerby (2009)  
Safer Society Survey



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## Literature on Research Supported Practices

- Key Findings: Management, supervision, & reentry for adult sex offenders
  - Specialized supervision with rehabilitation (e.g., containment approach) works
  - Circles of Support & Accountability (COSA) promising
  - Polygraph – provides additional information but questionable as recidivism reduction tool (only use in conjunction with supervision & treatment)
  - GPS – mixed research with no conclusive data to suggest it can prevent recidivism on its own (use as adjunct tool)
- Juveniles – insufficient data to draw conclusions

## Literature on Research Supported Practices – Implications for AI/AN Sex Offender

- Little research on this population
- Some research from other countries does compare aboriginal v. non-aboriginal
  - Questionable generalizability
- Findings presented are speculative and in need of verification with AI/AN population

## Literature on Research Supported Practices - Implications

- Unique cultural factors for AI/AN offenders may impact assessment and treatment
  - Level of historical cultural trauma
  - Victimization rates
  - Importance of elders
  - Degree of familiarity between tribal members
  - Co-occurring mental health disorders (substance abuse)

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## Literature on Research Supported Practices - Implications

- Until research is done, caution must be exercised
- Use of RNR may be helpful
  - Responsivity – cultural components
  - Caution with risk assessment (may over- or underestimate risk)
- AI/AN populations are not all the same
- Use best practices for non-AI/AN population (particularly aboriginal offenders from other countries), and do research and adjust accordingly

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## Literature on Research Supported Practices - Implications

- Collaboration between federal, state, local and tribal partnerships needed
- Need for a comprehensive sexual violence prevention and intervention strategy building on SORNA
- Fund research and programs
- Validate existing practices or develop appropriate culturally relevant tools and practices



## NASOM CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



## What Don't We Know (Gaps)

- True incidence/prevalence of sex assault in AI/AN communities
- What works for AI/AN sex offenders
- No research on which to make recommendations/develop policies
- Limited body of research from other countries
- Treatment needs unclear
- Community-based treatment not available
- No continuity of care for AI/AN offender reentry

## Recommendations

- Collaborate on resource development with AI/AN communities
- Identify federal, state, & local resources
  - Need for culturally relevant services
  - Information sharing/collaboration
- Strategic planning/needs assessment on sexual violence prevention and intervention



## Potential Recommendations

- AI/AN community multi-disciplinary training on what we know about sexual violence, offenders, and intervention
- Pilot assessment, treatment, reentry and management programs in AI/AN communities
- Collect data and do research
- Continually adjust programming based
  - on research

**WHAT SERVICES ARE AI/AN SEX OFFENDERS RECEIVING IN YOUR COMMUNITY?**

**IF SERVICES ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN  
YOUR COMMUNITY, ARE AI/AN SEX  
OFFENDERS RECEIVING SERVICES  
OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMMUNITY?**



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**REVIEW  
...QUESTIONS?**

