

## **BETTER TOGETHER**

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**T-36**

### **A Non-Avoidance Based Approach to Managing Sex Offenders and Technology**

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Technology is a constant part of our daily lives, with the availability of the internet increasing since the 1990s. Unfortunately, there has also been an increase in availability of child pornography and other deviant material during this time period. Initially, sex offender treatment programs responded by teaching avoidance – often to the degree of avoidance of the internet entirely. However, with the role that the internet now place in our life for everything from smart phones as our primary means of communication to using the internet for basic tasks such as job hunting and buying a car, avoidance is no longer a reasonable option. Therefore, we propose that sexually violent predators will learn more adaptive skills by having access to these technologies while they are still in an inpatient setting under the monitoring of a full treatment team. We discuss the application of an evidence based model for monitoring sexually violent predators with access to the internet and smart phones. The results of this program have demonstrated that access to technology provides additional information to the treatment team regarding risk and allows for a more in depth level of skill building than could be obtained through avoidance.

#### **Learning Goals:**

- To illustrate the necessity of internet access for many basic tasks of daily life.
- To provide evidence for a non-avoidance based approach related to sex offenders and technology.
- To provide guidance/tips for those who are establishing working with sex offenders with access to the internet and technology.

**Daeton H. DeGrant, MA, LPC:** Mr. DeGrant is a clinician with additional background in technology, who is currently pursuing an advanced degree in digital forensic. He has worked with civilly committed SVPs since 2013. Prior to that he provided direct care in group homes to individual's with severe behavioral issues.

**Nena L. Kircher, PsyD:** Dr. Kircher works primarily as an evaluator and has worked within a forensic setting since 2011. Prior to that she worked in community mental health and has been consistently working with victims or perpetrators of sexual abuse since 2001. She has additional interest/experience related to program and curriculum development.