Executive Summary for 2006 Mathom Evaluation Project

- Data was collected from May 2005 to January 2006. Recidivism data was collected in June, 2006.
- This paper covers all juvenile sex offenders placed in a secured juvenile detention facility in Bucks County, PA from October 1989 to May 2005.
- During this time, there were 179 admissions
- All offenders are male and range in age from 12 to 20 years old with an average age of 15.6 years
- About two-thirds of the population is white
- The average number of days detained in the facility is 472.2 (15.7 months)
- data reveals that about half of the sample (48.5%) had committed a prior offense
- 12.3% of the sample had committed a sex offense prior to the offense for which they were sentenced to treatment.
- Overall recidivism rate is in the lower range of previous studies at 40.7%.
- Crimes of violence constituted 13.7% (N=10) of the total first re-offenses
- The rate for sex offense recidivism is 3.9%.
- Of the 179 offenders, 7 were arrested for a sex offense and one of these cases was dismissed.
- Average time to 1st recidivism was 33.4 months (2.02 years)
- Combing the categories of violence and sex offenses during the first recidivism yields a violence/sex crime rate of 23.2%
- The J-SOAP-II total score would have accurately predicted future recidivism.
- J-SOAP II scores were most predictive for the Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Items
- Only the Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score did not significantly correlate with recidivism

Abstract: *This paper examines recidivism for all juvenile sex offenders placed in a secured juvenile detention facility from October 1989 to May 2005 (N=179). Recidivism through re-arrest data relating to time to recidivism, type of recidivism, and multiple recidivisms is provided. The study then uses J-SOAP-II variables on a subgroup of the population (N=115) to determine the practicality of using this instrument as a tool for assessing release. This study finds support for previous studies on the amount of recidivism and the types of recidivism. This paper adds to that research by exploring subsequent re-offending. Finally, this research generally supports the use of J-SOAP-II as a useful tool for predicting future offending. Two of the tested three Scales as well as the overall J-SOAP-II score significantly related to recidivism.*

Introduction

There is no doubt that juvenile sex offenders present challenging issues to both researchers and practitioners. Juvenile sex offenders accounted for 1 out of every 5 arrests in 2004 for forcible rape and other sex offenses (not including prostitution). This arrest rate for juveniles is 25% higher than their total arrest rate for all offenses (http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t472004.pdf). Pennsylvania's rate of juvenile arrest for sex crimes is slightly higher than the national average (21.4%). In addition, the rate for Bucks County, PA during 2005 was even higher at 32%. Statistically, this means that juveniles account for roughly one-third of all arrests for sex crimes (except prostitution) in Bucks County. During the 5 years between 2000 and 2004, there were 175 juvenile arrests for sex crimes in Bucks County, accounting for 30.1% of all sex crime arrests (http://ucr.psp.state.pa.us/UCR/Reporting/Annual/AnnualSumArrestUI.asp). The challenge presented by this data parallels the day-to-day challenge of the criminal justice system itself; decreasing the number of victims.

Juvenile sex offenders also present a significant challenge for the scientific community. The relative paucity of published empirical research on juvenile sex offenders compared to other types of juvenile offenders reflects this challenge. Miner (2002) states that "A wealth of descriptive information about this population has been published...but very little empirical research has addressed the factors directly related to juveniles' risk for reoffending" (421-422). In addition, Craig, et al (2003) found that from 1995 to 2001 there were only 6 methodologically sound studies on the treatment of juvenile sex offenders. The paucity of research is surprising given two important elements of juvenile sex offending:

1. The relatively high number (as a proportion) of juveniles arrested for sex offenses.
2. The severe impact that sex offenses have on the community.

Challenges to Research

There are three primary reasons why researchers may be shying away from juvenile sex offender studies. First, juvenile sex offenders were not a point of focus during the developmental years of criminology. The primary social theorists who helped shape the field of criminology during the last century all but ignored this class of offender. Development of primary theoretical paradigms such as control, strain, social disorganization, and learning theories occurred without significant contributions from juvenile sex offender researchers. In part, this may be because juvenile sex offending was not defined as a major, or at least visible, form of delinquency. While research and programs for juvenile sex offenders has grown over the past 20 years (McGrath,

Cumming, & Burchard, 2003), the study of juvenile sex offending has fallen more to the science of psychology, and has been primarily limited to questions of specific treatment alternatives rather than generalized explanations. The results of two database searches verify both the domain of psychology and the recent surge in scholarly interest. A recent review of PsycINFO revealed 36 hits in peer reviewed publications for the keyword search terms "juvenile" AND "sex offender" AND "recidivism" since 1978. Almost half of these (N=15) were published between 2000 and 2006 and 3 of these 15 (20%) did not directly deal with the issue of juvenile sex offender recidivism assessment. A similar search in Criminal Justice Abstracts, which is criminology oriented, found 7 articles since 1991.

Another limiting factor to the study of juvenile sex offending involves the practical limitations of finding control groups. Finding a matched sample of sex offenders who do not undergo treatment has both practical and ethical problems. From a practical standpoint, it is very difficult to find identified juvenile sex offenders who have not undergone treatment. In addition, finding officially unrecognized juvenile sex offenders and keeping their status secret for the purpose of research raises the ethical specter of Alfred Kinsey's relationship with Rex King (for example see Reisman, 2006).

A third potential limiting factor in this research field, involves the confidentiality status of juvenile records and the sensitivity surrounding the behavior. Potential researchers will face three layers of confidentiality issues: law enforcement (to track either police contacts or arrest), court records (to track delinquency and charge status), and therapeutic records (to track the type and length of therapy for adjudicated sex offenders). The most difficult barrier to overcome is the confidentiality of therapeutic records. The basic rule of client confidentiality from the American Psychiatric Association is:

> *Psychologists have a primary obligation to take reasonable precautions to protect confidential information obtained through or stored in any medium, recognizing that the extent and limits of confidentiality may be regulated by law or established by institutional rules or professional or scientific relationship.*
> *http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html#4;*

Of course, there are exceptions to this rule including protection of the client or others from harm, and research that negates the possibility of tracking or identifying clients individually. This may leave researchers at the mercy of individual therapists who are bound by their own ethical code which may prohibit them from disclosing certain key types of information. These practices will severely limit the ability of researchers to track clients through therapy records.

Police and court records can also be roadblocks to this type of research. When information is made available to the general public, it is generally vague and relatively useless for statistical analysis. In general, police records are not a viable option for juvenile sex offender researchers. The laws and regulations controlling information on juvenile arrests require police to only allow access to appropriate law enforcement, court, or corrections personnel. It is highly unlikely that a law enforcement agency will distribute any information on juvenile arrests, even if they could eliminate any identifying information.

Realistically, this leaves most researchers turning to court records for information on juvenile sex offenders. However, there are limits to court records as well. As a blanket protection, judges can order that a particular juvenile's records be sealed from public view. Even

without this order, there are other barriers that must be overcome. According to the Juvenile Law Center in Pennsylvania:

> *Court records concerning delinquency proceedings are, as a general matter, confidential. However, the following people may have access to some of the information contained in the court records:*
> *Judges, officers, and the professional staff of the court.*
> *Other parties to the delinquency proceedings and their lawyers. (A party to the proceeding includes the child, any victims, the district attorney and any involved service providers.)*
> *Any agency or institution supervising the minor or maintaining custody of the minor as the result of the court order.*
> *Court staff and the defendant's attorney for use in preparing a pre-sentence report in a criminal case when the defendant has previously been the subject of delinquency proceedings.*
> *A court that is determining bail for any subsequent offense.*
> *The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts.*
> *With permission from the court, any other person with a legitimate interest in the proceedings.Pennsylvania courts have held this exception to be very limited.*
> *http://www.jlc.org/index.php/factsheets/privacy*

The rules and regulations involving juvenile record confidentiality appear to be one reason why research in this very important area has been limited. Of course, many of these rules and regulations apply to all juveniles, seemingly indicating that any research on juvenile delinquency would be problematic without specific client waivers. However, confidentiality issues become magnified in juvenile sex offender research because of the sensitive nature of the charges. The nature of this type of offense has led some to call for decreased confidentiality (many states require juvenile sex offenders to publicly register as such) while leading others to demand increased confidentiality (Zimring & Allen, 2004; Garfinkle, 2003).

Of course, researchers have been able to overcome these confidentiality issues, typically by receiving the courts permission to do research and by keeping client information confidential and untraceable. However, even when this occurs, the small number of subjects made available for a research project limits findings. As pointed out by Righthand & Welch (2004), "Relatively few studies have investigated the factors associated with the risk of repeat or persistent sexual offending...Methodological problems such as small sample sizes further limit this research" (27-28)

Existing Research

Research on juvenile sex offenders indicates a wide variety of explanatory variables ranging from low self-control (Miner, 2002) to developmental issues (Kruttschnitt, et al.: 2000). Explaining juvenile sex offending has proven difficult. Kruttschnitt, et al. (2000) found that factors predictive of juvenile sex offending change with a juvenile's age. In addition, it seems clear from the research that predictive factors used to explain adult sex offending are not appropriate when attempting to explain juvenile sex offending (Miner, 2002; Trivits & Reppucci, 2002). However, explanations of juvenile offending in general appear to be useful in explaining juvenile sex offending (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). This may be explained, in part, by findings

suggesting that, like their non sex- offending counterparts, juvenile sex offenders have low levels of specialization (Righthand & Welch, 2004; Bynum, et al. 2001).

Further proof of non-specialization comes from previous data on sex offender recidivism. There are significant percentile differences between previous measurements of non- and sexually-oriented recidivism. In a recent review of existing literature on sex offender recidivism, Efta-Breitbach & Freeman (2004) found studies showing a recidivism rate as high as 90%. However, they also point out that, "Nonsexual recidivism rates, for periods up to 10 years, range from 34.8% to 90%" (Efta-Breitbach & Freeman, 2004: 259). Most studies fall in the 50% to 70% range after a 5 to 10 year follow-up for nonsexual recidivism. Lack of specialization is indicated by the comparatively low levels of recidivism for sexually-oriented offenses.

"Research has consistently shown that sexual and nonsexual recidivism rates are dissimilar, with sexual reoffenses occurring at a lower rate (Efta-Breitbach & Freeman, 2004: 258). In a review of 11 juvenile sex offender recidivism studies since 1986, Caldwell (2002) found an average sexual recidivism rate of 7.5% and an average non-sexual recidivism rate or 36.5%. These lower recidivism numbers are explained, in part, by a relatively low average follow-up period of 44.5 months. A study by Langstrom and Grann (2000) found an average time to recidivate of 60.95 months, well above the average follow-up period in the Caldwell (2002) review (Efta-Breitbach & Freeman, 2004: 259). One must be cautious in assuming that risk increases proportionally over time as well. Hanson (1998) found declining recidivism risk after 6 years. A review of the literature by Waite, et al. (2005) found "Current literature indicates that recidivism rates for sexual offending generally range from 2 to 14%" (315).

In general, while there is disagreement on the theoretical causes of juvenile sex offender recidivism, there appears to be consistency in the literature on two points relevant to this research. First, the rate of sexual recidivism is well below the rate of overall recidivism. Second, the average amount of time for recidivism appears to lie between 3 to 6 years. Previous research also provides some insight into the risk factors associated with recidivism.

Factors Associated With Recidivism

The literature clearly identifies lack of treatment as the most important factor associated with juvenile sexual reoffending. While many (Craig, et al., 2003; Prentky, et al., 2000; Rasmussan, 1999; Hagan & Gust-Brey, 1999) have examined treatment completion, others (Miner 2002) have examined length of treatment. In either case, there is strong evidence that treatment, either sustained or completed, decreases the likelihood of recidivism.

Other areas of significance for recidivism include family history factors (*e.g. physical abuse, sexual abuse, guardian status*)(Becker and Hunter, 1997; Burton, 2000), behavioral indicators (*history of substance abuse, prior arrests/delinquency*), sexual drive indicators (*degree of planning offenses, number of victims, etc...*) (Hanson and Bussiere, 1998; Rasmussen, 1999), impulsivity indicators (*history of behavior problems, pervasive anger, etc...*)(Miner, 2002; Prentky & Righthand, 2003), and treatment issues (*accepting responsibility, remorse and guilt, etc..*)(Prentky and Righthand, 2003).

Purpose of the Study

This study focuses on recidivism rates for offenders housed in a juvenile residential sex offender facility. Specifically, this paper examines the association of J-SOAP II scores with recidivism (Prentky and Rightland, 2003). In addition, this research offers two descriptions of

offense category (sex v. non sex offenses and violent v. property offenses). Background data on offenders was gathered using police records, court records, and facility records. Bucks County (Pennsylvania) Juvenile Probation gathered recidivism data through use of the Pennsylvania State Police's Computerized Criminal History Record Information System (CCHRI).

Such a powerful database requires strict rules for maintaining community safety and personal privacy. Of course there is flexibility in using this information for therapy, safety, and official State purposes (including research). Out of concern for these rules, Juvenile Probation required a system of data gathering that would ensure no violation of privacy issues. Accessing the coding information by subject required special consideration and work by administrators at both the residential facility and Juvenile Probation. First, any existing confidential therapeutic information was removed from each file. Second, each file was coded as a universal identifier. The juvenile detention facility provided Juvenile Probation with code sheets and keys. Juvenile Probation then used this information to run background checks. The only identifying information recorded by the researchers involved the codes without the key, therefore making it impossible to track or identify specific subjects/clients.

Recidivism in this study is conceptualized as an arrest. This means that only officially recognized/charged acts are counted. While this method no doubt underestimates the actual illegal behavior of the sample group, it also helps ensure a higher level of reliability. Using official offenses as well as a conservative scoring scheme for the J-SOAP II variables (see below) helps provide as much reliability to the findings as possible. In addition, when multiple charges stem from the same arrest, only the most serious charge (as defined by statute) is recorded.

J-SOAP II

The basic description of J-SOAP-II as well as its appropriateness to this study are summarized by the authors of the scale:

> *The Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol-II (J-SOAP-II) is a checklist whose purpose is to aid in the systematic review of risk factors that have been identified in the professional literature as being associated with sexual and criminal offending. It is designed to be used with boys in the age range of 12 to 18 who have been adjudicated for sexual offenses...*(Prentky and Righthand, 2003: 1).

The J-SOAP-II is a revised version of the J-SOAP and was derived from "reviews of the literature that covered five areas":

1. clinical studies of juvenile sex offenders
2. risk assessment/outcome studies of juvenile sex offenders
3. risk assessment/outcome studies of adult sex offenders
4. risk assessment/outcome studies from the general juvenile delinquency literature and
5. risk assessment studies on mixed populations of adult offenders (2)

The J-SOAP originated in 1994 as "the first attempt to establish an actuarial scale for sexually abusive youth" (Miccio-Fonseca & Rasmussen, 2006: 6) The scale was updated in 1998 and the current revision (2003) includes four Scales for aiding in the treatment of juvenile sex offenders. Each Scale contains various items used to measure the potential sexual reoffending:

1. Scale 1= Sexual Drive/Sexual Preoccupation contain 8 measures including:
    a. Prior legally charged sex offenses
    b. Number of sexual abuse victims
    c. Male child victim
    d. Duration of sex offense history
    e. Degree of planning in sexual offenses
    f. Sexualized aggression
    g. Sexual drive and preoccupation
    h. Sexual victimization history
2. Scale 2= Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Items
    a. Caregiver consistency
    b. Pervasive anger
    c. School behavior problems
    d. History of conduct disorder before age 10
    e. Juvenile antisocial behavior (ages 10-17)
    f. Ever charged or arrested before the age of 16
    g. Multiple item offenses
    h. History of physical assault and/or exposure to family violence
3. Scale 3= Intervention Items
    a. Accepting responsibility for offenses
    b. Internal motivation for change
    c. Understands risk factors and applies risk management strategies
    d. Empathy
    e. Remorse and guilt
    f. Cognitive distortions
    g. Quality of peer relationships
4. Scale 4= Community Stability/Adjustment Items
    a. Management of sexual urges and desire
    b. Management of anger
    c. Stability of current living situation
    d. Stability in school
    e. Evidence of positive support systems

All of these factors are scored on a 0 to 2 scale. A "0" always indicates the absence of an item and "2" always refers to the "clear presence" of an item. While the scale has been considered "a reliable" instrument and has been "widely used" (Miccio-Fonseca & Rasmussen, 2006: 7), there are some concerns on its use. There appear to be three important issues to keep in mind about using this scale.

First, the original J-SOAP is partially based on adult sex offenders (Prentky and Righthand: 2). This may be problematic given the research indicating a causal difference between adult and juvenile sex crime motivation. Second, even researchers who strongly support its use express some concern over its predictive ability (Fanniff & Becker, 2006). Third, while its internal validity is generally high (Waite et al., 2005; Prentky and Righthand, 2003), the validity of the items themselves is questionable. Miccio-Fonseca & Rasmussen state, "the ability of each item of the J-SOAP II to discriminate youth according to the severity of their sexually abusive behavior is unknown" (8). Despite these issues, the breadth of its use, its high internal validity,

and its general acceptance as an appropriate predictive tool make the J-SOAP II instrument appropriate for this kind of recidivism study.

Keeping in mind that J-SOAP-II is a predictive tool, Prentky and Righthand offer some suggestions on its use. First, they recommend some form of training or practice in scoring the scale items. At the very least, they recommend a careful reading of the J-SOAP-II manual (2003). In addition, it is recommended that the assessor collaborate with at least one other clinician and that "agreed-upon scores should be used" (9). However, they do suggest that this is "often not feasible". In any event, when information on an item is "very limited, unclear, or incomplete, items should be scored 'conservatively' (that is, in the direction of lower risk), and it should be noted that the resulting score may underestimate the risk." (9). Finally, Prentky and Righthand suggest using multiple sources in order to crosscheck information when possible.

This research stayed as close to these recommendations as possible. First, of course, the J-SOAP-II manual was carefully studied and discussed. Second, two assessors worked on the first 10 cases together in an attempt to derive a more consistent coding scheme. Third, random crosschecking between assessors of item scoring was done in order to help maintain a consistent coding scheme during the coding process. Fourth, all scored items were crosschecked with other sources when possible. Finally, when the record was not clear or there was conflicting information, items were scored as conservatively as possible given the available data. Questionable items were often downgraded using the minimal amount of information that seemed reliable.

The authors also make it clear that the J-SOAP-II cannot be adjusted. It is important to note that this study's elimination of all items in Scale 4 does not constitute an adjustment to the scale itself. Prentky and Righthand clearly define adjustment as "changing the way they (assessors) rated a particular item because the score was not consistent with their impression of the juvenile." (9)

The elimination of Scale 4 from this study is an acceptable methodological action based on two criteria. First, this study is primarily an "after the fact" assessment of J-SOAP-II. That is, for the most part, recidivists have already been identified. The purpose of using J-SOAP-II in this study is to assess if clinicians should be using this scale as a treatment tool for juvenile sex offenders who are currently in a secured facility. Prentky and Righthand (2003) point out that previous studies have acceptably eliminated Scale 4 Items for juveniles who had "been in secure care for 6 months or longer" (3). For that reason, this study focuses on the majority of juveniles in this study whose secured treatment fall into this criteria.

Secondly, Prentky and Righthand also point out (4) that Scale 4 accounted for the least amount of variance in predicting recidivism. Scale 4 accounted for 8.5% of variance while Scores 1 and 2 accounted for about 20% each and Scale 3 accounted for 9% of the variance. Based on this information, eliminating Scale 4 from the scored items should have a minimal effect on the outcome measures included here.

Descriptive Data

Data on subjects from the facility was collected from May, 2005 to January, 2006 and recidivism data was collected in late June, 2006. This paper covers all juvenile sex offenders placed in a secured juvenile detention facility in Bucks County, PA from October 1989 to May 2005. During this time, there were 179 admissions. All offenders are male and range in age from 12 to 20 years old with an average age of 15.6 years. About two-thirds of the population is white

(65.4%; N= 117) and almost half of the residents (45.8%; N=82) resided at the facility between 7 and 18 months. The average number of days detained in the facility is 472.2 (15.7 months). Data for age (Table I), race/ethnicity (Table II), and time in detention (Table III) are found below:

Table I

Age at time of entry to facility		Frequency	Valid Percent
	12	5	2.8
	13	26	14.7
	14	36	20.3
	15	43	24.3
	16	29	16.4
	17	20	11.3
	18	14	7.9
	19	2	1.1
	20	2	1.1
	Total	177	100.0
Missing		2	
Total		179	

Age of Total Sample

Table II

Race and Ethnicity		Frequency	Valid Percent
	White	117	67.2
	Black	41	23.6
	Hispanic	14	8.0
	Asian	2	1.1
	Total	174	100.0
Missing		5	
Total		179	

Race/Ethnicity of Total Sample

Table III

Detention in months	Frequency	Valid Percent
06 months or fewer	29	16.2
07 to 12 months	39	21.8
13 to 18 months	43	24.0
19 to 24 months	29	16.2
25 to 30 months	21	11.7
31 to 26 months	6	3.4
37 to 42 months	5	2.8
43 months or more	1	.6
Missing	6	3.4
Total	179	100.0

Time in Detention for Total Sample

Data was also collected on offenses prior to the offense for which the juveniles were placed in treatment. Interestingly, the rates before detention are slightly higher than the recidivism rates after detention. In fact, excluding the missing data reveals that about half of the sample (48.5%) had committed a prior offense. The data (Table IV) also indicates that 12.3% of the sample had committed a sex offense prior to the offense for which they were sentenced to treatment.

Table IV

Crimes prior to first arrest		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
	No	67	37.4	51.5
	Nonsex	47	26.3	36.2
	Sex	16	8.9	12.3
	Total	130	72.6	100.0
Missing		49	27.4	
Total		179	100.0	

Prior Crimes for Total Sample

Recidivism Data

This research supports previous research on sex offender recidivism. First, the overall recidivism rate is within the average range found in previous studies. It is important to mention, however, that this sample seems to fall at the lower end of that range (40.7%). The second similarity to previous research is the remarkably lower rate for sex offense recidivism (3.9%). Of the 179 offenders, 7 were arrested for a sex offense and one of these cases was dismissed. It is important to remember that the entire sample had been out of residential treatment for at least one year before retrieval of the recidivism data occurred. In fact, only 5.5% of the sample (N=10) was released in 2005.

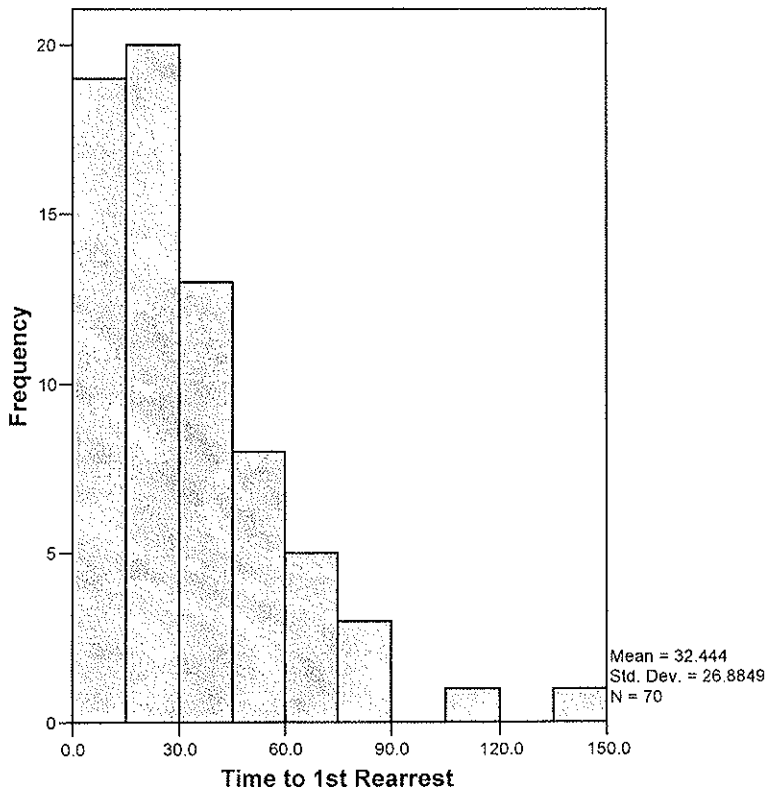
Table V

1st Recidivism by crime type	Frequency	Percent
No Recid	106	59.2
Nonsex	66	36.9
Sex	7	3.9
Total	179	100.0

Total Sample 1st Offense Recidivism Type

The average time for the 1st rearrest was calculated using the date of rearrest and the date the juvenile was discharged from the facility. No times were calculated for three offenders whose discharge dates were missing from the records. Of the remaining 70 recidivists, the average time to 1st recidivism was 33.4 months (2.02 years). The shortest time to recidivism was less than one month and the longest was 143.5 months (12 years).

Graph 1



This data also relates to previous research, but with a different timeframe. Recall that Hanson found decreasing risk after 6 years. This data indicates a significant decrease in risk after 2.5 years (30 months). In fact, 40 of the 70 recidivists (57.1%) did so within 2.5 years. Before 6 years, 14.2% (N=10) had not yet recidivated. The average recidivism time for the sex reoffender subgroup was almost identical to the average time of the group (33 months).

Data on subsequent recidivism was also recorded from the dataset. Of the original 73 recidivists, 50.6% (N=37) were rearrested for a subsequent offense. Of these 37 offenders, 5.4% (N=2) were sex crime recidivists (both were for indecent assault).

In terms of community safety, it is also important to track recidivism for categories of crimes. The concern for recidivism is a concern for community safety and this includes other types of violence such as aggravated assault. While almost all sex offenses constituted violent crimes (such as rape and indecent assault), some did not (e.g. indecent exposure). Crimes of violence constituted 13.7% (N=10) of the total first re-offenses. The rate of violent crime increased during the second re-offense. Of the 37 recidivists who were arrested a second time, 35.1 % (N=13) were charged with a violent crime.

Combing the categories of violence and sex offenses during the first recidivism yields a violence/sex crime rate of 23.2%. Fortunately, this rate is much smaller than the rate for the top three offenses: Drug possession (N=13), Retail theft (N=8), and Theft by unlawful taking (N=7). These three crimes constitute 38.4% of all recidivism in the sample.

Examining data for both times of arrest reveals that 4 juvenile sex offenders were arrested for indecent assault. Among all recidivists during both times of arrest, the most common charges were: Drug Possession (N=21), Theft (N=12), and Robbery (N=10). In addition, it should be noted that between both sets of recidivism, the 110 primary charges fell into 37 separate offenses ranging from Rape to Driving Without a License. This indicates a wide range of criminal behaviors among juvenile sex offenders who recidivate.

So far, this data reveals some important facts about juvenile sex offender recidivism. First, this research supports previous research indicating that rates of offending after treatment are quite low when compared to overall recidivism rates. Second, this research indicates a decrease in risk over time for recidivating, with almost all re-offending occurring before the 6th year. In addition, most re-offending occurs within 2.5 years, after which there is a dramatic drop in rates. Third, there is some indication (although limited) that juvenile sex offenders who commit a non-sex crime after treatment are unlikely to commit a sex crime later. Fourth, the rate of violent offenses increases among recidivists over time. Finally, among recidivists, the rate of violent and sex offenses combined is relatively low when compared to drug or property offenses.

Testing J-SOAP-II

Of the 179 offenders in the study, 40 (N=22.3%) were eliminated from this section of the study. Even with the help of staff at the facility, it was sometimes impossible to score every item on all three J-SOAP-II scales used in this study. Other offenders were eliminated from this part of the analysis based on the recommendations of Prentky and Righthand (2003). More specifically, 22 offenders (12.3%) were eliminated from this subgroup because they were housed at the facility for fewer than 180 days and two offenders were eliminated from the subgroup based on their age (older than 18). This leaves a subgroup of 115 offenders for testing the ability of J-SOAP-II to predict recidivism.

Age ranged from 12 to 18 years with a mean of 15.0 years. The majority of the remaining sample is white (N=78) followed by black (N=28). On average, this group spent 561 days at the facility (18.7 months) with most spending between 13 to 18 months.

Table VI

Age at time of entry to facility		Frequency	Percent
Valid	12	5	4.3
	13	18	15.7
	14	20	17.4
	15	31	27.0
	16	18	15.7
	17	12	10.4
	18	11	9.6
	Total	115	100.0

Age of J-SOAP Subgroup

Table VII

Race and Ethnicity		Frequency	Valid Percent
	Asian	2	1.8
	Black	26	22.8
	Hispanic	8	7.0
	White	78	68.4
	Total	114	100.0
Missing		1	
Total		115	

Race/Ethnicity of J-SOAP Subgroup

Table VIII

Time served in months		Frequency	Percent
Valid	07 to 12 months	28	24.3
	13 to 18 months	35	30.4
	19 to 24 months	26	22.6
	25 to 30 months	17	14.8
	31 to 26 months	4	3.5
	37 to 42 months	4	3.5
	43 months or more	1	.9
	Total	115	100.0

Time in Detention of J-SOAP Subgroup

The overwhelmingly majority (N=99) of offenders had no record of criminal actions before the act associated with their incarceration. Of offenders who did have prior acts, fewer than half (43.8%) committed sex offenses (N=7).

Table 9

Previous Arrest	Frequency	Percent
Sex offense	7	6.1
No	99	86.1
Non-sex offense	9	7.8
Total	115	100.0

Prior Crimes for J-SOAP Subgroup

Recidivism of Subgroup

Recidivism rates were similar between the subgroup (40.9%) and the total sample (40.7%). However, the number of subsequent sex offenses for 1st time recidivists decreased from 3.9% for the total sample, to 2.6% (N=3) for the subgroup. In addition, the rate of violent crime for the subgroup (3.5%) was lower than the total sample (13.7%).

Table 10

1st Recidivism by crime type	Frequency	Percent
No Recid	68	59.1
Nonsex	44	38.3
Sex	3	2.6
Total	115	100.0

Type of Recidivism for J-SOAP Subgroup

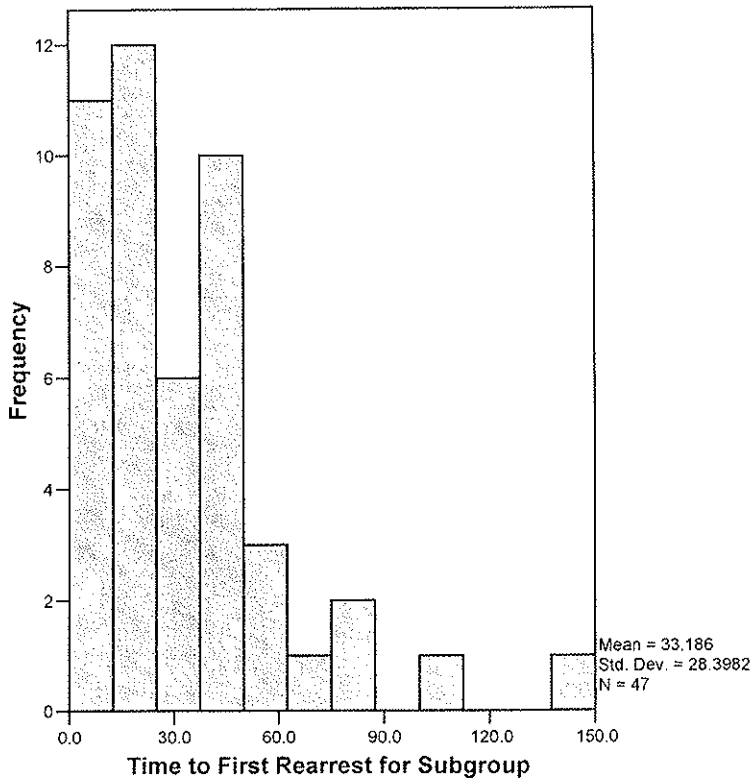
Table 11

1st Recidivism by crime category	Frequency	Percent
	68	59.1
Nonviolent	43	37.4
Violent	4	3.5
Total	115	100.0

Category of Recidivism for J-SOAP Subgroup

Interestingly, the average time to 1st rearrest is almost identical (33.1 months) for the subgroup as it was for the total sample. Except for the decrease in scores around the mean, this data closely resembles the data for the entire sample.

Chart 2



Of the subgroup, 22 (N=19.1%) were subsequently arrested a second time. None of them was charged with a sex offense, and 7 were charged with crimes of violence. When combining 1st and 2nd arrest categories, the three top charges are: Theft=16, Drug Possession=13, and Burglary= 8.

Analysis of J-SOAP-II Scores

J-SOAP-II scores for the group were calculated for the Scales of: Sexual Drive/Sexual Preoccupation, Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior, and Intervention. The purpose of this section is to measure the effectiveness of these scores in predicting recidivism. The first two Scales have potential minimum scores of 0 (indicating no risk) and maximum scores of 16 (indicating high risk). The third (Intervention) has a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 14. An offender's overall J-SOAP-II score can range from 0 to 46.

The average total score for the subgroup is 14.92 and the range is 0 to 36. The average score for each Scale is as follows:

Table 12

J-SOAP total scores by category	Total J-SOAP Score	Intervention Item Score	Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score	Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Score
N	115	115	115	115
Mean	14.92	5.07	4.65	5.20
Minimum	3	0	0	0
Maximum	36	14	13	15

J-SOAP Scale Scores

Recidivists, on average, had a higher overall J-SOAP-II score than non-recidivists. In addition, recidivists had higher average scores on two of the three scales.

Table 13

Recidivists Scores	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score	47	0	10	4.32	2.704
Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Score	47	0	15	6.55	3.550
Intervention Item Score	47	0	12	5.40	3.139
Total J-SOAP Score	47	4	32	16.28	6.762
Valid N (listwise)	47				

J-SOAP Recidivists Scale Scores

Table 14

Non-recidivists Scores	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score	68	0	13	4.88	2.707
Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Score	68	0	11	4.26	2.735
Intervention Item Score	68	0	14	4.84	3.716
Total J-SOAP Score	68	3	36	13.99	6.288
Valid N (listwise)	68				

J-SOAP Non-Recidivists Scale Scores

Rearrest data was coded by number of rearrests. It is interesting to note that the majority of offenders who qualified for the J-SOAP-II subgroup came from the group of recidivists who had 3 or more arrests. In the entire sample, 36 juveniles had three or more arrests subsequent to their release from the facility. Of these, 26 (72%) made it into the J-SOAP-II subgroup.

Table 15

Number of Rearrests	Frequency	Percent
.0	68	59.1
1.0	19	16.5
2.0	2	1.7
3.0	26	22.6
Total	115	100.0

J-SOAP Subgroup Rearrest

T-tests were used to determine if J-SOAP-II scores could be used to significantly correlate with recidivism in the subgroup. Tests were run for Total J-SOAP-II scores, Sexual Drive/Sexual Preoccupation scores, Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Items, and Intervention Items scores all using Number of rearrests as the dependent variable. A paired t-test statistic was run for each Scale, however, the correlation coefficients indicated that an Independent t-test would be more acceptable with this dataset.

Table 16

Paired Samples Correlations		N	Correlation
Pair 1	NumberofRearrests & Total J-SOAP Score	115	.103
Pair 2	NumberofRearrests & Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score	115	.155
Pair 3	NumberofRearrests & Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Score	115	.350
Pair 4	NumberofRearrests & Intervention Item Score	115	.014

J-SOAP Paired t-test Correlations

Independent samples t-tests were calculated and significance was found in 3 of the 4 measures. The data is summarized below:

Table 17

Item	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	*T*
Total J-SOAP Score	85	0.034	2.161
Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score	85	0.813	0.237
Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Score	85	0.029	2.225
Intervention Item Score	35	0.046	2.067

J-SOAP Independent t-tests

Only the Sex Drive/Preoccupation Score did not significantly correlate with recidivism. In order to gain more understanding of these items, Cronbach's alpha was used to examine inter-item reliability. It is interesting to note that the only non-significant Scale is also the lowest for inter-

item reliability. Further analysis of inter-reliability of all four scales, reveals the lowest mean scores on these scale items.

Table 18

Scale	α	Result
Sexual Drive/Preoccupation	0.695	p=.813
Impulsive/Antisocial	0.82	p<.050
Intervention	0.951	p<.050
All Items	0.858	p<.050

Cronbach's Scores for J-SOAP Scales

Conclusions

This data reveals some important descriptive findings as well as some challenging correlations. For example, this research supports prior research in sex offense and non-sex offense recidivism. For both types of offenses, this data was on the lower end, but within the range defined in previous research. Another important finding involves the likelihood of recidivating over time. This research revealed a significant decrease between years 4 and 5 (40 months), though most recidivism occurred by the 30th month. This research also found a decrease in risk over time for recidivating, with almost all re-offending occurring before the 6th year. Interestingly, this research also found that, while overall recidivism decreases over time, violent recidivism tends to increase. There is also some indication that juvenile sex offenders who commit a non-sex crime after treatment are less likely to commit a sex crime later when compared to those offenders who commit a sex crime as a 1st offense. Finally, recidivists are far more likely to commit a drug possession or property crime than they are to commit sex offenses or violent offenses combined. It may be important to remember that 12.3% of the total sample had committed a sex offense prior to detention. Recidivism data clearly shows a decrease in this population for sex offenses after detention (decreased to 3.9%).

This study also makes a contribution for better understanding the practical value of using the J-SOAP-II instrument for incarcerated juvenile sex offenders. Specifically, this research found that the J-SOAP-II total score would have accurately predicted future recidivism. Strongest correlations were for the Impulsive/Antisocial Behavior Items. The data also revealed that the Sexual Drive/Preoccupation Item Scale was not statistically significant in this prediction. This is interesting when considering that this Scale also demonstrated the lowest inter-item reliability. In short, the data reveals that detention facility staff could have used the J-SOAP-II scale as an instrument for determining release. However, too much emphasis on the Sex Drive/Preoccupation Scale would have counteracted the findings from the other Scales. Of course, the major limitation to this study is the lack of sexual recidivists in the final J-SOAP-II subgroup. This made it impossible to explore the possibility that different types of offenses correlate with different Scale scores. This paper was also limited by the inability of the researchers to account for subsequent time in detention as a factor in 2nd and 3rd re-offenses.

Future research on this dataset could focus on the possible effects of other background variables. Specifically, it may be useful to include variables already eliminated from the J-SOAP-II instrument. It would also be helpful to further explore how each Scale plays a role in predicting recidivism and if there are predictive cut-off scores that can be used for assessment.

** It is important to mention that one sex offender committed multiple offenses and was arrested more than 3 times. His first two arrests were for robbery and his most serious subsequent arrest was for murder. Third offenses were not used in the analysis due to coding problems. Specifically, the third re-arrest included both actual third re-arrests and the most recent criminal charge for those offenders with more than three re-arrests.*

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