

SHAPING THE FUTURE

2019 ATSA Conference | Friday November 8 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

F-05

Ethical and Clinical Issues in Treating Non-Justice-Involved People with Pedophilia and/or Hebephilia

Ainslie Heasman, PhD, CPsych

A focus on child sexual abuse as a preventable public health problem has been discussed by many authors in recent years (McPhail, Stephens, & Heasman, 2018; Van Horn et al., 2015; Kenny & Wurtele, 2012;). Treatment of non-justice-involved individuals with a sexual interest in pre-pubescent or pubescent children is getting increased attention in the field as a necessary approach in the prevention of child sexual abuse. To date, much of the focus of treatment for individuals with pedophilic and/or hebephilic interest has occurred after one or more offences has been committed, and consequently after the experience of victimization. Often times, once a client is involved in the criminal justice system, relevant child protection reports have been made and associated interventions have been put in place. With the increased attention and opportunities for non-justice-involved individuals to access therapy comes an increased likelihood for child protection concerns to be raised. This can leave the clinician facing legislative requirements that may require a child protection report, which can in turn produce ethical dilemmas.

This workshop will review the available literature on non-justice involved individuals with pedophilia and/or hebephilia, in terms of their treatment needs and barriers to accessing services. This will be discussed in light of known risk factors for child sexual abuse and sexual recidivism as relevant treatment targets. Mandatory reporting legislation in Canada, the United States and various other countries will be reviewed and discussed. The Canadian Psychological Association Code of Ethics (Canadian Psychological Association, 2017) and the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association, 2017) will be reviewed in the context of identifying and addressing ethical dilemmas that arise in a clinical setting when working with this population. The opportunities, challenges and risks to the client, the clinician, and the therapeutic relationship will be explored with respect to making (or not making) a mandatory report.

Participants will have the opportunity to explore several case examples of non-justice involved people with pedophilia and/or hebephilia seeking therapy. We will explore the risk and protective factors identified in the vignettes and use the various codes of ethics and legislative requirements to engage in a discussion on decision-making with regards to reporting.

The workshop will conclude with practical recommendations for clinical work with this client population (in light of the possible ethical dilemmas) and how this intersects with the various legislative requirements.

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Learning Goals:

- Participants will be able to summarize the ethical challenges associated with working with non-justice involved individuals with pedophilia and/or hebephilia.
- Participants will be able to evaluate the need for mandatory reporting based on case vignettes.
- Participants will be able to identify approaches and processes to address the ethical and legal requirements in working with non-justice involved individuals with pedophilia and/or hebephilia.

Dr. Ainslie Heasman, PhD, C.Psych is a Clinical and Forensic Psychologist who is currently employed at the Sexual Behaviours Clinic at the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto, Ontario, as well as in private practice. Her graduate school training in the United States afforded her the opportunity to work in a civil commitment setting and a state forensic hospital. Dr. Heasman also previously worked in provincial corrections at the Ontario Correctional Institute. She currently engages in risk assessment for sexual violence as well as group and individual therapy for hypersexuality, sexual offending, and paraphilic interests for mandated and non-mandated clients. Her research and clinical interests involve non-justice involved individuals with a sexual interest in children. Dr. Heasman has presented nationally and internationally on these topics. She is currently the Treasurer on the Board of Directors of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) and an Associate Graduate Faculty member in the MSc and PhD Forensic Psychology programs at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT).