

Childcare Providers Who Commit Sexual Offences: Offender, Offence and Victim Characteristics

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Introduction

- Research has demonstrated that a large proportion of sexual offenses occur while the perpetrator is providing childcare to the victim
- Those who offend may in fact seek out this position in order to create an opportunity to offend
- Two previous investigations have revealed that 34% of all sexual offenses were committed by nonparental caregivers and most sexual offenses were committed by the child's regular caregiver (Margolin, 1991; Margolin & Craft, 1990)
- It is important to attempt to understand the individual who sexually offends in his/her capacity as childcare provider in order to increase the ability to identify and apprehend these individuals

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Introduction

- Previous research has shown that victims and perpetrators in childcare cases, such as babysitting were significantly younger than victims and offenders in other childcare contexts, such as sleep-overs, or live-in care.
- Childcare providers who commit sexual offenses are characteristically either “authoritarian” or “controlling” in their presentation (Sloan, 1988), and there are a higher frequency of cases where more than one offender is involved (Gallagher, 1999; White & Hart, 1995; Finklehor, 1988).
- Childcare providers are also more likely to select vulnerable groups of children (Gallagher, 1999).

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Rationale For Study

- The study is designed to provide much needed information on childcare providers that sexually offend against children and adolescents
- Findings from the present study may aid in the development of a behavioral profile of childcare providers who sexually offend, help the community provide more adequate supervision of these individuals, and might also assist the authorities in the apprehension of such offenders

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Materials

RCMP crime reports

- Information from Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) crime reports was used to compile descriptive information of the offender, offense and the victim
 - ▶ This information is unique because it contains a wealth of data about the attributes of offenders and their offences across Canada
 - Municipal and provincial police forces complete a booklet of standardized questions following each sexual and/or violent incident
 - Completed booklets/crime reports are forwarded to specific RCMP centers
- Reports contain over 200 variables of offender, offense & victim characteristics

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Method

Participants

- 163 adult male childcare providers who were involved in a sexual offense against a child or adolescent between 1995 & 2002
 - Inclusion criteria for study:
 - Male
 - Appears to be 18 years old or older
 - offender's relationship to victim at time of offense identified as day care provider/babysitter
- For the purposes of the RCMP database, the identity of an offender does not have to be established by charge or conviction. If as a result of the investigation, the investigator(s) is satisfied that the identity of the offender is known, then the person can and should be listed as the offender. Suspects are not entered into the database as offenders

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Procedure

- Request submitted to RCMP regarding all childcare providers involved in a sexual offense
- Request specified variables pertaining to
 - offender (e.g., apparent age, motivation, marital status, employment)
 - offense (e.g., crime scene, extent of force, extent of injury, sexual acts)
 - victim characteristics (e.g., age, height, weight)
- With the exception of apparent age of victim and offender, variables were coded into dichotomous variables indicating the presence or absence of a characteristic
- SPSS version 10.0
 - Frequency counts and percentages were computed for each variable to develop profile

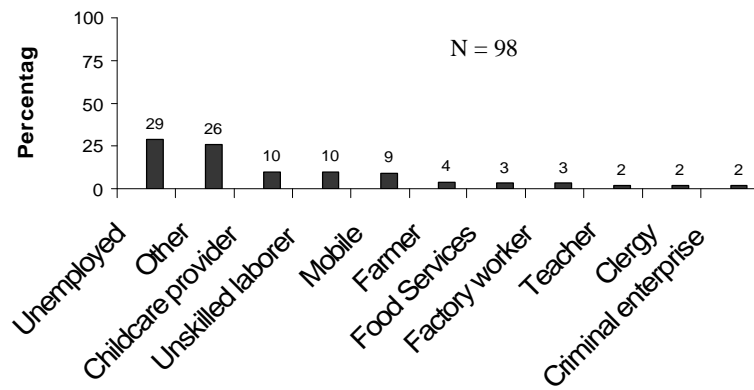
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Results: Offender Characteristics

- Mean apparent age= 38.2 (SD = 13.4)
- 56% were single; 31% were married, 10% were divorced
- 70% heterosexual, 17% homosexual, 5% bisexual, 8% celibate
- 44% described as “average” citizens, 29% described as reclusive loner, and 16% described as sociable
- 12% reported problems with alcohol, 11% had sexual problems, 9% reported mental health problems
- 4% collected pornographic photographs of adults; 1% collected pornographic child photographs
- 14% were under the influence of alcohol at time of offense

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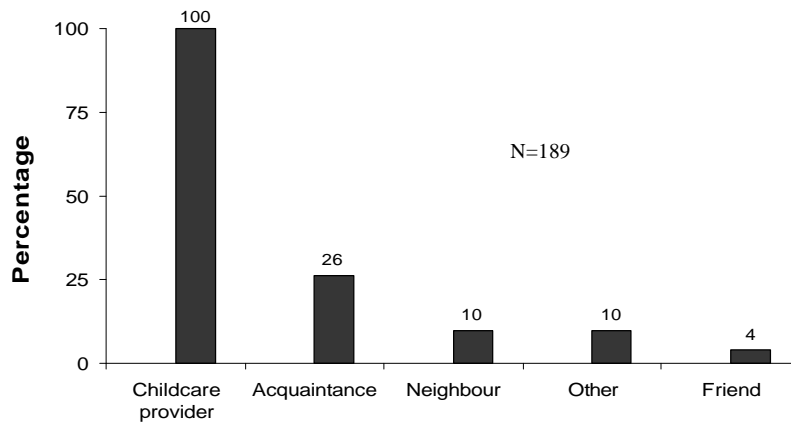
Results: Offender's Occupation



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Results: Offender's Relationship to Victim

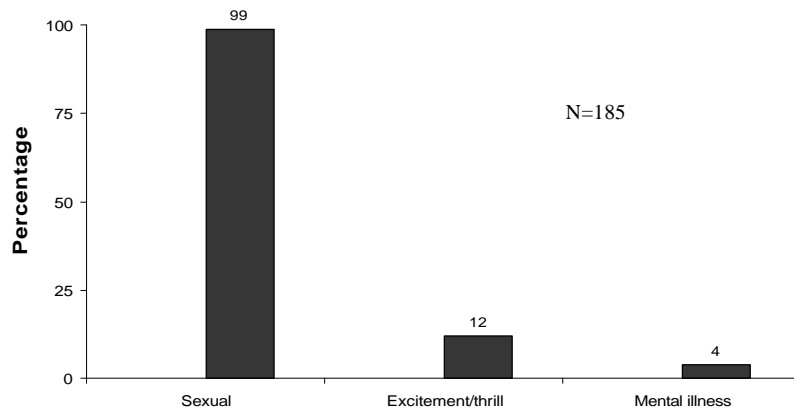
(not exclusive categories)



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Results: Offender's Motivation for Offense

(not exclusive categories)



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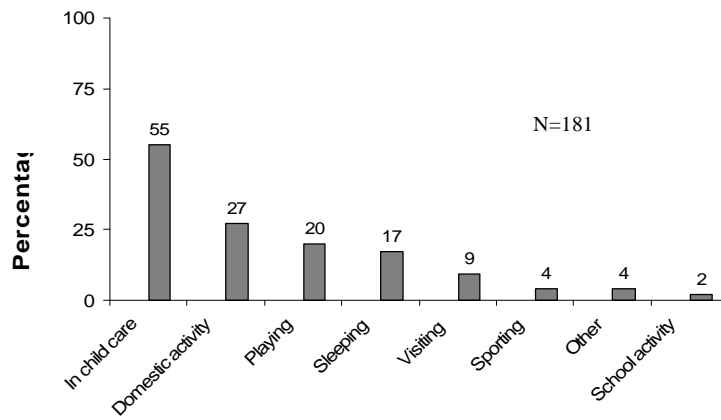
Results: Victim Characteristics

- Mean apparent age = 7.2 years (SD = 3.3); age range: 0-16
 - 85% of victims were under the age of 10 years
 - 33% of victim were under the age of 5 years
- 76% of victims were female
- 68% had slim build; 28% medium; 3% large
- 61% were living with both parents, 33% were living with single parent, 4% were living with relatives (i.e. grandparents)

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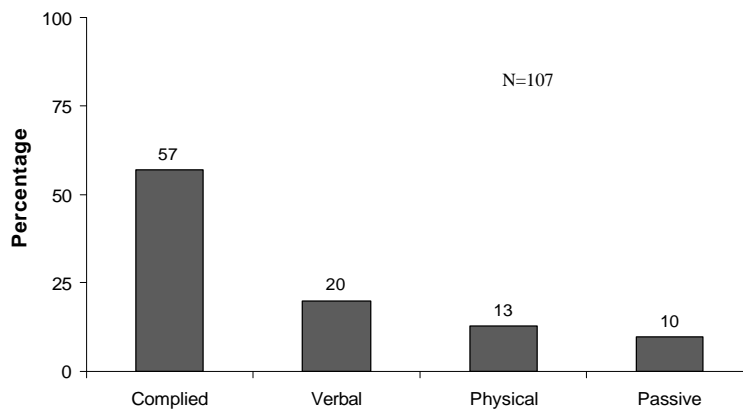
Results: Victim's Activity at Time of Offense

(not exclusive categories)



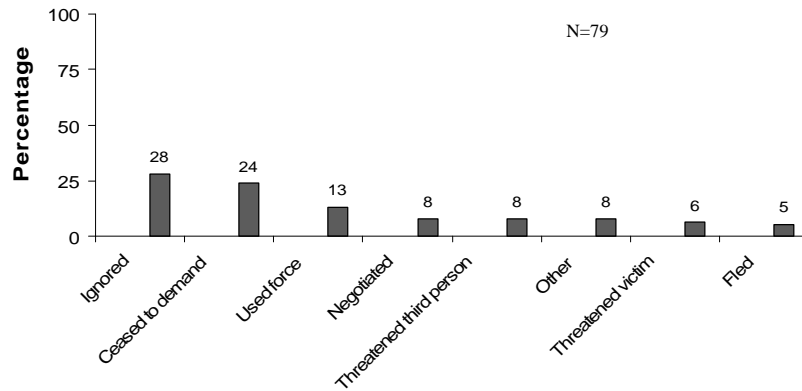
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Results: Victim Resistance



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Results: Offender Reaction to Victim Resistance



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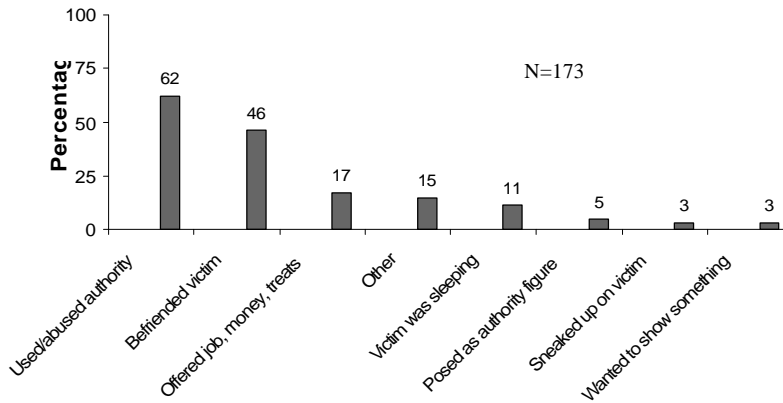
Results: Offense Characteristics

- 189 separate sex-crime incidents
- 163 adult male offenders
- Mean number of victim per offender=1 (range: 1-15)
- 96% of the offenses occurred at the victim's or offender's residence
- 88% of victim's sustained no injuries, 9% sustained minor, and 5% sustained moderate to severe injuries due to the offense
- 60% of offenders made no effort to reassure victims after offense, while 29% made some effort to reassure victim
- 93% of offenders displayed no overt anger toward the victims
- Offender released victim 86% of the time, compared to 10% victims rescued or 4% victim escape

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Results: Offender's Contact with Victim

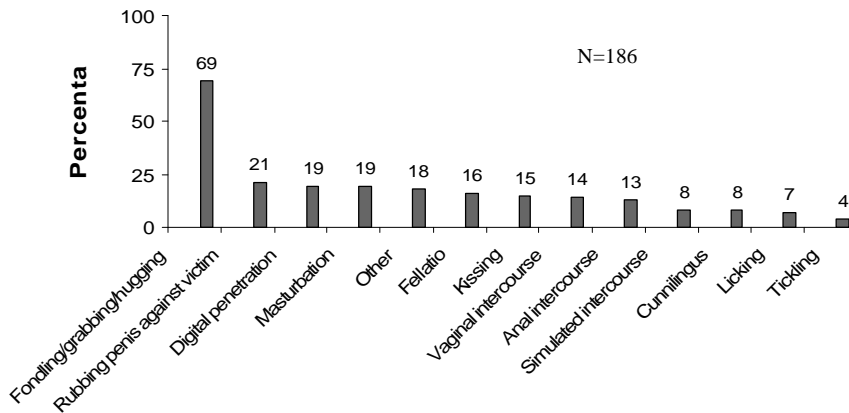
(not exclusive categories)



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Results: Sexual Acts Attempted or Occurred

(not exclusive categories)

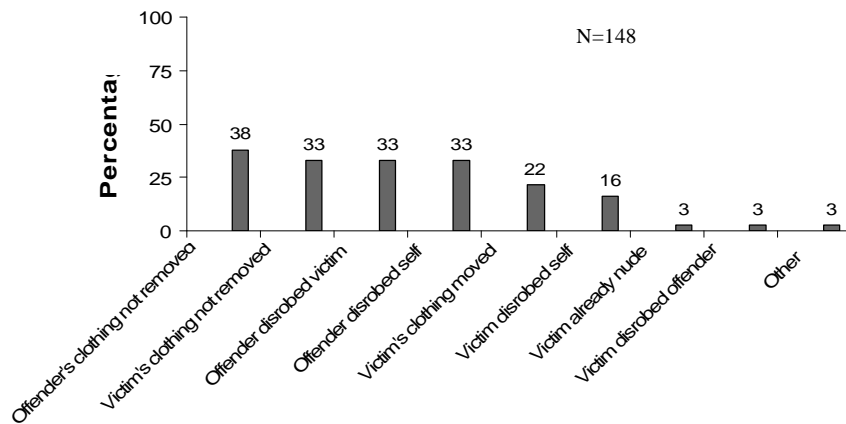


IN - 100

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Results: Who disrobed whom

(not exclusive categories)



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Offender Profile

A male childcare provider involved in a sex offense appears to be about age of 38 years, is single, and heterosexual. He is described as an average citizen, and is not likely to have substance abuse, psychological, or sexual problems. At the time of the offense he is unlikely to be intoxicated. This individual is usually unemployed and comes into contact with the victim through his role as a childcare provider, although sometimes he is an acquaintance of the victim already. The primary motivation of the offense is sexual.

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Victim Profile

Childcare providers are most likely to offend against 7-year-old female children with slim builds. Victims are usually living with their parent(s). Most victims were in childcare at the time of the offense, and were likely engaged in a domestic activity, playing, or sleeping. Victims are unlikely to resist these offenders, however when they do, it is most likely verbal, and childcare providers are most likely to either ignore the victim stop pursuing sexual contact.

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Offense Profile

The offense most commonly occurs at the childcare provider's residence or the victim's residence. The offender facilitated contact by using or abusing his authority and/or befriending the victim. The sexual acts perpetrated are most commonly fondling, followed by the offender rubbing his penis against the victim, digital penetration, and masturbation. In many cases neither the victim's nor the offender's clothing was removed. However, if it was, it was most likely removed by the offender. Most victims did not sustain any physical injuries as a result of the offense and were intentionally released.

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Discussion

- The profile presented should be helpful in the apprehension of childcare providers involved in a sexual offense and in understanding some of the needs of these clients
- Many of the profile characteristics are consistent with previous literature, except for multiple offenders involved in an incident, and extent of the victim's vulnerabilities (ex: developmental disability)
- A limitation of this research is that some victim and offender characteristics are unavailable
- Future research intends to explore other profiles of sex offenders in a position of trust and compare those to childcare providers and other sexual offenders

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