

Mental Health Professionals' Perspectives on Sex Offender Registry Web Sites

Alvin Malesky^{1,2} and Jeanmarie Keim¹

In an attempt to reduce the occurrence of childhood sexual abuse, some state governments have passed legislation allowing the public access to sex offender registries. One of the ways this access is granted is through the world wide web (web). There is, however, limited research on the impact this type of community notification has on actual rates of child sexual abuse. This study investigates the opinions of 133 mental health professionals who work with sex offenders regarding the implications of public sex offender registry web sites. Over 80% of the participants in this study do not believe that sex offender registry sites will affect the number of children who are sexually abused each year. Seventy percent of the respondents also believe that a listing of sex offenders on the web will create a false sense of security for parents, and over 60% of the respondents believe that sex offenders who are listed on these sites will become targets of vigilantism in their community. Implications for future research are provided.

KEY WORDS: sex offender; registry; world wide web; child; sexual abuse.

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse is a significant problem in the United States. Research statistics indicate that as many as 27% of females and 16% of males in the U.S. may have been sexually assaulted during their childhood (Finkelhor, Hotaling, Lewis, & Smith, 1990). In order to lower the number of children who are sexually victimized, it is imperative to examine factors associated with the individuals who commit these crimes. Research on child sex offenders indicates that some perpetrators have multiple victims (Abel Screening, 2000; Abel et al., 1987; Bernard, 1975;

¹Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research, The University of Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee 38152.

²To whom correspondence should be addressed at 100 Ball Education, Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research, The University of Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee 38152; e-mail: amalesky@aol.com.

Elliot, Browne, & Kilcoyne, 1995). Elliot et al. (1995), for example, found that 30% of the child sex offenders who reported committing sex offenses against children also reported sexually victimizing between 10 and 450 different children.

Studies that examine recidivism rates of sex offenders also support the view that some offenders have multiple victims. A meta-analysis of offender recidivism studies indicated the overall sex offender recidivism rates to be about 13%, with sexual recidivism for child sexual abuse being a little over 12% in an average 4–5 year follow-up period (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). Recidivism rates, however, can continue to increase as the follow-up period increases. Thirty-one percent of a sample of child molesters from a maximum security psychiatric institution were convicted of a new sex offense within a 6.3 year follow-up period beginning from the time the patient was first at risk to reoffend (Rice, Quinsey, & Harris, 1991).

Given that some perpetrators have multiple victims over an extended period of time, it is prudent to examine techniques that can be utilized to prevent offenders from committing additional sex crimes. One possible method is treating the perpetrators of the abuse. As is well accepted, however, treatment modalities that are 100% effective with all offenders do not exist (Furby, Weninrott, & Blackshaw, 1989; Hall, 1995).

Like treatment, judicial intervention does not completely prevent future sex offenses from occurring. The average time an adult is sentenced to jail for committing a sexual assault on a child is 132 months. Of the roughly 234,000 convicted sex offenders under the responsibility of correction agencies, almost 60% are under probation or parole supervision in the community (U.S. Department of Justice [USDJ], 1996; USDJ, 1997c). These statistics indicate that the vast majority of individuals convicted of child sexual abuse will eventually be released back into the community and will once again have access to children.

As the majority of convicted child sex offenders are eventually released back into the community and treatment is not 100% effective, legislators are exploring options beyond treatment or confinement. Community notification is one such option. However, the manner in which jurisdictions disseminate the information about sex offenders varies greatly. One type of community notification that has received increased attention has been posting information (pictures, current address, criminal history, aliases, etc.) of convicted sex offenders on the world wide web (web). The state of Virginia began listing the names and addresses of more than 4,000 sex offenders on the Internet in December, 1998. In doing so, it became the 10th state to create a web site with a roster of convicted sex offenders (Timberg, 1998). The public response to the site was overwhelming. In the first 12 hr of operation, the site was visited more than 45,000 times (Nakamura, 1998). Currently, 30 states either have operational web sites or have plans to establish sites devoted to some type of sex offender registry (USDJ, 1999).

There has been little research, however, as to whether this type of community notification will actually lower the number of children who are sexually abused in the United States. Without the benefit of research, controversy exists regarding the

effects of sex offender registry web sites. Those in favor of this type of community notification argue that it gives parents the power to protect their children by enabling them to keep track of the sex offenders in their community (Matson & Lieb, 1996a). They also claim this type of notification may deter individuals from committing additional sex crimes because the sex offender might believe he or she is being closely monitored (Matson & Lieb, 1996b).

Conversely, others argue that this type of notification may encourage sex offenders to evade the attention of law enforcement personnel and serve to further drive the perpetrators underground in order to avoid being placed on the Internet (Matson & Lieb, 1996a; Paisner, 1999). Registration and public notification of sex offenders may also lull the community into a false sense of security (USDJ, 1997b). Parents may believe their children are safe as long as they are with an adult who does not appear on a registry web site. Because a majority of sex offenders do not appear on registration lists, the child's safety may, in fact, be in jeopardy without the parents realizing it (Matson & Lieb, 1996a). It has also been speculated that community notification may actually increase the number of children who are sexually abused. For example "the general notification of laypersons outside the criminal justice system may increase, rather than decrease, the risk of recidivism by placing extreme pressure on the offender" (USDJ, 1997a, p. 9).

Finally, there are concerns that public sex offender registries will encourage acts of vigilantism against those whose names appear on the listing. "Sex offender notification is a flawed strategy for controlling sex crime. It reflects a skewed view of sex offenders and, lacking a plan for problem solving, it encourages citizen action in the form of vigilantism" (Presser & Gunnison, 1999, p. 311). An act of vigilantism has even prompted the Attorney General of one state to order prosecutors to "combat vigilantism by doing more to educate the public about 'Megan's Law.'" (Hanley, 1998, p. B5). Others, however, suggest that vigilantism will decrease over time and that only a small number of sex offenders experience retaliation from members of the community for their past sexual offenses (Matson & Lieb 1996b; USDJ, 1997b).

A consensus obviously does not exist as to the effects of sex offender registry web sites. Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the possible consequences of placing a listing of sex offenders on the web by soliciting the opinions of individuals who work with the perpetrators of sexual abuse. It is hoped that the opinions of these professionals will provide insight into the impact these web sites will have on the actual occurrence of child sexual abuse.

METHOD

Participants

Participants in this study were randomly selected from the membership roster of The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA). No follow-up

or reminder procedures were used. Three hundred questionnaires were mailed. One hundred thirty three participants from 36 states completed the questionnaires, yielding a response rate of 44.3%.

Ninety of the 133 participants were male (67.7%), 42 were female (31.6%), and 1 (0.8%) did not report his or her sex. Age of the participants ranged from 24 to 70, however, the majority (84, 63.5%) fell between 42 and 55 years of age. Most respondents—123 (92.5%)—indicated they were Caucasian/Non-Hispanic, with 1 Asian/Pacific Islander (.8%), 5 participants (3.8%) African American/Black, and 2 (1.5%) were multiracial.

Most of the respondents, 80 (62.1%), indicated their highest educational degree earned to date was a masters. Forty-three participants (33%) reported having a doctoral degree and six participants (4.5%) either did not respond to the question or had degree(s) other than a masters or a doctorate. Thirty-five respondents (26%) reported they were licensed psychologists, 25 (19%) licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), and 20 (15%) licensed professional counselors (LPC). The remaining participants held credentials in one or more other areas.

Nearly all of the respondents, 131 (98.5%), reported working with child sex offenders in either a research or therapeutic capacity on a weekly basis. Ninety-five of the 133 respondents (71.4%) reported accessing the world wide web on a weekly basis, and three quarters of the respondents indicated they have at least one child.

Materials

A short demographic form was used to obtain background information on the participants. A brief questionnaire (10 questions) was also included to ascertain participants' opinions concerning sex offender registry web sites. The first nine items on the questionnaire were derived from a literature review on the implications of sex offender registries on the Internet. These questions were presented in a 5-point Likert scale format. The anchors for these nine items were "Strongly Disagree" and "Strongly Agree" with "Not Sure" falling in the middle. The final item on the survey was a forced choice question concerning the effect sex offender registry web sites would have on the number of children who are sexually abused each year. The three choices for this question were: "decrease," "increase," and "not affect the number of children who are sexually abused." A section was also included in the questionnaire for respondents to provide comments or feedback or both to the researchers.

Design and Procedure

ATSA granted permission to survey randomly selected individuals from the membership list. Questionnaire packets, including self-addressed stamped return envelopes, were mailed to participants in July 1999. No identifying information

was placed on the return questionnaires, thereby ensuring anonymity. This guarantee of anonymity precludes follow-up or reminder procedures for those who did not respond to the survey.

RESULTS

Due to the limited research on sex offender registry web sites, this study is descriptive in nature. Percentages are reported regarding participants' views on the 5-point Likert scale items. Table I indicates percentage by category for the Likert scale questions.

Independent *t*-tests were conducted to determine if significant differences existed in the responses between: male and female participants; participants who

Table I. Responses for Likert Scale Questions

Question	Responses (%)				
	SD	D	NS	A	SA
The listing of child sex offenders on the world wide web will increase stress on the offenders thereby increasing the likelihood that they will commit additional sex offenses against children as a means to deal with this stress.	11.3	38.3	28.6	17.3	4.5
A public listing of sex offenders on the web will deter sex offenders from committing additional sex crimes against children because the offenders believe they are being closely monitored and thus will be arrested for any crimes.	13.5	45.9	19.5	18.0	3.0
A public registry will create a false sense of security for parents or guardians of children because they will believe they can protect their children from sexual predators just by checking the public sex offender registry on the web.	6.8	14.3	9.0	46.6	23.3
Public web sites listing convicted sex offenders would send the message to the offenders that they can never be trusted, thus hampering efforts to rehabilitate them.	8.3	34.6	28.6	24.8	3.8
A listing of sex offenders on the web will decrease the number of children sexually abused each year by enabling parents or guardians to better protect their children from child sex offenders.	16.5	42.9	25.6	13.5	1.5
Convicted sex offenders who appear on a public sex offender registry web site will become targets of vigilantes in the community.	1.5	8.3	26.5	50.0	12.9
A public registry of sex offenders on the web will deter individuals from committing sex crimes with the threat of being caught and placed on the registry.	25.6	42.1	17.3	11.3	3.8
A public registry of sex offenders on the web will hamper treatment by decreasing the offenders' desire to be honest about past crimes for fear of being placed on the public registry.	6.1	24.2	28.0	32.6	8.3
A significant number of parents/guardians would access the sex offender registry on the web to inquire about adults their children may come in contact with.	4.5	25.6	36.8	27.1	5.3

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not Sure, A = Agree, and SA = Strongly Agree.

reported having children and those that did not; and respondents who reported that their state has community notification of convicted sex offenders through the world wide web and those who reported that their state does not have this type of notification system. Due to the fact that multiple *t*-tests were conducted, it was necessary to use Bonferroni technique in order to minimize the probability of a Type I error. A Bonferroni adjustment of .05 alpha yielded a significance level of .006. No significant differences were found between the above groups in their responses to the Likert scale questions, using the adjusted alpha.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if significant differences based on licensure existed among respondents. The results of the ANOVA indicated no significant differences among licensed psychologists, LPCs, and LCSWs in their responses to the survey items.

Finally, a chi-square was utilized to determine if significant differences existed between the participants' responses to question 10 (effect of sex offender registry web sites on the number of children sexually abused each year) and the expected responses to this question due to chance. Of the 125 participants who answered the question, 101 (80.8%) believed there would be no change in child sexual abuse numbers, whereas 21 (16.8%) felt numbers would decrease and 3 (2.4%) felt it would increase the number of children who are sexually abused. The results indicated that significantly fewer participants believed that public sex offender registry web sites would either decrease or increase the number of children sexually abused each year as compared to chance fluctuation. The results of the chi-square also indicated that a significantly high number of participants believed that sex offender registry web sites would not affect the number of children sexually abused each year. These results were significant at the .005 level ($\chi^2(2, N = 125) = 130.624, p < .005$).

DISCUSSION

As previously stated, this study is descriptive in nature due to the minimal research that has been conducted on community notification of sex offenders via the Internet. The questions in this study were derived from concerns or comments in the literature relating to the possible implications of sex offender registry web sites. Specifically, these concerns or comments dealt with the impact sex offender registry sites may have on the perpetrators who commit these crimes as well as on the individuals who access these sites.

Seventy-nine respondents (59.4%) disagreed that sex offender registry web sites would deter previously convicted sex offenders from committing additional sex crimes against children because they believe they are being closely monitored. Furthermore, 90 respondents (67.7%) did not think that the threat of being placed on a sex offender registry site would sufficiently deter perpetrators from committing sex crimes against children. Reasons for this rationale provided by participants in the comment section included the following: "Sex offenders do not

consider the consequences to the victims or themselves prior to offending,” and “The most predatory of offenders aren’t concerned about notification of any type.” These results indicate that a majority of the participants in this study did not believe that web sites listing convicted sex offenders would significantly discourage perpetrators from committing sex crimes against children.

Only 20 respondents (15%) believed that the number of children who are sexually abused each year would decrease because parents would be better able to protect their children through accessing a sex offender registry site. Furthermore, 93 respondents (69.9%) believed that a listing of sex offenders on the web would create a false sense of security for parents or guardians who might feel that they can protect their children simply by checking a web site.

There are a number of possible explanations for these results. First, it is difficult to ensure that all child sex offenders are included on registries. Consequently, a child may come into contact with a convicted sex offender who does not appear on the web. Parents may be less vigilant because they erroneously assume that because the adult is omitted from the registries, he or she is not a threat to their child. Additionally, a proportion of child sex offenders are mobile and thus can go into neighborhoods where they are not known (Freeman-Longo & Blanchard, 1998). It is difficult, if not impossible, for parents to check the web site every time someone new enters their neighborhood. Once again, parents may not be as concerned about their child’s safety because their neighborhood is “sex offender free” according to the web site; when, in actuality, child sex offenders can enter their neighborhood at anytime without the parents’ knowledge. Finally, an offender who has never been convicted would not be on any registry and thus the parents would not know about his or her offending history.

Disagreement existed among respondents as to whether sex offender web sites would send the message to perpetrators that they cannot be trusted, thus hampering efforts to rehabilitate them. Fifty-seven (42.9%) of the respondents disagreed, 38 (28.6%) stated that they were not sure, and 38 (28.6%) agreed with this statement. One of the respondents asked a group of male sex offenders as to their opinions on this question. The group concluded that a web site would send the message that they cannot be trusted. Due to the divergent nature of the responses to this item, further research with child sex offenders, as well as with those who treat these individuals, should be utilized in answering this question.

Eighty-three respondents (62.9%) believed that sex offenders who are listed on the web site will become targets of vigilantes in the community. One respondent stated that numerous negative consequences (i.e., termination from jobs, police harassment, and community vigilantism) have occurred in her state since it implemented this type of notification system. This report, however, is in contrast to a 1996 study where a small minority (3.5%) of registered sexual offenders reported incidents of harassment (Matson & Lieb, 1996b). There are a number of explanations for the discrepancy in the Matson and Lieb report and the current findings. First, community notification in the Matson and Lieb survey utilized

notification procedures such as community meetings to disseminate information about sex offenders. These venues provide a better opportunity to educate the community about sex offenders as well as to stress the importance of not harassing these individuals than do generic web sites. Second, the statistics in the Matson and Lieb survey were based on reported cases. It is possible that actual harassment is more prevalent than is indicated due to the fact that some cases may go unreported. Even though states, like Virginia, make statements on their registry web site such as "Unlawful use of the information for purposes of intimidation or harassing another is prohibited and willful violation shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor" (Virginia State Police Web Site, 2000), many of the professionals in this study who work with sex offenders still believe that community vigilantism will occur. Further investigation is warranted to determine the possible consequences vigilantism may have on the offender as well as its overall effects on childhood sexual abuse.

The response percentages were relatively similar, 40 (30.3%) strongly disagree/disagree; 37 (28%) not sure; and 54 (40.9%) agree/strongly agree, about whether a public sex offender registry on the web would hamper treatment, by decreasing the offenders' desire to be honest about past crimes, for fear of being placed on the Internet. Being placed on the web, however, is only one possible consequence of a long chain of events that could result from an individual revealing past crimes. In fact, a perpetrator would have to be charged, go to trial, and then found guilty before he or she could be placed on the web site. Any of these events in and of themselves would likely be negative for the perpetrator. This makes it difficult to discriminate whether being placed on the web would hamper treatment or if the events leading up to being placed on the web are the factors that prevent the perpetrator from being honest. Nevertheless, the respondents in this survey were relatively divided as to their opinions on this question.

Only 29 (21%) of the respondents believed that listing child sex offenders on the web would increase these individual's stress, thereby increasing the possibility that they would use reoffending as a coping mechanism to deal with this stress. The point was made by one participant that stress is an inherent condition of everyday life for many people and although being placed on a web site may be psychologically and emotionally challenging, it is by no means the only factor that would cause stress in perpetrators' lives. The majority of respondents believe that it is unrealistic to think that being placed on a web site registry in and of itself would increase an individual's stress level to the point of needing to reoffend in order to deal with this stress. It is important to note, however, that 38 respondents (28.6%) were unsure as to the effects this type of registry may have on the listed sex offenders.

Disagreement existed among the participants, 40 (31%) strongly disagree/disagree; 49 (37%) not sure; 43 (32%) agree/strongly agree, as to whether a significant number of parents/guardians would access these web sites to inquire about individuals who have contact with their children. These results need to be considered in conjunction with the fact that some sex offender web sites have had high

volumes of inquiries. For example, within its first year of operation, the Virginia State Police sex offender registry web site reported having over 7 million searches requested and over a million hits (Kucera, 1999). It is possible that a small number of individuals are repeatedly accessing the web sites, thereby increasing the number of hits these sites receive. It is also possible, and was suggested by one of the participants in this study, that child sex offenders may access these web sites in hopes of finding other offenders who share their sexual desires. It is more likely, however, that the large number of inquires are a result of numerous individuals utilizing the web site for benign reasons. Finding out more information about the types of individuals who access these sites, such as reasons for obtaining this information and number of visits, is an area for additional research.

The results of the *t*-tests indicated that significant differences did not exist between men and women on their answers to the survey's questions. Participants who have children did not differ significantly from participants who did not report having children. No significant differences were found between respondents who reside in states with community notification via the web and respondents whose states do not have this type of notification system. These results indicate that the opinions expressed in this study were not influenced by gender, having children, or residing in a state that utilizes this type of notification system. In addition, the results of the ANOVA did not find significant differences in responses among licenced psychologists, LCSWs, or LPCs. This result suggests that the opinions held by mental health professionals in this sample are also consistent across professional licensure concerning the effects of sex offender registry web sites.

The main research question this study attempted to answer was whether mental health professionals who work with sex offenders believe that sex offender registry web sites would affect the number of children who are sexually abused each year. The answer to this question, according to this study is, no. Of the 125 participants who answered the question, 101 (80.8%) stated that community notification through the web would not affect the number of children who are sexually abused each year. A number of reasons were provided for this finding including (a) a proportion of child sex offenders will not appear on registry sites, (b) child sex offenders are motivated by strong drives and will not be deterred by public notification, and (c) not everyone has access to the Internet. Regardless of the reasoning, it is clear that a significant number of mental health professionals in this study who reported working with sex offenders do not believe that this type of notification will significantly change the number of children who are sexually abused each year.

The limitations of this study need to be considered when generalizing from its results. The entire participant pool was obtained from a single association. It is, therefore, possible that the opinions of individuals in this organization concerning community notification may be different from those of other mental health professionals who are not affiliated with this group. Future research should solicit opinions from participants who are members of a variety of different organizations to broaden the generalizability of the results.

Due to the fact that limited empirical knowledge exists concerning the effects of sex offender registries on the Internet, it is difficult for members of ATSA to have opinions grounded in actual data. Future research should gather data before and after the implementation of this type of notification procedures in order to attain a better idea of the actual effectiveness of these web sites. It may also be beneficial to elicit the opinions of offenders as to their views concerning online sex offender registries.

This study also has limited diversity in regard to the sex and race/ethnicity of the participants. Finally, the questions in this survey do not distinguish between the different types of registry web sites that are currently in existence. For example, some states utilize a ranking system where only the most predatory offenders are placed on the web, whereas other states list all convicted sex offenders. In the future it will be beneficial to examine the differences in opinions about the various types of public offender registries sites that are currently being utilized.

CONCLUSION

Public sex offender registry web sites were never intended to be a panacea for childhood sexual abuse. The results of this study, however, indicate that this type of community notification may not be as effective as lawmakers or advocacy groups had initially hoped. Over 80% of the mental health professionals who responded to the question do not believe that sex offender registry web sites will change the number of children who are sexually abused each year. These results should caution legislators and the public from believing that sex offender registry sites are the final answer to decreasing the number of children who are sexually victimized. These findings also warn against becoming complacent in searching for other solutions to this problem. One respondent stated,

Notification provides a false sense of accomplishment at a time when people are frightened and outraged, but it also helps to deter us from more effective measures, such as good forensic evaluations for all offenders and increased probation-parole supervision and treatment programs.

In summary, the results of this study suggest that sex offender registry web sites are not the final solution to the problem of childhood sexual abuse. It is therefore essential that additional avenues are explored in order to effectively deal with this problem.

REFERENCES

- Abel Screening. (2000, February). *National sexual violence databank* [On-line]. Available: www.abelscreen.com/
- Abel, G. G., Becker, J. V., Mittelman, M., Cunningham-Rathner, J., Rouleau, J. L., & Murphy, W. D. (1987). Self-reported sex crimes of nonincarcerated paraphiliacs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2(1), 3-25.
- Bernard, F. (1975). An enquiry among a group of pedophiles. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 11(3), 242-255.

- Elliot, M., Browne, K., & Kilcoyne, J. (1995). Child sexual abuse prevention: What offenders tell us. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 19*(5), 579–594.
- Finkelhor, D., Hotaling, G., Lewis, I. A., & Smith, C. (1990). Sexual abuse in a national survey of adult men and women: Prevalence, characteristics, and risk factors. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 14*, 19–28.
- Freeman-Longo, R. E., & Blanchard, G. T. (1998). *Sexual abuse in America: Epidemic of the 21st century*. Brandon, Vermont: The Safer Society Press.
- Furby, L., Weinrott, M. R., & Blackshaw, L. (1989). Sex offender recidivism: A review. *Psychological Bulletin, 105*(1), 3–30.
- Hall, G. C. N. (1995). Sexual offender recidivism revisited: A meta-analysis of recent treatment studies. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 63*(5), 802–809.
- Hanley, R. (1998, June 18). Attorney general seeks to combat vigilantism: Effort to clear up 'Megan's Law' confusion. *New York Times*, p. B5.
- Hanson, R. K., & Bussiere, M. T. (1998). Predicting relapse: A meta-analysis of sexual offender recidivism studies. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 66*(2), 348–362.
- Kucera, J. (1999, December 24). Sex offender internet listing elicits concern. *The Fairfax Journal*, p. A1.
- Matson, S., & Lieb, R. (1996a). *Community notification in Washington State: 1996 survey of law enforcement*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- Matson, S., & Lieb, R. (1996b). *Sex offender community notification: A review of state laws*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- Nakamura, D. (1998, December 30). Virginia's sex offender site has heavy volume. *The Washington Post*, p. D1.
- Paisner, S. R. (1999, February 21). Online registries of sex offenders may do more harm than good. *The Washington Post*, p. B01.
- Presser, L., & Gunnison, E. (1999). Strange bedfellows: Is sex offender notification a form of community justice? *Crime & Delinquency, 45*(3), 299–315.
- Rice, M. E., Quinsey, V. L., & Harris, G. T. (1991). Sexual recidivism among child molesters released from a maximum security psychiatric institution. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 59*(3), 381–386.
- Timberg, C. (1998, December 30). Virginia lists sex offenders on internet. *The Washington Post*, p. A01.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (1996). *Child victimizers: Violent offenders and their victims* (NCJ-153258). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Justice (1997a). *Child sexual molestation: Research issues* (NCJ-163390). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (1997b). *Sex offender community notification* (NCJ-162364). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (1997c). *Sex offenses and offenders* (NCJ-163392). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Justice (1999). *Summary of state sex offender registry dissemination procedures: Update* (NCJ 177620). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Virginia State Police (2000, February). *Sex offender and crimes against minors registry home page* [On-line]. Available: www.vsp.state.va.us/