

Community Notification: The Importance of Individualized Sex Offender Assessment

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Arkansas Process

- ▶ Registration requires assessment by the Sex Offender Community Notification Assessment Program (SOCNA).
- ▶ Leads the nation in approach to sex offender assessment as recommended by the federal government and professional organizations



SOCNA is:

- ▶ Part of the Arkansas Department of Correction (ADC).
- ▶ Overseen by nine member governor appointed Sex Offender Assessment Committee (SOAC).
- ▶ Assesses ALL registered sex offenders.
- ▶ Assigns Community Notification Levels 1–4.

What Is the Purpose of Community Notification?

- ▶ SOSRA strives to provide *accurate* and *detailed* information to local law enforcement officers, who conduct CN and supervise offenders in their communities.
- ▶ Our hope is to help target limited resources toward those who most need them.

However,

- ▶ Over the years, SOCNA assessments have been used in additional ways including:
 - DHS/CACD investigations & custody proceedings.
 - Prosecutors – New sex offense and failure to register prosecutions.
 - Prosecutors, Defense Attorneys and Court – Termination of registration hearings in circuit court.
 - Treatment providers (ADC & Community)
 - Arkansas Parole Board
 - ACC– Level 3 & 4 Parolees

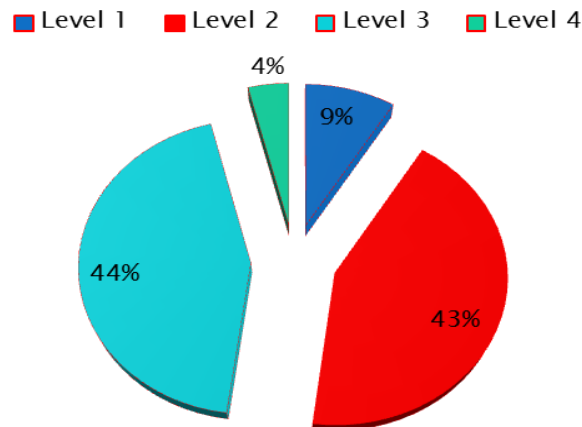
Facts

- ▶ Recidivism rates for sex offenders in general are not any higher than other criminal offenses.
- ▶ Certain subgroups of sex offenders re-offend at higher rates.
- ▶ We need to know what kind of offender we are assessing.
- ▶ Treating low risk offenders with high levels of intervention makes them worse and wastes resources

SOCNA Numbers

- ▶ Began assessing offenders in the fall of 1999.
- ▶ Developed to provide expertise in assessment and uniformity across the state.

Level 1 –4 Sept. 1999–December 2014



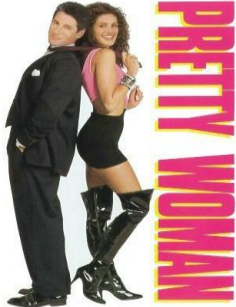
Why have individualized assessment & rank offenders?

- ▶ Not all sex offenders reoffend
- ▶ Sex offenders present varying levels of risk
- ▶ Some sex offenders are particularly dangerous
- ▶ Allows us to better monitor and conserve resources
- ▶ High Risk = High Supervision / Treatment Intensity
- ▶ Low Risk = Lower Supervision / intensity of services

What Is A Sex Offender?

Examples of Registrants in Arkansas

- ▶ Sexual contact with children
- ▶ Forced rape with teens/adults
- ▶ “Consensual” sex between 18/19-year-olds and 15-year-olds (Statutory offenders)
- ▶ Flashers, peepers
- ▶ Giving HIV
- ▶ Stalkers
- ▶ Failure to protect Child Pornographers/ Internet Stalkers
- ▶ Bestiality
- ▶ False Imprisonment
- ▶ Unable to consent
 - Teachers, inmates, MR

SEX OFFENDER FACT SHEET		
 <p> Photo Date: 12-06-02 State Police ID #: 9999999 CSN #: 9999999 </p>	Offender Name: Vivian Ward ADC#: 999999	
	Aliases: "Harry"	
	Social Security #: 999-99-9999	Fingerprint Code/Class: XXXXOOXXOOXXOOXXOOXX
	Driver's License #: 999999999	
	Date Of Birth: 9-99-99**	
	Height: 5'10"	Weight: 135 Race: Caucasian
	Hair Color: Auburn	Eye Color: Brown
	Scars, Marks, or Tattoos: 6" Scar/Chest; Tattoo: Eagle/R. Arm.	
	Date of DNA Sample: 11-6-03	
	Assessment Date: 1-6-03	
Anticipated Legal Address: Rt. 6, Box 56; No Where, AR 10000 Date Last Verified (ACIC): 6-23-03		
Temporary Address (if applicable): ADC Cummins Unit		
Probation/Parole Office: NA (Will have City, State and Phone Number)		
Place of Employment: NA (Will list employer's name, City and State)		
Description of Crime: This offender was convicted of Sexual Abuse-First Degree on 2-3-98. This offense involved the offender engaging in sexual contact with a 14 year-old female.		
Criminal History – Sexual/Violence: Rape; Assault. Contact ACIC for additional criminal history.		
Victim Preferences: Victim was an adolescent female.		
Community Notification Level: 3		
Notification for this offender may need to increase, if the offender engages in any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug or alcohol use • Failing to maintain employment; Unstructured free time • Failing to maintain a stable residence • Having access to the Internet • Failing to comply with state registration laws and supervision • Failing to complete sex offender treatment • Associating with felons or others known to engage in criminal activity 		
Treatment History: Offender reports substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment and sex offender treatment.		

Additional information may be obtained from the Arkansas Department of Correction
 Sex Offender Screening and Risk Assessment Program
 Contact ACIC/NCIC for additional Social Security Numbers and Dates of Birth

An Assessment May Include

- ▶ Review of historical data
- ▶ Interview with the offender
- ▶ Truth Verification (Polygraph/CVSA)
- ▶ Appropriate Actuarial Instruments
- ▶ Psychological testing, as deemed necessary

Sex offender risk assessment

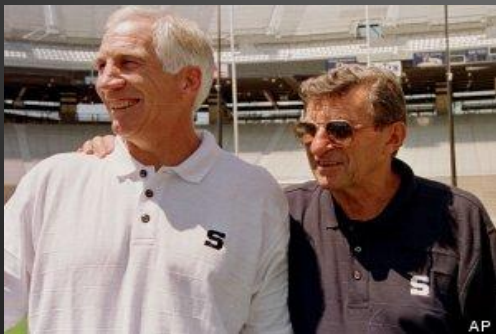
- ▶ Offender age
- ▶ Offender's lack of relationship history
- ▶ History of violence
- ▶ Number of sex offense charges/convictions
- ▶ Unrelated victims
- ▶ Stranger victims
- ▶ Male victims
- ▶ Overall criminal history
- ▶ Convictions for paraphilic “hands-off” offenses

Benefits of individualized assessment?

- ▶ Community being notified of problematic offenders is the obvious
- ▶ Offender
 - Being more open with partners
 - Open with employers
 - Getting in/staying in treatment
 - Better chances of successful re-entry for lower risk offenders
 - Knows he is being monitored
- ▶ Law enforcement:
 - Has a ready database for investigating new crimes
- ▶ Prevention?
 - Dialogue about sex crimes/community education

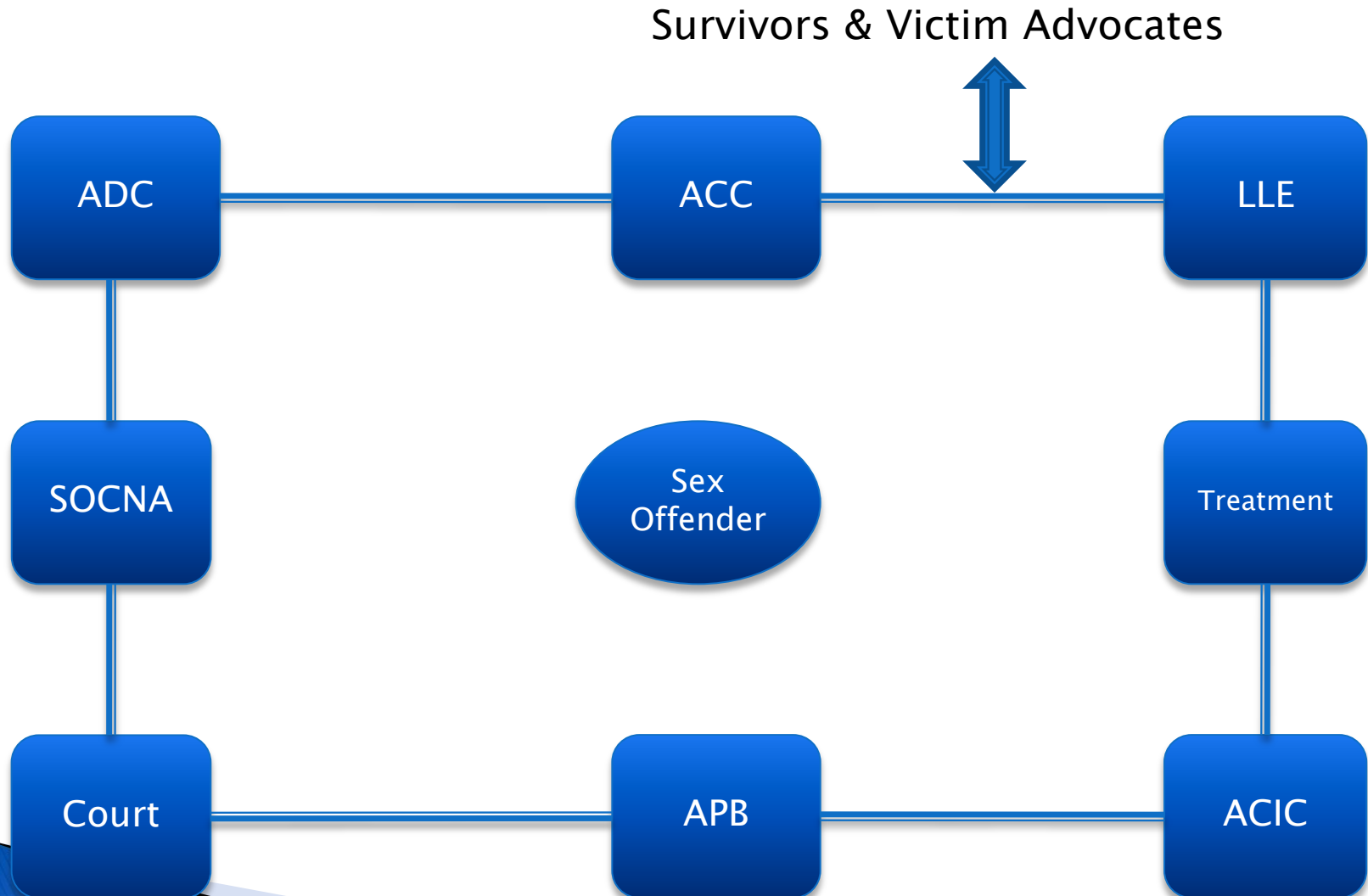
There is No One Solution

- ▶ Electronic Monitoring will not stop offending by predatory pedophiles. (and very expen\$ive)



- ▶ Residency restrictions are not likely to stop the majority of sex offenses, as they are committed by people victims know and often love.
- ▶ Perhaps child safety zones are better?

Sex Offender Management Is The Goal



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