

Children and Youth Engaging in Problematic Sexual Behavior

September 14, 2023



Please join us for an in-person conference, co-sponsored by William James College

MASOC CONFERENCE AGENDA

8:30-9:00

REGISTRATION

9:00-9:15

WELCOME

9:15 – 10:15

KEYNOTE

Using Language to Avoid Landmines: How to Convey Scientific Facts and Cut through Myths

Kelly M. Socia, Ph.D.

How can we convey important scientific information to folks who are not interested in statistics and would rather listen to their 'gut'? How can we cut through the widespread myths and misperceptions about children and adolescents engaging in problematic sexual behavior to promote fairer and more effective policies? The key is to use effective methods of communicating scientific research, while avoiding the 'landmines' that can derail your message. This presentation will examine some of the right (and wrong) ways to communicate information about controversial and stigmatizing topics to the public and policymakers, so that the underlying message has the best chance of being listened to and acted on. In doing so, examples of real-life interactions that went well (and not so well) will be covered, along with best practices when it comes to communicating difficult subject matter to the public, policymakers, and others who may not be receptive to the underlying message.

Dr. Socia is a professor in the School of Criminology and Justice Studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where he is also an assistant director for the Center for Public Opinion. His research interests include punitive views, sex offense policies, public opinion, and policy making.



10:15-10:45

BREAK

10:45-12:15

WORKSHOP SERIES A

A1. Identifying and Intervening on PSB with Young Children and their Families

Ariel K. Berman, Ph.D.

Latency-Preschool/Intermediate

Many clinicians feel uncertain about how to support caregivers in intervening on problematic sexual behavior (PSB) in young children. Part of this discomfort may be related to uncertainty about which behaviors are normative and when behaviors may become concerning. Early interventions based on behavior parent training (BPT) with young children (3-6) exhibiting problematic sexual behavior show great promise. This workshop will cover the current research literature on typical and concerning sexual behaviors, identifying when to intervene, and how to support caregivers in appropriately intervening, safety planning, and finding an evidence-based intervention program.

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A2. Stop Telling Me to Calm Down!

Beth Cote, MS and Kevin Creeden, MA

Adolescents/Intermediate

Think about a time of distress when you utilized self-regulation skills and managed complex emotions. Now think about a time you faced an adversity or stressor and struggled to overcome the obstacle because you felt incompetent. What were the differences between these experiences? Shifting the perspective from deficit-focused to strengths-based treatment is essential for healthy development, particularly for adolescents with learning difficulties who also have a history of problematic sexual behavior. So, how do you accomplish such a transformation? This workshop will focus on how to organize and implement a strengths-based treatment plan for Intellectual Disability youth with problematic sexual behavior. We will discuss client engagement, motivation, measures of progress and the obstacles that we experience along the way. More importantly, we will discuss how to maintain therapist motivation and enthusiasm when treatment progress moves slowly or when periods of regression occur.

A3. Getting Your Stuck Case Back on Track

David S. Prescott, LICSW

Adolescents/All Levels

The training will use fictionalized case examples to illustrate how combining an understanding of the working alliance with principles of the Good Lives Model and using skills from Motivational Interviewing can get treatment moving in the right direction. Along the way, it explores how to frame treatment as involving goals that clients can approach rather than things they must avoid. Finally, it reviews methods for including client feedback at each turn.

A4. Sexual Wellbeing: Why It Matters for Adolescents Who Cause Harm

Jane Fleishman, Ph.D.

Adolescents/All Levels

Developing consensual sexual relationships can be a challenge particularly with clients with problem sexual behaviors. Bringing discussions of sexual wellbeing to clients necessitates candor and comprehensive sexuality education. Yet how do we create an atmosphere of positive, non-coercive, and pleasurable sexual expression for adolescents inclusive of all gender and sexual identities? Using a sexual health model which incorporates sexual health, sexual pleasure, sexual wellbeing, and sexual justice (Mitchell et al., 2021), clients have an opportunity to develop tools for consensual and intimate sexual relationships. Offering participants ample time for frank discussion.

A5. Implementing a Problematic Sexual Behavior-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Program within a Rural Children's Advocacy Center

Jeffrey Trant, Ph.D. and Kelly Broadway, BA

Latency/Introductory

Children's Advocacy Centers are on the front line of responding to reports of problematic sexual behavior in children and youth. At the same time, the workforce crisis in the behavioral healthcare field has exacerbated waitlists and access to timely, evidence-based treatment, especially in rural areas of Massachusetts. This presentation will describe a PSB-CBT Program integrated within the most rural area of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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12:15-1:15

LUNCH

1:15-2:45

WORKSHOP SERIES B

B1. A Strategic Focus on PSB Mental Health Access for Massachusetts CACs

Tom King, MSW and Christa Collier, MS

Latency/Intermediate

In July 2020, Massachusetts Children's Alliance, the coalition of the 12 Children's Advocacy Centers in the state, launched a new pilot program for children showing problematic sexual behaviors (PSB). Children's Advocacy Centers serve as the ideal community nexus as nearly 30% of referrals received involve child to child scenarios and these centers have existing connections to evidence based trained clinicians. In partnership with, the National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth, nearly 50 clinicians serving six CACs have been trained since 2020 with an evidence-based. Problematic Sexual Behavior-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (PSB-CBT) for children ages 5-14. It can eliminate PSBs, encourage prosocial behavior, and enhance parenting skills. Ninety-eight percent of children and youth with PSBs who receive early and effective interventions will not re-offend and instead grow into healthy adults. Tom King and Christa Collier will share the perspective of leading this initiative, leaning on the preliminary data collected to date, with emphasis on expanding the access to mental health supports for children with PSBs in Massachusetts.

B2. Hitting Reset: Gamer Culture through a Sex Offense Lens

David L. Delmonico, Ph.D., Stephen Kuniak, Ph.D. and Natalie A. Drozda, Ph.D.

All Ages/All Levels

Apex. Halo. Minecraft. Fortnite. LoL. GTA. WoW. Roblox. According to a Pew Research study in 2018, an estimated 90% of 13-17-year old adolescents play video games on their computer, gaming console, or cell phone. Sexual innuendo, online sexual interactions, and direct conversations about sex between gamers is common. Chances are the adolescents you treat play some form of video games. Understanding the "Gamer Culture" is critical to the assessment and treatment process, especially for children and adolescents. This workshop will introduce participants to various forms of gaming and gaming culture and discuss how gaming may intersect the world of sexuality, including in-game pornography and sexual behavior. Additionally, this workshop will address how gaming can be a positive addition to the treatment process. Gaming can provide a positive leisure activity, help to develop problem solving skills, improve patience and resilience, and create a positive social network – all of which are protective factors for sexual offense behavior. This workshop will provide thought provoking, practical ideas for working with adolescents who game.

B3. Assessing PSBs in Children, Youth and Adolescents on the Autism Spectrum

Laurie Guidry, Psy.D.

All Ages/Intermediate

This workshop will provide an overview of the elements necessary to complete a comprehensive assessment of children, youth, and adolescents with problematic sexual behaviors who are on the Autism Spectrum. Assessment structure, central underlying issues and ASD-specific challenges will be introduced, reviewed, and discussed.

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B4. The Power of Shame

Linda Sanford, MSW

All Ages/Intermediate

Shame is a common sequela to trauma and often is an underlying cause of many behaviors that bring people to the attention of helping professionals. Shame can also be the “glue” that holds families together. This workshop will explore the role shame plays in criminal, abusive, addictive, and self-destructive behaviors. Implications for interviewing and treatment approaches will be covered as well as the challenges to countertransference management represented by shame.

B5. What’s OK? A Unique Perpetration Prevention Approach for Youth and Young Adults

Jenny Coleman, MA

Adolescents/All Levels

What’s OK? was developed by Stop It Now! to meet an urgent need for resources to support youth and young adults who have questions about their own concerning sexual behaviors. While there are resources to address other areas of sexual health and wellbeing, there was no resource available for youth to inquire specifically about their own sexual interests and behaviors, particularly when they are feeling concerned about what they are interested in or doing. Additionally, services for youth are most often designed to address behaviors after harm has occurred. This form of prevention after a child is harmed is where most MASOC members focus their work. However, with What’s OK?, professionals have access to a new resource, an early prevention strategy that offers tools, information, and guidance to youth and young adults specifically in order to deter criminal and illegal sexual offending behaviors.

2:45-3:00

BREAK

3:00-4:30

WORKSHOP SERIES C

C1. An Initial Support and Stabilization Response Model for Children’s Advocacy Center Multidisciplinary Team Members

Mary Harris, MSW, Diane Lanni, BS and Sasha Svendsen, MD

All Ages/Introductory

Most community MDT responses to PSB are reactionary and punitive, rather than child and family centered and hopeful. This has resulted in increased barriers connecting families to supports and effectively addressing the issue. Research demonstrates that PSB concerns respond well to timely and supportive interventions. It is imperative that community MDT members take the time to critically assess and evaluate the needs of the child, communicate openly with the family and among professional colleagues, and remain focused on the well being of all the children involved. Drawing from the liberation health framework, this interdisciplinary workshop seeks to empower teams by providing learners with a three-pronged approach to PSB response that includes education, critical reflection, and tools to engage and support families’ experiences.

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C2. Using Superheroes to Address Trauma, Loss and Resilience: Lessons from the Batman Group

Kevin Creeden, MA

All Ages/All Levels

At their most basic level the appeal to identifying with superheroes is that they are empowering. However in the origins of almost every superhero story there is usually trauma and loss and quite often the loss of an important attachment figure. Harrington and Neimeyer (2021) note that the superhero story is often one of the emergence from the vulnerability of traumatic loss through a transformative process. For our clients who are struggling with trauma and loss, often in ways that can cause harm to others, the superhero story can provide an alternative view that focuses on caring for others by highlighting our personal strengths and skills while also being aware of our vulnerabilities. This workshop will look at how superhero stories can be used in different aspects of treatment and how they can shape the client's own trauma narrative and transformative process.

C3. From Treatment to Life Skills

Anette Birgersson, Licensed Psychotherapist and Christin Santiago, BS/CTRS

Adolescents/Intermediate

In this workshop, we focus on how mind and body-based interventions bring treatment to life. They allow clients the opportunity to learn and practice skills in real time, making new behaviors automatic and maintained by tapping into different parts of the brain and using interoceptive exposure. We will talk about how to practice safe touch, consent, healthy sexuality, and boundaries as well as prosocial skills and emotional regulation. Having FUN in treatment, results in better buy-in, motivation and confidence that stays with them after treatment. We will explore how powerful these interventions are and how they can help us individualize treatment to their vulnerabilities.

C4. Self-Care Strategies for Your Adolescent Clients...and You!

Jannine Hebert, MA

Adolescents/All Levels

Very often we become exclusively focused on addressing our clients' behaviors losing sight of the importance of seeing the whole client. Assisting our clients in developing strategies and habits of self-care is an important component to treatment. It is also important that we learn and apply these strategies and mindset to our own lives. We shouldn't ask clients to do something we aren't willing to do! Participants will leave the workshop with simple but creative ideas for assisting adolescents (and ourselves) in understanding and implementing self-care practices.

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C5. Addressing Problematic Sexual Behavior within a School Setting

Jean Lindquist Grady, Psy.D.

All Ages/All levels

Research shows that children and adolescents engaging in problematic sexual behavior benefit from the routine, supervision and academic programming in schools. Dr. Grady will provide a brief overview of a systematic school-based approach (Tiered approach) that enables schools to provide supervision and academics to kids with problematic sexual behaviors. This approach protects the privacy and reputation of the child or teen with problematic sexual behaviors, provides protection to students and staff, and manages the liability for school administrators. Topics will include: differentiating between the students who need to be taught new skills and those students who have the skills, but are having difficulty performing or generalizing; teaching the child about personal and sexual boundaries and the importance of engaging in positive and healthy relationships; and collaborating with community-based support.

4:30-5:30

JOIN US FOR A DRINK OR SODA TO MEET UP WITH OLD FRIENDS OR MEET NEW ONES!



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Registration Information

The Early Bird cost of the conference is \$148. This price includes the cost for Continuing Education Credits. Pre-registration is required for all sessions. During the registration process, please be sure you have indicated the workshops you wish to attend.

Online registration is strongly encouraged. When registering online you will automatically receive a confirmation from the online registration system. If you need to be invoiced or need to register offline for any reason, please contact Diane Langelier at dlangelier@neari.com or by calling **413.540.0712 x14**.

NOTE: After September 7, 2023, the registration fee will increase by \$25.00. The Early Bird rate will no longer be in effect.

REFUND POLICY: Refunds will not be given unless the conference is canceled. If you are unable to attend for any reason, you may designate a replacement. Please notify the conference coordinator of any changes via email at dlangelier@neari.com, or by phone at **413.540.0712 x14**.

Continuing Education Credits

Continuing Education Credits will be available for Psychologists, Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (MA), and NBCC/LPC. Application is underway for Continuing Education Credits for Social Workers.

This program is co-sponsored by William James College (WJC) and online registration and CE Credits managed by the College. Questions or concerns regarding online registration or CE Credits should be directed to **CE@williamjames.edu**.

William James College will award Psychologists 5.5 credits for the full day. For Licensed Mental Health Counselors, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT's in MA) 5.5 CE Credits will be awarded for the full day. Application for Social Work continuing education credits has been submitted. Please contact us at **CE@williamjames.edu** for the status of social work CE accreditation. The number of CE hours to be awarded for NBCC/LPC is yet to be determined. Please note that there may be a slight variance in the number of CE credits approved for each discipline by the relevant authorizing board.

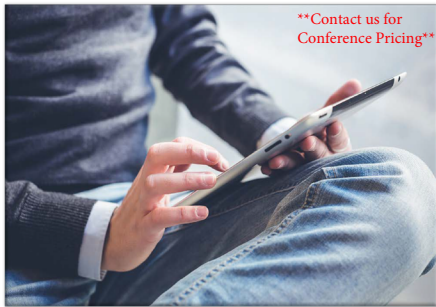
A link to the evaluation form will be emailed to you once the conference is over. Once the evaluations are submitted, WJC will generate the CE certificates which will be emailed to you.

Student Rates

Student rates are being offered at **\$45.00**. All students must register using their .edu email accounts. For questions about the student rates, student scholarships, or help in registration, please contact Diane Langelier at dlangelier@neari.com or by calling **413.540.0712x14**.

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MASOC

Massachusetts Society for a world Free of Sexual Harm by Youth

MASOC's mission is to ensure that children and adolescents with problematic or abusive sexual behavior live healthy, safe, and productive lives. We strive to prevent sexually abusive behaviors in these youth by training professionals and educating the community about developmentally appropriate interventions, evidence-based treatment, and effective public policies. Since its founding in 1986, MASOC provides education and training services to professionals; education to legislators on emerging issues; and collaborates with key partners who also care deeply about these issues. To help with your work, we offer a monthly newsletter on a key research topic, a listserv to hear updates with access to nearly 300 other professionals, and free training and CEU opportunities. MASOC invites all professionals who work with these children and adolescents to join with us in our efforts. Contact MASOC via the website at www.masoc.net or by email at info@masoc.net.



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