

Reconsidering Risk for Reoffense in Intrafamilial Child Molesters: New Aspects on Clinical and Criminological Issues

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Abstract

Intrafamilial child molesters are generally seen to be at lower risk for reoffense than extrafamilial child molesters. There is, however, good reason to question this assumption. The literature usually does not take into account some clinical and criminological data, that might indicate a higher relative risk for reoffending in intrafamilial child molesters than generally assumed. On two groups of intrafamilial (n=157) and extrafamilial (n=131) child molesters, this study tested some of the assumptions generally made about these offender groups. We found that there are indeed differences that can not be interpreted in line with the general literature on this topic. Most importantly, the time from onset of offense until official conviction is much longer in intrafamilial than extrafamilial offenders, rendering the former considerable more opportunity to consistently recidivate than the latter. Results are discussed and interpreted in terms of treatment needs for both groups of individuals.

Key words: intrafamilial child molesters, pedophilia, psychiatric diagnosis, risk assessment, relapse, reconviction

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