

**Iowa Sex Offender Research Council**

**Report to the Iowa General Assembly  
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The Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning  
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## Preface

Over the last several years, lawmakers have responded to several highly publicized child abduction, assault, and murder cases. While such cases remain rare in Iowa, the public debates they have generated are having far-reaching effects. Policy makers are responsible for controlling the nature of such effects. Challenges they face stem from the need to avoid responses whose primary motivation is political and the desire to make informed decisions that recognize both the strengths and the limitations of the criminal justice system as a vehicle for promoting safe and healthy families and communities.

One of the standing goals of the Research Council is to provide nonpartisan guidance to help avoid or fix problematic sex offense policies and practices. Setting this goal was a response to the concern over what can result from elected officials' efforts to respond to the types of sex offender-related concerns that can easily become emotionally laden and politically charged due to the universally held abhorrence of sex crimes against children.

An issue of perhaps the greatest interest to many Council members is a belief in the benefit of viewing Iowa's efforts to protect children from sex crimes with as comprehensive a platform as possible. It has been suggested that much more can be done to prevent child-victim sex crimes than would be accomplished by concentrating solely on what to do with offenders *after* a crime has occurred. To prevent child victimization, most laws and policy provisions rely largely on incapacitation and future deterrent effects of increased penalties, more restrictive supervision practices, and greater public awareness of the risk presented by a segment of Iowa's known sex offenders. For some offenders, these policies will no doubt prevent future sex crimes against children, and the Council supports long-term studies to examine the desired results and for ways to improve such results through better supervision tools and more effective offender treatment.

Unfortunately, many of the effects from the new policies may primarily influence persons who have already committed sex offenses against minors and who have already been caught doing so. The evidence suggests, however, that most offenders coming to the attention of the justice system for sex crimes have not previously been adjudicated for such crimes. Thus, Council members continue to discuss the need for a range of preventive efforts and a need to think about sex crimes against children from other than just a "reaction-to-the-offender" perspective. This is particularly true for juvenile sex offenders, where early intervention has the best potential to stop future offending behaviors.

Along with incapacitation and deterrence, comprehensive approaches to the prevention of child-victim sex crimes would also involve ensuring that parents have the tools needed to detect signs of adults with sex behavior problems, to both help teach their children about warning signs and to find the support necessary for healthy parenting. School, faith-based, and other community organizations might benefit from stronger

supports and better tools to more effectively promote positive youth development and the learning of respect for others, respect for boundaries, and healthy relationships.

All of us who have children, or who live in communities where there are children, need to understand the limitations of our justice system and the importance of our own ability to play a role in preventing sexual abuse and protecting children from sex offenders, who are often the child's own family members. Over 1,000 incidents of child sexual abuse are confirmed or founded each year in Iowa, and many such acts take place in the child's home or the residence of the caretaker of the child. Efforts to prevent child sexual abuse and to provide for early interventions with children and families at risk should be strategically examined and strengthened.

## Summary of Recommendations

Following are the specific recommendations to be found in the body of this report.

- 1. The Sex Offender Research Council recommends that juvenile court officials, when determining the appropriate charge(s) when making an allegation of delinquency for a sex offense, should take into consideration the type of abuse, the use of force, and the comparative ages of offender and victim.**
- 2. The Sex Offender Research Council, through an evaluation of available research, recognizes the mandatory placement of certain juvenile offenders on the sex offender registry based solely on offense classification is not the best practice for addressing the treatment and rehabilitation needs of the juvenile offender. The research suggests a better approach would include a registration determination based on case specific information including the nature and circumstances of the offense, comparative ages of the offender and victim, the offender's background and a determination of the risk to re-offend.**
- 3. All juvenile sex offenders should be evaluated by a team of multi-disciplinary personnel prior to any final dispositional orders; the timing of such an evaluation is not being specified at this point in time.**
- 4. As recommended in past reports, the State should establish criteria and licensing/certification for individuals and programs providing sex offender treatment to juveniles.**
- 5. The Sex Offender Research Council recommends that further research be conducted to determine the best practice for supervising sex offenders, using criteria based upon risk assessment, recidivism, public safety, and optimal use of scarce public resources.**
- 6. Although the Council recognizes that policies requiring prevention efforts are difficult to enforce, members encourage the dissemination of evidence-based materials to the widest audiences possible, and encourage all agencies, institutions, and providers that work with parents and children to include information on sexual abuse and healthy relationships in materials, conversations, and education sessions. Further, as funds become available, the Council would recommend providing funds to help with the dissemination of materials and supporting the training of key individuals who work with the target population.**

## Juvenile Sex Offenders

### Statement of the Issue

The Sex Offender Research Council (SORC), at their June 23, 2010 meeting chose to emphasize the effect that Iowa's current legislation and practices has on juveniles accused and adjudicated on sex offenses. Significant changes were made during the 2009 Legislative session with regard to the treatment of juvenile sex offenders, specifically in response to compliance with the federal Adam Walsh Act. The SORC requested a more comprehensive analysis of the changes made to IA Code 692A, and the impact on juveniles.

### Review of the Legislation/Iowa Code 692A

IA Code 692A is the section that covers Sex Offender Registration. Following are definitions in that section that affect juvenile offenders.

1. A sex offender is any person who is required by this section of the Code to register.
2. An aggravated offense against a minor includes sex abuse in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree (709.2), sex abuse in the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree (709.3), and sex abuse in the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree [709.4, except 709.4(2)(c)(4), if the victim was 14 or 15 and the offender was 4 or more years older].
3. The period of registration is 10 years unless the offender commits a second offense, aggravated offense, or is a sexually violent predator.
4. Registration is required for juvenile offenders aged 14 or older for sex abuse 2<sup>nd</sup> [709.3(2)] and sex abuse 3<sup>rd</sup> [709.4(subs 1, 3, and 4) or 709.11(1) or (2)]. Other juveniles may be placed on the Registry if ordered by Juvenile Court.
5. Exclusionary zones apply to juvenile sex offenders for day care sites, playgrounds, and libraries. The exclusions do not apply for schools and school events if the juvenile is a student at that facility.
6. Residency restrictions apply to any juvenile on the Registry for an aggravated offense against a minor upon reaching 18 years of age.
7. Juveniles waived to adult court and convicted as adults are covered by the special sentences in 903B(1) and (2), including lifetime supervision.

## Juvenile Data, Adjudications

OFFENSE	CLASS	FY08	FY09	FY10
Assault with intent/serious injury	FELC	0	1	1
Assault with intent/injury	FELD	5	2	3
Assault with intent/no injury	AGMS	19	20	25
Sex abuse 2nd	FELB	58	85	44
Sex abuse 3rd	FELC	20	21	12
Sex abuse 3rd, victim 12-13	FELC	3	8	16
Sex abuse 3rd, <20	FELC	3	4	1
Lascivious acts	FELC	2	2	2
Burglary 1st	FELB	0	0	0
Incest	FELD	2	4	2
Indecent contact w/ child	AGMS	0	0	1
Indecent exposure	SRMS	12	10	6
Sexual exploitation of child	FELC	1	0	0
Medium depicting exploit child	AGMS	0	2	2
TOTAL CHARGES		125	159	115
NUMBER JUVENILES		114	114	104
JUVENILES PLACED ON REGISTRY*		19	14	29

\*Note: The number is based upon age at offense, not necessarily age at registration.

During FY2010, there were 38 juveniles 14 and over adjudicated for offenses that require registration. Nineteen were for assault with intent to commit sexual abuse with either bodily injury or serious injury. The Juvenile Court has the latitude to determine when these juveniles are placed on the Registry.

## Juvenile Recidivism

Two cohorts of juveniles were used: juveniles adjudicated for sex offenses during the state fiscal years of FY2003 through FY2005 (July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2005) and juveniles adjudicated for sex offenses during the state fiscal years of FY2006 through FY2008 (July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2008). These two groups were selected as representing equal time periods prior to and after the Code changes and implementation of the residency restrictions. Data were obtained from the Iowa Court Information System, Justice Data Warehouse.

Names of individuals on the Sex Offender Registry (SOR) as of June 30, 2008 who were under 22 years of age were provided by the Department of Public Safety. This list was used to determine if offenders previously adjudicated as juveniles were currently on the Registry.

In addition, recidivism was investigated for the earlier cohort of juveniles who are currently on the Registry to determine general rates of recidivism and recidivism for sex offenses. It is assumed that individuals who are not currently on the Registry but were adjudicated as juveniles for sex offenses have not been adjudicated or convicted of a subsequent sex offense. The second cohort was not investigated for recidivism because many of these individuals would still be juveniles or would not have had sufficient time elapse to gather meaningful information. Recidivism information was obtained from Iowa Courts Online.

## Results

During the 3-year period FY03-FY05, there were 350 juveniles adjudicated for sex offenses in Iowa. Of these, 47 were on the SOR as of June 30, 2008. During the 3-year period FY06-FY08, there were 312 juveniles adjudicated for sex offenses, with 27 of these on the SOR.

Juvenile Sex Offenders, Registration

	# Adjudicated	# on SOR	% on SOR
FY03-05	350	47	13.4%
FY06-08	312	27	8.6%
Total	662	74	11.1%

Of the 662 juveniles adjudicated for sex offenses from both cohorts, 588 have not been placed on the SOR at this time, either as a consequence of their original adjudication or for any subsequent sexual offense.

As stated earlier, the first cohort of 350 juveniles was assessed for subsequent offenses. Eleven (3.1%) either had another adjudication for a sex offense during one of the two time periods, or had a consent decree revoked. These individuals were still minors at the time of the subsequent adjudication. It is unclear from the data source whether any of these constituted “new” offenses, or were part of the original juvenile complaint, so these are not included in the recidivism counts below. Ten of these individuals were not on the SOR as of June 30, 2008, so had not been convicted of a new offense as an adult.

Of the FY03-FY05 cohort, 47 were on the SOR as of June 30. These registrants were evaluated for subsequent offenses, assuming that many of them would be adults at the time of the study and would have had three to six years to re-offend. Of the 47, 20 had no subsequent criminal cases filed against them. Another seven individuals had either failure to register or residency violations (public order offenses), but no other criminal offenses. Fourteen of the 47 had non-sex offense convictions in a variety of offense types, including theft, drug and/or alcohol, and assault. Six of the 47 had new sex offense charges.

### Recidivism, FY03-FY05 Cohort on Registry

	#	%
No charges/convictions	20	42.5%
Public order only	7	14.8%
Other criminal	14	29.7%
Sex offense charges/convictions	6	12.7%
Total	47	100%*

\* May not equal 100% due to rounding.

While the sex offense recidivism rate for those on the SOR is 12.7%, overall only the six identified above have been either charged or convicted of new sex offenses as adults, a sex offense recidivism rate for the FY03-FY05 cohort of 350 juveniles of 1.7%.

A new study is being conducted by CJJP on male juvenile sex offenders placed at the juvenile facility in Eldora between 1991 and 2002, or approximately 200 juveniles. The study will look at recidivism through June, 2010. The hypothesis is that these juveniles would likely have a higher recidivism rate for sex or other violent offenses. Results should be available early in 2011.

## Literature Review

Much has been written about the difference between juvenile sex offenders and adult sex offenders. Research suggests that juvenile recidivism can be lower than that of adult offenders, and juveniles respond better to treatment that is tailored to juvenile offending patterns, brain development, and history of abuse. Consequently, a system that treats juvenile offenders with the same laws and consequences as adult offenders has not been proven to be effective at either promoting public safety or rehabilitating juveniles for productive adulthood.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the predictive value of various juvenile risk-assessments for sexual and non-sexual recidivism. While results have been mixed (Viljoen, 2008, Prentsky, 2010, Rajlic, 2010), there is consensus that offense class is not a predictor of recidivism. Various typologies of juvenile sex offenders have also been assessed for risk of recidivism; two recent studies (Rajlic, 2010 and Kemper, 2007) looked at age of victim and delinquency patterns. While both found some differences in recidivism, sexual reoffending was much lower than non-sexual reoffending, even among high-risk juveniles committed to juvenile correctional facilities.

All of these studies recognized differences among juvenile sex offenders based upon social history, delinquency history, education, sexual abuse history, and developmental stage. In general, the studies found that an individual assessment of risk and appropriate sanctions and treatment was preferable to simply classifying juveniles based upon uniform criteria.

Research has also begun on the effects of sex offender registration on juveniles and adults. Elizabeth Letourneau has conducted several studies of the effects of juvenile registration policies in South Carolina (Letourneau, 2008 and 2009). In one study, she examined recidivism rates for registered and non-registered juvenile sex offenders, finding no significant difference in sexual re-offense rates. In both cases, sexual recidivism was less than 10%.

Letourneau also found that mandatory registration laws may have had an effect on charging and adjudication practices. The results of her analysis suggested that fewer juveniles were adjudicated for mandatory registration offenses after laws requiring registration went into effect. As a policy matter, mandatory registration may reduce the number of juveniles who receive appropriate sanctions and treatment, also potentially reducing public safety. When registration is not based upon a thorough evaluation of risk but rather on uniform, charge-based criteria, potentially high-risk youth may not be identified.

On the other hand, mandatory registration may result in low-risk juveniles being put at risk for the adverse effects of registration, such as continued social stigma and isolation, loss of educational opportunities, loss of employment opportunities, and interference with the development of stable family units (Council of State Governments, 2010).

The Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice submitted the following recommendations on juvenile sex offender registration as a part of the comment period for changes in the federal rules for SORNA:

1. Mandatory registration laws establish a blanket approach for all ages for a category of crime that includes a wide range of forbidden behaviors. Such application fails to acknowledge research that demonstrates clear differences between adults and juveniles who engage in such behaviors, and who, in many cases, do not present the same risks as adults who commit sex crimes.
2. States that do not exclude juveniles from sex offender registration laws should give judges the discretion to determine at sentencing whether a juvenile adjudicated/convicted of a sex offense should be required to register and, if so, the duration of the registration and any conditions of registration.
3. Mandatory sex offender registry laws remove important discretion from judges and prosecutors. Juvenile court judges and prosecutors are best equipped to evaluate the circumstances of juvenile offenders on an individual case basis and determine the need for registration.
4. With research showing lower rates of recidivism for juvenile sex offenders who receive appropriate treatment, it is imperative to acknowledge treatment as an effective and powerful tool in protecting the community. States should be required to develop guidelines and standards for a system of programs for treatment and monitoring juvenile sex offenders.

## Recommendations

1. Juveniles most frequently offend with peers; in other words, the victims are generally also minors. Applying charge class and sanctions based upon the age of the victim when the perpetrator is also a minor places the majority of juvenile offenders in the category of committing aggravated offenses against minors. **The SORC recommends that juvenile court officials, when determining the appropriate charge(s) when making an allegation of delinquency for a sex offense, should take into consideration the type of abuse, the use of force, and the comparative ages of offender and victim.**
2. **The Sex Offender Research Council, through an evaluation of available research, recognizes the mandatory placement of certain juvenile offenders on the sex offender registry based solely on offense classification is not the best practice for addressing the treatment and rehabilitation needs of the juvenile offender. The research suggests a better approach would include a registration determination based on case specific information including the nature and circumstances of the offense, comparative ages of the offender and victim, the offender's background and a determination of the risk to re-offend.**
3. **All juvenile sex offenders should be evaluated by a team of multi-disciplinary personnel prior to any final dispositional orders; the timing of such an evaluation is not being specified at this time.**
4. **As recommended in past reports, the State should establish criteria and licensing/certification for individuals and programs providing sex offender treatment to juveniles.**

## Special Sentences

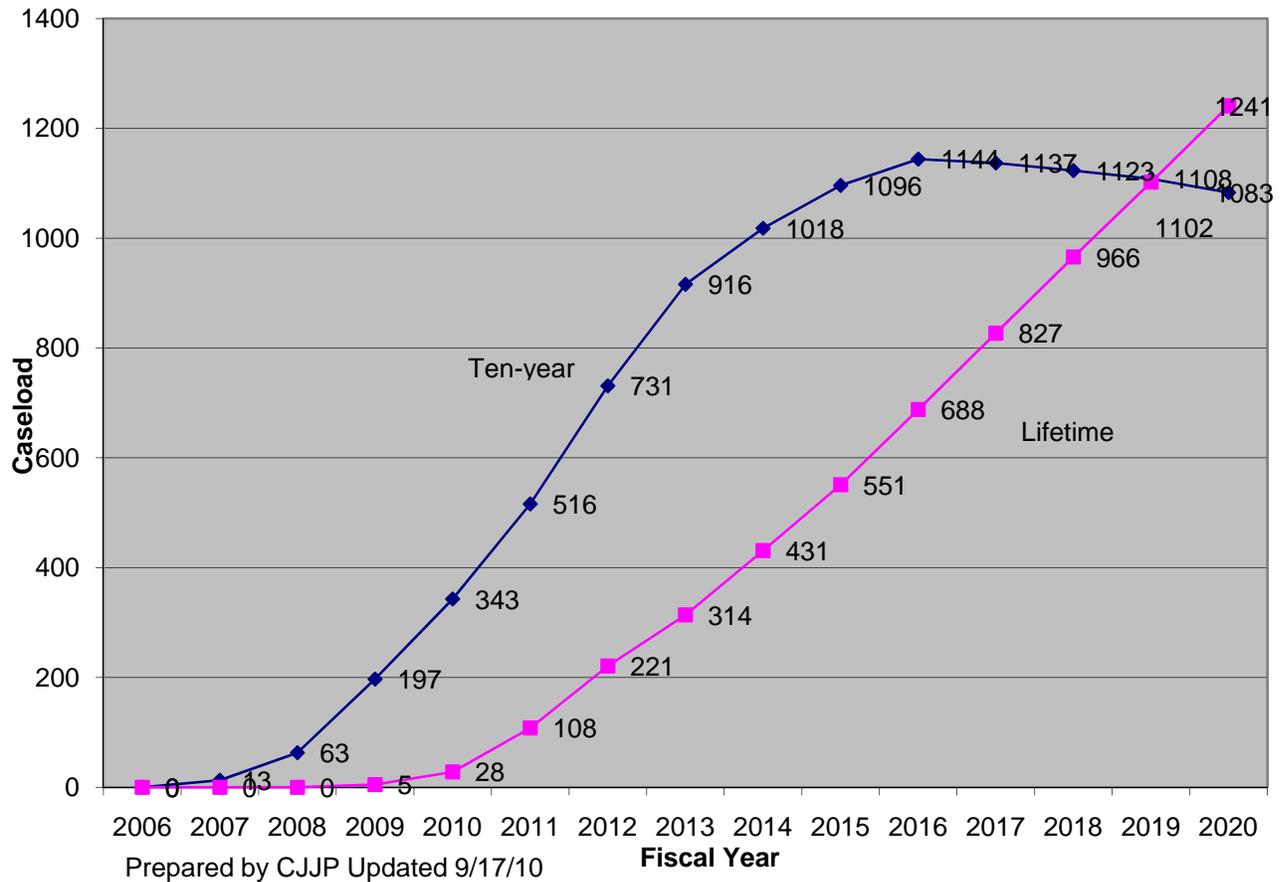
### Statement of the Issue

In 2005, the Iowa General Assembly passed legislation establishing a special sentence for sex offenders. Iowa Code 903B created a 10-year special sentence for offenders convicted of D felony or misdemeanor sex offenses and a life-time special sentence for offenders convicted of C and B felony sex offenses. These special sentences are to run after an offender completes his or her original sentence.

The number of individuals required to be on the life-time special sentence continues to increase, and will continue to increase for a number of years. The burden on the Department of Corrections will be significant, both in terms of staff resources for supervision, and for the prison population as the number of offenders who are revoked for supervision violations are sentenced to prison.

## Special Sentence Data

### Anticipated Special Sentence Caseloads FY10

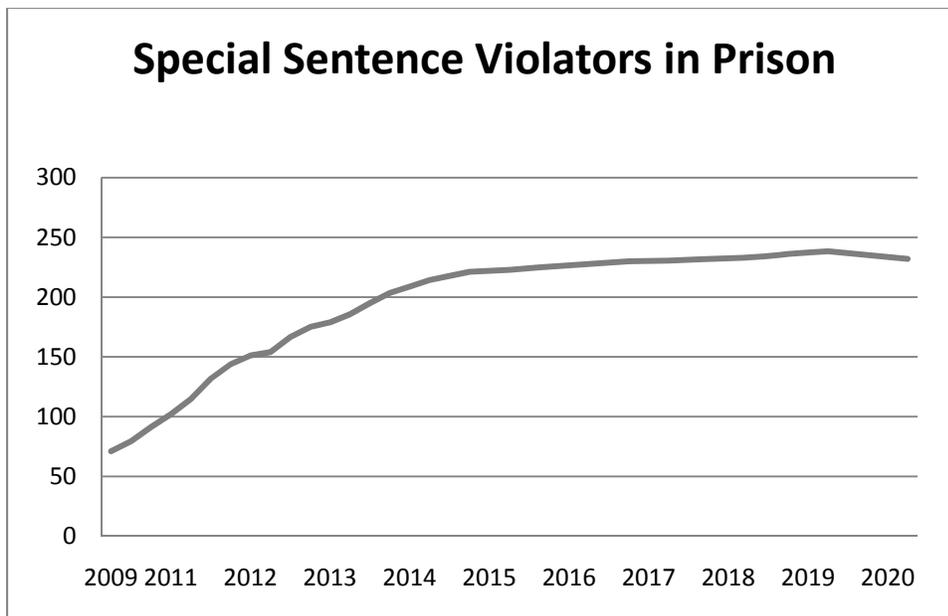


As can be seen in the above graph, the number of offenders under current law with 10-year special sentences is expected to continue to increase for another six years before leveling or decreasing. The number of offenders who will be on life-time supervision will continue to increase at least through the year 2020.

Using an average total parole caseload of 3,356 through FY2010, it is estimated that by the year 2020, the average parole caseload will increase to 5,170, of whom about 2,300 or 44% will be supervised on special sentences. This estimate is based upon assumptions that the non-special sentence parolee numbers will remain constant, and that a certain percentage of special sentence parolees will be revoked to prison. The special sentence, particularly life-time supervision, will increase the parole caseload by 54% in ten years.

The Department of Corrections estimates the cost of residential supervision at \$11.02 per day and regular supervision at \$3.64 per day. GPS monitoring adds an additional \$7.00 per day. If one assumes that the projected 2,300 persons on special sentence supervision were being supervised at the minimum level at today's cost, the special sentence cost per day would be \$8,372, or \$3,055,780 per year. Some of these offenders will also be on GPS monitoring, at least for part of the time, further increasing the daily and annual expenditures.

The special sentence also has an impact on the prison population. The number of revocations has increased since the first offenders were placed on special sentences. The first revocation of a special sentence has a prison term of two years, while second and subsequent revocations are for prison terms of five years. Below is the estimate of the number of prisoners who will be in prison for special sentence revocations at the end of 2020.



It is anticipated that life-time supervision will increase the number of revocations, both first and subsequent, as the time exposure to potential violations increases.

At this time there are no studies that demonstrate the public safety benefit to life-time supervision for sex offenders. However, it is believed that risk-based supervision could have a positive effect.

### **Recommendation**

**The Sex Offender Research Council recommends that further research be conducted to determine the best practice for supervising sex offenders, using criteria based upon risk assessment, recidivism, public safety, and optimal use of scarce public resources.**

## Child Endangerment

### Statement of the Issue

During the 2005 Legislative session, IA Code chapter 726.6, Child Endangerment, was amended to include cohabitation with a person required to register, or registered as a sex offender, as a criminal act. The charge was most likely to be an aggravated misdemeanor as the definition did not include death, serious injury, or bodily injury.

In 2009 the definition was amended from cohabitation to the following: "Knowingly allows a person custody or control of, or unsupervised access to a child or a minor after knowing the person is required to register or is on the sex offender registry as a sex offender under chapter 692A." IA Code 726.6(1)(h). Again, the offense is an aggravated misdemeanor.

Questions have been raised about the equity of charging the parent or guardian in such cases without an offense charge for the registered sex offender.

### Child Endangerment Data

Information specific to this charge is not readily available. Court charging and convictions codes for IA Code 726.6 are specific to the offense class, not the definition of the act. Therefore, any event that results in an aggravated misdemeanor child endangerment charge and/or conviction uses the same Code citation. As a result, it is not possible to determine which of those cases may have been the result of interactions with sex offenders, either under the 2005 or 2009 definition. Many of the cases are presumed to fall under the denial of care definitions.

#### Offenders Convicted of an AGMS Child Endangerment Offense

	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010
# Offenders convicted	412	480	503	489	581

Proportionally, slightly more males are convicted of this offense than females. In FY2010, 51% of the offenders were male, while in FY2009 the percentage was 54%.

On October 13, 2010, there were 5,086 registrants on the Sex Offender Registry (SOR). Of these, 2,518 had victims age 13 or less, and 1,752 had victims aged 14-17. Therefore, 83.9% of registered sex offenders had victims who were either children (13 and under) or minors (14 to 17).

Offenders who committed their offense(s) after July 1, 2005 are now required to serve a special sentence for a minimum of 10 years. These individuals are supervised by Community-Based Corrections' parole officers. Supervision conditions for these

individuals may or may not include contact with minors or children for the entire term of the special sentence, but supervision is based upon risk for sexual re-offending. The Department of Corrections evaluated the reason for special sentence revocation for the 58 offenders who had been revoked through the end of calendar year 2009. Forty-one percent (41.4) were revoked for a sex offender treatment or sex-related violation. Of these, 28% were for contact with minors, victims, victims' families, or other inappropriate contact with others.

## **Recommendation**

While it is not possible with the data available at this time to determine the number of individuals convicted of 726.6(1)(h), it is likely that there have been some. It is also apparent that there are sanctions involving prison time for offenders who have prohibited contact with minors through the terms of supervision under the special sentence. The extent to which these two acts align is not clear.

**Therefore, the Sex Offender Research Council does not recommend any changes to the Iowa Code pertaining to child endangerment at this time.**

## **Prevention**

The ultimate goal in preventing sexual abuse is to prevent first time perpetration and victimization. To date, the majority of the activity by this Council has focused on the incapacitation of offenders through increased sentences, civil commitment, increased supervision via special sentence paroles and electronic monitoring, and restricting where offenders live or loiter and where they can be employed. The theory behind these approaches is that these restrictions will reduce the opportunities for known offenders to re-offend. Research on the efficacy of these approaches indicates that recidivism may be delayed for high risk offenders, but that these approaches have either little impact or adverse effects on low risk offenders.

Another approach that has been taken is treatment of offenders. Treatment is available in the prison system and through CBC. Treatment is also available to juveniles through services ordered by Juvenile Court. The Department of Corrections uses treatment providers that have been certified by the Iowa Board for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (IBTSA). However, there is no comparable requirement for providers of treatment for juveniles, nor is the certification recognized in the Code of Iowa. (There have been protocols in place, but no requirements to implement them.) Treatment for sex offenders has been evaluated extensively, and has been proven to reduce recidivism. Treatment is particularly beneficial for juveniles if provided through proven interventions and trained professionals (Finkelhor, David, "The Prevention of Childhood Sexual Abuse", Preventing Child Maltreatment, Vol. 19, No. 2, Fall 2009).

Combination approaches of incapacitation and community education exist in sex offender registries and community notification. Controlled studies of these approaches have been limited and show mixed results (ibid).

These prevention approaches are considered to be secondary or tertiary (i.e., after the abuse has occurred). Research on effective primary prevention strategies has been recent and more common in the fields of substance abuse and HIV prevention. Early approaches to child sexual abuse prevention (during the 1980s and early 1990s) typically involved education programs for children that focused on appropriate space and touching. A number of studies and meta-analyses have been done on programs designed for children for abuse prevention that show some benefit. Some of the discussions about these approaches include concerns about making children fearful or distrustful of adults and about making children responsible for preventing their own abuse.

Other primary prevention approaches involve parents, caregivers, educational personnel, and other “influential” adults. Accurate information about sexual abuse, sex offenders, and warning signs in child and adult behaviors that could suggest the potential for abusing are areas that have been addressed. Research done in Vermont during the 1990s suggests that many people do not have factual information, and lack skills, knowledge, or confidence in how to approach either the child or the adult in a potential abuse situation. More recently, there have been programs developed that promote the benefit of providing normal sexual development training to adults who work with children as a protective factor to sexual violence. An example of this type of program is *Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development* developed by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.

Educational materials that are based upon research are available from several sources. Most of the research to date suggests that both child and community education efforts at least increase reporting of cases. (See Chasan-Taber, Lisa and Tabachnick, Joan, “Evaluation of a Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Program,” *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1999.)

During its 2005 session, the Iowa Legislature amended IA Code chapter 256.9, subsection 54.a to require the Department of Education to “develop and make available to school districts, examples of age-appropriate and research-based materials and lists of resources which parents may use to teach their children to recognize unwanted physical and verbal sexual advances....” In August, 2006 the department published “Preventing Child and Youth Sexual Harassment, Abuse, and Assault: A Resource for Iowa’s Families.” It is not known how many districts or individual schools are regularly disseminating this material. An addendum that provides a list of resources related to bullying and internet safety for children has been released in the past year.

Vermont also experimented with a confidential hotline designed to encourage abusers or potential abusers to call for assistance. Two other states, Minnesota and Virginia, are also using this strategy. Evaluation of the benefit of the Vermont hotline over a two-

year period was inconclusive; it is not known how many individuals actually approached the legal system in order to receive treatment as a result of the hotline (Chasan-Taber, et al). However, given the legal climate that has emerged since then for sex abusers, with increased punitive effects, it seems unlikely that such an approach would work today. In past reports, the SORC has recommended treatment options outside the criminal justice framework.

In January, 2010 the Iowa Department of Public Health completed work on a five-year plan for sexual violence prevention in Iowa. This was developed with input from a broad group of state and community partners. It identifies strategies to reduce the first time perpetration and victimization of sexual abuse/assault in Iowa and is posted on the IDPH webpage: [http://www.idph.state.ia.us/bh/sv\\_prevention.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/bh/sv_prevention.asp).

#### **Recommendation:**

**Although the Council recognizes that policies requiring prevention efforts are difficult to enforce, members encourage the dissemination of evidence-based materials to the widest audiences possible, and encourage all agencies, institutions, and providers that work with parents and children to include information on sexual abuse and healthy relationships in materials, conversations, and education sessions. Further, as funds become available, the Council would recommend providing funds to help with the dissemination of materials and supporting the training of key individuals who work with the target population.**

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