Preventing Child Maltreatment: 
Learning from our Successes

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Protecting Delaware’s Children
A Conference for the Multidisciplinary Team Professional Involved in 
Law Enforcement, Investigation, Child Fatality Review, Prosecution, 
Treatment, and Prevention of Child Abuse

June 3-4, 2010
Dover, Delaware
Sexual Abuse Substantiation Rates: Excluding States with Major Data Changes*

1990-2007

53% Decline (1992-2007)

0% Decline (2006-2007)

*Excludes FL, LA, NE, NJ and NC, states with over 20% increase or decrease 06-07

Source: NCANDS
State Decreases in Sexual Abuse Substantiations
Peak Year – 2002*

Decline in Victims of Sexual Abuse
Peak Year (1990-1995) to 2002

>51% (27)
50%-26% (14)
25%-0% (6)
Increasing (2)
Missing data (2)

*Source: NCANDS
US Maltreatment Trends 1990-2007: All States

- Neglect: -7%
- Physical Abuse (x2): -53%
- Sexual Abuse (x3): -56%

Trend estimates represent total change from 1992 to 2007

Source: NCANDS
US Maltreatment Trends: Excluding States with Major Data Changes 06-07*

Neglect: -6%
Physical Abuse (x2): -52%
Sexual Abuse (x3): -53%

Trend estimates represent total change from 1992 to 2007

Source: NCANDS
Physical Abuse Substantiation Rates: Excluding States with Major Data Changes*

1990-2007

- 52% Decline (1992-2006)
- 8% Decline (2006-2007)

*Excludes FL, LA, NE, NJ and NC, states with over 20% increase or decrease 06-07

*Source: NCANDS
Rate per 10,000 Children (<18)

Sexual Abuse Substantiations 1990-2006*: Extrapolated to U. S. Child Population

53% Decline

*Source: NCANDS
Physical Abuse Substantiations 1990-2006*:
Extrapolated to U. S. Child Population

48% Decline

*Source: NCANDS
Neglect Substantiations 1990-2005*:
Extrapolated to U. S. Child Population

Rate per 10,000 Children (<18)

*Source: NCANDS
ONTARIO, CANADA
Trends in Neglect, Physical and Sexual Abuse

*Source: Ontario Incidence Studies

43% Decline
ENGLAND
Trends in Neglect, Physical and Sexual Abuse
1997 - 2006

ILLINOIS

Investigated Cases of Sexual Abuse by Abuse Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuse Type</th>
<th>90-92 avg</th>
<th>97-99 avg</th>
<th>% Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STDs</td>
<td>7355</td>
<td>5026</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penetration</td>
<td>8813</td>
<td>5526</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molestation</td>
<td>2056</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90-92 avg: 2056, 7355, 8813, 369
97-99 avg: 1630, 5026, 5526, 198

% Decline: 32%, 37%, 21%, 46%
ILLINOIS
Investigated Cases of Sexual Abuse by Perpetrator Relationship to Victim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>90-92 avg</th>
<th>97-99 avg</th>
<th>% Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Figure</td>
<td>9571</td>
<td>5813</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Relative</td>
<td>2876</td>
<td>2044</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling</td>
<td>1486</td>
<td>1223</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof Care</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2643</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average values:
- 90-92 avg: 6787 cases
- 97-99 avg: 3524 cases

% Decline:
- Parent Figure: 39%
- Other Relative: 29%
- Sibling: 18%
- Prof Care: 31%
- Other: 28%
PENNSYLVANIA
Investigated Cases of Sexual Abuse by Age of Perpetrator

90-92 avg. | 97-99 avg. | % Decline
---|---|---
3068 | 2396 | 22%
2290 | 1548 | 32%
884 | 588 | 33%
985 | 596 | 40%

- 35 and over
- 25 to 34
- 18 to 24
- 12 to 17

Illinois

Pennsylvania

% Change

Anonymous

Average
National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS)

Change 1993-2006

-20\%  -23\%  -33\%  -44\%

Percent

Physical Neglect  Physical Abuse  Emotional Abuse  Sexual Abuse

- Sexual Abuse: 47% to 66%
- Physical Abuse: 23%
- Neglect: 47%
THIS IS REAL
Juvenile Sex Victimization Trends, 1993 - 2005

Victimizations:
- 52% Decline

*Note: Known offenders are family members or acquaintances; unknown offenders are strangers or unidentified.

Source: National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), each year, for number of incidents; Crimes Against Children Research Center (CCRC) calculations for rates.
Juvenile Victimization Trends, 1993 – 2004 (NCVS)

Larceny (x1)                       -55% decline
Simple Assault (x2)            -63% decline
Robbery (x14)                    -72% decline
Aggravated Assault (x5)    -74% decline
Sex Assault (x20)               -67% decline

Age 12 – 17 years; 3 year averages.

Note: respondents are 6th, 9th, and 12th grade students enrolled in public schools in selected Minnesota school districts.

Source: Minnesota Student Survey, 1992-2004
PENNSYLVANIA
Trends in Sexual Abuse Case Investigation
Outcomes

90-92 avg
97-99 avg.

37%
58%
37%

I-med evid.
I-perp admiss
I-CPS inves.
Teenage Birth Rate

Rate per 1,000 Females
(15-17 yrs old)

45% decline
1991-2005

Teen Suicide

Rate per 100,000 Teens (15-17 yrs)

Source: Center for Disease Control: WISQARS (fatal suicides, all types)
Teen Runaway Arrests

Intimate Partner Violence
(Nonfatal Victimizations)


68% decline 1993-2004
National Trends in Childhood Problem Behavior and Competence Measured by CBCL

Achenbach, Domenic & Rescola, 2003
Why do I Feel so Overwhelmed?
SPECIAL REPORT

THE DARKEST CORNER OF THE INTERNET

How the Web Has Fed a Shocking Increase in the Sexual Exploitation of Children
Argument for Internet Facilitating Sex Crimes

- Direct access of Molesters to Children
- Profusion of Child Porn
- Market for New Photos and Victims
- Priming of New Sex Interest in Children
- Emboldening Existing Child Molesters
- Online Support and Recruitment Networks
Estimated Overall Nationwide Arrests for Forcible Rapes and Other Sex Crimes with Victims Younger than 18.

- All sex crimes, victims 0-17: 54,693 (2000), 49,345 (2006)
Could the Internet be helping?

- Overall decline in sex crimes and SA
- Internet may also *decrease* access
- Online as substitute for real world risky behavior
- Porn substituting for live victims
- New opportunities for law enforcement
The Internet also has benefited law enforcement.

– Brings hidden crimes to light
– Undercover cops: Allows law enforcement to pose online as youth
– Caught many at earlier stage in offending history
– Wholesale arrest of congregating offenders
– Provides high quality evidence that results in high conviction rates
Increased Justice System Activity
Beginning in 1975, while I was mayor, I had an affair with a high school student for nearly a year. In 1994, I funded a conservatorship in her behalf, believing I was partly responsible for her difficulties coping with her life.

For almost thirty years, I have lived with enormous guilt and shame about this relationship. I have also been afraid that it would be exposed to my family, friends and the public whose respect I have sought to earn.

How can such behavior be erased when the damage to others and to my family has all these years? For almost thirty years I have sat in my place of worship each year at Yom Kippur, the day of atonement in my religious tradition, reading in silence, searching for personal peace. And I have found that question is that it cannot be erased.

The pain and damage that I have caused have been with me constantly along that my private apologies and actions, deep and true though they may have been, are not enough. I apologize now, publicly and completely.

I am truly sorry for allowing the relationship to happen at all, with someone who was not responsible or accountable for her actions; for failing my first wife; and for betraying the trust of family, friends and all those who put their trust in me.

This moment has arrived at a time when I am struggling with my health. Finding some measure of personal peace, in addition to stepping aside from my public service and business activities, is part of that struggle.

In my life I have been blessed with a loving and supportive family, wonderful children and grandchildren, and a wife who has helped me confront this issue.

With all sincerity, I pray that God will accept my contrition and protect my family from the
Increased Incarceration
Persons Incarcerated in State Prison for Sex Crimes vs. Juveniles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prisoners in Thousands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>19,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>43,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>60,720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics
Major Justice Prevention Initiatives

- Registration
- Community Notification
- Background checks
- Residency restrictions
Overly Stereotyped Offender

✓ Adult men
✓ Pedophilic
✓ Guileful and effective with children
✓ Use public environments to ID victims
✓ Resistant to change
Realities

✓ Most not pedophiles
✓ One third are themselves juveniles
✓ Only 14% strangers (25% family, 60% acquaintances)
✓ One third involve “compliant victim” cases
✓ Variable re-offense rate, but many low risk
Bottom Line on Justice Initiatives

- Popular with public
- Have specific function
- Contribution to prevention?
- Only 10% new arrests have prior sex conviction
- Little evaluation
- Many adopted AFTER decline already began
Bottom Line on Justice Initiatives (cont.)

- Intensify investigation and disclosure promotion (incl. undercover)
- Restrict intensive post conviction resources to high risk group
- Evaluation
  - Therapy
  - Intensive supervision (Circles of Accountability and Support)
- Cushion impact of system on victims
Prevention Education
Education Programs

✓ Virtues
  • Proven prevention paradigm
  • Considerable research
  • Relatively low cost
  • Can be combined with harm reduction
  • Reaches potential perpetrators

✓ Limitations
  • No evidence as yet that it prevents sexual abuse
  • Burden on schools and teachers
Vulnerable groups

- Troubled teens looking for sympathetic adults
Vulnerable groups

Boys who are gay or questioning their sexual orientation
Educate adults & youth about...

Why sex with underage youth is wrong

- Expectation for adults to observe boundary
- Developmentally inappropriate
- Inability to consent

Be honest about dynamics of statutory or compliant victim crimes
Targeting “by-standers”
Molester Proofing Youth Serving Organizations

- Screening, overt and covert
- Standards and norms
- Training staff
- Educating youth and parents
- Promoting disclosure
Prevention for physical abuse and neglect

- Home visitation
- Parenting education
Other Factors in Decline
Victim Treatment / Intergenerational Transmission Decline
More Screening/Background Checks
Better Supervision
Domestic Violence Prevention and Intervention
Demographic Shifts

[Images of demographic shifts]

Source: ChildTrends Data Bank. Demographics: “Number of Children” – Table 1. 2002.
Living Arrangements of Children, 1970-2000


Unemployment Rate
Seasonally Adjusted

Psychiatric Pharmacology
Treatment for Depression During Year
All Ages

% of US Population

1987 1997

% with drug therapy

2.3
0.7

Source: Olfson et al. (2002a)
Psychiatric Medication Usage by Children (0-18) in the US

Source: Olfson et al. (2002b)
Surveillance and Privacy Erosion
Dissipation of Cultural Revolution Side Effects
Promising Areas

- Enhancing Prosecution Effectiveness
- Increasing Victim Support
- Molester Proofing Organizations
- Offender Treatment Availability
- Initiatives about Statutory Victims
Did we win?
The sexual revolution is over.
“Why Have Child Maltreatment and Child Victimization Declined?”
http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV137J.pdf

“Child Maltreatment Trends in the 1990’s: Why Does Neglect Differ from Physical & Sexual Abuse?”

“Explanations for the Decline in Child Sexual Abuse Cases”

“The Decline in Sexual Abuse Cases”