Welcome to the NJJA Webinar Series

Therapeutic Restitution for Youth with Illegal Sexual Harm

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NJJA WEBINAR
LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES
RSAFE® PROGRAM
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Juvenile Court P.O. ~ 1986 to 1988

- Probation department worked with NDHHS to provide case management for all abuse and neglect cases
- Had mostly sexual abuse cases
- Did the best we could at the time
- No computers or internet!!

Basics about Youth with Illegal Sexual Harm or PSB

- Their identity is **NOT** based on an event in their history or by one problem
Basics about Youth with PSB

- Use person first language
- Youth who was abused in their history
- Youth with problematic sexual behavior
- Youth who sexually abused someone
- Youth who caused sexual harm
- When need to be vague: Youth who has difficulty making good decisions

Brains are not developed

- The brain is not developed until age 25
- Impulsive, less planning of sexual abuse
- STOP using term grooming for youth
- Consider learning disabilities, poor peer skills/spectrum and traumatic brain injury
- Reduced ability to find non sexual solutions to problems
Balancing thoughts & feelings

- Acknowledge the harm
- Provide Hope
- Youth can be proud of accomplishments to help the other child heal
- Youth can be proud of trying to make amends and fix the mistake
- The original behavior is still wrong, illegal and hurtful to the other person

The pinnacle of the treatment process

- Clarification
  - Take full responsibility for wrong doing
  - Understand why
- Reparation (repair the mistake)
  - Apologize to adult caregivers
  - Make amends to child they abused
- Creating a new normal
- Reunification, sometimes
A sincere apology has three parts:

I am sorry

It is my fault

What can I do to make it right?

Goals of reparation for youth with PSB

- concrete way for the youth to prove that they are genuinely remorseful

- if appropriate, begin the repair process of the relationship between the children or teens.
**Goals of reparation for victimized child**

- Create a positive environment in the family if siblings or cousins involved.
- Partially restores the balance after sexual harm.
- Meets whatever emotional needs they may have after trauma.

**Reparation cons**

- Takes a lot of planning and creativity.
- May not go well, causing more friction between the two families.
- Someone must be the leader of the process, to make sure it happens.
- Never know what some folks will say.
- Need GOOD JUDGEMENT.
- Will meet resistance from those who want youth with PSB to be punished.
- Uncomfortable, “yucky” content to conversations.
After son’s suicide, Ponca Hills parents turn tragedy into charity
Quotes from Article by Michael Kelly  Omaha World Herald

- The offender’s mother said she had heard from her son’s counselor that the other parents refused to look at the letters.
- The other mom said the letters were never offered.
- She wishes her family had received them, but says they never were offered.
- “I really do think that would have helped.”
- The two families once were close, but a deep rift remains. They never speak.
The Five Languages of Apology

1. Expressing Regret – “I apologize”
2. Accepting Responsibility – “I was wrong”
3. Making Restitution – “What can I do to make it right”
4. Genuinely Repenting – “I’ll try not to do that again”
5. Requesting Forgiveess – “Will you please forgive me?”
Why Not ask for Forgiveness

- Asking for forgiveness is dealt with very carefully
- True forgiveness is offered naturally and not requested
- May put too much pressure on child
- Parents may want it more than child who was abused
- Hopes and wishes of positive relationship in future may be more appropriate.

Rationale for reparation

- If it goes well..... There is a ripple effect

Healing for abused person
- Reduces shame after repairing mistake
- Caregivers & family members have hope
- Community at large has better understanding of youth with PSB

Providers have thrill of witnessing healing
A Reparation Project is more than an apology

- Provides PROOF that the person is remorseful and wants to make amends
- Gives youth with PSB something to be proud of
- "First time my brother ever did anything just for the benefit of me"
- Personalized way to make restitution than can benefit the child they abused

Build a bear outing

Read apology Letter to forensic interviewer
Moral Development

- Do not have an easy ability to connect consequences to behavior, worse with early brain development injury
- Not aware of basic feelings, therefore, cannot express guilt or remorse
- Is it lack of development or risk for offending?

Check your expectations

It's an apology all right, but somebody seems to have stolen the cheque...
Reparation Process
step 1 orientation

- Introduce at very FIRST sessions
- Parents must be actively involved in the treatment process.
- May include apology to child they abused, their parents, or other providers who stand in for the abused child

Great to include PO or Judge in Process
May or may not do “reparation project” for person they abused

Volunteer work at church

Shadow box of trophies for sibling
Reparation Process
step 2 clarification

- Collaboration:
  - Need the “other side of the story” to determine a semi-coherent narrative of the abuse.
  - Do not believe the youth with PSB 100%
  - the two therapists work together so the youth with PSB can help answer questions of the child he/she abused

Don’t ruin an APOLOGY with an EXCUSE.

Q U O T E D I A R Y . M E
Reparation Process
step 2 clarification

- YOUTH MUST TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY
- Caregivers also take responsibility if needed
- Explain (clarify) without making excuses
- Youth will feel shame if not psychopath, and will need support

Need a bridge to get over the "River of Shame"
Denial is just avoiding the river altogether
HELPING THE CAREGIVERS IN SIBLING INCEST CASES

support and safety for sibling who was abused

support and treatment for sibling who did the abusing

Reparation Process step 3 planning

- Whatever is chosen will not cause flashbacks or remind the child of the abuse in any way.
- Includes time, money, effort + needs of victimized child
- Options:
  - Apology to others
  - Letters given
  - Reparation project
  - Gifts of time or service
Reparation Process
step 4 Delivery

- The youth should make a formal apology in letter form to the victim and sometimes the victim’s parents or their own parents.
  - Statement of Responsibility
  - Expression regret
  - Offer to make amends
  - A sign or statement of being genuine in their repentance for the behavior

ACCOUNTABILITY
LETTER TO PARENT

To mom, I’m sorry for hurting [redacted] in a sexual way. It was not his fault for what I did and I take full responsibility for what I've done. I didn't know how you felt when you heard you probably [redacted] unjust and mad and didn't want to see me. But I like how you support me by taking me to therapy and...
ACCOUNTABILITY LETTER TO PARENT

talking to me with i'm sad and mad so you knew if i'm OK. But how i'm in therapy i can talk about what he did to me and what i did to him and i'm reaching how to keep kids younger than me safe. But i'm happy now. As I was hurt by her fitting a lot and getting to hug aunt more.

Reparation Process step 4 Delivery

- It is an extra step, extra work, extra benefits
- The abused child will not use the project to get revenge or use it against the child with PSB
- Emotional and physical needs of child who was abused is always the guideline for decisions.
Built shelf for sibling’s room

Took younger relative to zoo and bought gift in gift shop

Reparation Process
step 5 Making Meaning

- Present project with adults in room
- Take pictures or document for future
- Acknowledge the purpose of the project and it’s meaning
- Providers praise all involved and enjoy the positive interactions
Reparation Process
step 6 prepare for future

- Child who was abused may not be available for reparation, esp. if they are NOT in treatment
- Youth with PSB should plan for this and be prepared with alternative solutions
- Keep documentation of the apology letters or photos to use to help the other child/family in the future.

Balance is restored in the family and maybe our community
What can you do??

Thank you
Have a Good Day

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Help spread light into the dark corners of sexual abuse

Resources

- National Center for Sexual Behavior of Youth NCSBY.org
- NEARI Press free webinars
- Child Welfare Information Gateway
- Center for Sex Offender Management csom.org
- Joann Schladale at www.resourcesforresolvingviolence.com/publications
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Future Crimes

- 91% repeat non sexual offense without trtmt
- 50% repeat non sexual offense with treatment
- 21% reoffend sexually without treatment
- 4% to 13% reoffend sexually with treatment
- 1% of kids in RSafe have reoffended sexually

The New Normal

✓ The abusive person is NEVER ALONE with victimized child again, ever!
   ....even after clarification
   And reparation